

GET ACTIVE YOUR WAY

It is easier than you think

A guide to help you find
your fun in being active



Includes a workout
plan and diet tips,
with free/low cost
facilities in your area



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This guide helps demonstrate that physical activity is for people of all ages, backgrounds and beliefs in the Birmingham community – and not only that, it is essential to a happy and fulfilled life.

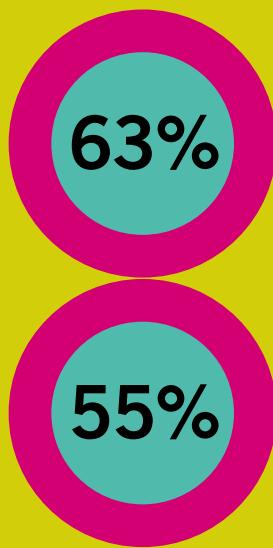


**YOUR HEART
YOUR BODY
YOUR LIFE
YOUR FUTURE**



WHY IS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IMPORTANT?

Many people who have a busy job or lifestyle believe they don't need to be active. However, physical activity is essential for a healthy and long life.



People from South Asian communities such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan are up to **six times more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes**², with instances in Birmingham and Solihull significantly above the national average³. Diabetes doubles your risk of cardiovascular disease⁴.



1. Long-term increase in activity levels positive but further action needed to tackle inequalities | Sport England
2. www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/health-people-ethnic-minority-groups-england
3. NHS England — Midlands » Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Week launches in West Midlands
4. Diabetes and heart disease | Cardiovascular disease | Diabetes UK

HOW MUCH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DO I NEED TO DO?

**You don't have to go fast,
you just have to go!**



HOW MUCH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DO I NEED TO DO?

Do you know how active you should be to live a long and healthy life?

Adults should ideally do some type of physical activity every day, but being active once or twice a week can reduce the risk of heart disease or stroke. Make sure your activity and its intensity are appropriate for your fitness.

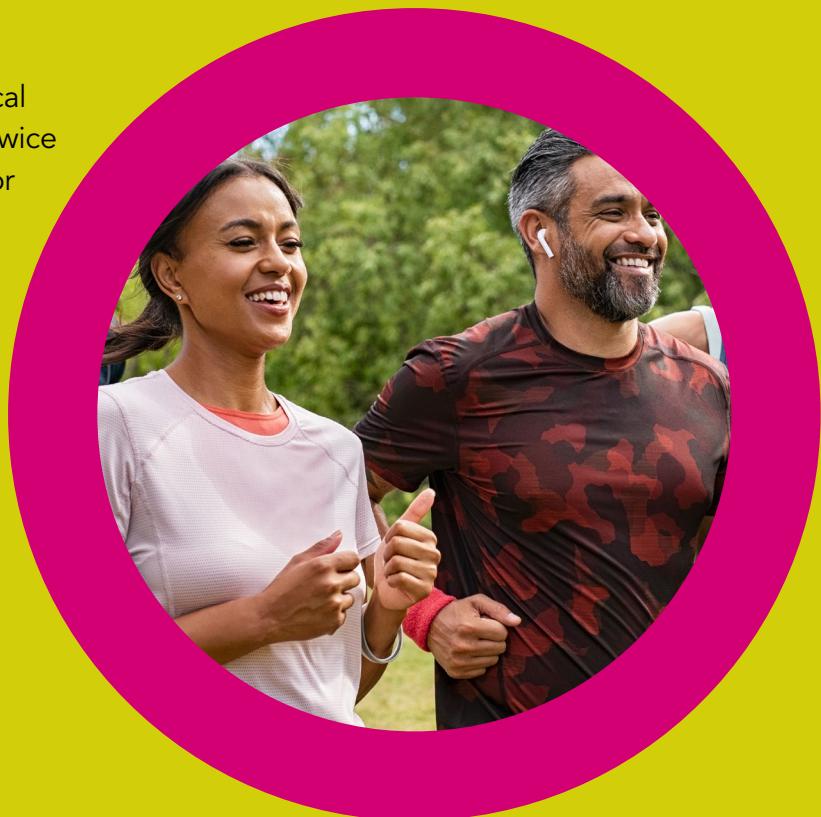
Across a week adults should aim to do:



At least **150 minutes** of moderate activities



2 x strengthening activities that work all the major muscle groups



You should also aim to:



Reduce time spent sitting or lying down, or break up longer period of not moving



Spread activities across the week



You can also achieve your weekly activity targets with several short sessions of very vigorous activity like spin or circuit training for **75 min per week**

It can be confusing to understand what all this activity might look like across a week, but this will be explained later in the toolkit.

While these are the guidelines for how often you should be active, the more you do, the greater the benefit to your health and wellbeing. These guidelines are also suitable for people with disabilities and pregnant women.

WHY IS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IMPORTANT?



Here are some other great reasons to get active now...

- Lowers your risk of early death by **30%**.
- Reduces the risk of major illness⁵ including coronary heart disease, strokes, type 2 diabetes and certain cancers.
- Age-related illness is lowered, such as osteoarthritis and dementia – these can start at a younger age, so the sooner you act the better.
- Falls are less common, especially through strength training, so hip fractures are less likely too.

5. Benefits of exercise - NHS
6. 14 Benefits of Strength Training, Backed by Science

- Reduced likelihood of depression – physical activity has long been known as a mood-booster. Being active also improves self-esteem, sense of accomplishment and if taken outside, can connect you with nature.
- Strength training makes daily tasks easier like looking after children and carrying shopping⁶.
- Training muscles also improves heart health, improves bone density, reduces injuries and body fat, while also helping brain health and improving blood flow.

WHAT TYPE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SHOULD I DO?

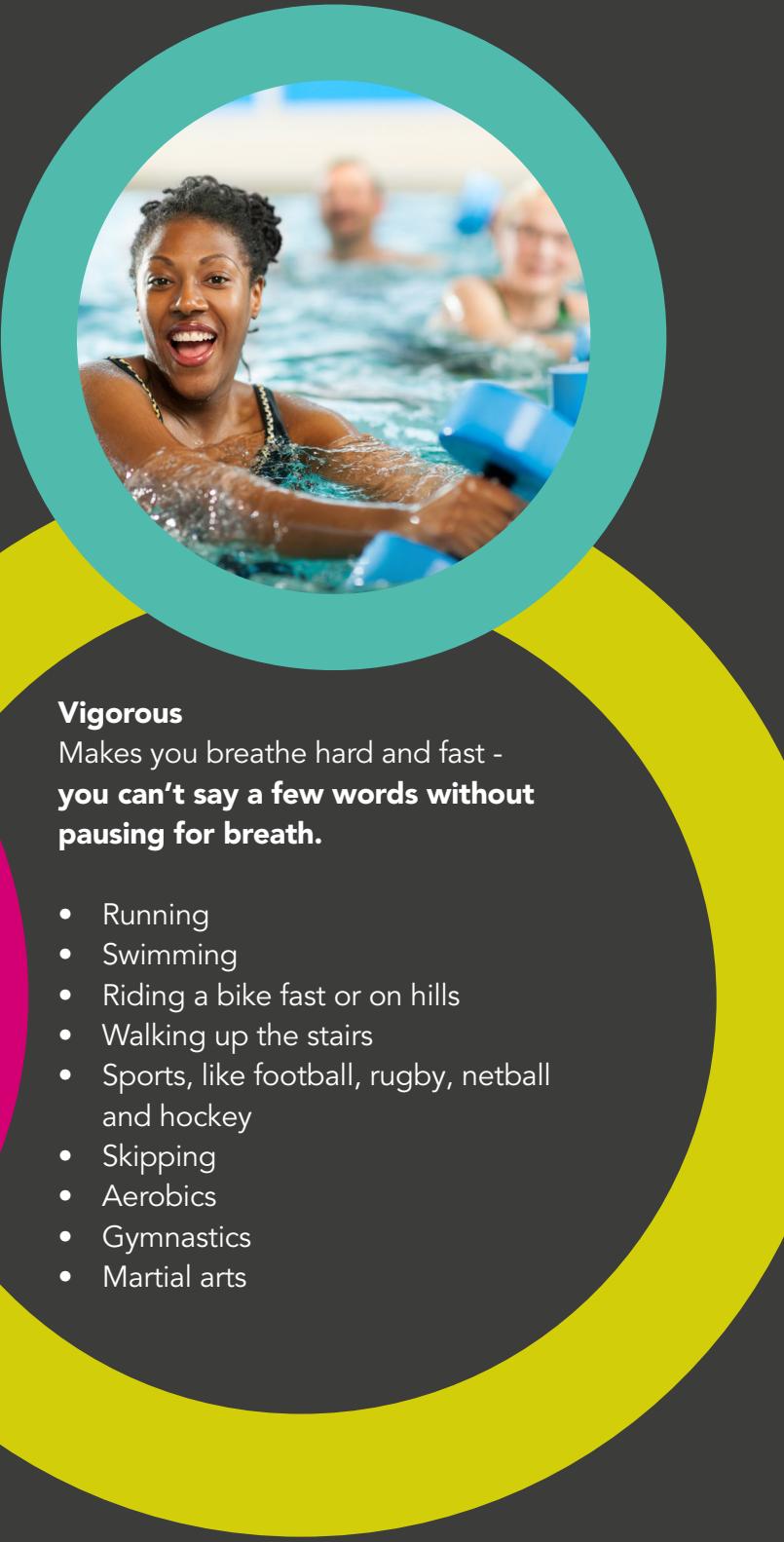
Do you know the different categories?

Moderate

Raises your heart rate, making you breathe faster and feel warmer.

You can talk but not sing!

- Brisk walking
- Water aerobics
- Riding a bike
- Dancing
- Doubles tennis
- Pushing a lawn mower
- Hiking
- Rollerblading



Vigorous

Makes you breathe hard and fast - **you can't say a few words without pausing for breath.**

- Running
- Swimming
- Riding a bike fast or on hills
- Walking up the stairs
- Sports, like football, rugby, netball and hockey
- Skipping
- Aerobics
- Gymnastics
- Martial arts

Very Vigorous

Performed in short bursts of maximum effort, broken up with rest. Also known as High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT).

- Lifting heavy weights
- Sprinting up hills
- Interval running
- Running up stairs
- Spinning classes



Strength

Involves pushing or pulling your body against resistance to strengthen muscle and bones. Do them to the point where you need a short rest before repeating the activity.

- Carrying heavy shopping bags
- Lifting weights
- Working with resistance bands
- Heavy gardening, such as digging and shovelling
- Wheeling a wheelchair
- Lifting and carrying children



WHAT ABOUT DIET?

It is often said that you can't exercise away from a bad diet, so to get the most out of being active it is essential to match this with good nutrition.

Daily recommended calorie intake

Men: 2,500 kcal

Women: 2,000 kcal

This can vary based on age and physical activity but is a good starting point.

For more diet and healthy lifestyle advice:

- **Food revolution (Food revolution | Birmingham City Council)**
- **Healthy Faith Setting Toolkits**
- **Recipe Finder – BHF**



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND FAITH

Guru Angad Dev ji, the Second Guru (teacher) of the Sikhs, encouraged the concept that one has to be physically and mentally strong to achieve anything in this world or on spiritual grounds:

“One has to be powerful outside to remain powerful inside, because a strong soul abides in a strong body.”

He encouraged people to take part in physical activity after morning prayers. For this, Guru ji made a special wrestling arena or 'Mal-akharas' where people used to train themselves. There was no discrimination between the rich or the poor. All were equally treated. People, especially children, used to perform in the arena under Guru's vision.

Giani Sukha Singh, founder of Sikh Helpline



Good physical wellbeing is intrinsically engrained in Islam. What this means is that by striving to fulfil the rights of Allah, a Muslim will automatically become physically fit. When a Muslim performs Salah, then he/she is regularly engaging in light workout of the entire body. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) encouraged us to walk to the mosque, promising the forgiveness of one minor sin and the upgrade of one degree with each step taken. Hajj requires utmost physical effort. Ramadan is the perfect detox for the body, both physical and spiritual.

Imam Dr Ather Hussain al-Azhari, Academic and Author.

Kabir's Way...

Activity: Gym Workouts

Age: 52

From: Castle Bromwich

Having been committed to the gym before the pandemic, it was very difficult for me when I contracted Long Covid as my ability to exercise without becoming exhausted was severely affected. I'm on the road to recovery though, so it's key to build up slowly but train consistently. I am gradually increasing my walking and going to the gym when I feel up to it. The lesson here is to work at your own rate but keep challenging yourself.



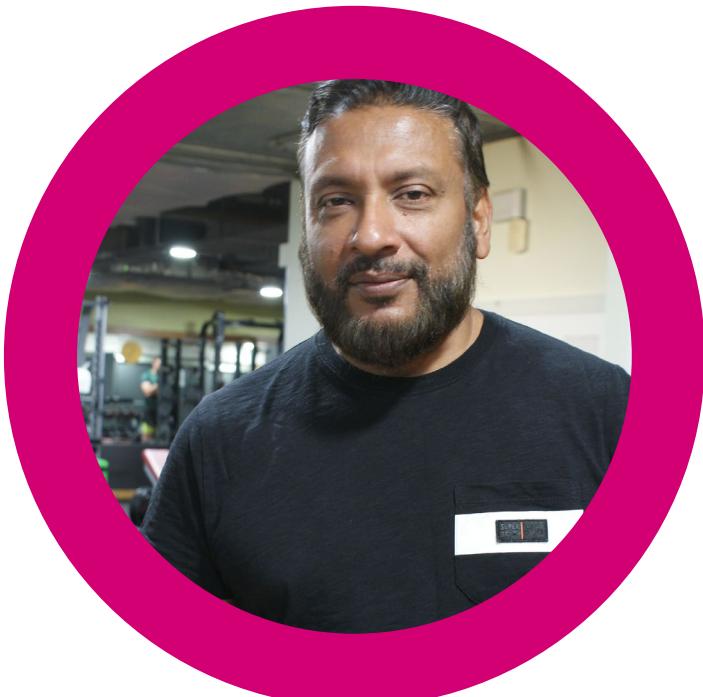
Prabhjot's way...

Activity: Brisk Walking

Age: 54

From: Brierley Hill

Like many people, I have a hectic life working as a translator, studying for a master's degree in Punjabi and Sikh Studies and teaching Punjabi lessons, as well as taking to the airwaves every week as a radio DJ for Raaj FM! Earlier in life, badminton was my passion but now staying fit for me means regular brisk walks as part of my everyday routine. By leaving my car at home whenever I can, I benefit from walking long distances and often smash my weekly step account. My fitness tracking watch always warns me if I have been inactive for too long!





Mumtaz's Way...

**Activity: Swimming Age: 48
From: Aston**

Life is definitely busy as a local councilor and mum of six! My hours of free time can be unpredictable, so I set able goals and then try to exceed them. Every single week I ensure I get off to a great start by attending a swimming session. I prefer to wear the burkini because it gives me safety and comfort. Swimwear, which allows you to be fully covered, is readily available now, and means it is possible for me to still keep fit and enjoy my favorite sports. When you're busy it can be tempting to skip fitness classes, but being healthy actually gives me more energy to do my job, have fun with my children and sleep better. I encourage my children to go to the gym and play football and hope they will continue these good habits into adulthood.

Sukaina's way...

**Activity: Walking Football
Age: 53
From: Moseley**

Despite getting a knee injury a few years ago, I have not given up on keeping active! I was inspired by Aaminah, my daughter, who is a physiotherapist. When she was putting her classes together, she thought of people like me who still want to keep active but might have some limitations.

That's how the walking football classes started! It's the game of football everybody loves, but players must walk instead of run. Combining the fun and tactics of sports with knee-friendly movement has shown me that motivation is the only limit to keeping fit. It's not just my physical health exercise is also vital to my mental health, and provides an opportunity every week to get out of the house and socialise with my community.



South Asian sport icons

Milkha Singh – first South Asian to win a Gold medal, Commonwealth Games 1958

Mary Kom - the only woman to have competed in boxing at the Olympics for India

Jahangir Khan – born in Pakistan, he was the youngest ever world Squash champion at 17.

Rohullah Nikpai – won Afghanistan's first Olympic medal, in Taekwondo, in 2008.

Susanthika Jayasinghe – Born in Sri Lanka, she was the first Asian to win an Olympic or World Championship medal in a sprint event in 2000.



Did you know?

Association football is the most popular sport in almost all Asian Countries.

Cricket is the second most popular sport, most popular in South Asia.

Asia has hosted a total of six **Olympic Games**: three Summer Games and three Winter Olympics.

India is the 4th position all-time medal winner in the **Commonwealth Games**.

The Asian Games, also known as Asiad, are the oldest and most prestigious event on the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) calendar, dating back to New Delhi in 1951. Like the Olympic Games, they are held every four years.

Sports originating in South Asia

Badminton was originally developed in India amongst British expatriates.

Snooker was first played in 1875 in India. Jahangir Khan, born in Pakistan, is widely regarded.

Kabaddi is a contact team sport originating from ancient India, with two teams attempting to cross onto the other team's side.

Tennikoit, also called ring tennis, played on a tennis-style court with a circular rubber ring

Leg Cricket is where cricket meets football, invented by a schoolboy in Maharashtra in 1999!

Pehlwani is a form of wrestling originating in India and Persia.

Gillidanda originated in India and is played like a bat and ball game, with a large stick used to hit a smaller one.

HOW ACTIVE AM I?

It may be helpful to review your activity levels now to get a better understanding of how much time you spend being active in a week. Use the questions below to think about how active you are.

Activities	Number of minutes
Walking – during the last week, did you walk briskly enough to make you feel warm and slightly breathing harder than normal for more than 15 minutes at a time? For example, it might be walking to the shops, to work or out with family and friends.	Number of minutes:
Other activity – during the last week, have you done any activity other than walking, for more than 15 minutes at a time that made you feel warm and breathing harder than normal. For example, heavy housework, swimming, dancing, aerobic class or badminton.	Number of minutes:



How did you do?

Total number of minutes:

- **Less than 150 minutes** – you are inactive.
- **150 minutes or more**, but you are active on less than 5 days a week – you need to increase your level of activity
- **150 minutes or more**, and you are active on more than 5 days a week – great! But you need to keep it up.

HOW CAN I PLAN MY WORKOUTS?

The groundwork of all happiness is health.

Create your own routine using your preferred combination of moderate, vigorous and strengthening exercises if it is safe for you to be active.

For example, across your week you could aim to:

- Get outside for a **30-minute walk everyday**
- Do strengthening exercises twice a week
- Explore a new hobby that helps keep you active

Across the week this could look like...

- **1 x 30-minute walk every day** and 2 strengthening classes a week. You could choose to do the school runs on foot, carry heavy shopping bags, go to a weights class at the gym and get out for a family walk at the weekend.

OR

- 75 minutes of jogging or swimming and 2 strengthening classes a week. This might look like jogging on 3 days, doing some heavy gardening and an at home body weight workout.

OR

- A mix of any of these types of activities! Remember to try to break up long periods of not moving with some activity and if you have medical conditions or concerns speak to your GP before increasing your physical activity.



HOW CAN I BECOME MORE ACTIVE?

- Are you concerned about cost?
- Are you looking for female-only classes?
- Do you need private changing facilities?
- Where can I find my local leisure centres and facilities?
- Do you need private changing facilities?

Use the Active Birmingham Activity Finder to find free and low-cost classes and facilities in your local area:

<https://activebirmingham.co.uk/>



You can find **FREE** gym, swim and fitness classes at Birmingham City Council Wellbeing Centres and at the below Leisure Centres across Birmingham. Timings vary across sites:

- Alexander Stadium
- Beeches Leisure Centre
- Handsworth Wellbeing Centre
- Billesley Tennis & Fitness Centre
- Kingstanding Wellbeing Centre
- Cocks Moors Woods Leisure Centre
- Nechells Wellbeing Centre
- Erdington Leisure Centre
- Saltley Wellbeing Centre
- Fox Hollies Leisure Centre
- Shard End Wellbeing Centre
- Harborne Pool & Fitness Centre
- Small Heath Wellbeing Centre
- Ladywood Leisure Centre
- Summerfield Community Sports Centre
- Northfield Leisure Centre
- Sparkhill Pool & Fitness Centre
- Stechford Leisure Centre
- Wyndley Leisure Centre

[See all leisure centres and facilities.](#)

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You've got this!

