

Making the most of gym time

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(HealthDay)—If you find that you're more motivated by working out under the guidance of a fitness instructor and like the idea of varying your workouts, taking classes is a great choice.

With today's wide variety of gym offerings, use these tips to decide on the best options for you.

You're likely to need a mix of classes to develop all of the key areas of fitness: strength training, cardio, flexibility and even mind-body for stress relief and [emotional well-being](#). Put together a weekly schedule that covers all of these.

For cardio work, spinning, stepping and [dance classes](#) are high-energy options that will keep you engaged as you break a sweat.

For [strength-training](#), you have many choices. Depending on your comfort level, you might like gentle resistance-bands or popular kettle-bell weight workouts. Pilates is another option that focuses on developing core muscles with strength and toning benefits. Be sure that all your muscle groups are worked over the course of the classes you take.

Don't forget classes that work on flexibility and balance. Two examples are yoga and tai chi, which have the added benefit of easing stress.

Shop around before you sign up for your membership to see whether you'd rather go to a specialized exercise studio or you'd prefer a wide array of more exotic offerings that only a large gym can provide. You might be more interested in fast-paced classes or perhaps prefer ones that combine different modalities.

When starting a new type of [class](#), choose a beginner level. If you like it, gradually work up to intermediate and advanced classes. Whatever you choose, classes will add a social component to your workouts and keep exercise fun.

More information: The American College of Sports Medicine has

more details on the [types of classes](#) to look for when planning your fitness schedule.

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