

[IMAGE]

Find Your Summer Fitness Groove

By Editorial Staff

Last issue, we discussed some of the safety considerations when it comes to exercising during the summer months, when we're prone to spend considerably more time outdoors in the sun and heat. But what about the benefits? If you're like most of us, you spend most of your year slaving away indoors, either at home or at your local gym. What better time than summer to get your sweat in the great outdoors and take a well-deserved break from your musty, dusty, altogether routine exercise routine? After all, exercise is where you find it – here are a few places you can look first.

1. Stairway to (Fitness) Heaven: You'll be amazed how easy it is to find a set of outdoor steps / stairs that can serve as a fun fitness tool. Whether it's steps leading down to a secluded beach or up to the top of a local landmark, steps provide the perfect opportunity to enjoy summer while getting a tremendous incline / decline workout. If steps aren't your thing, try a challenging hike that lets you enjoy the outdoors while getting a great workout at the same time. Any of these options will feel like a refreshing change from your machine workouts at the gym / home.

2. The Road Less Traveled: In general, when we encounter a wall of any sort, we either go around it or find a door to go through it. But what if, for fitness purposes at least, you chose to jump over (or on top of) it? Of course, it can't be too high a wall – we're talking anywhere from 2-3 feet, depending on your level of fitness. If it's a short, wide stone / cement wall bordering the sidewalk, you can either jump over it (and then back) for 10-15 repetitions or jump on top and then back down again. It's the outdoor version of the box jump, and it's another great workout you can do outdoors this summer.

fitness - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *3. School's in for Summer:* Kids are out of school, but those abandoned playgrounds are a perfect outdoor gym to help meet your summer fitness goals! Whether you do chin-ups on the monkey bars, swing from the rings, climb the rubber rock wall (an increasingly popular element of new playground set-ups) or find more creative ways to utilize the equipment, you'll get a tremendous whole-body workout and teach your kids how to do the same thing during the school year.

Too many of us spend too much of our lives indoors, and that applies to our exercise regimens as well. This summer, change things up by moving your workout outdoors whenever possible. It's time to find your summer fitness groove and run with it.

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