

30-Day Cardio Challenge



Want more energy? Trying to lose weight? Keeping an eye on your blood sugar or blood pressure? Looking for a mood boost? Cardiovascular activity can help!

We've put together some expert tips, helpful information, and new exercises to inspire you to get moving.

When you're ready to start your challenge, your mission is simple: **Aim to get 20-30 minutes of moderate cardio activity** each day. It could be a brisk walk, a run, or a specific exercise you enjoy. Don't worry if you miss a day, just do your best to get into a new, healthy habit. Time to move forward!



Check off all the days when you spent 30 minutes or more on cardio activity.

Click the squares on the left side of each day, or print this out and fill them in by hand.



1

We've all heard that physical activity is good for us. But how, exactly? Discover **the benefits of exercise** for yourself!



2

Why is getting more cardio activity important to you? Whether it's to shed some pounds, to feel more energized, to manage a condition, or something else, **write down your reason**. Keep that note somewhere handy to remind you of your motivation!



3

Don't just say you'll exercise. Schedule it. **Block off time in your calendar** and treat it like an important appointment you don't want to miss.



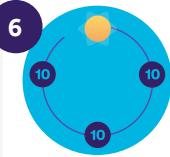
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Cardio exercise could be as simple as a **run**, a **jog**, or even just a **brisk walk**. Start with wherever you're comfortable. Then slowly build up and challenge yourself more over time.



5

Want to branch out from jogs and walks? **Jumping jacks** are a great way to get your heart pumping, even in the comfort of your own home. Try them for a couple minutes before your usual cardio exercise.



6

Feeling too busy to squeeze in 30 minutes of activity? It doesn't have to happen all at once! Research shows **three 10-minute bursts** of cardio throughout the day can be just as effective. Get your activity where you can—it all adds up.

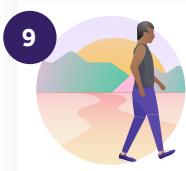
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Take stock of **what cardio tools are available**. Got a treadmill at home? Put it to good use. Have access to a cycling machine or elliptical at your gym? Great! Even just doing some stair climbs in your home or walking around the block can get your heart pumping.



It's hard to feel pumped for cardio every day. Here are some helpful tips to **motivate yourself to exercise**.



Squeeze in cardio time **when it energizes you most**. Maybe morning exercise starts your day off right. Maybe a brisk walk on your lunch break pumps you up for the afternoon. Or maybe you enjoy an after-dinner run. Switch it up until you find your ideal timing.



Intervals, Hill Climbs, Progressive, and Tempo: These **different styles of cardio activity** can have different benefits. Choose the style that works best for you and your goals.



Don't underestimate **dancing**! Constant dancing keeps your heart rate up and makes the time fly by. Look for a dance class online or an in-person class in your area, or just free-form dance in your home.



Feel like your exercise routine is in a rut? Stopped losing weight? Bust through that plateau with the **FITT Principle**.



Jumping rope isn't just a hobby for kids. It's a serious workout for adults, too. Look for a jump rope in stores or online, and have some fun!



How much physical activity do you actually need? The Heart and Stroke Foundation recommends **150 minutes or more each week**. If you can get 30 minutes even just 5 days each week, you'll achieve that goal.



You've made it to the halfway point in the challenge! **Write down** which activities, exercises, and times of day have worked best for you to get 30 minutes of cardio. Revisit this list when things get busy or challenging.

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Build up your arm muscles and strengthen your back with **arm circles**. It's a low-impact way to get some aerobic activity.

Boxing can be a powerful form of cardio. It burns a ton of calories, and can also help you feel stronger and more confident.

Be sure to **stretch** for a few minutes after your cardio. Go slowly and hold each stretch gently for 20-30 seconds while you breathe deeply.

Cardio doesn't have to be lonely. **Make it more social** with an exercise buddy who can cheer you on and hold you to it.

Want to make things more interesting? Find an **active sport** you like. A 30-minute run might feel like a long time, but a 30-minute game of tennis or basketball goes by fast!

It's common to assume the more cardio we do, the more food we should eat. But are your portions aligned with your goals? Here's a helpful **portion guide**.

If you have access to a gym, you can have some serious fun with **battle ropes**. It's a really satisfying way to get your heart rate up!

Life can be busy. And when schedules fill up, exercise often gets booted off the calendar. Here's how you can still **get cardio activity even on your busiest days!**

Change up your cardio with the **seasons**. Try skiing or snowshoeing in colder months, swimming in hotter months, and hiking or biking when it's more mild.

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The weather doesn't always make it easy to get exercise. Luckily, there are a ton of activities you can enjoy indoors! Here are some **weatherproof workouts you can do at home**.



26

Fuel up with the kind of food that will give you energy for cardio! The **Balanced Plate** is a great guide for what to eat—and how much of it to eat.



27

Physical activity has a way of lifting our spirits. When you're having a bad day, think of exercise as a helpful remedy. **Make a note of how you feel** before and after your cardio.



28

Feeling good about the challenge? **Reward yourself!** Not with treats and snacks, but with something that promotes healthy living. A good book, a new fitness outfit, a bubble bath—whatever feels rewarding to you and supports your goals.



29

You're almost done! Finish strong by adding some **high-knee exercises** to your usual cardio exercise.



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And here you are! The last day of the challenge. Draw from what you've learned in this challenge to keep up the momentum and aim for 30 minutes of cardio activity each day moving forward!