

5 Common Fitness Mistakes

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Hopefully you've stayed on track with your New Year's resolution of getting back in shape, but are you working out the right way? There are some surprising gym mistakes that both beginners and experts make during a workout. Here are some of the most common errors and how to fix them.

- **Cardio-only workouts.** You'll need to combine your cardio with strength training to achieve the best results. Strength training builds up your muscles, which leads to increased metabolism and more calories burned.
- **Slouching.** Working out on the elliptical, bike or treadmill can tempt us to lean forward and grasp the handlebars for dear life. This leads to a slouched position, and when your back is rounded your spine isn't getting the support it needs. Make sure you stand up straight while you're working out on these machines.
- **Gym distractions.** Personally, I look at my workout time as the one hour of the day when I can clear my mind completely. A lot of people, though, use their time on the treadmill to catch up on reading, text, scroll through their emails, etc. If you're doing this, you probably aren't getting the best workout. Try to focus completely on what you're doing – it's better for both your body and your mind.
- **Improper stretching technique.** Stretch at the end of your workout, not before. Stretching cold muscles can lead to pulls, tears and overall soreness. And don't bounce in a stretching position! Don't move your joints – remain in a static position while stretching to avoid getting injured.
- **Switch up your routine.** The same workout can get old really fast when you're doing it every day. Besides making it boring, doing the same exercises all the time works the same muscles. Your muscles spend less energy and burn less calories this way.

Keep these tips in mind when you're working out, and keep going! You don't want to be one of those people giving up on getting in shape for the New Year by the end of January.

What's your favorite way to work out? What's worked for you to get in great shape? Let us know in the comments!

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