



Spring into Shape

As the days get longer and the weather more forgiving, it's time to shed the winter layers and start using the outdoors as part of your exercise routine.

That's not to say you should ditch the gym membership. Even if you are an outdoors person, think of your summer gym membership as a back-up plan, and variety, with a great range of equipment and staff to keep you on task.

Please read on for ideas on how to keep physically active and ready for summer.

Self-led activities

If you struggle to fit in exercise, better weather makes incidental activity more achievable, whether it's walking for transport, gardening, or being out and about with family and friends. Research shows that this unplanned and regular movement makes an important contribution to health. A day spent not moving at a desk cannot be undone by one workout, so it's important to add in small bits of physical activity throughout the day. Use the improved weather to motivate yourself to get these mini exercise sessions.

Small Group Training

Outdoor group training sessions are run all year, but gain popularity once mornings get lighter and weather better. Often referred to as 'boot camps', small group training in the outdoors have a number of benefits. While some will be high intensity, many more are targeted at those newer to exercise, or who prefer a more relaxed workout.

It's important to make sure your session is operated by someone with the right education, has plenty of experience, and who can offer you encouragement during and between sessions.

- If you are new, you might want to look at choosing a programme that has ten or less people to ensure your trainer can give you the support you need.
- Talk to the exercise professional running the session prior to signing up to make sure their training style is the right fit for you.

Sports

Whether you like a casual game and get together, or being part of a more competitive team, there are plenty of options for those who like to combine their exercise with their sport.

If you are playing irregularly you will need to make sure you engage in other physical activity to keep up your exercise and fitness levels, and this will help to prevent injury.

Many teams have a local gym that they head to for their off field work, and if your team wants some tailored training, you will be able to hire a trainer to deliver a customised session. Divided between players, it can be a cost-effective solution and a fantastic way to build a team spirit.

For those with a gym membership who want to enjoy the great outdoors, but keep their membership, check in with your club or exercise professional. While in the past classes were usually held within the walls of the gym or studio, these days one of those group training classes you see in a park are just as likely to be run by a gym or exercise facility.

Whatever your preference for style of physical activity, plan to get outdoors.

Contact details for further information about the exercise industry:

NZ Register of Exercise Professionals, Registrar Stephen Gacsal

Email: stephen@reps.org.nz telephone: 0800 55 44 99 website: www.reps.org.nz

NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) - Independent not for profit quality mark of exercise professionals and facilities. Using REPs Registered Exercise Professionals is the “warrant of fitness check” that exercise professionals and facilities meet New Zealand and internationally benchmarked standards to deliver safe exercise advice and instruction. REPs is affiliated globally to other national exercise professional registers representing over 210,000 exercise professionals through the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs) - www.icreps.org

Exercise Association of New Zealand, Chief Executive Richard Beddie

Email: richard@exercisenz.org.nz, telephone: 0800 66 88 11 website: <http://www.exercisenz.org.nz>

Exercise Association of New Zealand - Not for profit exercise industry representative organisation. Its *mission is to proactively support a sustainable exercise and fitness industry in New Zealand by growing participation in structured exercise through advocacy, information and industry standards.*

