

# 17 WAYS TO STICK TO YOUR WORKOUT

Fading motivation is the enemy of every weightloss plan. To fire you up, top trainers reveal their never-quit, get-fit tricks



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**Find fat** Put your fingers on your belly and inhale deeply. As you exhale, contract your abs and pinch. "That's pure fat you're holding," says Tom Seabourne, author of 'Athletic Abs' (Human Kinetics, £13.95). Reason enough to hit the gym.

## 2 PLAN AHEAD

At the beginning of each month, plan all your workouts at once – then cross them off as they're completed. No one likes to miss an appointment.

You can't predict inconveniences such as impromptu late meetings or illness, so if any are left at the end of the month, tack them on to the following month. "You're typically 40% more likely to work out if you have strategies to help you overcome obstacles," says fitness trainer Scott Harber, from Esporta, ([www.esporta.com](http://www.esporta.com)).

**3 Vary your workouts** "Your body adapts to the workload and soon stops developing," says Neal Chamberlain, director of The Tonic Personal Training. Ask your gym instructor to review or devise a more intense workout programme when you get in a rut. "Always have something in your armory to keep your body stimulated," he adds.

**4 TAKE SOUND ADVICE** "Find tracks that really get you going, burn that CD, and stick the headphones in," enthuses Michael Goulden at Integra Training. To pump up adrenalin think The Prodigy rather than Coldplay.



**6 Make a bet** Challenge your nemesis – that idea-robbing colleague or annoying neighbour – to a contest. The first to lose 2kg or bench press 120kg wins. The key: "Make sure it's someone you don't like much," says MH exercise adviser Michael Mejia.

**7 Go through the motions** "On days when you don't feel like working out, make the only requirement of your session a single set of your favourite exercise," says Thomas Snape, an independent exercise physiologist based in London. It's likely that once you've started you'll finish your whole routine.



**5 Get a level partner** "You should try to train with someone at a similar fitness level to you," says Neal Chamberlain. "You're less likely to break an appointment if your mate is relying on you to spot him in the weight room."

**8 STRIKE A DEAL WITH THE MISSUS** You get one hour to yourself every day dedicated to your health; offer her the same. This way you'll escape the household chores and side-step marathon games of Monopoly with attention-grabbing kids. "As it's your health you can exercise guilt-free while acting as a role model for your children," says Matt Coulsen, personal trainer at David Lloyd Leisure.

**9 Blackmail yourself** Take a photograph of yourself shirtless, holding a sign with a readable list of your friends' and acquaintances' email addresses. Make sure there are several attractive female friends of yours included in the list. Send this photo to a trusted but sadistic friend, with the following instructions: "If I don't send you a new picture that shows serious improvement in 12 weeks, post this photo on www.hotornot.com and send the link to all the addresses listed below..."

"It's nasty, but a great motivator and extremely effective," says Ross Chouler, personal trainer at Holmes Place ([www.holmesplace.co.uk](http://www.holmesplace.co.uk)).

**11 Make your goals attractive** "Frame your goals so they're specific," says Jeff Archer, director of Upgrade My Life Coaching. Vague aims like 'lose some weight' aren't the kind of thing you can boast about. "I can now lift my own body weight," or "I can run a mile in five minutes," are.

**12 SEE YOUR BODY THROUGH HER EYES** Grant your partner temporary immunity to name your least attractive physical characteristic (that you can improve). "It's instant motivation," says Michael Mejia.

If she's hesitant, make a list for her – abs, love handles, upper arms and so on – and have her rank them from best to worst. Make the most-hated body part your workout focus for four weeks. After showing off the reformed muscle for as long as possible and basking in her admiration, prepare for an assault on the next one.

**13 Squat first** Always start with the exercises you dread. "You'll look forward to your favourite exercises at the end of your workout, which will encourage you to complete the entire session," says Ross Chouler.

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**Leave the gym** That's right. You read correctly. If working out at the gym really isn't doing it for you then find a sport that will have the following effect: you enjoy exercise. This makes your brain release a chemical called serotonin, which makes you feel happy.

**14 BOOK YOURSELF A BODY-COMPOSITION TEST**

Find out your body fat percentage, blood pressure and pulse rate. "First work out your specific goals. Tangible results are a great motivator and a monthly update on your figures provides concrete evidence of success," prescribes Dr Paul Holmes, sports and exercise psychologist at Manchester Metropolitan University. Next Generation Health Club provides a full test for £20 ([www.nextgenerationclubs.co.uk](http://www.nextgenerationclubs.co.uk)).



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**Sign up for a race** Ideally a charity run that's far from home, so you have to book transport and a hotel room.

"Setting a date gives you a goal to work towards," says Jeff Archer, "and the money you splash out will act as an extra incentive too."

**16 Don't do what you hate** If you despise the treadmill then skip rope, lift weights, or join a class – they cater for all levels and are always full of women. "Whenever you start to dread your workout, do what appeals to you instead," says Louise Hurley ACSM, regional health and fitness manager for Living Well ([www.livingwell.co.uk](http://www.livingwell.co.uk)). Sick of your routine? Find a new one; if you're stuck for ideas check the *Men's Health Home Workout Bible* (Rodale, £15.99, available via [www.menshealth.co.uk](http://www.menshealth.co.uk)).

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**Join a fitness message board.** It'll be full of inspiration from men who have accomplished their goals and are working towards new ones. There'll also be like-minded people you can team up with, and who will spur you on when you're lacking enthusiasm. Our particular favourite is [www.menshealth.co.uk/talk](http://www.menshealth.co.uk/talk)