



Keeping Active While Staying Put: A Brief ‘How To’ Guide (3 Videos)

Staying physically active is very important to maintaining good health, both physically and mentally.

Studies have shown that remaining active can do wonders for keeping pretty much every part of the body [in good shape](#), and it can even [improve a person’s mood](#).

The [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) recommend that everyone engage in “150 minutes of moderate intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity physical activity per week, or a combination of both.”

Yet global pandemic control measures mean that for the inhabitants of many countries, the usual avenues for exercise, such as gyms, wellness studios, public swimming pools, and even parks, are now off limits.

In many places, regulations even bar people from stepping outside their homes other than making irregular supermarket runs for the bare essentials.

In this context, staying active and keeping fit may seem more daunting than ever, but there are several good ways to avoid becoming sedentary even when having to stay home.

In this Special Feature, we suggest five things that you can do at any time to increase your level of physical activity from the comfort of your own home.

1. Gentle calisthenics

Calisthenics is a form of exercise that makes use of a person's [body weight](#) to train the major muscles.

Some calisthenics — such as pullups that require a bar — may be difficult at home, but most of them are achievable.

Calisthenics can include squats, crunches, pushups, and planks, all of which people can do pretty much anywhere.

A simplified, gentle set of calisthenics — known as “radio calisthenics” because a national, daily radio broadcast invites listeners to participate — has been a staple of morning exercise in Japan [since 1928](#).

This is one example of “radio calisthenics,” but many other light exercise routines are available online:

Research has suggested that calisthenics can bring many benefits to both individuals in good health and those with underlying health conditions.

For instance, studies have shown that calisthenics may [prevent the reduction of skeletal muscle volume](#) in people with [type 2 diabetes](#), [improve respiratory muscle strength](#) in those with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and [improve posture and body strength](#) in healthy adults.

2. Home cardio

Cardiovascular exercise, or “cardio” for short, which is often synonymous with aerobic exercise, works by boosting a person's heart rate.

Examples of cardio exercises include running in place, jumping jacks, lunge jumps, and skipping in place.

According to various studies, cardio can help a person [lose weight](#), [maintain brain function](#), and [keep cholesterol](#) levels in check.

Once again, many online resources can help you come up with a home-based cardio workout.

For example, the National Health Service (NHS) in the United Kingdom provide a handy [10-minute cardio exercise routine](#).

There are also plenty of other online videos illustrating home cardio workout ideas. The best option will depend on a person's level of fitness and what they hope to achieve.

3. Pilates at home

[Pilates](#), which has become increasingly popular over the past few decades, is a physical training method that can improve balance and posture, as well as body strength.

Physical trainer [Joseph Pilates](#) originally developed this practice in the early 20th century.

Research has confirmed that a nonstrenuous Pilates routine can [improve muscular endurance and flexibility](#). Other studies have indicated that Pilates can help [manage chronic low back pain](#) and possibly even [improve sleep quality](#) in some people.

People can do most, if not all, Pilates exercises at home, and there are many online videos offering tailored routines to meet specific aims, such as [improving back pain](#).

Instructional videos for full body Pilates workouts, such as the one below, are also easy to come by:

4. Yoga

Yoga can also be a good option for staying active and flexible. There are many [different types of yoga](#), each of which has a different level of intensity and difficulty.

Anecdotally, yoga can help improve a person's well-being in many ways, and recent research seems to back such individual reports.

Studies have suggested that the [benefits of yoga](#) include [managing back pain](#), [relieving stress and anxiety](#), and [lifting a person's mood](#).

There are many different online yoga classes to choose from, but if you have never practiced yoga, it can be hard to know where to start.

Medical News Today have curated a list featuring [five of the most helpful online yoga channels](#) and interviewed some of the instructors behind them.

But there are many other good yoga routines, such as this one, from "Yoga with Adrienne," suggesting a few movements for tension relief:

5. Fun (and useful) home activities

It is not always necessary to engage in a structured exercise routine to stay active. Research has shown that simply "[avoiding inactivity](#)" can make a difference.

One study suggested that doing as little as [10 minutes of leisurely activity](#) — such as gardening or dancing in your living room — per week is associated with a lower risk of premature death.

Therefore, besides a reinvigorating morning workout and a relaxing yoga session before bed, it could be equally healthful to try planting some cilantro in your kitchen garden or having a little disco moment by yourself or with your family.

Even doing some regular housework may bring health benefits, beyond ensuring a tidy home and healthful meals. Some researchers [have suggested](#) that older men may have poorer health partly because they generally take on less housework than women.

Now is the time to engage in all the activities that we never had quite enough time for — including dusting all those bookshelves — secure in the knowledge that they will contribute, even just a little, to our well-being.

For more science-backed advice on what you can do to stay in shape while staying home, check out our [article](#) on the 10 best ways to exercise at home.