

SWEAT TOGETHER:

FITNESS ACTIVITIES FOR COUPLES

by Zack Lucks, NASM-CPT, EMT



Working out with a loved one is a great way to stay motivated, boost happiness and strengthen your relationship. You can start your fitness journey together with outdoor exercises, gym classes or home workouts. In each category, I share examples and discuss the benefits so that I can help you choose activities you both enjoy. Remember, finding enjoyable exercises leads to consistency and success in reaching your fitness goals.



OUTDOOR EXERCISE OPTIONS

Some couples prefer outdoor exercise activities. They enjoy the fresh air, nature and the change in scenery that comes with exercising outside. Outdoor activities are great for spending quality time together, learning patience, improving communication and enhancing problem-solving skills as a team!

- **Hiking:** Hiking is fantastic for both your body and for weight-loss. It combines cardio and resistance training, helping you burn calories and boost your metabolism. Hiking has various difficulty levels, from easy flat paths to more challenging uphill trails. You can also adjust the difficulty of your hike by walking faster or choosing longer distances. It is recommended to progress by increasing the duration of hiking time before increasing the intensity level.
- **Mini Golf:** Mini golf is not only fun but also has some hidden exercise benefits that many people are not aware of. To put it into perspective, mini golf is an effective way to increase your step count and potentially burn hundreds of calories by simply walking through the course. In addition to increased steps, mini golf helps with building rotational strength and flexibility in the abdominal complex, back, hips and shoulders.
- **Cycling:** For those looking for low-impact outside exercises, cycling is a wonderful option. It is highly effective in increasing cardiovascular capacity and building lower body strength. Cycling will allow you to build muscle mass in your quads, hamstrings, glutes and calves without putting stress on your joints. The beauty of cycling lies in its suitability as a beginner-level outdoor cardiovascular activity, allowing cyclists to easily control the intensity level.



GYM CLASS EXERCISE OPTIONS

Attending a scheduled fitness class together is a powerful way to stay accountable and commit to exercising as a couple.

- **Yoga:** Yoga extends beyond enhancing flexibility and reducing tension. Its additional positive effects contribute to overall health and aid in weight-loss. These benefits include increased strength and muscle tone, improved athletic performance, injury prevention, better breath control, improved cardiovascular health and enhanced circulation. The enduring positive impact of yoga includes improved mobility and muscle balance, which can reduce pain and enhance other workout routines beyond yoga.
- **Pilates Reformer:** The Pilates reformer is a wonderful, low-impact activity for resolving tight hips and lower back pain. It combines deep breathing core exercises with low-impact equipment to improve blood flow and oxygenation, increase balance and coordination, boost the immune system, improve flexibility, and increase cognitive function and endorphins. With consistent participation in Pilates reformer classes, you can experience reduced pain, a decreased likelihood of falls, and enjoy more restful sleep.
- **Salsa Dancing:** Salsa dancing is a fun exercise that engages your entire body, facilitating weight-loss, calorie burning and increased heart rate. It combines cardio and muscle building, contributing to a lowered resting heart rate and enhanced coordination.



HOME EXERCISE OPTIONS

You can create an effective workout at home using affordable equipment such as resistance bands and dumbbells. Home exercise saves time and money, eliminates the need to drive in bad weather, and makes exercising more convenient since you can do it from the comfort of your own home.

- **Resistance Bands and Dumbbells:** Versatile and highly effective, resistance bands and dumbbells are easy to store and fun to use. It is highly recommended to get a resistance band set that is adjustable for weight progression and has a door stopper to enable a diverse set of exercise options. It's also beneficial to have multiple dumbbell weights for varying resistance levels in different exercises. Resistance bands and dumbbells can be used separately for workouts or combined in the same workout.
- **Resistance Band and Dumbbell Progression Continuum:** Whether you're using resistance bands, dumbbells, or both, the same levels of progression apply. There are four levels, ranging from beginner to advanced: the single-set method, the multi-set method, supersets and circuit training. In the single-set method, you do one set per exercise. The multi-set method involves doing two or more sets per exercise, with breaks between sets. A superset means switching immediately from exercise A to exercise B without taking a break. Finally, a circuit is a superset involving three or more exercises. Supersets and circuits allow for both resistance training and cardio since breaks are taken at the end of the cycle rather than between exercises or sets. No matter which level you start or end with, each is effective for burning calories and building muscle.

Beginning an exercise routine with your partner is a great way to get started, stay motivated and encourage one another to stay on track! Regardless of whether you prefer to work out together outdoors, in a gym class or at home, picking something that you enjoy doing as a couple will enhance your chances of success in accomplishing fitness goals.

About the Author:

Zack Lucks, NASM-CPT, EMT, is a weight-loss and medical fitness specialist who has experience running bariatric, diabetes and orthopedic exercise groups in clinical settings. He is also the founder of the virtual personal training company GLYDE and is the fitness expert for bariatric surgery and diabetes education practices at multiple hospitals across the United States. Zack is a Medfit Network Provider of the Year Award winner and is an active member of the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC). You can reach him at zacklucks@gmail.com or visit his website at www.glydetraining.com.





ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



VIBRANT COMMUNITY



NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



ANNUAL CONVENTION



ADVOCACY



PUBLIC EDUCATION

LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

Through the OAC Community, you can get access to:

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
 - Community Discussion Forum
 - Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
- AND MUCH MORE**



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