

# Quick Steps To Fitness

In today's busy world, full of stress and distractions, it's not easy to find time to exercise but you can start getting fitter with just 20 minutes of exercise three times a week. When you're fitter, you'll feel better, improve your health, reduce stress and have more energy.

The basic idea is not complicated. Do a bit more exercise, eat a bit more healthily and you will get fitter and lose weight.

## Get Fit

Running is an ideal way to improve your fitness. It's convenient, cheap and doesn't need a lot of time - just pull on a decent pair of trainers and start running. If you're new to running, start slowly by alternating running for a minute then walking for a minute. Gradually reduce the amount of walking over several weeks until you can run continuously for 20 minutes.

Running is also one of the most effective calorie-burning activities. Every mile you run can use up more than 100 calories regardless of your pace.

You can run on your own if you want but you don't have to. Running with other people can make it safer, more fun and will help you stick to your training routine. Join a jogging or running club and you'll find a sociable group of like-minded people to provide encouragement and advice. Jog Derbyshire have a network of running groups around the county, all led by qualified group leaders. Contact Russell at [www.ZenFitness.co.uk](http://www.ZenFitness.co.uk) for details of a beginner's group in Derby or visit the Jog Derbyshire website (<http://www.activederbyshire.co.uk/jog/group-search>) to search for your local group.

## Eat Well

If you want to lose weight, combine exercise with a healthier diet.

It is better to eat little and often rather than having fewer large and heavy meals. Snacking on healthy foods is a great way to maintain energy levels during the day. Don't skip meals, particularly breakfast which you need to restore your energy levels at the start of the day.

Don't use extreme diets to lose weight quickly. If you reduce your food intake by more than 1000 calories a day, this will put your body into starvation mode and it will try to conserve fat rather than losing it. Instead, set a realistic goal of losing around 1lb per week by reducing your daily intake by 500 calories. Swap unhealthy foods for healthier options, reduce portion sizes, cut down on alcohol, and do more exercise. Simply put, if you take in more calories than you use, you'll gain weight; if you use more calories than you take in, you'll lose weight.

So don't delay - start today for a fitter and healthier future.