

FIND BALANCE IN RECREATION



YOUR CHALLENGE: Limit your leisure computer/TV time to one hour on weekdays and no more than two hours on weekends. Spend time being active with your family and friends instead! Report the completion of your goal at www.dmba.com with a simple “yes” or “no.”

SO WHAT’S “RECREATION”?

Many activities could be considered recreational or relaxing: playing sports, watching television, taking a walk through the park, swimming, reading a book, gardening, or even napping.

But some recreational activities promote health more than others. We all know one of the best ways to improve your health is to be physically active every day. It can reduce the risk of premature death in more ways than one:

- Reduces the risk of heart attack and stroke
- Helps people achieve and maintain a healthy body weight
- Helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints



- Lowers blood pressure
- Reduces the risk of diabetes
- Reduces the risk of cancer
- Helps you relax
- Reduces depression and anxiety
- Improves your mood
- Increases your life expectancy

For best physical, emotional, and social health, get regular activity and limit screen time to one hour on weekdays and no more than two hours on weekends.

If you just have to watch a favorite lengthy movie or football game, move your stationary bicycle or a treadmill to the TV, and put in some active miles while you're watching. Or do body weight exercises or walk in place.

GET ACTIVE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Spending time with family and friends outdoors is a great way to be physically active. It'll also bring you closer together as friends, as a couple, or as a family.

Spending active time with family and friends—vacations, family reunions, weekend outings, and daily habits—creates happy memories, models healthy behaviors, and contributes to a positive self-image.

Here are some easy and inexpensive ideas to get yourself and your family up and moving:

- Take your pet for a walk.
- Let a family member plan a walking tour around your neighborhood and serve as a guide.
- Organize a walkathon with your school, club, church, or in your neighborhood. Donate the proceeds to your favorite charity.
- Learn a new sport together.
- Declare one day a month to be major power-cleaning day. Scrub the walls, wash the windows, and clean the gutters.
- Do yard work for an elderly or ill friend or neighbor.

- Walk to the grocery store or library together as a family.
- Go on an active vacation: hiking, camping, walking tours of the city.
- When you've planned an active vacation, work together to get in shape for it.
- Create your own home video of exercise routines.
- Learn tai chi, taekwondo, Pilates, or yoga.
- Help your kids design and build an obstacle course using whatever you have on hand—cardboard boxes, chairs, tables, rope, sheets, or buckets.
- Invite grandparents to teach you how they used to dance.
- Plant a garden—and maintain it.
- Pick a family member to be “coach of the day.” He or she can choose what game the family will play (perhaps kickball, hide-and-seek, or hopscotch). The coach of the day could even make up a game—complete with rules.
- Dress in bathing suits and wash the car—and expect a water fight.
- When you have your family reunion, include physical activities that everyone can enjoy: Frisbee golf, old-fashioned sack/wheelbarrow races, or softball—and remember safety gear.
- Teach your kids some games you liked when you were a kid yourself.



HEAD TO THE PARK!

One more idea ... visit public parks. You can walk around your neighborhood, but it's probably more enjoyable to walk through a beautiful city park or backpack through a national forest.

Try it for yourself to experience a unique blend of peacefulness and exhilaration that comes from spending active time outdoors.

According to the National Recreation and Park Association, surveys have found that having a park close to where you live or work is one of the most important factors in determining whether you will become active and stay that way.

Besides encouraging social interaction and physical activity, spending time in a park simply makes you feel good.

If you're concerned about your health—for you or a family member—turn off the television and the computer games, and make physical activity a family affair. Come up with your own list of fun physical activities, and then get moving—together!

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

- Recreational opportunities www.recreation.gov
- American Heart Association <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living>
- WebMD <https://www.webmd.com/living-healthy>
- CDC Healthy Living <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyliving/index.html>

Note: If you can't complete this challenge because of a medical condition, let us know and we'll come up with an alternative for you.



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