

Kick-start Your Fitness

A FOUR-WEEK WORKOUT PLAN TO GET YOU GOING

In just one month, the three-times-a-week walking regimen (below) will help you slim down, while the twice-a-week strength training will give your body new tone.

The calendar has blanks for rating your effort. Use a scale of one to five, five being most intense. The idea is to monitor your workouts; don't feel they should all be fives.

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
Sunday	Walk, 30 minutes RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Strength train, 1 set, 8 to 12 reps RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Walk, 30 mins RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Strength train, 2 to 3 sets, 8 to 12 reps RATING <input type="checkbox"/>
Monday	Strength train, 1 set, 8 to 12 repetitions RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Stairs, 15 mins RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Strength train, 1 to 2 sets, 8 to 12 reps RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Stairs, 15 mins RATING <input type="checkbox"/>
Tuesday	Walk intervals totaling 5 mins fast, 15 slow RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Active rest (take any opportunity to walk) RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Walk intervals totaling 10 mins fast, 20 slow RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Active rest (take any opportunity to walk) RATING <input type="checkbox"/>
Wednesday	Active rest (take any opportunity to walk) RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Walk, 30 mins RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Active rest (take any opportunity to walk) RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Walk, 30 mins RATING <input type="checkbox"/>
Thursday	Strength train, 1 set, 8 to 12 reps RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Active rest (take any opportunity to walk) RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Strength train, 1 to 2 sets, 8 to 12 reps RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Active rest (take any opportunity to walk) RATING <input type="checkbox"/>
Friday	Active rest (take any opportunity to walk) RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Strength train, 1 set, 8 to 12 reps RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Active rest (take any opportunity to walk) RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Strength train, 2 to 3 sets, 8 to 12 reps RATING <input type="checkbox"/>
Saturday	Hike with a friend RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Hike with a friend RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Hike with a friend RATING <input type="checkbox"/>	Hike with a friend RATING <input type="checkbox"/>

Walk your way into shape

Vary the simple act of putting one foot in front of the other and you'll get four different workouts.

WALK For ease, start and end your route at your doorstep or office entrance. (In inclement weather, check whether a local shopping mall offers an indoor route.) Try to maintain a smooth stride and a brisk pace, but don't overdo it. You should be able to talk comfortably. (See why you need a partner?)

HIKE It's the same idea as the walks, but challenge yourself—and keep it exciting—by choosing new trails each weekend. Enjoy the scenery, socialize, and, oh yeah, get a good workout.

WALK INTERVALS Alternate periods of fast and slow striding. At first, limit the periods of exertion to a minute, and make the slow interval three times as long. As your effort ratings on these days fall, speed up (jog, even) for longer stretches and stroll for shorter ones; aim for a hard-to-easy ratio of one to one.

STAIRS We've made this workout shorter because it's tough. Find a stairway with about 40 steps (say, the bleachers at a high school). Head up purposefully, at the fastest pace you can manage to the top. Catch your breath as you walk down; repeat.