

10 tips for how to exercise while at work

By Nathan Henley

Many of us spend our workdays sitting at a desk or a computer. Our shoulders get tense, our backs slouch over, and our fingers and hands are the only parts of our body that move for most of the day. With the new year here, many of us made resolutions to be healthier. Why not resolve to try some of these exercises while at work?



1. **Leave the car at home.** If possible, consider walking or riding a bike to work. If you use public transportation, you could start getting off a few stops ahead of time and walk the remaining distance. Even if you have to drive, you could park farther away. Also, skip the elevator and take the stairs.

2. **Stand up.** We burn more calories standing up than we do sitting down. Stand and walk around your office while on the phone. You might also consider getting a high table to work at for a few hours during the day. If you need to talk to a colleague, walk to their office rather than relying on texts and instant messaging.

3. **Take a break.** When you need to take a break, take a quick walk or do some stretches. Turn your head side to side, roll your shoulders forward and backward, and stretch your arms and legs.

4. **Sit on a fitness ball.** Get rid of your office chair and trade it for an inflated fitness ball (as long as you can safely balance on it). Sitting on one of these will improve your balance and your core muscles. You can also use the ball for exercise during breaks.

5. **Turn your cubicle into a gym.** Keep light hand weights or resistance bands in your office. You can easily do some arm curls in those five minutes before a meeting when you normally have nothing to do.

6. **Start a fitness club.** Find some co-workers who are interested in working out and organize a lunchtime fitness club. You can walk or jog around the block. This will improve workplace camaraderie and help you keep each other accountable for exercising.

7. **Make meetings active.** For informal meetings with one or two people, consider walking and talking. You can walk around the building while talking or even go outside if the weather is nice.

8. **Speed up.** If your job involves walking in some way, try walking faster. You may need to switch your high heels for flats, but the quicker you walk, the more calories you'll burn.

9. **Plan your travel.** If you have to travel on the job, don't forget about exercise. If you're waiting around in an airport, you can take a walk around the terminal. Some equipment like tennis shoes, resistance bands, and jump ropes are easy to pack. Reserve a hotel with a fitness room. You could even bring a workout DVD with you and do it in your hotel room.

10. **Do two things at once.** If you truly want to work and exercise at the same time, consider turning a treadmill into a desk. James Levine of the Mayo Clinic came up with a desk that can be installed onto a treadmill so that it's possible to walk and work at the same time. Studies have shown that the average person can burn an extra 100 calories an hour while walking less than 1 mile/hour on the treadmill. Sound crazy? See it for yourself.

Nathan Henley is a sports psychologist who specializes in performance improvement and injury rehabilitation. He also

owns the site Sports Psychology Degree for students interested in getting a degree in sports psychology.