



The benefits of green exercise

Green exercise is any physical activity that takes place in natural settings. Research suggests that exercising outdoors in a natural environment may even increase the enjoyment and frequency of an activity along with more social interaction and connection with others. Engaging in just five minutes of green exercise has been reported to improve self-esteem and mood. Immersing yourself in natural landscapes everyday has been shown to improve mental health by reducing levels of stress, anxiety and even improving symptoms of depression. Being in nature also stimulates all the senses and may help improve sleep and restore your mind from fatigue.



Additional benefits to outdoor physical activity:

- Uneven terrain engages different muscle groups and coordination important for balance.
- Being out in the sun boosts Vitamin D levels necessary for overall well-being, strong bones and muscles.
- Outdoor activities provide exposure to fresh air, sunlight and interesting things to view.

Things to consider before you head out:

- Check the temperature
- Choose the appropriate outfit
- Protect yourself from wind and sun
- Wear proper shoes
- Choose your location
- Choose a time of day
- Take your water
- Be on the alert
- Don't skip the warmup and stretch
- Don't skip the cooldown and flexibility

Easy ways to experience green exercise:

- Take a walk outside and enjoy the wildlife.
- Gardening provides good exercise and wholesome foods.
- Hit the trails or parks and enjoy being present in nature.
- Participate in a local 5k.
- Take up standup paddle boarding or kayaking
- Try rock climbing, roller blading or pickleball
- Go swimming or cross-country skiing
- Golf — take your cart and walk for a bigger benefit.
- Play with your children or grandchildren outside.

Don't forget to take time to just be present and completely enjoy the beauty of being outdoors.

Source: Michigan State University, Frontiers in Psychology, American Psychological Association