

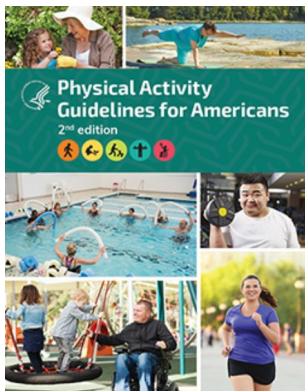
The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

The [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#) (Guidelines) are an essential resource for all people, including:

- * Health and exercise professionals
- * Community leaders
- * Individuals looking to get or stay active

These [Guidelines](#) provide information and resources to help people make healthier choices for themselves and their families by making physical activity the easy choice in all the places where people play, work, learn, and live.

For adults, the *Guidelines* state that you should simply move more and sit less throughout the day. How this is achieved can look different for everyone and it is important to remember that doing some



physical activity is better than doing none. In other words, swapping any amount of sitting time for physical activity can lead to health benefits.

Move more
& sit less!

The key [Guidelines](#) for adults include:

Do at least **150 minutes** (about two and a half hours) to **300 minutes** (five hours) of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity each week. Note that this will be a goal for many people, not a starting point.

- **Moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity** is any activity that gets your heart beating faster than if you are sitting at rest.
- Individuals can break up their activity during the week (for example, **30 minutes** on five days instead of completing 150 minutes all at once).
- Bouts of movement of **ANY** length contribute to the health benefits associated with the total daily volume of physical activity.



The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (continued)

Examples of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activities include:

- Walking briskly
- Raking the yard
- Dancing
- Playing basketball



The *Guidelines* also recommend **muscle-strengthening activities** of moderate or greater intensity that involve all major muscle groups on at least two days per week. These would be activities that make your muscles work harder than usual.



Examples of muscle-strengthening activities include:

- Body-weight exercise (push-ups, pull-ups, squats, lunges)
- Weightlifting
- Everyday activities (carrying groceries, hiking, lifting heavy objects, shoveling snow, playing on playground equipment)

Visit the [ACE Exercise Library](#) for guidance on how to do these activities safely.

Sample week of an adult completing 150 minutes (about 2 and a half hours) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity:

Day	Activity	Minutes
Monday	Pick-up basketball	30 minutes
Tuesday	Carry groceries upstairs	10 minutes
Wednesday	Brisk walk at work	20 minutes
Thursday	Brisk walk after dinner	30 minutes
Friday	Playing tennis	30 minutes
Saturday		
Sunday	Mowing/raking the yard	30 minutes

TOTAL: 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activities

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (continued)



If you would rather do **vigorous-intensity aerobic activity** (like running, hiking uphill or with a heavy backpack, high-intensity interval training, strenuous exercise classes like kickboxing), aim to achieve at least 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) per week.

Generally, every 2 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity counts the same as 1 minute of vigorous-intensity physical activity.

Day	Activity	Minutes
Mon		
Tues	Carry heavy groceries upstairs	10 minutes
Wed		
Thurs	Strenuous fitness class	45 minutes
Fri		
Sat	Heavy yard work (e.g., digging or shoveling with heart rate increases)	20 minutes
Sun		

Sample week of an adult completing 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity:

TOTAL: 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity

Some activity is always **better** than none at all

Keep in mind that if these *Guidelines* are more than you can do right now, do what you can. Bouts of physical activity of any length contribute to the health benefits of the accumulated total.

Tips for getting started with adding more movement into your day include:

- **Take breaks** from sedentary behavior every 60 to 120 minutes.
- **Limit overall discretionary sitting time** to no more than two hours/day.
- **Substitute light-intensity activities** for sedentary time whenever possible.
- **Modify your environment** to limit sitting (e.g., use a standing desk).
- **Increase physical activity** gradually over time.
- **Begin** by decreasing sedentary behavior (sitting, reclining, lying, desk-based office work, watching television, driving a car) and building in light-intensity physical activity (cooking, light household chores, walking at a slow or leisurely pace).
 - Examples: Take a 10-minute walk, do squats while brushing your teeth, stretch while watching TV, do countertop push-ups while waiting for water to boil.
 - Use this worksheet to track what are called "**movement snacks**," which are short bouts of physical activity used to break up sedentary behavior.

Movement snacks—short bouts of physical activity to break up sedentary behavior—are an effective way to drive important health and wellness benefits. The benefits of movement snacks include everything from reducing the risk of obesity and heart disease to better managing stress and improving mood and cognition.