

Stop making exercise excuses

The most common workout roadblocks are time, weather, interruptions and motivation. More often than not, we've fallen victim to at least one. Read on to get creative solutions so you can step over the roadblock and get moving.



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It's Sunday night and you have great workout goals for the week ahead. Then it rains on Monday. Your Tuesday meeting runs late. Wednesday, your kid's sick. By Thursday, the goal is lost and so is your willpower.

This classic scenario doesn't have to be a regular occurrence. Consider the following common workout roadblocks and our creative solutions.

1. **Time.** Schedule exercise like you would a hair appointment or a date with a friend — mark it on the calendar and be there. If evenings and mornings are too crazy, make exercise part of your lunch break. Squeeze activity in every moment you can: take the stairs, park at the end of the carpark, walk the long way to the mailbox, follow your kids as they play.

And don't forget to ask for support: tell your partner or friends your fitness goals and ask them to help you reach them. If that means he makes breakfast for the kids while you take a 30-minute walk, so be it. Better yet, make your post-dinner walk a family event.

2. **Weather.** Taking advantage of the outdoors is a key component to making exercise something you love. Who said wet grass is off limits?

If you don't want the weather to rain on your fitness parade, incorporate appropriate clothes (water-resistant shoes, a raincoat and layering options for winter) into your workout wardrobe.

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Also, add indoor options: the gym, exercise DVDs, weights, a fitness ball or consider a treadmill.

3. **Interruptions.** There's a reason why morning exercisers are the most faithful to their routines — there's little chance a meeting or a phone call will derail you at 7am. Develop problem-solving skills just like you would for any important part of your life by keeping track of your exercise. Mark down when you work out, how long, when you don't and why. After a few weeks, you'll see the problems and develop a plan.
4. **Energy and motivation.** The biggest obstacle to regular exercise is the feeling that it's not enjoyable. To help overcome that, be aware of your breathing and let those breaths be deep and easy. While exercising, tune into your body's sensations — the stretch of your thigh, the roll of your heel. A lot of us push ourselves through our workouts, trying to burn off fat. Because we are out of touch with our bodies, we don't know how to experience the pleasure in movement.

Most importantly, give yourself a break when you need it. Sometimes it's appropriate to let the workout wait till the next day. As long as you find a way to fit it in most of the time, you'll feel good about it.

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PS: If you are one of those procrastinators, beware you may have a greater fight on your hands than just making excuses. With the 90 day Get Tough Coaching Program; it is not too late to achieve your goals in 2008. Let Australia's No.1 Mental Toughness Coach, **Shelley Taylor-Smith** help you win the battle within at: <http://www.championmindset.com.au/successCoach.htm> and stop making excuses!

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