

Have you made any 2013 fitness-related New Year's Resolutions? What different ways of keeping fit are popular where you live? What is your favourite way of keeping fit?

What do you think is one of the biggest excuses for not keeping fit and how are gyms responding? Orr discovers the latest trends to help take the graft out of getting in shape.

Interval training

One of the biggest excuses for not keeping fit is that we're time-poor. But gyms are responding to clients' concerns by introducing a number of shorter classes, focusing on achievable results in 30 minutes with what they are dubbing HIIT (high intensity interval training). Fitness First has introduced the GRIT training class, incorporating two components: strength and plyometrics (a type of exercise designed to develop muscular performance and endurance through short and powerful movements). Be warned, your muscles will be working at a maximum level for the shortest amount of time.



Cardio Tennis

After Andy Murray's triumphant 2012, the public's interest in tennis is at an all-time high. Cardio Tennis is a group class complete with drills, which gives players of all abilities a high-energy workout. Purists will no doubt balk at the use of a "pumping soundtrack", but this a fun take on the traditional sport. Tennis is one of the best all-round workouts there is. It's particularly good for core strength, as it's the abs and lower back that do most of the World.

Ugi

Ugi is a short-duration, high-intensity class straight from Canada that will be debuting exclusively in the UK at Virgin Active. The barefoot 30-minute workout uses a 15cm diameter exercise ball available in various weights to suit individual needs. The workout builds strength, endurance, and core stability to help people become functionally fit (another buzz term). “Ugi is happiness training,” says creator Sarah Shears. “There are 1,440 minutes in every day, and if you use 30 of them for physical activity, the other 1,410 feel better.”

Aqua Zumba

Zumba has really taken the world by storm over the past couple of years and now the Colombian dance fitness programme has moved into the swimming pool. Known as the “Zumba pool party”, it takes everything that people loved about the original – the world music and high-energy fun – and turns it into something that one company has described as creating “an atmosphere more reminiscent of a Miami pool party”. While it might not be for everyone, it does promise to be cardio-conditioning and body-toning.

Group personal training

For those really serious about getting fit, having a personal trainer is often the dream. But with many of us still being forced to penny-pinch, it is often unrealistic. One way to overcome this is by doing group personal training sessions. Getting together with one, two, or three like-minded friends, of a similar fitness level, will allow you to receive a much more tailored session than a normal gym class allows. And you get to split the cost. It’s hardly groundbreaking but many have predicted a huge rise in 2013, as clients and trainers work together to make a package that suits all.

Self-monitoring

Self-monitoring – the act of keeping track of what you eat, how much you move, and how well you sleep – is destined to really go mainstream this year, thanks to a number of apps and devices. The Nike FuelBand will track your activity based on “oxygenkinetics” (the movement of your wrist). LarkLife is compatible with iPhones and will advise on exercise, sleep, eating and energising. And swimmers can use Swimtag, a new device that tracks their activity, including lengths, splits and strokes. Perhaps that personal trainer isn’t needed after all.



Instant Ideas