

# 8 Ways to Keep Fit Outside the Gym This Winter

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For Active.com

Without a gym membership, many people feel lost when it comes to staying in shape as winter approaches. Skiing and ice hockey are great sports, but they can be costly and require a lot of training, traveling and planning. However, with a little creativity and some basic equipment it's not hard, and can even be fun, to stay in shape all winter long. Here are some low-cost ideas to keep fit outside the gym this season. If you need more of a challenge, use the modification tips to take it up a notch.

## 1. Stairs

[Running](#) or walking up and down the stairs in your house or apartment building can be a great high intensity cardio and leg workout. One option for those starting out is to add walking intervals every few floors. For example, leave the stairwell and walk the length of the hallway and back before resuming your ascent.

### **Take it up a notch:**

Try climbing two steps at a time, sprinting a few flights or doing jumping jacks between floors to raise the intensity.

## 2. Ice Skating

This is a great aerobic and social workout that can be done free of charge in some arenas.

### **Take it up a notch:**

If triple axels are not in your repertoire, you can still pick up the pace to get your heart pumping. Skating backwards can also work your muscles in different ways.

If you have 10 or 20 meters to yourself you can try this:

Skate as fast as you can for 10 metres.

Come to a complete stop and touch the ice with your hand.

Immediately sprint back to the starting spot and touch the ice again.

Do this for one minute, three times.

Skate leisurely for one to two minutes between sets to catch your breath.

As you get better at it, try going for longer periods, change your distance or reduce your rest time.

## 3. Indoor Sports

Join a team or individual sports program. Competition levels can range from recreational to expert. The most cost effective programs are usually run by local municipalities where gym space at a local school or community centre is secured and people drop in for a game of basketball, floor hockey or other team sports. You can also sign up for any number of aerobics classes, dance classes or other [group fitness sessions](#).

### **Take it up a notch:**

If you have the time, try combining more than one workout each day. Try a yoga class right after pick-up basketball or Zumba in the morning and volleyball at night.

## 4. Mall Walking

When [walking](#) outdoors is not an option, do laps inside your local shopping mall. For the average person, a brisk one-hour walk can burn 300 to 400 calories.

### **Take it up a notch:**

If there are multiple levels in the mall, climb stairs or walk up escalators to challenge your leg muscles and burn extra calories.

## 5. Home Workouts

A workout DVD or even a quick YouTube search to find indoor aerobic routines can pay off when you have limited space. If you have weights, resistance bands, a skipping rope, a stability ball, trampoline, or other equipment, you can incorporate those into [a great full body workout](#).

### **Take it up a notch:**

Experiment with mixing and matching workouts. For the best fat-burning workouts, mix some resistance training with some high intensity cardio. In 20 or 30 minutes you could easily burn more calories than you would on a treadmill at the gym.

#### 6. Dancing

For even more fun and less structure, turn up the volume on some of your favorite songs and dance. Dance to your two favorite current songs and three you haven't heard since "back in the day" and you've got yourself a 20-minute workout while dinner is on the stove.

**Take it up a notch:**

Try doing [push ups](#), dips, jumping jacks or burpees during the choruses.

#### 7. Active TV Viewing

Don't want to miss your favorite TV show? Try jogging or skipping on the spot while you watch.

**Take it up a notch:**

Do squats, push ups, or burpees during the commercial breaks.

#### 8. Snow Sprints

Head out to an open, snow-covered field with some water-resistant trainers or [hiking](#) shoes and an appropriate number of layers. Ice doesn't usually form on grass, so it's usually safe to run on a field of fresh fallen snow. Try running, jogging, jumping, and plain old-fashioned playing in the snow. There are few things more tranquil yet exhilarating than running around in freshly fallen snow.

**Take it up a notch:**

Walking lunges in the snow can burn more calories because your muscles are working harder to stabilize each step. And if you work on jumping and sprinting in the snow, any other surface may make you feel like Usain Bolt.

Winter doesn't need to be a season of sedentary hibernation. This year, use these tips to keep fit outside the gym and emerge next spring with the beach-ready body you've always wanted.

<http://www.active.com/fitness/articles/8-ways-to-keep-fit-outside-the-gym-this-winter>