

# Get Up and Keep Going!



## The end of the year

doesn't have to mean the end of your Get Up and Go plan. But for a lot of people, the colder, darker days and vacations from school make it hard to stay on track. Get Up and Go is here to help! You can fight the temptation to be a couch potato and mix up your workout schedule at the same time.

**Ready? Let's Get Up and Go!**

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## Bounce Out of a Slump

After a few months, it can be hard to Get Up and Go sometimes. That's where trying something new can be a big help. Take Elle Gilbert, the alpine ski racer in this month's *Current Health* magazine. When there's no snow, she plays other sports to keep in ski-season shape. Try a new activity that gives you the same healthy benefits as what you have been doing—with the bonus of being fun too!

### Need some ideas? Try these!

**Balancing Act:** Looking to work on your sense of balance? Try a balance board, where you stand on a wobbly board and use your strength to keep yourself from tipping over. Some boards combine exercise with a game. With these boards, your body movement tips the board from left to right and back to front, moving a ball around a maze. When you get the ball through the maze, you win. Want to move while you balance? A RipStik, or "caster board," looks like a skateboard but has only two wheels. When a rider moves, it looks as if he or she is snowboarding or surfing.

**Getting Creative:** In the magazine this month, we learned about pogo stick games. Another group of inventive students at Dalhousie University in Canada made up their own game, a combination of Ultimate Frisbee and Quidditch (played in the Harry Potter books). But instead of flying on brooms, as in the books, this game is played in a pool. Players float on tubes and aim a flying disc into a goal. But at the same time, a ball is tossed around to make scoring even tougher.

**Try it yourself!** Want to try a brand-new game, but aren't sure what to do? Spin the wheels at [www.verbnow.com/game\\_generator](http://www.verbnow.com/game_generator) to learn how to play "Rec Room Hula Hopping," "Snowball Skeet," "Play-ground Socc-minton" and more.

**HOP TO IT!** To use a pogo stick, you stand on it, hold the handle, and start bouncing. Traditional pogo sticks have a spring at the bottom, but some new-style sticks use other methods to get you moving. There are even pogo sticks with a ball at the bottom which you can use in pools!



Have you ever made up a game?  
How did it work? Let us know!  
[currenthealth@weeklyreader.com](mailto:currenthealth@weeklyreader.com)

## Stay On Track

For many people, December means fun times with family and friends. For others, it's about special foods that aren't so good for you. And for most kids, December also means time off from school. All these things can add up to one problem: It can be hard to keep your Get Up and Go plan in good shape! Here are some tips.

### \* Make time for exercise.

Do you get most of your exercise in school? On your days off, try and fit in some activity too. Pick a time each day that will work for you and get moving!

### \* Try some tunes.

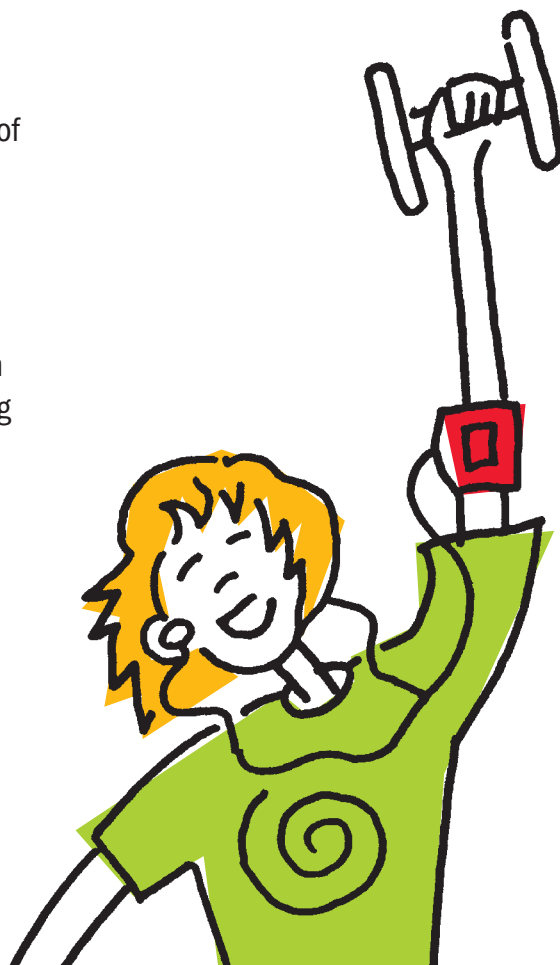
Music has been proven to help people get more out of exercise. Dance music usually works well, even if you aren't dancing. So put on your favorite fast-paced songs or radio station and get moving!

### \* Do a little party planning.

Do you have a party to go to tomorrow that will cut in to your exercise time? Then get out and do something today, fitness expert Andrea Metcalf advises.

### \* Be positive.

Is it difficult to make it all work? No worries. Stay positive and do what you can. Remember that tomorrow is another day to start fresh, Metcalf says.



## Serving Size Strategies

**Uh-oh. Here comes that giant plate of turkey again. And there's a big bowl of sweet potatoes with marshmallows up next. What's a healthy eater to do?**

**Practice perfect portioning.** Don't pile your plate as high as the Eiffel Tower. Take small portions. Just because your dinner plate is huge doesn't mean your meal needs to be!

**Or pick your plate.** If you have a choice of dinner plates, choose a smaller one. That way you are less likely to overload the dish with food you won't—or maybe *shouldn't*—eat.

**Eat slowly.** It takes about 20 minutes for your mind to know that your stomach is full. Eating slowly also help you enjoy your food more. Plus, nobody likes to get a stomach ache during a party!

**Don't forget dessert.** Dessert counts too! Keep portion sizes in mind when you're facing down a table of pies and cookies.

## The Gift of Health

December is a time when many people exchange gifts with loved ones. Here are some ideas for healthy gift-giving, now and year round.

### For Your Parents

Sometimes the gift of time is the most meaningful and appreciated. Help your parents get healthy by offering to watch younger siblings while they go for a walk or a run. Or plan time to walk as a family.

### For Your Best Friend

You know music is a great way to help you get moving. Why not make a list of your favorite workout songs, or create an exercise mix or CD, for a friend? You'll give your friend a gift of health—and good tunes!

### For Your Brother or Sister

Exercising together is more fun than exercising alone. Set up a special time once a week to get together with your siblings and do something active. Join a team, take a class, or sign up for a bowling league together. Even if you just go for a walk, it will give you a chance to get to know each other better.

### For Your Grandparents

Some grandparents run marathons. Others love to play golf. Still others like to walk whenever they can. These activities can give you gift ideas. But even if your grandparents are no longer active, talk to them about what they did for exercise or sports when they were your age. You might be surprised to learn that Grandma was a tennis ace, or that Grandpa was a real star on the dance floor.

Going to a big family dinner this month? Gather a group and go for a walk after you eat. Even if you feel groggy from eating too much, you'll feel better when you return from a brisk walk outside than you will after a post-dinner nap in Grandpa's old chair!

**The winter holidays aren't the only time healthy gifts are appreciated. Try these ideas next time you're stumped for what to give:**

#### For a Birthday

Think about giving the gift of a healthy experience. What about a gift certificate for a karate lesson or a dance class?

#### For Mother's or Father's Day

Surprise your parents with a healthy breakfast. Put together a fruit salad or low-fat smoothie, or make a bowl of oatmeal—it's good for their hearts.



## Personal Get Up and Go Planner

Finding time to make healthy changes can be difficult. It helps if you plan ahead. Use this planner to help you. Fill in two weeks' worth of dates as shown at right. Then list ways you can Get Up and Go each day. Check off the activities and list others as you go. Use the planner to find time to Get Up and Go and to keep track of your progress!

date: Dec. 12

- walk to school
- walk at mall
- basketball game
- jump rope

Played kickball with neighbors

Took stairs at the mall instead of the escalator

MY PLAN:

EXTRAS:



**Keep it Up!**  
 If you've been active with Get Up and Go for the whole school year so far, pat yourself on the back! Or are you just getting started? No problem, it's never too late to begin! This sheet can help you.

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