

KEEP IT SIMPLE AND FUN



Exercising is always easier in theory than in practice. There are so many reasons not to do it. You're tired, it's too hot, you have errands to run or places to go. And sometimes people just don't know where to begin when starting a new exercise regimen. Here are some basic steps to get yourself off the couch and into a healthier, fitter lifestyle.

- Step one - Get moving.
- Step two – Keep it simple.
- Step three – Have fun.

Following these three basic steps will make adhering to any exercise program an easier task. It will also enrich your life. New friends will be made. You will rediscover your neighborhood and discover other stimulating areas in Greater New Orleans and the state of Louisiana.

Walking is one of the easiest forms of exercise that includes all three basic principles. You set your own level of activity, from a stroll around the block to a nature hike, all the way up to walk/run events that are so frequent in the city.

Another type of exercise requiring minimal investment is swimming. When invited to a pool party, GET IN THE WATER AND MOVE. There is no need to be a world class swimmer. Splashing around and doing some water aerobics beats sitting around nibbling on chips and hot dogs.

Dancing is also a logical choice. From ballroom dancing to Cajun/zydeco, Latin, hip hop, line, in groups or by yourself, there is no lack of music, opportunity or willing participants in New Orleans.

Now to a favorite event for many recreational athletes. Cycling. You probably have an old cruiser, tricycle, tandem, mountain or lightweight bicycle in that back shed begging to be dusted and oiled up. Cycling is the closest thing to the fountain of youth. The young feel younger and the old feel childish. Places you drove through for years will look different from a bicycle seat. You will really grasp the soul of a city. Cycling to work is becoming a popular activity. There is even a (small) tax credit for those that do. Just watch out for cars and dogs.

The list goes on and on. It includes golf, tennis, basketball, horseshoes, canoeing, you name it. There is sure to be an activity within your skill and fitness level. Just remember – move, keep it simple, and have fun.

By now, you are probably thinking, “Where am I going to do this?” This leads to the fourth step: keep it safe. The following are but a few suggestions. Both banks of the Mississippi River have paved levees several miles in length. These linear parks offer safety and a beautiful interaction with nature. On most every day, you will see walkers, runners, skaters, horse riders and cyclists. The Westbank segment extends from Gretna to the Algiers ferry. The Eastbank segment extends from Audubon Park to Ormond Estates. Bicycle/walking lanes are also found in Tremé, Uptown, City Park and at the Lakefront. Nature (walking) trails are found in Lafitte and in East New Orleans. North of the lake, the Saint Tammany Trace is a linear park of singular beauty. Once you get moving, you will discover your own favorite route.

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GET IN AND MOVE