



How to Stay Fit on Vacation

By Ylva Van Buuren

Traveling can present all sorts of hurdles to fitness. But exercise can be a lifesaver when you're away by relieving stress and keeping energy levels up. Here are tips for keeping fit when you're far from home.

Before You Leave:

- Preplan. Think about your workout routine and if you can do it in another city, says Helen Vanderburg, an award winning fitness trainer, motivational speaker, and owner of Heavens Fitness, a club in Calgary.
- If staying in a hotel or resort, find out what fitness options it offers. Does it have a workout room or a pool, or do you get guest passes to a nearby gym? Are there in-room workout options such as free weights, a yoga mat, or exercise DVDs? Ask about tennis courts and outdoor running trails.
- If you're heading off on a family vacation, talk to your spouse about how the two of you can take turns working out. Plan something active with the family such as a hike or a bike ride.

What to Pack:

- **One versatile workout outfit** (top, shorts, and/or tights, socks, bra) you can wear for an outdoor run OR a workout in the gym.
- **Footwear** for your chosen activity.
- In cool weather, **extra layers for outdoors**, including a long-sleeved light fleece and a wind-resistant jacket (if possible, take a waterproof breathable one that will be functional in all kinds of weather).
- **Swimsuit**, goggles
- **Resistance training equipment** such as stretch bands, elastic tubing, or portable weights (i.e. AquaBells Dumbbells)
- **Skipping rope**
- Tennis or squash **racket**
- **Exercise videos** or DVD
- **Sunscreen**, sunglasses, and a hat

Travel Tip:

- Wear walking shoes and comfortable clothes to the airport; then after you check your luggage, take a trip around the terminal says Marjorie O'Connor, an Edmonton fitness professional seen daily on *Moves with Marjorie* on CityTV.
- Monitor your heart rate, as travel can be tough on your body, says Vanderburg, who notes that stress can increase your resting heart rate.
- Use a pedometer to keep track of how many steps you take.
- If you have a long layover, visit www.airportgyms.com to find gyms near airports in the United States and Canada.

Keep Fit While You Sit:

- Sitting in a cramped airplane seat during long flights can lead to swollen ankles and, on rare occasions, deep vein thrombosis. To avoid problems, **get up and walk around for a few minutes every couple of hours**, “at appropriate times of course,” says Desmond Ryan, vice-president of In-Flight Services and Catering for Air Transit in Toronto (i.e. when there’s no turbulence and food service is finished).
- Sitting in a car or train can cause stiffness, so **take frequent breaks** (e.g. walk around at a rest stop, or on a train get up and walk every half hour or so).
- Other tips: wear loose clothing and drink water or juice to stay hydrated

Exercise Tip: When your schedule is really packed, sneak in 10 minutes of activity whenever possible says O'Connor. Head for your room and do **10 minutes of jogging in place, jumping jacks, or skipping**, or put on the music channel and dance for a few songs; walk 3 or 4 blocks and then return; or run up several flights of stairs. Try to do a 10 minute activity 2 or 3 times a day.

Rx for Jet Lag: Exercise can help reduce the effects of jet lag because it increases the amount of oxygen circulating throughout your body, which helps you feel better and restores energy. Vanderburg recommends travelers do **20 minutes of light cardiovascular exercise** after settling in.

Go for Goals: Don't worry if you can't workout every day. Most active people can maintain their fitness level with 2 cardiovascular workouts and two mini-strength workouts a week, says Vanderburg.

Be Safe When You Run: Ask your host or hotel concierge if it's safe to run in the area and if he/she knows any good routes. If not, contact a local running store or visit www.runthepplanet.com to find running routes in various cities. **Always let someone know when you go out for a run**, and carry ID, cell phone, and a map.

Class Act: If you're motivated by fitness classes, check the Internet before you go for a nearby club that has pay-as-you-go classes.

Helen Vanderburg's 35 Minute Hotel Gym Workout:

- **Warm-up** with 5 minutes light-intensity cardio (i.e. walking)
- Do at least **20 minutes of more intense cardio** on a treadmill, stationary bike, or other cardio machine.
- Do a 5 minute resistance training workout that includes squats, lunges, pushups, crunches, and back extensions. Use free weights, flat bands, or tubing to add resistance.
- To cool down, **stretch all the muscles you have worked**, including hamstrings, hip flexors, and chest. Hold each stretch for 10-20 seconds.

Pool Workout:

- Find out if there's an **adult swim** or a time when the pool is relatively quiet and suit up then.
- Do your **water workout** for at least 30 minutes (e.g. jog in the shallow end, swim the crawl, or the breaststroke).
- Stretch large muscles after you swim.

Room Workout: Bring your own DVD and workout in your room. However, some hotels have a workout routine on their in-house television channel.