

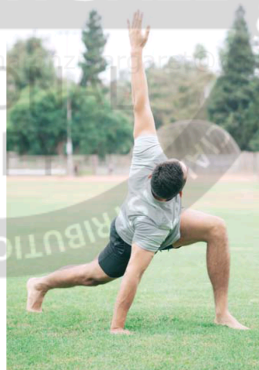
- Exercise

# How to start your fitness journey through exercise

Are you a Fresh Starter?



**HEALTHY EVER AFTER**  
CHESHIRE QUE,  
RND, RN, RD



**MOVEMENT IS KEY** Good health stems from good habits like eating right, and physical activities

**D**on't know how to start an exercise program? You must be a Fresh Starter, a term coined by Dr. Robert Kushner et al in their publication on "Counseling Overweight Adults: The Lifestyle Patterns Approach and Toolkit in 2009." Described to be someone who may be uncomfortable being around exercise equipment due to lack of knowledge on how to use them, Fresh Starters have never really exercised but are willing to learn as long as they get proper instructions.

To help you start your fitness journey, US and Europe-accredited strength and conditioning specialist Royan Hernandez answers common questions that boggle the mind of a beginner in exercise.

**I have no idea how to start my fitness routing. What should I do?**

"First, ask yourself why you want to start and how much do you want it. Think of what motivates you to achieve your goals. That is the easy part, being motivated. Committing to the goal is the hard part. As the cliché goes: Motivation will make you start but discipline and commitment will keep you going," explains Hernandez. He recommends to ideally start with a

strength and conditioning/fitness coach, a nutritionist-dietitian to help you build a good relationship with food because even if training makes us fit and strong, physique is determined by how and what we eat, and a doctor to monitor progress and overall health status, especially when medical conditions exist.

"It's important to have a coach to guide you because there are a lot of factors to consider such as age, fitness level, schedule, lifestyle and routine, medical conditions," adds Hernandez. "Your coach will help you create an approach that is tailor fit to your goals and needs so you can achieve your goal by adjusting training volume and intensity thru proper periodization of training."

**How much exercise do I need?**

"This depends on your fitness level. But the rule of thumb I say is move. Be

active. Take a walk daily. Walking is one of the most underrated exercises. If you can walk from point A to point B then do it. It is very beneficial from making the proper muscle synergy for movement to burning calories with minimal effort," replies Hernandez.

recovery means more work and more calories burned."

Frequency divides the training load accordingly, which is beneficial for those with time limitations in training per day. "As we build muscle, we increase metabolic demand of the

you are not training to compete, you don't need more tools and equipment. It will start with training using your body weight. As you progress, you will need external loads to stimulate your muscles as you get stronger. Slowly invest on your training tools and equipment. Before you know it, you will have your own home gym. Some of my clients achieve their goals by training in the park and using all the equipment and tools available in the playground and in the field. I have clients who achieved their goals by using different rubber bands of different tensions," says Hernandez.

We need external load. The coach recommends a set of dumbbell and rubber bands for starters. These small equipment will make wonders according to him. "The body adapts so we

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For the general population, Hernandez recommends two hours per week of cardio workout in addition to twice to four times per week strength training to have a good carryover on fitness, health, and performance needs.

"Cardio work will increase our heart and lung capacity, which leads to more intensity of work we can do per training. Resulting to faster recovery when our heart and lungs can distribute the nutrients to our body. And yes, you guessed it right, faster

body and increase our training capacity per day hence more calories burned and more fat loss will take place," explains Hernandez.

**I don't like exercising in the gym or public places, what can I do?**

"This is easy. Train at home or at a park near you. You don't need a gym. All you need is to commit. As long as you have a floor that you can be stable then you can train. If

need to stress them up from time to time. Meaning we get stronger so we need heavier loads."

Hernandez encourages every Fresh Starter out there to begin by asking someone with a lot of knowledge on health and fitness. Trust and credibility based on one's judgement is important. He says that asking someone is better than being afraid and not asking at all.

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