



## IMPROVING FITNESS

# A five-pronged approach

By Debbie Gilbey

**"I want to lose weight" is the most common client response when asked why they have come to the gym.**

While losing weight will dramatically reduce obesity related problems such as a higher risk of diabetes etc., focussing on pure weight loss and nothing else will not make you that much fitter than before. The aforementioned client will generally add on later that, in addition to the weight loss, they would like to be generally fitter.

What you need to understand is that if you flip your focus and mind-set to becoming a fitter and healthier version of yourself then weight loss will naturally occur, instead of making weight loss the priority. Aiming for a positive change, being better, fitter, more awesome,



↑ **If you change your mind-set to becoming a fitter and healthier version of yourself then weight loss will naturally occur**

will have a much larger impact on mentally achieving it and staying focussed. The word

'lose' is connected with negative emotions, thus making it harder to stay on track. We all

want to be amazing winners, not losers. Fitness is typically sub-categorised into the follow-

ing headings: Strength, Speed, Stamina, Suppleness and Skill. Not one of those five is about weight loss. Each pillar of fitness is near enough of equal measure to the next one.

To better highlight this I will be using one exercise for all of them, which is 'Get Ups'. This is where you begin laying on your back and rock forward to a standing position.

**Strength:** This is a body weight exercise where your muscles are used to lift you off the floor. People with low fitness levels typically have to use what is around them to heave themselves up.

**Speed:** How quickly you can actually get up from a horizontal position.

**Stamina:** Keep repeating the movement various times. After a while you will slow down and your muscles won't work as effectively to push you up.

**Suppleness:** Flexibility plays a large part in this move. People with tight hip flexors will usually plant their feet quite wide and tilt their knees inwards to stand, which can be damaging in the long term. A person with good suppleness will make the movement look flawless.

**Skill:** Trust me, it becomes quite tricky to consistently lie down and stand back up again multiple times without pushing your hands down on the floor for a boost, or contorting your body into an odd position.

Being able to do something that you couldn't do before, perhaps multiple times, is a measure of fitness and I can guarantee the weight will just fall off as an afterthought.

For more information about health and fitness, please contact Debbie via: [www.fitnesswithdebbie.com](http://www.fitnesswithdebbie.com). ■

## EXERCISE KNOWHOW

# Warm up and cool down

**One of the biggest mistakes people make when exercising is not taking the time to warm up before they begin and cool down afterwards.**

Omitting this can lead to various injuries, from lower back problems to torn muscles and strained ligaments and tendons. However, just five or 10 minutes at the start and end of an exercise session can make your workouts more effective and less hazardous, and leave you feeling fully stretched and refreshed to carry on with your day.

### Warming up

A warm up session should last between five and 10 minutes at least. The aim is to build your heart rate up safely, and prepare your joints and muscles for more strenuous movement.

The trick is to use a combination of exercises that work every part of the body. There



↑ **Warming up and cooling down is a vital part of every exercise routine**

are many routines you can choose from, but here is one to start you off.

Begin by marching for three minutes. March on the spot for a while, forwards a little

way, backwards to where you started, and repeat. At the same time, bend the arms, make gentle fist shapes with the hands, and pump the arms up and down in rhythm with

your steps. Follow this with 60 'heel digs'. With one leg slightly bent at the knee, step the other heel to the front of the body, toes pointing up. Alternate legs and continue for 60 seconds, combining each move with a punch forward with the arms.

Next, stand with a straight back and abdominal muscles pulled slightly in. Put a slight bend in one leg and bring the other knee up to touch the opposite hand around mid-chest height. Alternate sides and try to do 30 in 30 seconds.

Follow this with 10 knee bends. Stand with the feet around shoulder-width apart, arms stretched out in front of you, palms face down. Lower your bottom around 10cm towards the floor, as though sitting on a chair, then stand and repeat.

Now march on the spot again, arms hanging loosely by the sides, and roll the shoulders

forwards five times, backwards five times, and repeat. You're ready to go!

### Cool down stretches

At least five minutes of these will help you lower the heart rate safely and give your muscles a good stretch. Hold each position for five to 15 seconds. To stretch the back of the thighs, lie on your back with one leg bent at the knee, foot flat on the floor. Lift the other leg to a 90 degree angle to the floor, straight if you can, with the knee slightly bent if not. Take hold of the leg either above or below the knee and gently pull the leg towards the chest slightly. Repeat on the other side.

Now bring both knees into chest, knees bent. Clasp the hands together round the knees and lower them towards the body slightly as you exhale, to stretch the buttocks. Then lie on your

side, bottom leg slightly bent and knee a little forward from the body. Take hold of the heel of the top foot and bring it towards the buttock, bending the knee to stretch the front of the thigh. Repeat on the other side.

Then, in a sitting position with the back straight, bend the knees and place the soles of the feet together, outside edges of the feet on the floor. Holding the feet, very gently lower the knees towards the floor as far as is comfortable.

For a calf stretch, stand with one foot forward, knee bent and no further forward than the ankle. Keeping the other leg straight, try to lower the heel towards the ground. Repeat with the opposite leg.

To finish off, stand up straight, feet shoulder-width apart and more or less parallel to each other. Reach up towards the ceiling, arms also parallel, to feel a complete stretch along both sides of the body. ■

# TALLER KAY



Tel: 922 790 825  
E-mail: [autosamericas@gmail.com](mailto:autosamericas@gmail.com)

Inspection (no expiration of. Warranty for new cars)  
Brakes and motor service  
Technical Inspection Agency (ITV)  
Car bodywork repairs



**GERMAN CAR SERVICE**  
LAS AMERICAS S. L. - RENT A CAR  
Las Chafiras, C/ Arujo 60  
Poligono Industrial Andoriñas

**Long-term  
parking spaces**  
(from one month)  
**in Las Chafiras**  
**922 790 825**