

What Are the Next Outdoor Fitness Trends You Should Try Right Now?



By Ignacio Pérez

Gym workouts can be boring, especially if you don't have an exciting goal like winning a marathon. Of late, the experience has become more important than the workout itself. The 'Green Exercise' movement is on the rise, and has turned the great outdoors into the 'new indoors.'

Do you think that only a personal trainer in a gym can help you work out and tone your body? Think twice! Thrilling outdoor activities, from [surfing](#) and [stand-up paddling](#) to outdoor trips like camping, hiking and even rock climbing, are just as efficient. So throw some sunscreen on, strap on your sunglasses and say hello to your new gym – open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, no paid subscription required.

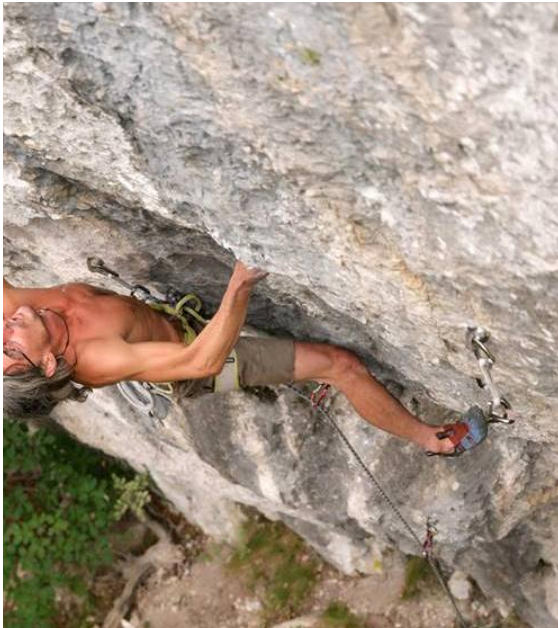
Are you sick of doing crunches in the gym? Are you ready to get your sweat on? The sun is shining, the water is calling, and all that's missing is you. Not sure where to start? Here's the latest scoop on the next [outdoor fitness trends](#) that are already taking the world by storm.

Outdoor Adventure

Many personal trainers try to include outdoor activities as part of their clients' fitness program. [Based on research](#), moderate exposure to sunlight can boost your mood, get you high on vitamin D and have you sweating even more than you would in the gym. According to [a study](#) by *Environmental Science and Technology*, those who exercise outside have higher energy levels and are less stressed and tensed than those who exercise indoors.



Photo credit: Octavia Drughi



Outdoor excursions and activities have many great mental health benefits too. Greenery has a positive impact on the mind after only five minutes. And doesn't that rolling scenery look so much better than the television screen in your gym?

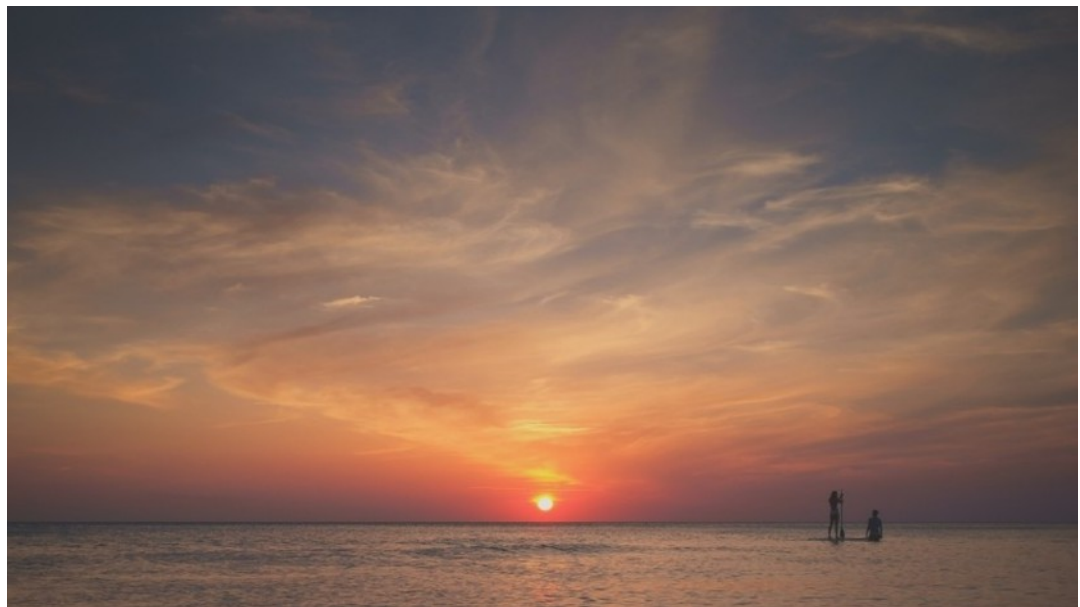
Outdoor activities like hiking, [kayaking](#), trail running, mountain biking, [surfing](#) and rock climbing are excellent cardio, endurance and strength workouts that also improve your coordination and focus.

You can burn up to 500 calories per hour while hiking. Trail running burns 10 percent more calories than road running, and you can melt well over 1,000 calories per hour. Rock climbing burns between 500 and 900 calories per hour (depending on the intensity of the climb and the rests in between the routes). While [climbing gyms](#) are touted as the next health clubs, going

outside is so much better!

Stand-up Paddling

A fitness trend that has already swept the world, stand-up paddle boarding, or simply SUP, is an ancient mode of transportation that has been around for centuries. Yet it only exploded in popularity over the past years. Stand-up paddling is much easier to learn than surfing but just as exciting.



[Stand-up paddling](#) improves your balance, strength, cardiovascular health, endurance and posture. It can also help you lose weight, [burning up to](#) 500 calories per hour when paddling at a moderate pace, and up to 1,125 calories per hour when doing SUP racing.

Photo credit: Octavia Drughi



You can embark on epic SUP trips and paddle on rivers, lakes and oceans with only the help of a paddle and board. For an extra challenge, try river rapids, waves (SUP surfing), SUP racing and SUP yoga. What you'll get in return is a great workout that will sculpt your arms, legs and abs, while

filling you up with energy and good vibes. SUP is so darn fun and relaxing, that you'll completely forget that you're working out.

Outdoor Group Training Sessions



Photo credit: fitnessbells.com

Do you like training solo? Group training makes working out much more exciting, so this might be a good time to change your mind! You'll be motivated to push yourself harder than you would

when exercising on your own. After all, nothing tops a group of insanely motivated people to help you get a sweat on. What's more, it is a great way to hold yourself accountable. You may not feel as willing to skip a workout with friends than you would if it was just you.

Small group training involves six to eight people exercising together, either indoor or outdoor, with or without a personal trainer. But what do you do during these outdoor group training sessions? It can be anything from jogging, running and biking to your favorite bodyweight, cardio, strength, endurance or [CrossFit](#) workouts.

Photo credit: fillnowcoaching.com



High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) doesn't have to be all about the gym anymore. Take yours outside amongst friends and reap the many benefits of a unique and ever-changing environment. You can even [take your yoga outdoors](#). The possibilities are endless!

Outdoor Obstacle Course Challenges

Inspired by the classic military assault course, millions of people worldwide are joining these challenges to test their endurance, stamina, strength and speed. But don't expect these races to be solely physical, they will test your mental resistance and even your sanity.

Obstacle courses involve climbing, crawling, running, jumping, lifting, throwing, pulling, all in short bursts of energy. Picture this: rope ladders, monkey bars, trench and water crossings, mud crawls, barbed wire fences, muddy pits, one after the other.



Photo credit: hiconsumption.com

Races vary in length, usually from 3 to 12 miles (5 to 20 km), and can include anywhere from 15 to 45 obstacles. Some races are timed, some are not. At the end, everyone feels like a winner.



Even if you compete individually, there's still a sense of camaraderie, as it takes team-work to get past most of the obstacles.

Photo credit: hiconsumption.com

Establishing a running routine is not enough to prepare for an obstacle course competition. You must [train like an athlete](#) and combine running with specific exercises that mimic the movements you'll be performing during the race.

[Spartan Race](#) is the world's largest and most recognizable obstacle course race. Other popular international races are [Warrior Dash](#) and [Tough Mudder](#), but you'll surely find plenty of local competition near you. Lace up, abandon all hesitation, act like a kid and let go of your inhibitions!

Slacklining



If you've ever had dreams of joining the circus as a kid, then this one's for you. If you're not familiar with slacklining yet, please allow me to introduce it to you.

Balancing on a strip of webbing suspended low to the ground is known as slacklining. You can mount the line just about anywhere between two trees, posts, buildings, etc. It's like walking a tightrope, only... not so tight. Hence the name, slack.

However, there's no slacking when it comes to slacklining. With so many exercises that you can try, training is never boring. You can simply walk from one end to the other, which is just as

hard as it looks, try step-ups, lunges, headstands and all sort of neat tricks. All the muscles in your body will be engaged, from your core to your glutes, hamstrings, quads, hips and calves.

According to [a study](#), slacklining improves posture, balance and side-to-side stability, and can help you perform better at other sports and outdoor activities, such as rock climbing, hiking, running, [surfing](#), skiing and stand-up paddling. Aside from improving your balance, slacklining can prevent common leg injuries by improving leg joint stability, as shown by another [study](#) by researchers from the University of Salzburg.

All health benefits aside, perhaps the best thing you can gain from slacklining is the good fun that you are bound to have each time you walk the line, not to mention the boost in self-esteem from seeing improvements each time. It is also a surefire way to meet new, like-minded people.

SUP Yoga



Photo by Benoit Mouren

Year-on-year, yoga is getting more and more popular. It is an age-old practice, yet its many amazing benefits are only starting to be acknowledged. This season, take your yoga outdoors on the water because paddleboard yoga is a huge thing right now.

[SUP yoga](#) is a great way to take your yoga practice to the next level. If you simply cannot find those ‘unorthodox’ poses challenging enough anymore, wait until you step on a paddleboard. You’re in for

a surprise. Even the simplest of poses will seem hard to pull off at first, regardless of your fitness level.

You don’t necessarily need to be an experienced yoga practitioner or stand-up paddle boarder. SUP yoga is for everyone. It doesn’t matter if you’ve never stepped on a paddleboard before or if you’ve only taken a few yoga classes and don’t even know all the poses yet, anyone can reap the benefits of this low-impact exercise. You will develop strong obliques, sculpt your shoulders and improve your posture, build strength, flexibility and coordination. Being in motion helps tone your core muscles and hone balance.

Yoga is a calming exercise, and when you pair it with the warm, soothing sun and the playful reflections of the water, you’ll immediately slip into a meditative state of mind. So go ahead, trade your yoga mat for a paddleboard this summer!

Whether you’re a fan of CrossFit, yoga, hiking, surfing or simply riding your bike everywhere you go, the trick is to enjoy it. That is the secret ingredient for a fitness trend that will never go out of style.