

National Fitness Day: Why it's Easier than People in the UK Think to get Fit

The most active day of the year in the UK comes shortly after news that 6.3m Brits don't even manage to go for a brisk walk once a month

Munich, 26th September 2017 – With National Fitness Day approaching and the worrying results of the most recent Health Survey for England (HSE), we are being reminded once again that exercise and a balanced diet are vital to our general health. With 41% of men and 31% of women in the UK overweight and a further 27% of adults obese, it is time that fitness and healthy eating started fitting into our 2017 lifestyles. As the risk of serious illness increases sharply with a person's BMI, popular digital health and fitness company [Freeletics](#) carried out a UK survey to uncover the hurdles Britain faces when it comes to exercise and diet, revealing some surprising misconceptions and simple solutions.

77% believe they need to spend longer exercising than they actually do

One surprising outcome of the survey showed that most Brits overestimate how long they would have to exercise to get fit. A fifth (19%) believes that a workout needs to take a lengthy 41 to 60 minutes to be effective, while a further 50% think you need to exercise 21 to 40 minutes per session. Overall, 32% of respondents cited a lack of time as the most common reason they skip exercise, which is no surprise given this background. 28% also complained that their fitness routine takes too long, underlining the need for a more practical solution that fits into today's schedules.

The good news? It takes a lot less time than many believe for a workout to really be effective. You can train anytime, anywhere for 15 to 20 minutes and still really burn off calories. *"Despite common myths, you don't need to do an hour-long workout for it to be effective. In fact, just a 15-minute workout can often lead to better results than a 90-minute one,"* explains **Ben Bulach, Training Specialist** at Freeletics. *"You don't even have to go to a gym to get active - you can exercise just as efficiently at home or in a local park. Bodyweight training, especially high intensity training (HIT) workouts, are a great way of boosting your metabolism and burning lots of calories in a very short time without any equipment."*

While 28% of Brits run and 28% cycle to lose weight, both of which can be quite time-consuming, only 9% look to bodyweight-only training to get fit, despite all its benefits. Considering that people in the UK are under more and more time pressure, this is an ideal yet largely undiscovered solution for a flexible and effective exercise routine.

39% of Brits lack the motivation to exercise

Perhaps less surprising is the fact that many lack the motivation to go outside or to the gym to exercise. At 39%, this is the number one reason people in the UK skip their workouts. Interestingly, this is despite the fact that 51% of respondents claim they had lost weight with their current routine, indicating that there are other contributing factors, such as time and monotony, playing a role in the UK's lack of motivation to exercise.

"Motivation can easily be dampened by just the thought of spending an hour exercising, especially if your training is repetitive. Make sure your routine doesn't get boring – have a variety of different workouts and exercise plans. Training apps can help with this," advises **Bulach**. *"Also, by joining a community, you will find motivation in the form of others. A community, be it local or digital, can help you stay on track as you will see the progress of*

others and be motivated to share your own. Our app users love our interactive online community of over 20 million people, as it helps them stay on track and feel accountable.”

The other key factor: 31% of Brits choose an unsustainable dieting method

Exercise is just one factor when it comes to health. A balanced diet is just as, if not more important than exercise, especially for weight loss. But Freeletics also uncovered some misconceptions here as well. Although calorie counting is not sustainable nor particularly healthy, it is the top method (31%) for those trying to lose weight in the UK. In comparison, only half as many would choose to eat unprocessed, ‘clean’ foods instead, which could be due to the fact that 25% of people believe that healthy foods are too expensive.

*“Calorie counting is a common weight loss method, but shouldn’t be the route to caloric deficit,” explains **Katharina Kaiser, Nutrition Specialists** at Freeletics. “Scientifically, it is inaccurate and can often lead to a yo-yo effect. But it can also cause psychological issues where people obsess over calories, making them fret about what they eat more and more, thus creating an unhealthy relationship with food.”*

Another problem calorie counting poses is that it doesn’t give guidance on what is actually “healthy.” 27% of people in the UK believe that this weight loss method equates eating healthy food, which is unfortunately not always the case. *“Not all calories are equal. If we compare 250g of crisps with 250g of avocado, we see that they have roughly the same number of calories. The crisps, however, are full of “empty calories” and harmful trans fatty acids, while the avocado is full of healthy omega 3, potassium and fibre.”*

A more sustainable diet is the consumption of healthy, unprocessed foods only – known as “clean eating.” By integrating balanced eating principles into their daily routine, people can avoid the laborious activity of counting their calories and the classic yo-yo effect before and after such diet regimes. Enjoying high quality, natural foods provides a sustainable method for losing weight and staying healthy and energised. And eating healthily doesn’t have to be as expensive as 25% of the UK thinks: *“Clean eating doesn’t have to cost a fortune. Many staple ingredients are simple, widely available and inexpensive, such as cottage cheese, oats, eggs, courgettes, lentils and brown rice. Buying your ingredients in bulk or frozen also helps to stock your kitchen for less money,” **Kaiser** recommends.*

Further tips from the Freeletics experts to get more active during the day

- After getting up, plank for a few minutes – this can be done right next to your bed.
- Take your morning coffee for a walk: instead of sitting in the kitchen, take a stroll.
- Choose a parking space further away from the building so you take a short walk.
- Aim to stand up once an hour during the day (trackers can help), or even work while standing for a period of time.
- Take calls outside: if you have a phone call coming up, take it outside for a quick stroll.
- Drink out of a glass instead of a bottle so that you have to get up to refill more often.
- Trade emails for conversations: instead of asking colleagues in the same office questions via email or office apps like Slack, get up and visit them at their desk.
- Walk the extra mile: get off the bus or train one stop early and walk the last stretch.
- While brushing your teeth, try doing some squats at the same time.
- Have a pullup bar installed on a doorframe – each time you walk past, do one pullup.
- If you want to binge on your latest Netflix series all evening, try spending 10 minutes doing some exercises such as squats, lunges, situps or jumping jacks while watching.

- ENDS -

Sources:

PHE Study “Physical inactivity levels in adults aged 40 to 60 in England” 08/2017

HSE 2015 12/2016

Freeletics Exercise Survey 01/2017 – nationwide survey of 1,508 people in the UK who have either tried to lose weight or been on a health and fitness programme

Freeletics Calorie Counting Survey 10/2016 – nationwide survey of 1,036 people in the UK who have either tried to lose weight or been on a health and fitness programme

The Freeletics Bodyweight, Running, Gym and Nutrition apps can be downloaded for free in the [App Store](#) and [Google Play Store](#). For more information about Freeletics, visit www.press.freeletics.com.

About Freeletics

Freeletics has been built around a single vision since day one: to help everyone in the world unleash their full physical and mental potential and become the greatest version of themselves. Freeletics is the creator of some of Europe’s #1 fitness apps. It promotes and increases physical fitness as well as mental strength, willpower and self-confidence – all of which are vital tools for shaping a life in accordance with one’s desires and goals.

Founded in June 2013, the company has already created one of the most successful fitness movements in the world, with more than 20 million users in over 160 countries. Freeletics also sets new standards as an employer: teamwork, passion and performance are all central values within the company – values that continue to motivate the team of more than 140 employees to continuously develop Freeletics as an international sports and lifestyle brand and constantly optimize and expand the company’s product portfolio.

Freeletics Media Channels

- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/freeletics>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/freeletics>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/freeletics>

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