

10 IDEAS FOR SPRING CLEANING YOUR WORKOUT ROUTINE



You may like your regular workout, but if you've been following the same patterns for too long, it's likely the benefits you're receiving from all of your efforts have significantly decreased. Not only has your body adjusted to the routine, but it's likely you've also checked out mentally as well, meaning you're not giving that workout as much "oomph" as you used to. That's why spring cleaning isn't just for your closets -- it's a great idea for your fitness routine, too. By **throwing out the old and embracing the new**, you'll kick-start your metabolism and renew your fitness zest. Here are a few excellent strategies for doing just that.

1. When it's nice, get outside. Spring and summer are seasons dominated by unique fitness events, many of which happen in the great outdoors. For example, now's the perfect time if you've been wanting to participate in a color run. **2. Add some new strength training into the mix.** Many people fall into one of two camps: those who love to lift weights and those who prefer spending hours on the cardio machines. Whichever camp you fall into, now might be the time to dip your toes into the other arena. If you're new to weight training, start simply with squats, planks, and dumbbell rows before graduating to heavier weights and more complex routines. If you're more of a lifter, start with 15 minutes on the elliptical and gradually increase your duration until you're really pushing it every time. By trading time in one discipline for time in the other, you'll not only shake things up but you'll also complete a more rounded routine. **3. Change your intervals** While spring cleaning your workout routine can mean trying out entirely new activities, you don't have to throw everything you love out the door. Instead, give a few new intervals a try. Switch more rapidly between cardio equipment, or simply choose a new course on your machine-- perhaps the "Endurance" option rather than the "Hills," or vice versa. **4. Switch up the duration.** Likewise, it can also be effective to play around with how often and for how long you're working out. One week, go for two to three long workouts. The next, opt for short, intense sessions. The next, do something in-between. Experimenting in this way will keep your workouts from getting too predictable, and will constantly challenge your body in new ways. **5. Try a different time** Always exercise in the afternoon? Get up with the early birds a few times this week and be amazed at all that you can get done before your first cup of coffee. Alternatively, for morning workout aficionados, see for yourself how effective a post-work session at the gym can be for releasing all of that stress that's built up over the day. Getting creative with your schedule will keep your workout out of the humdrum zone. **6. Mix it up with intramural sports** An intramural sport or activity will force your muscles to move in new and interesting ways, distract you with mental challenges, and even help you make a few new friends. From the softball team at work to that new swing dancing league, embrace the challenge of an entirely novel activity. **7. Give a few new classes a whirl** If you've always wanted to try that yoga , Essentrics, Pilates, BLT or Step and Pump class, now might be the time. Fitness instructors are good at what they do, and you'll find working out with friends motivating. What have you got to lose? **8. Set a challenge with a race** You may enjoy running, swimming or biking on your own, but if your interest is waning, why not put all of that training to good use and enter a race? You'll uncover a new wealth of motivation when you know your morning jog will help you through that 10K or half marathon, and you'll be extra likely to jump into your cold local pool for a training session when you know it's for a charity triathlon. **9. Commit to a friend** If you've always been a lone wolf, spring is the perfect time to become a more social animal. A workout buddy is a quick way to inject enthusiasm and accountability into your daily routine, while a group training class will keep that heart pumping via new and interesting means. Just *try* not to get a little sweat on when you're surrounded by so many peppy and engaged classmates.

10. Hire a personal trainer When you've hit a rut, a fitness expert is really the best way to roll-out a workout makeover. Not only will they have a much better idea of what's possible, but they'll also help you build variety into your workout so you shouldn't need to give it an overhaul for quite some time. Plus, it's harder to make last minute cancellations when you know you've got someone you're paying waiting for you.

How will YOU freshen up your stale workout?

Do it and ...

Celebrate your Success!!

<https://www.precor.com/en-us/resources/10-ideas-spring-cleaning-your-workout-routine>



APRIL 2018

Earth Day 2018: End Plastic Pollution Countdown to April 22

From poisoning and injuring marine life to disrupting human hormones, from littering our beaches and landscapes to clogging our waste streams and landfills, the exponential growth of plastics is now threatening the survival of our planet.

In response, Earth Day 2018 is dedicated to providing the information and inspiration needed to fundamentally change human attitude and behavior about plastics.

Learn and act to End Plastic Pollution for yourself and your close communities.

Go to ..

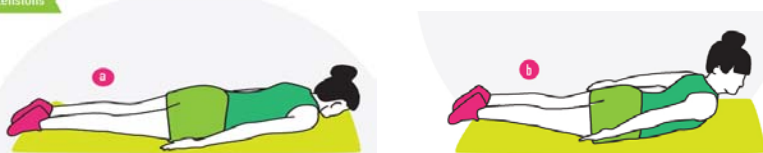
<https://www.earthday.org/yourjourney2018/>

Back Extensions

A strong lower back will reduce your risk of injury to your vertebral discs.

This exercise is also called prone cobra in yoga.

Back Extensions



1 Lie face-down on a mat or well-padded floor, arms straight by your sides, palms up, forehead facing the floor. The tops of your feet should be flat against the floor.

2 Slowly lift your head and shoulders off the floor, lifting your arms, squeezing your shoulder blades together and hold for five seconds. Lower to start position and do one to two sets of 15 repetitions each.

This is a very important exercise for overall back health, especially the lower back. Having a strong core including your lower back is a necessity for maintenance of health. These [extensions] will also give you that deep definition where your spine runs through.

<http://www.sheknows.com/health-and-wellness/articles/803952/five-exercises-for-a-sexy-back-illustrated-back-exercises/page:4>

Dumbbell bent-over row

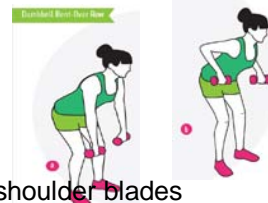
Back rows work your entire back and can work your core muscles if you keep your abdominal muscles pulled in and your back flat.

1 Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, arms at your sides, a dumbbell in each hand. Bend your knees slightly, pushing your hips back, and bend forward at your hips without rounding your back. Hold the weights straight down from your shoulders with your wrists facing back and your knuckles facing forward. Pull the weights straight up to the sides, bending your elbows, while keeping your torso in the same position. You are only moving your arms, not the rest of your body. Squeeze your shoulder blades together as your elbows reach to the ceiling.

2 Slowly lower the weights to start position. Be sure to keep your back flat. Do one to two sets of 15 repetitions each.

The bent-over row can be called "one of the best movements for improving posture and building those muscles in the mid-back area". To get the most out of the exercise, it is advised, "When you

perform this exercise, focus on squeezing your shoulder blades together." <http://www.sheknows.com/health-and-wellness/articles/803952/five-exercises-for-a-sexy-back-illustrated-back-exercises/page:5>



April Trainers Tip :

Social Fitness: Why Group Fitness Classes Benefit Us All Connection Matters

Today, we could do almost everything we need to do without any human interaction. But there is something that technology can't replace: face-to-face connection with others! Joining a group fitness class helps feed our desire to be with people. We are all social creatures and what better way to feed this need than in a Fitness class!

Friendly Environment

When you choose to connect with people and take part in doing something you love, you are generally with people who are similar to yourself. Group fitness classes are filled with a wide range of people and personalities. Getting to know these new folks can expand your friendship circle and build new relationships. Working out with a friend can be fun!

Accepting Atmosphere

Are you a beginner? Never hesitate to join a FitnessWorks group class. Exercise sessions are filled with a range of different skill levels. We also offer beginner classes to help ease you in! No matter your fitness or experience, group classes are welcoming and led by instructors that understand that everyone was a beginner at some point.

compiled by Ariella Tsafatinos

Judy's April Soup Recipe : Gouda & Lentil

Sounds very rich but check out the nutritional info + makes 6 servings.

Ingredients:

1 tbsp butter, 1 c. chopped onion, 1 c. thinly sliced celery or baby spinach (I used spinach – made it look more colorful) 4 c. diced sweet potato, ½ tsp ground cumin, 4 c. low sodium chicken broth, 1 can (19 oz) lentils, rinsed and drained, 1 c. shredded Gouda, salt and pepper to taste (did not add salt)
½ c. grape tomatoes, quartered

Directions:

In a large pot, melt butter. Add onions and celery (if using) and sauté until soft. Stir in sweet potatoes and cumin and sauté for 2 minutes. Add broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered for 10 – 12 minutes or until potatoes are tender.

In a blender, puree soup until smooth. Return to pot, stir in lentils, cook until heated through. Remove from heat and stir in half of the Gouda and all of the spinach leaves if you choose not to use celery.

Ladle soup into bowls and garnish with remaining Gouda and tomatoes.

Nutrition per serving

Calories – 280; protein – 16g, carbs – 37g, fat – 8g, fibre – 8.9g, sodium 284mg

