

Slaying the couch-potato mindset

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(HealthDay)—There's no shortage of creative excuses people come up with to stay stuck on the sofa, but three of them top the list.

Here's how to hurdle the obstacles standing between you and getting in shape.

"I'm too tired to [exercise](#)." Being too tired to work out is a common theme among procrastinators. And while it sounds counter-intuitive, exercise gives you more energy—it feeds on itself in a good way. Researchers at the University of Georgia found that healthy but sedentary adults who did as little as 20 minutes of low-to-moderate cardio (think brisk walking) three days a week felt more energized after just a few weeks.

"I don't have time to exercise." Who doesn't feel squeezed by a busy schedule? And yes, driving back and forth to the gym can double the time you need to allot to a workout. So skip the trip and invest in home equipment. But still can't find a 30-minute block of time? Break up your workout into a few short segments a day. Steal 10 to 15 minutes before the kids wake up and another 15 after they go to sleep.

"I'm too out of shape to exercise." Being out of shape is no reason to sit on the sidelines and *stay* out of shape. Fitness can start with just one step. If you're unhappy with your appearance, work out at home at first or invest in exercise clothes that flatter you. Set small, realistic goals that you can build on. Begin with 5 minutes of walking and focus on the present, not the 30 minutes you hope to accomplish. Praise yourself for getting started, rather than berate yourself for not having Olympic fitness status.

Keep the momentum going by rewarding yourself with fitness-related items such as a high-tech monitor or watch or new exercise clothes as your size decreases.

More information: The American Council on Exercise has great tips to [help you overcome excuses](#) and boost your energy level through

fitness.

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