

No Time to Work Out? No Problem with the Experts' 10 Best Questions

Highlight

The #1 excuse for not working out? Lack of time. But even the busiest bodies can find a few minutes. We've compiled the best ideas from thousands of successful exercisers and experts into these 10 questions.

The 10 Best Questions

[This is the shorthand version.](#) The experts' suggested best answers are below.

1. How can I make sure that I'll exercise the same time every day?
2. Can I plan ahead? No, really, will I make myself plan ahead?
3. Will I put my workouts on my schedule just like my other must-do appointments?
4. What exercises can I squeeze into my daily idle times or wait times?
5. Where's my most convenient location for exercising?
6. Can I work out in the morning?
7. How can I stand up more frequently into my office job?
8. Woof! Will Fido be my workout buddy?
9. No dog? Who else could be my workout buddy?
10. How will I handle missed workouts?

The Golden Question

The million-dollar question you almost forgot to ask.

Do I have the willpower to turn my good intentions to exercise into real workouts?

The 10 Best Answers

1. [How can I make sure that I'll exercise the same time every day?](#)

Consistency, consistency, consistency. This is the real secret, say thousands of people surveyed by *Consumer Reports*, the medical staff at the Mayo Clinic (top U.S. hospital), and scores of professional trainers and athletes.

Consumer Reports summarized their findings: “No matter what their stage in life, this was the top strategy people used to stick with a plan. They chose the time of day most convenient to their circumstances.”

2. Can I plan ahead? No, really, will I make myself plan ahead?

Successful workout warriors have a battle plan to fight their time crunches. According to *Consumer Reports*, “Nineteen percent of successful exercisers plan their weekly exercise schedule in advance.”

Some even keep packed gym bags in the car. The next question will help translate planning into a reality.

[Related: How to Choose the Best Fitness Club: Ask These 10 Best Questions](#)

3. Will I put my workouts on my schedule just like my other must-do appointments?

One of the most common reasons for skipping a workout or exercise class is being too busy with other obligations. A common characteristic of the most successful exercisers is that they make fitness as important as their other obligations. They actually write their workout times into their weekly or daily schedules.

Stick to it by constantly reminding yourself that exercise is a priority just like business meetings, the kids’ soccer games, and doctor appointments. The Mayo Clinic advises, “Don’t change your exercise plans for every interruption that comes along.”

[Related: Top Time Management Tips: The 10 Best Questions](#)

4. What exercises can I squeeze into my daily idle times or wait times?

Look for spontaneous exercise minutes, too. How much time do you spend waiting for a bus, in line for morning coffee, or picking up groceries on the way home? Pace around your bus stop, do standing balance exercises in the coffee shop, or walk a few extra aisles at the supermarket.

Invest in a fitness tracker. Set goals for your daily step counts. You might be pleasantly surprised how fast the steps add up. Sure, it’s not a quality workout, but at least you’re moving.

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5. Where’s my most convenient location for exercising?

Successful workout wonks short on time swear by the importance of a location close to home, work, or even your commute. The Mayo Clinic advises, “Make the most of your commute by fitting exercise into your transportation routine.”

Walk instead of riding the bus, bicycle instead of taking the train. Walk an extra bus stop or two and park farther from your office, not closer. And as we've all heard a dozen times, take the stairs, not the elevator. It's a killer cardio and leg workout.

If you use a fitness club or gym, be careful about picking one close to home or work so you'll really go regularly, not occasionally.

[Related: The 10 Best Questions to Ask When Buying a Bicycle](#)

6. Can I work out in the morning?

The early bird gets the six-pack abs. Wake up earlier say the most successful fitness fanatics. An extra 30 morning minutes gets you a treadmill or neighborhood run or a gym stop on your way to work. By the time you wake up, you've already worked out and skipped the excuses!

Fitness tracker manufacturer JawBone recently analyzed data from more than one million users and found that the time of day strongly predicts how regularly people actually exercise.

The most popular time of day for the most consistent exercisers is 6:00 am. People who work out only sporadically are likely to be night exercisers.

7. How can I stand up more frequently into my office job?

Stand up, sit down, fight, fight, fight! It's the battle of the bulge you're fighting in your sit-down job and lifestyle.

Researchers at the Mayo Clinic discovered "persuasive evidence" that inactivity, particularly sitting, can be very bad for your health, weight, and backside. Even though it seems obvious, here's the killer: inactivity is bad for you even if you exercise.

Stand-up desks, stand-up meetings, and stand-up exercises are all the rage. Learn more here.

[Related: Am I Sitting Too Much: Ask These 10 Best Questions](#)

8. Woof! Will Fido be my workout buddy?

Get a dog into your life and take him for daily walks. Time-hungry exercisers swear by this routine. The Mayo Clinic says, "An enthusiastic dog may give you the motivation you need to lace up your walking shoes." Your four-legged friend doesn't cost a gym membership and pays you back in nonstop tail wags.

If you don't have or want a dog, pretend you're being chased by Doberman. That'll keep your workout will short – and intense.

[Related: How to Choose a Great Dog: The 10 Best Questions](#)

[Related: Be a Walking Workout Wonder: The 10 Best Questions](#)

9. No dog? Who else could be my workout buddy?

Mix up your socializing with exercising. Recruit family members, kids, friends or office mates for hikes, outdoor activities, or whatever gets you moving.

Fitness and wellness specialist Jessica Cady-Bartholomew told the *Wisconsin State Journal*, “When people work out alone, it's easy to cheat on the intensity. Adherence and fun comes from social interactions.”

If you're serious about your workouts, choose your workout buddy carefully to help you reach your goals.

[Related: How to Choose a Good Workout Buddy: Ask These 10 Best Questions](#)

10. How will I handle missed workouts?

Everyone skips or misses a few workouts, but it's how you recover that matters. Again, have a plan, be consistent, and write the makeup session back into your appointment schedule.

Most important, don't feel guilty or beat yourself up. It's too easy to figure that since you've already blown it, a few chips or chocolates will soothe your bad mood.

[Related: To Skip or Not Skip My Workout? Ask Yourself these 10 Best Questions](#)

The Golden Question

The million-dollar question you almost forgot to ask.

Do I have the willpower to turn my good intentions to exercise into real workouts?

This is a toughie. It's always easier to talk about workouts you want to do but somehow they never quite happen. Sound familiar? All this drama is a big time hog besides packing on the pounds.

We'll let celebrity psychologist Dr. Phil McGraw take it from here because it's his Life Law #5: Life rewards action. He says, “Talk is cheap. It's what you do that determines the script of your life. The world couldn't care less about thoughts without actions. You must leave behind the comfortable if you are to move onward and upward.”

QDoc's Q-Tipsters

Answer these question honestly and to find more time and more positive energy, and no more unused gym memberships.

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