



# Carers Active



## Welcome to Carers Active!

### This is your handy guide to getting started

We know that finding the time and motivation to be active can be challenging while you're also juggling all the demands of being a carer. Carers Active is about moving in whatever way works for you.

There's no need to be the fastest, the strongest or go the longest. It's about making you feel good and helping you build activity into your routine.

### Top tips

Every minute of physical activity counts to improve your health, and any type of activity is good for you. Check out these tips to help you when getting started:

**Make it routine** If you struggle to find time to exercise, try building it into your routine. Can you move first thing or later in the evening? Even a few minutes here and there makes a difference!



**Plan ahead** If you feel too tired to exercise, work out what time of day you have the most energy. Eat well, in advance, to fuel your activity.

**Have fun!** Exercise while listening to music or a podcast, or meet up with a friend. Or try something new – see below for ideas.



**Start small** Your confidence and ability will grow and the sense of achievement when they do will make it all worthwhile.

**Be creative** You don't need to spend a fortune. For exercises at home you might just need a chair and a tin of baked beans!



**Take time to look after yourself** Give yourself moments to breathe and stretch in a way that you find relaxing.



### Share

We'd love to see how you're keeping active.

Post a photo of your activity on social media tagging us @CarersUK.

Or email us at [carersactive@carersuk.co.uk](mailto:carersactive@carersuk.co.uk).



If you can get activity into your week, just once a week, that will be helpful to you, which ultimately helps the person you care for too.



– Paul, carer

[classfinder.org.uk](https://www.classfinder.org.uk)

is a great resource for finding online or in-person classes

# Ideas for being active

There are many ways to be active and it doesn't necessarily have to be what springs to mind when you think of exercising. Try building one of the activities below into your daily routine – it can be as intense or as gentle as suits you. If you can, it's great to do a mix of strengthening exercises like yoga and cardio-based activity like walking or running.

“

My gym class is great for stress relief, makes me feel alive and just boosts my energy tenfold.

”

– Hayley, Carer

## Gardening



It's time to dig out the gloves! Gardening improves endurance and strength and reduces stress, and simply being outside can create a sense of wellbeing.

## Dancing



Put on your favourite music and get moving! Dancing is great for maintaining strong bones and muscles, increasing balance and beating stress.

## Activity at the office



Park a few streets away or get off the bus a few stops early. Take stairs instead of the lift or use the toilet furthest from your desk.

## Boxercise



Boxercise incorporates a combination of boxing movements and aerobics. It's great for reducing muscle tension and improving co-ordination and strength.



## Swimming or aqua aerobics

These activities involve most muscle groups and are a good aerobic workout too. You only need basic swimming ability for aqua aerobics.



## Yoga, pilates or tai chi

These low-impact activities focus on improving balance, core strength, and breathing, and are accessible to everyone no matter your ability level.

## Activities at home



Ideal if you're not able to get outside or to a gym and want to improve your health, lift your mood and remain independent. Try a fitness app or YouTube.

## Walking or running



Choose the longer route on regular journeys or gently jog on your way. Walk faster than a stroll and add short bursts of speed.

## Sports



Community sports clubs welcome new people and there are walking options for several sports such as hockey, football, netball and rugby.

## What if I have a long-term health condition?

When you're managing a long-term health condition, it's good to check with your doctor before being active. It's also about finding something that you feel comfortable doing. The We Are Undefeatable website has lots of information and ideas to help you build activity into your life [www.weareundefeatable.co.uk](http://www.weareundefeatable.co.uk)

Organisations like MS Society, Diabetes UK and Parkinsons UK also have condition-specific advice which you can find on their websites.

## What if I have a disability?

If you have a disability, it can be challenging to stay active but there are lots of different options and support you could explore. The Activity Alliance works to make active lives possible for disabled people and provides some really helpful advice [www.activityalliance.org.uk/get-active/how-to-start](http://www.activityalliance.org.uk/get-active/how-to-start).

You could also consult with a specialist, such as a physiotherapist, to help you decide what might be most suitable.

## Activities at home

There are heaps of fitness apps and YouTube videos for all types of activity and any exercise you can think of.

