

[IMAGE]

Spring Into Shape

By Editorial Staff

Spring officially kicks off on March 15 this year; for many people, that signals the first day of their quest to get into the shape they've always desired. Why Spring? Perhaps because it represents renewal, rebirth – the re-emergence of plants that shed their leaves for winter, animals that went into hibernation, etc.

Have you been hibernating this winter? Did you pack on the holiday pounds – and keep right on going into the first few months of the year? Well, now is the time to shed those pounds and get back to the lean, mean fighting machine you once were. Here are four sensible ways to get started:

1. Lose your car keys: Walking is the simplest form of exercise and opportunities abound, especially if you're willing to forgo modern conveniences like your car, which can take you right to the doorstep of any destination. If the weather's good and you're within a mile of where you're going, why not leave the car at home and foot it? And if you're traveling longer distances, why not park the car a good distance away and finish the trip with a brisk, invigorating walk? Movement is life - so start moving more and sitting less today.

exercise - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *2. Hit the deck:* Exercise isn't about gym memberships, fancy equipment and personal training (although those can all be effective); it can be as simple as using your body's own weight against itself and the forces of gravity. Don't have time to get to the gym? Then hit the deck at home and do a five-rotation workout that includes push-ups, planks, wall squats, leg lifts and lunges (and that's just for starters!).

3. Control the remote: After a stressful day at the office and an evening shift as chef / teacher / maid at home, exercise may be the furthest thing from your mind. No, it's time to plop down on the couch and watch a few hours of television to unwind. The problem: Couch time generally means little movement; what's more, it can often lead to intermittent snacking, which can add empty calories to your day. Set a TV limit (for your entire family) and then find something more productive to do with your time.

4. Make lots of lemonade: We've saved the most important lesson for last. Getting in shape is a process, a lifestyle; it doesn't happen overnight and there will be plenty of challenges along the way. But like any

other challenge, your attitude can make a profound difference. Whether it's a busy week when you're forced to miss a workout, or a month in which the mirror and scale don't seem to be your friends, stay positive. Take every lemon and turn it into lemonade.

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