

## GOING TO EXTREMES: Tips on how to exercise outdoors in any weather

No matter the season, exercise is a must to stay healthy. Question is... how do we keep active when Mother Nature isn't cooperating? Here are some quick tips to keep you moving and motivated during extreme weather.



### **Winter: To layer or not to layer?**

Experts say that even when it's cold outside, one of the biggest concerns in winter exercise is overdressing.<sup>1</sup> When too much clothing is worn in the cold, sweating can occur, which normally is a good thing. However, when sweat evaporates, heat is pulled from your body, creating the potential risk of hypothermia.

The solution? Dress in layers that you can take off when you start to sweat, then put back on as needed.

Here's how the pros do it:

- Start with a thin, breathable synthetic layer to draw sweat away from your body. Avoid cotton—it soaks up sweat and makes you colder.
- Cover your first layer with a fleece or wool top for insulation.
- Finish with an outer layer made of nylon, or another material that protects you from the wind, but still breathes.
- If the temperatures are below freezing, remember your hat, gloves or mittens, and something to cover your face.

### **Summer: Temperature check**

Hot-weather exercise puts more stress on your body, so you need to pay attention to it. Some tips to keep in mind, include:

- **Watch the temperature.** Pay special attention to heat and air quality alerts.
- **Warm up to it.** Take it slow, especially at the beginning of summer. Your body needs to adapt to the heat over a week or two.
- **Hydrate!** Help your body sweat and cool down by drinking lots of water. Don't wait until you're thirsty. If you're heading into an intense workout, consider a sports drink that can replace the sodium, chloride, and potassium you lose through sweating.
- **Dress for it.** Lightweight, loose-fitting clothing helps sweat evaporate to keep you cooler. Wearing light-colored clothing and hats will reflect sunlight and protect you from the heat.
- **Timing is everything.** Don't work out mid day when the sun is at its peak. Exercise in the morning or evening, when it's cooler.
- **Have a backup plan.** If you're not sure that taking your workout outside is a good idea, stay indoors. Work out at the gym, walk laps at the mall, or climb stairs inside an air-conditioned building.

## Quick ideas to help you get up, get out, and get going:



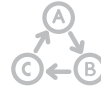
### Set a musical alarm

Wake up to a song that gets you moving.



### Go with small goals

Set reachable targets that you can increase over time. It could be how many miles you walk or how many reps you do. Write them down, and track your progress.



### Mix it up

Nothing kills motivation quite like routine. Check your gym's schedule for interesting classes, or switch up your usual workout with some yoga or meditation.



### Grab a friend

You probably know someone else who needs a little boost in the exercise department. Support each other and get healthy!

For more information on exercising in extreme weather, visit [mayoclinic.org](http://mayoclinic.org).

Visit [ahealthyme.com](http://ahealthyme.com) and be sure to sign up for an ahealthyme account!

1. [nytimes.com/2008/01/17/health/nutrition/17BEST.html?\\_r=0](http://nytimes.com/2008/01/17/health/nutrition/17BEST.html?_r=0)

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