

Home Checklist

We are where we live. Shape your surroundings, because your surroundings shape you.



Place a scale in a prominent spot in your home and weigh yourself daily



How to do it: Place your scale in a place in your home where you can't avoid it.

Why do it: People who weigh themselves every day for two years weigh as much as 17 pounds less after two years than people who never weigh themselves. Daily weight checks take only seconds, and the results can provide powerful reinforcement.

Have only one TV in your home



How to do it: Have only one TV. Put it in a common room, preferably in a cabinet behind doors. The goal here is to nudge you away from screen time that encourages overeating and detracts from potential physical activity.

Why do it: Research shows people who watch more TV are more likely to be overweight. Watching TV actually lowers metabolism, makes us less active and engaged, and encourages us to eat junk food via commercials. Kids with a TV in their bedrooms are 18% more likely to be (or become) obese and have lower grades. The happiest people watch only 30-60 minutes of TV per day.

Use Hand Tools & Equipment More



How to do it: If you are able, mow your lawn with a push lawn mower, shovel the snow with a hand shovel, and gather the leaves from your lawn with an old-fashioned rake instead of a leaf-blower.

Why do it: Shoveling, raking, and push-mowing are healthy and productive outdoor workouts – some burn almost 400 calories an hour. In fact, mowing the lawn or raking leaves burns about the same amount of calories as lifting weights.

Grow and maintain your own garden or plants



How to do it: Plant a garden in your yard, start a container garden on your patio, cultivate an indoor herb garden on your windowsill, or add indoor plants into your home. For indoor plants that are easy to maintain, try a Golden Pothos Vine or Spider Plants.

Why do it: Outdoor gardening is common in blue zones areas. This activity provides low-intensity range-of-motion exercise, vitamin D from the sun, and fresh vegetables and herbs. Studies show that working with plants can also reduce psychological and physiological stress.



Did you know that watering plants burns about the same amount of calories as stretching and walking? Besides their ability to clean the air, indoor plants have been proven to provide health benefits to people who interact with them. And because plants are permanent, you'll be nudged to nurture them daily.

Welcome a dog into your home



How to do it: If you and your family are prepared for the responsibility of caring for a dog, consider adopting or buying one.

Why do it: Pets make for great companions and encourage you to walk or run. Researchers found that if you own a dog, you naturally get over five hours of exercise a week. In fact, studies have shown that dog owners have lower rates of health problems compared to those who don't own a dog. (Although you don't walk them, there are some research-backed health benefits to owning a cat and other types of pets as well.)

Own a bicycle



How to do it: Buy a bike or fix your current bike so you can use it. Also, use a helmet to prevent injury.

Why do it: Just having a bike nudges you to use it. Riding at a moderate speed burns approximately 235 calories per half hour. Wearing a bicycle helmet dramatically reduces the risks of serious head injury and brain injury.

Own at least four of the following: walking shoes, jump rope, fitness/yoga mat, weights, basketball, baseball, football, golf balls/clubs, roller blades, camping supplies, running shoes



How to do it: Keep walking and exercise equipment in your home to encourage physical activity.

Why do it: Makes this equipment easy to use. Did you know that rollerblading burns more calories than running track and field hurdles, and playing catch for only 30 minutes burns over 100 calories?

Create an indoor exercise area



How to do it: Designate a portion or a corner of a room in your home for your exercise equipment, stability ball, yoga mat, and/or weight set.

Why do it: Exercising is made more convenient when you have a space in your home designated for that specific activity. You are more likely to use the equipment if it's easily accessible and visible. A study at the University of Florida found that women who exercised at home lost 25 pounds in 15 months and maintained that loss.

Place cushions on the floor



How to do it: Instead of sitting on chairs and furniture all the time, create an area where you can sit on cushions on the floor for reading, talking, downshifting, enjoying hobbies, or doing family activities.

Why do it: Okinawan elders sit and get up from the floor dozens or hundreds of times per day. This exerts their legs, back, and core in a routine way. Sitting on the floor also improves posture and increases overall strength, flexibility, and mobility. Supporting yourself without a chair back improves posture and may help you burn up to an additional 130 calories each hour.

Create a "pride shrine" area or wall



How to do it: Create a "pride shrine" with pictures and mementos that trigger pleasant memories and pride of accomplishments. It can be a wall of family photos, mementos of grandparents and loved ones, and/or framed reminders of achievements like school diplomas, races run, picturesque hikes, or artwork. Put this area in a high-traffic area in your home so you see it several times a day.

Why do it: Every time you walk by, you'll be rewarded with a surge of pride, some motivation, and a reminder of how you fit into the world.

