



Wellness ... Get on the Bus!

Recharge at Work by Listening to This

We all face workplace stress, whether it's rushing to prep a PowerPoint or trying to make a private call in an open-office plan, where there is *no* privacy. Turns out, there's a "natural" solution to finding more calm throughout your day.

Recent research has found listening to the sounds of nature at work, specifically something like a "mountain stream," will help you feel refreshed and ready to tackle your to-do list. Which is much better than the alternative: eight hours of overhearing different ringtones battle for dominance across the floor. That's why we made you this stress-busting, productivity-enhancing playlist, below. Plug in and press play!

Track Number	Track Name	Artist	Duration
1	Ambient Music With Mountain Stream Sounds of Nature for Relaxation Meditation With Solo Gentle Electric Guitar Sou...	Yoga Workout Music	4:06
2	Healing Sleep Music	Deep Sleep	3:19
3	A Day Without Rain	Enya, Mixed By Enya And Nicky Ryan	2:36
4	In The Morning Light	Yanni	3:51
5	Song from the Mountains (Relaxing New Age Music)	Chakra Balancing Sound Therapy	4:00

"Exposure to 'natural' sounds actually restores attention capacity," says Alana DeLoach, a graduate student at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute who was involved in the study. This supports past research that shows bringing the outdoors inside, such as keeping a plant at your desk or looking at a photograph of a scenic landscape, helps reduce stress at work. So bring on the Zen—and the productivity.

How To Keep A Sliced Apple From Turning Brown

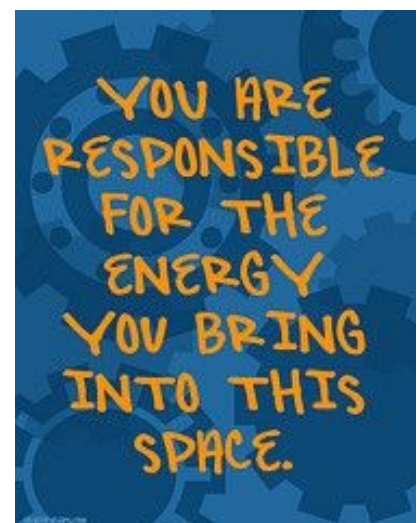
This quick back-to-school lunchbox hack will make you look like a lunchroom superhero.

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All you need is an apple and a rubber band.

Here's how you work your magic: Simply pre-slice the apple and wrap it up tight with rubber band. That simple lunchroom trick keeps the apple from oxidizing — A.K.A. turning brown.





30-Minute Workouts for Any Schedule

By Heather Mangieri, MS, RDN, CSSD, LDN Ilya_Vinogradov/iStock/Thinkstock

Who isn't in a time crunch these days? Even with the best intentions, it's easy to fall off the workout wagon after a hiccup in a weekly routine. Yet, the beneficial effects of exercise are undeniable and far outweigh any risk in most adults. Current recommendations suggest that in a week, adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise such as brisk walking or cycling, and two to three days of muscle-strengthening activities.

It's best to spread your activity out during the week, as well as breaking it up into smaller chunks of time throughout the day. In fact, "research continues to emerge supporting the notion that small bouts of exercise accumulated throughout the day may provide many of the same benefits as one continuous bout of activity," says Jessica Matthews, MS, an exercise physiologist at the American Council on Exercise. So, if you can't seem to find 30 consecutive minutes in a day for your workout, you can still fit

it in by splitting up the time.

So how do we put those recommendations into practice? "Making time for physical activity starts with changing our mindset and treating workouts just as you would any other important appointment or commitment," says Matthews. "To help make fitness a priority, block off time in your day planner and treat it just as you would any other obligation."

10-Minute Mini-Workouts

Matthews suggests taking 10 minutes in the morning, afternoon and evening to do some form of activity. This can include 10 minutes of bodyweight exercises (push-ups, crunches, lunges, squats, etc.) in the morning, a 10-minute brisk walk during your lunch break at work and 10 minutes of yoga-inspired stretching in the evening.

Involve the Family in Daily Fitness

Thirty minutes will fly by if you get the kids engaged in something that they, too, can enjoy. Grab the family and head out for a walk, game of tag or bike ride.

Clean with Purpose

Don't just sweep the floor, scrub the floor. Don't just unload the dishwasher, dance with the dishes. Minutes add up fast when you move more during your clean-up time.

Look for Opportunities to Walk

Suggest work meetings on the go. "Walk and talk in lieu of sitting in an office," suggests Felicia Stoler, DCN, MS, RD, exercise physiologist. "I do that with clients when the weather is nice versus sitting in my office," she says. If your job has you hanging out in airports on a regular basis, make that work for you, too. "When traveling, I like to walk and check out the stores in the airport — not to buy, but to keep moving before hours of sitting," Stoler says.

Stoler also points out how quickly 30 minutes of activity accumulates when you seek out opportunities, such as taking the stairs, parking far away and doing yard work.

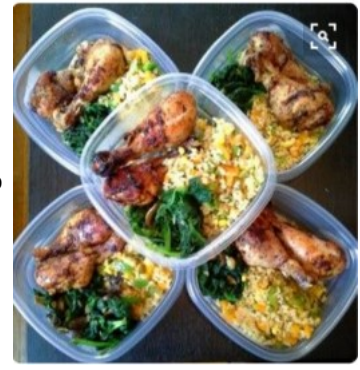
If you can't seem to find the self-motivation needed to make it happen, consider recruiting a workout partner or hiring a fitness professional. Knowing that someone is expecting you at a certain place or time can help to enhance accountability for being more active, says Matthews.

HOW TO FIT EXERCISE INTO A BUSY WORK SCHEDULE

M T W Th Fr

- 1 WORK OUT EFFICIENTLY**
Think high-intensity intervals, Tabata training, bodyweight exercises, and running.
- 2 CATER TO YOUR OWN LIKES AND DISLIKES**
Yoga 🧘 Weight Training 🏋️
- 3 USE COMPETITIONS AS MOTIVATION**
Sign up and set a goal.
- 4 MAKE A SCHEDULE AND STICK TO IT**
Remind yourself that working out is a priority worth keeping.
- 5 TRACK YOUR ACTIVITY LEVELS**
Keep a workout log to monitor your progress.
- 6 CHOOSE SOME MOVEMENT OVER NONE**
Squeeze in fitness wherever you can.

Meal prepping is one of the best ways to stay on track with healthy eating. When life gets away from you, it's all too easy to rely on takeout or quick meal options. Sometimes, there just aren't enough hours in a day to cook a full-on meal—that's where prepping comes in.



"It's essentially like you're paying in advance with your time and effort," Cassy Joy Garcia, author of paleo cookbook *Fed & Fit* out "It's completely normal to feel like you don't have the time or energy to cook a healthy meal during the week, so prepping healthy meals when you have time is the equivalent of knitting yourself a healthy-food safety net you can fall back on throughout the week." Ready to create your own delicious healthy-eating safety net? Here are eight game-changing tips for your best, most efficient meal prepping session ever.

1. Calculate how much food you'll actually need to cook.

Before you plan your meals and hit the grocery store, consider how much food you're actually going to eat so you don't under- or over-do it. "Start with the simple math of how much you'd want to enjoy at a single meal," says Garcia. "I typically recommend 4-6 ounces of protein, about half a cup of a vegetable-based starch (like a squash or potato), and at least one cup of cooked vegetables. If you're preparing meals for five days of the week, simply multiply!" You can also add in a couple of extra servings in case you're especially hungry one day and store it in the freezer if you don't end up eating it, she adds.

2. Get strategic about when you'll eat what, and plan a small mid-week grocery run if you can.

While prepping for a whole week sounds great in theory, you have to consider the shelf life of cooked foods before diving in and cooking, say, six days' worth of chicken breast. "For example, while baked potatoes and roasted vegetables will keep for about a full five days depending on the temperature and humidity of where you live, sometimes it's best to eat meat sooner than that," says Garcia. That chicken? It's probably only good for three to four days. Pop into a grocery store mid-week to grab any more fresh fruits, veggies, herbs, and meat you need, or simply keep some meat in the freezer to thaw and cook when you run out.

3. Write out a meal-prep game plan before you start.

"I recommend making a meal prep schedule for the day," says Garcia. "If you know you'll need your oven for a couple different components, map out what can bake at the same time and what can't. The same goes for pots on the stove and any other kitchen equipment you may need to use (like the blender and food processor). Meal prepping doesn't have to take all day! It can go by quickly if you have a thought-out plan of action." By planning out what you'll need to cook and in what order, you'll minimize the time you spend figuring out what the next step is as you go.

4. And lay out all of your ingredients in an ~orderly fashion.~

In addition to your game plan, take it a step further by actually laying out what you need before you start, restaurant kitchen-style. Wash and chop your veggies, thaw your meats, and measure out any grains. "I also recommend that you set out any containers you'll use for storage before you start cooking," says Garcia. "Having ingredients and containers ready to go can make the cooking and then portion-to-store steps more streamlined and less intimidating."

5. Cook versatile ingredients.

"I highly recommend you cook large meal components all at once, store them separately, and then combine them in fun and creative ways throughout the week," says Garcia. "For example, toss five to seven pounds of chicken in the slow cooker so that you can make shredded chicken. I recommend storing that chicken unseasoned in the refrigerator, and then you can use that protein to make a variety of meals throughout the week such as stuffed potatoes, added protein to an omelet, a quick casserole, or a quick teriyaki bowl. The same can be said for cooking a large batch of baked potatoes and roasted veggies."

6. Don't try to make a different meal for every day.

If you try to chef your way through five different recipes or meals for five different nights, chances are you'll be spending your whole day in the kitchen (and potentially run out of fridge space). "Choose versatile, basic proteins, starches, and vegetables that can be made in large batches and then rely on fun sauces, salsas, herbs, and quick preparation methods to keep meals interesting throughout the week. I've seen a lot of people burn out on meal prepping, but it's because they really just took on too much all at once." Here's one dinner you can turn into a week of healthy lunches, if you're looking for a versatile recipe.

7. Prep things you actually like.

If you don't like what you prepped, chances are, you just won't eat it—especially if you have healthier options, like takeout, calling your name. "After a few days, leftovers may appear less and less attractive—but if it's your favorite food, you're more likely to keep looking forward to meal time," says Garcia.

8. And don't forget about healthy dessert!

"Dessert is all-too-often an afterthought, which is usually why they become unhealthy choices," says Garcia. "If you know that you enjoy the occasional sweet treat, I recommend taking that into consideration when you're planning your week's meals. A quick batch of roasted fruit popsicles or chia seed pudding cups can help keep you from being tempted by other not-so-healthy sweet treats but still satisfy that sweet tooth." When you have healthy food on hand, you're more likely to eat healthy food, simple as that.