Winter Fitness Activities
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http://www.livestrong.com/article/179021-winter-fitness-activities/

Just because it’s winter doesn’t mean that you can’t enjoy activities that aid fitness and exercise. Winter offers a variety of opportunities for exercising while enjoying the outdoors. Depending on your location, you may have plenty of snow-bound activities to choose from that offer cardiovascular exercise, endurance training, toning and sculpting.

Here are some Winter Activity Ideas:

**Snowshoeing:** Snowshoeing gives your lower body and cardiovascular a low-impact workout. Your legs will especially benefit from a trek in snowshoes because you’ll work the ankle, calves, knees and thighs. A 135-lb. woman can burn roughly 450 calories an hour while snowshoeing, according to Self magazine, more if you’re trekking up and down hills.

**Cross-Country Skiing:** Cross-country skiing is a low-impact workout for the whole body. It offers an effective cardio workout that gets the heart rate elevated and keeps it there, helping to increase metabolism and burn calories. Cross-country skiing also tones and sculpts the lower body and increases stamina and endurance. Easy on the joints, cross-country skiing also helps improve balance, and using the poles gives your upper body a good workout, too. An hour of moderate cross-country skiing for a 135-lb. woman can burn up to 515 calories an hour at a moderate pace and up to 580 calories an hour as a fast pace.

**Hiking:** Dress accordingly and go outside for a walk in the snow. Layering clothing so that you can take off outerwear as you sweat. Wear a synthetic material next to your body that allows sweat to escape. Add a layer of something fleecy and then an outer shell. Wear gloves and pay attention to wind chill. Hike on flat surfaces to start and then add more challenge as you feel yourself growing stronger. Hiking offers cardiovascular, toning and

**Downhill Skiing:** Whether or not you have skied, starting on the bunny hill is the perfect place to start! The challenge of exercising in the cold and the excitement of speeding down a snow-covered mountainside appeal to many who travel to ski resorts every year to partake in downhill skiing. A person weighing 160 pounds burns 365 calories in an hour of downhill skiing. Go hit the slopes!

**Snow Ball Fights:** Enjoy a good, old-fashioned snowball fight. Get outside with a group of friends and have a snowball war or fight. Much like a paintball game, you’ll get plenty of exercise running, ducking, twisting and turning.

**Ice Skating:** You can burn up to 350 calories just breezing around the iced pond or skating rink, or up to 450 calories an hour with a moderate hour of ice skating. Work the entire body and increase cardiovascular fitness while ice skating, toning and sculpting the body.

Studies have shown that most of us gain less weight over the winter holidays than we think, only one pound on average. However, the news is not all that good, as many people never manage to lose the weight again. Average weight gain over the Christmas Holidays Permanent holiday weight gain is not a pleasant thought for most of us, especially since the number one New Year resolution is to lose weight fast. Eighty percent of Americans make a New Year resolution each year, and twenty six percent of those resolutions were to improve overall health and fitness, making this the top category for self-improvement. According to Amy O’Connor, deputy editor of Prevention magazine: “Fifty-nine million people every year resolve to lose weight.” So what can we do to maintain some degree of weight control during the holidays?