

11 Equipment Essentials for Easy Everyday Exercises

It's easy to fall into a sedentary lifestyle, especially if you rely on a car to get around. But don't worry, you don't need to go out and buy expensive equipment to become more active. There are countless ways you can assimilate more activities into your daily life. It's best to introduce small changes over time. You don't need to go out of your way to exercise or go to the gym. There are many alternatives that are much more practical.



72-year-old Phil Woods is on a 2,700-mile mission (25 miles/day) to inspire older adults to walk more

Why exercise anyway? Many centenarians have spent decades doing activities that keep them up and moving around on a daily basis. But the activities not necessarily strenuous in the way you may think. You don't need to join a gym or participate in a team sport in order to exercise.

Many centenarians were relatively poor for part or most of their lives. Many of them did, and still do, rely on walking, biking, or public transportation as their main mode of transportation. Some were farmers or laborers. Others have

never worked outside the home, but raising a family, cooking, cleaning, gardening or participating in community activities have kept them moving around day after day for many decades. These activities are surprisingly simple, but profoundly beneficial over time.

Here are 11 equipment essentials that can help you live a more active lifestyle:

1. [Walking shoes](#). A good pair of comfortable shoes is one of the most valuable investments you can make in your health. Walking is especially important if you work at a computer or have a desk job where you sit for numerous hours each day. Your body tenses up if you sit in one place for too long. If necessary, set a reminder alarm to go off every 30 minutes or so and get up to walk around and stretch. If possible, take a few breaks throughout the day to walk for 15 minutes or more. If possible, go for a brisk walk during lunch and after work. If you want to increase the intensity of your walk, pick up your speed and jog or run for part of the time. Women especially need to be reminded to wear comfortable [walking shoes](#) as often as possible. [KEEN](#) has lots of great choices on [boots](#), shoes and [sandals](#). High heels may be ok for some special occasions, but as these models demonstrate, heels are not appropriate attire for walking. Here's why . . .

2. **Broom.** Sweep your floors. Clean your home. The next time you feel annoyed by the fact that cleaning is one of those jobs that never ends, think about some of the benefits. Be thankful for your home and the fact that you have the mobility to keep it clean. When you clean your home, you have opportunities to kneel down to clean things on or near the floor, lift buckets full of water, and stretch upwards while cleaning door trim or vents. Why pay for a membership to a sweaty gym when you can workout for free in your own home? Do cleaning exercises instead.

3. Drying Rack. When you hang your laundry up to dry, you get more exercise than you do when you toss everything in the dryer, especially if you're bending over to lift items from a laundry basket and reaching up to a clothesline. By hanging your clothes up to dry, you reap numerous benefits. Washers and dryers increase the wear and tear on your clothes. When your clothes aren't soiled, use the gentle cycle on your washer and skip the dryer. This also helps to cut back on your electric bill. The less time your clothes spend in the dryer, the better. Laundry exercises are much more practical than the bending and stretching exercises you do in an aerobics class.

[Laundry Study Shows Americans Have Few Hangups](#)

4. Music. People go to [Zumba](#), in part, because they can feed off the energy of the music and the people around them. But you don't need to go to an exercise class to listen to music that energizes you. Download some workout songs that you like and listen to them often, like when you're cleaning your house or hanging up clothes. When you wear headsets, not only do you cut off other people, but you may even put yourself in danger if you're out walking and don't hear the honk of a car. Use them cautiously.



5. Stairs. Whenever possible, use stairs and escalators instead of elevators. Even if an escalator is moving, you can use it like a staircase. Keep walking. If people are in front of you, excuse yourself and ask if you can pass by. In many cases, escalators give you a little extra exercise because the rise is typically a bit higher than standard steps. The best part about stairs is that you don't have to pay for them. If you get out on a regular basis, you'll find staircases in

many places.

6. [Cast Iron Cookware.](#) Trade in your teflon and aluminum pans for cast iron. Cast iron pots, pans and muffin tins typically weigh a few pounds. So you get a mini workout every time you lift them, rinse them out or store them in your cabinets. Teflon and aluminum add toxins to your food, so it's better to avoid them anyway. When you cook at home you have a much better idea of what you're eating. So remember that it's not enough to just buy cast iron cookware. You also need to get into the daily habit of cooking healthy meals at home in order to benefit. My kitchen is well stocked with [Lodge Cast Iron Cookware](#). I pump iron every day.

7. **Bike.** The bike is one of the most efficient forms of transportation. Not only is it a great way to get around, it's also good for you. Why buy a stationery bike that doesn't go anywhere when you can buy a real bike that can take you places? By biking more you may be able to save money by using your car less. Be sure to get a bike that suits your size so you'll be comfortable and safe when you ride. As you find more ways to use your bike, you might want to add some accessories, such as lights, a basket or a [rear mount bike rack](#), so that you'll use it more often. I love my [Wald basket](#) and [bungee cargo net](#) combination for quick errands. Bike riding helps you maintain balance and endurance. If you want a cardio workout, ride your bike in a hilly area or pedal faster. Remember to wear a helmet and a good pair of biking gloves.

8. **Public Transportation Pass.** People who rely on public transportation are more likely to walk more. If you own a car, do what you can to rely on it less and less over time. If you don't live near a public transportation stop, consider driving to a commuter parking lot and finishing your commute on public transportation. If this isn't practical, you may be able to find other ways to use public transportation. When you plan trips, look into your options of traveling by bus, train or plane instead of taking your own car. Next time you travel, see if you can manage your trip without renting a car. The

less you rely on a car, the more active you'll tend to be. [ClipperCard](#)

[This CAR Game Will Drive You Crazy](#)

9. Trowel. Grow your own vegetables. Gardening helps you connect with nature and it has the added benefit of supplying you with food. Even if you don't have a yard, you can use a trowel to do basic gardening with potted plants. When you have plants



inside or outside your home, you'll get a little more exercise as you water them, repot them from time to time and swap them around to different locations in your home. If you have access to a balcony, porch or yard, you can grow more and get more exercise as you kneel down to do some weeding or bend over to cut clippings from your herb plants.

10. Sportswear. Wear comfortable sports attire as often as possible. This makes it easier for you to stretch and flex. Do more of this every day. If you get any resistance at all, you want it to come from your muscles, not your clothing. Depending on the type of work you do, you may be able to find lots of great sportswear that can double as casual wear for work. This makes it easier for you to walk, bike or stretch before, during or after work. [Columbia Sportswear](#)

11. Water bottle. As you increase your physical activity, make sure you stay hydrated with water. Avoid all drinks that contain high fructose corn syrup. If you head out for a walk, take a large water bottle with you. Fill it with water or a fresh juice drink. Drinking some extra water or fruit juice is a great way to flush your body and curb your appetite.

[Drink Distilled Water to Detox and Defend Your Body](#)

You don't necessarily need to make these specific changes to

your lifestyle. What is important is that you think about the simple things in your daily routine and, over time, make minor changes to incorporate more activity. Seek activities you enjoy. If it isn't fun or rewarding in some way, it will be difficult to maintain anyway. As you find ways to be more active every day, you'll find that there really is no need for you to do something silly like run on a treadmill in your garage.

Although running, weight lifting, or high-impact sports may be good for your heart, they tend to be damaging to your knees or other body parts that get overused. Most centenarians report that they were active throughout their lives, but typically not in highly strenuous activities. They're more likely to work out in their garden than in a gym. They're more likely to be walkers than runners.

Some people are so lazy, they don't even exercise good judgment. [Alfred E Neuman](#)

Seek ways to add practical activities to your lifestyle. The more movement you incorporate into your daily life, the better off you'll be in the long run. Active living every day is much better for you than irregular binge workouts a few times a month.

