

Fun Fact of the Week

The Top 2019 Fitness Trends — and How to Incorporate them Into Your Workouts*

By Stephanie Mansour

Fitness professionals say these are the exercise trends to watch this year. Here's how to use them to your advantage.

Each year, the [worldwide survey of fitness trends](#) is sent to over 30,000 fitness professionals to rank exercise trends for the next year. These trends aren't "trendy" or fads — almost all of the most popular fitness trends predicted for 2019 have earned a spot on the list in previous years.

The trends that have staying power (such as HIIT training and [group workouts](#)) are ones that are easily accessible in everyday life, and deliver results, fast. Wearable technology is seeing a resurgence, taking the first place for 2019 (after dropping to 3rd place in 2018). Here are some of the top 2019 fitness trends along with their health pitch or claim, plus a takeaway for how you can integrate them into your current fitness plan.



STREAMING WORKOUTS

The Trend: Streaming workouts allow you to have the convenience of an instructor-led workout accessible no matter where you are. If you travel a lot and are stuck in hotel rooms, or if you're unmotivated to get to the gym and go to an in-person class, these streaming workouts are for you.

The Verdict: As with all exercise, consistency is key. I'd recommend trying a streaming workout for a month, and track how often you use it. Then take the amount you paid for the subscription for the streaming workouts, and divide it out into how many workouts you actually did. Then decide if it's financially worth it to you. Celebrity trainer Joey Thurman (creator of the Joey Thurman fit app) warns that with streaming workouts, you don't have a professional checking your form and prescribing the right exercises for *your* body, so you could risk [injuring yourself](#) or enforcing bad habits. So it may be worth scheduling a session or two with a personal trainer in person first to get instruction on proper technique. "All in all," he says, "If it's a reputable source, trainer, coach and company, you should be fine."

The Takeaway: If you have an erratic schedule or travel often, the convenience of having workouts ready to play wherever you are can help you stick with a routine. What's the difference between buying a subscription to streaming workouts and searching for workouts on YouTube, you ask? Good question. If you're financially invested in a workout program, you're more likely to stick to it. So while the free workouts may be tempting, the financial commitment may help keep yourself accountable.

HIIT WORKOUTS

The Trend: Traditionally, the benefit of HIIT workouts (high intensity interval training) is that you can get a big bang for your exercise buck. By pushing yourself through interval training, and alternating between high intensity and lower intensity, you're all in for a shorter workout that rarely provides breaks or time to catch your breath. HIIT is being incorporated into more and more workouts — from boutique gyms to bootcamps. They're even starting to pop up in Pilates classes and [yoga classes](#).

The Verdict: According to Thurman, “This is a trend that never should go away.” He says that the point of HIIT is to, “Go hard or go home!” He has his clients do these workouts on their own one to three times a week and incorporates HIIT into his training sessions. [Research shows](#) that high intensity interval training is one of the best ways to burn fat quickly. By pushing your body full force for a shorter amount of time, you’re getting a strength training workout, [cardio workout](#) and a full-body workout all at once.

The Takeaway: You don’t need a fancy HIIT class to incorporate this trend into your workout. You can apply the HIIT training principles to any workout that you’re already doing. If you’re the queen of cardio, you can make your cardio workout more effective by changing your speed or changing the difficulty every few minutes. Or you could add 30 second sprints every few minutes. If you’re doing a strength training workout, you can cut out breaks in between sets and add in some cardio bursts to get your heart rate up. If you’re looking to spice up your yoga or Pilates routine, move through some parts of the sequence faster and go slower through other parts.

GROUP TRAINING CLASSES

The Trend: If you’re motivated by a competitive spirit or can’t afford one-on-one training but would like direction from a fitness instructor, group training classes are a popular trend that allows participants to use the energy of a group to push through a workout.

The Verdict: Group training classes can serve as a good motivator to push yourself harder or faster compared to the people around you. [One study found](#) that 95 percent of those who started a weight-loss program with friends completed the program, compared to a 76 percent completion rate for those who tackled the program alone. Other [studies](#) confirm that working out with a partner significantly increases time spent exercising. Plus, with an instructor-led workout, you can bank on a good, hard workout, that doesn’t take much forethought or planning on your part. However, Thurman warns, “Beware that everyone is doing the same workout, and one instructor has to watch 20 or 30 of you. Be sure to keep strict form and always speak up if something doesn’t feel right!”

The Takeaway: Enlisting a group mentality can help when your [motivation starts to wane](#). Consider working out with a group of friends in your living room, joining a run club for weekly jogs in the park or signing up for a group training class to help hold yourself accountable and push yourself harder.

WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY

The Trend: Wearable trackers are definitely here to stay. They’re helping everyday people track their health on many different levels. From encouraging you during a tough workout to giving you feedback on your sleep, there’s [a tracker to suit your needs](#).

The Verdict: Many of my clients use trackers in addition to their other health and fitness goals. For example, one of my clients has a tracker and tries to close her “rings” everyday. She has a step goal (10,000), a water goal (she has to manually enter this), and a sleep goal (a minimum of 6 hours) to meet. This is in addition to her other goals that help with weight loss. But when she closes her rings, it gives her an extra confidence boost. So while trackers are great, I’d recommend using them as a supplement to other goals. Thurman echoes this, “Wearing a smart watch is great ... if you use it correctly. It’s nice that you hit your 10,000 steps a day, but how many steps were you taking before you got the watch?”

The Takeaway: Take the wearable technology with a grain of salt. Thurman even says, “Sometimes technology gives you a reason to slack off. They can also give you a false sense of accomplishment by [overestimating your calorie burn](#) or how hard you worked.” So use this tool to help keep you on track, but don’t rely on them fully.

HIRING A PERSONAL TRAINER

The Trend: When you’re [working with a personal trainer](#), all you have to do is show up and let him/her do the coaching. A personal trainer not only provides a well-rounded and educated workout for you, but also ensures accountability with the appointments. Thurman (who, as a personal trainer, admits he’s biased) says, “For the most part, I would say this is the best way to get you the most efficient workout and results the fastest.”

The Verdict: As a certified personal trainer myself, I know the kind of results we can deliver. But sometimes I cringe when I see trainers in the gym staring off or checking their phones instead of checking the form of their clients. Make sure you have an attentive trainer who pushes you, but never makes you feel like it's "all pain and no gain." Ideally you want to feel like you're working together with the trainer.

The Takeaway: "Make sure the trainer knows what they're doing, will push you safely, is certified, and will give you 95 percent of what you want and 5 percent of what you need," says Thurman. Communicate with your trainer so that you're both on the same page, and if one isn't working out for you, shop around for someone with a coaching style that fits your needs. If expenses are an issue, go to one personal training session a week and ask for a written out workout routine that you can follow for a few other days during the week. It is also important to know that trainers realize it won't be a life long partnership! The goal is to help you reach your goals and equip you with the tools you need to succeed on your own. So be honest about how many sessions you can afford and what you hope to accomplish in that time.

NOT ON THE LIST BUT SHOULD BE: MEDITATION BECOMES MAINSTREAM IN FITNESS

The Trend: Working out the mind is becoming almost as popular as working out the body. By [practicing meditation](#) and mindfulness, you're able to be more in tune with your body and how you're feeling. Whether you flow through a moving meditation (like in a yoga class) or set aside time each day to sit in a traditional pose and meditate, it's becoming more and more common for people to have their own personal meditation practice.

The Verdict: Thurman says, "Meditation has been around for thousands of years for a reason ... it works! The mind is a powerful thing, and I suggest getting to know yourself." He also says that we can utilize our own energy for good or bad, and I've noticed this with my clients as well. When we go through positive body-image meditations, their outlook on themselves slowly (but positively) changes. What's more, along with the mental effects of meditation, [research shows](#) that there are also physiological effects from meditation. Pain reduction, improvement in immune system, increasing blood flow to the heart, and decreasing cortisol are just a few of the effects that are similar to the effects of exercise.

The Takeaway: You can integrate meditation into your everyday life by using meditation apps. There are also some boutique studios that specialize in meditation, and even some mainstream gyms now offer meditation classes. The [practice of mindfulness](#) can also be brought into any workout — not just traditional meditation. Bring your awareness to a certain body part during a bootcamp session or pay attention to your breathing pattern as you [run on a treadmill](#). Not only will you quiet your mind, but focusing specifically on certain aspects of your body may also push you to work harder and better target muscle groups.