

Exercise for your **body shape**

Health and fitness expert **Dean Hodgkin** says that the pathway to fitness needs a personal trainer's approach.

We seem to be constantly bombarded by celebrity fitness success stories, often recording remarkable changes in appearance. From Madonna to Gwyneth and from Demi to Jordan each makeover features a significant common-denominator ... the personal trainer. You'd be forgiven for thinking that having your own fitness guru was a prerequisite for achieving A-list status as it's a case of needles and haystacks when trying to find a celebrity who has made the journey solo. In fact, to the rich and famous a personal trainer is right up there with the rest of his or her must-have designer accessories. Fear not, however, for the pathway to fitness is not solely trodden by the well-heeled. If you've decided this is definitely the year you give up giving up but your bank balance is not as ample as your waistline, your fitness dreams can still come true. All you need is a little inside knowledge to apply the personal trainer's approach to your own lifestyle and so ensure your efforts are successful.

The good news is, becoming your own fitness guru is as easy as 1-2-3!

STEP 1 – Assess your shape

STEP 2 – Identify your preferences

STEP 3 – Establish the time you have available.

STEP 2: What's your personality?

Extrovert	You are sociable, perhaps adventurous and enjoy being with friends. You also like to be in control and tend to be eager to please others. Your favoured exercise options will be group classes, team sports and charity activities.
Introvert	You prefer 'me' time and can be sensitive yet strong-willed. Often creative, your workout flavours will be at home, outdoors and mind-body influenced.

STEP 1: What's your body type?

Danger - your present exercise routine could be bad for your body! Yes, believe it or not, the wrong type of exercise for you could sabotage your efforts rather than move you closer to your goals. Since we come in different shapes you'll not be surprised to learn that, when we're talking fitness, 'one size fits all' doesn't apply. The key to bringing about positive changes in your body is to find an exercise regime that suits your body type.

Once you've identified your body type, you can select from a menu designed to target your problem areas. Simply choosing to exercise blindly may produce the wrong sort of results for you and even exaggerate your bad points.

Your genetic blueprint has programmed your body to develop muscle and store fat in specific areas, enabling us to define four distinct body shape classifications.

Pear	You tend to put on weight easily and it usually ends up on your hips and thighs. Focus should be on building definition in the upper body to balance your appearance. Work for the lower body should be low intensity to avoid adding bulk but also low impact as the load-bearing joints may be susceptible to injury
Stick	You have trouble achieving curves and generally have a wiry frame, which, unfortunately, predisposes you to an increased risk of osteoporosis. You should concentrate on weight-bearing exercises to increase bone density and add lean body mass for a more Rubenesque appearance.
Hourglass	Naturally muscular, you don't have to work too hard to look defined. However, you tend to be less flexible so to avoid both short and long term injury risks stretching should be a significant component of your plan. A high metabolic rate may mean you need less aerobic, calorie burning work but this should still be done to improve your heart/lung efficiency for the associated health benefits.
Apple	You've got the natural strength of the hourglass but with an extra layer of insulation all around. Higher body fat levels make you naturally more buoyant, so water-based sessions will suit you perfectly. Pay special attention to your mid-section as it's a flab-prone zone for you, so never skip the abdominal exercises.

STEP 3: Time

To increase your chance of success it's important to select exercise options that can be slotted into your daily routine, rather than trying to juggle your day around your workout.

1. Work	There's never enough time as you've got a full time job, kids to bathe, pets to feed. The key here is to grab ten minutes whenever you can, as the benefits of your exercise bites can still be accrued cumulatively.
2. Rest	Maybe working part-time or looking after little ones, you are busy but have some down-time that can be your exercise window.
3. Play	Perhaps you're not working currently and there are no dependants demanding your attention. You can easily afford to take the time required to travel to a venue, complete your activity or workout and return home.

Find the right workout plan for you			
Shape	Personality	Time	Options
Pear	Extrovert	Work	Spinning, Low Impact Aerobics
		Rest	Ceroc, Salsa
		Play	Rowing, Fencing
	Introvert	Work	Hip/Thigh Toning Video, Power-walking
		Rest	Modern Dance, New-Body Class
		Play	TKO, Bodycombat, Karate
Stick	Extrovert	Work	Dumbbells at Home
		Rest	Bodymax, Bodypump, Step Class
		Play	Athletics, Volleyball
	Introvert	Work	Running, Home Rower
		Rest	Gym Weights Programme
		Play	Rock Climbing, Half-Marathon
Hourglass	Extrovert	Work	Pilates Video, Stability Ball at Home
		Rest	Fitness Yoga, Bodybalance, Circuit Class
		Play	Tennis, Badminton, Squash
	Introvert	Work	Home Treadmill, Home Stepper
		Rest	Frisbee, Hatha Yoga
		Play	Bodybuilding, Mini-Triathlon
Apple	Extrovert	Work	Home Exercise Bike, Home Elliptical Trainer
		Rest	Aqua Class, Tums and Bums Class, Pilates
		Play	Tai Chi, Aikido
	Introvert	Work	Abdominals Video, Powerwalking
		Rest	Mountain Biking, Core Strength in Gym
		Play	Swimming, Hiking

Ceroc: French jive dance class, like a mix of rock 'n' roll and salsa

New body class: Class using small hand weights for upper body toning whilst performing aerobic routines

TKO: combat fitness

Bodymax: group resistance class using dumbbells (as opposed to barbells in Bodypump)

Bodybalance: Mind body class that blends yoga, pilates and relaxation techniques

Body combat: combat fitness

Aikido: a form of martial art with self defence benefit, gentler than karate but more intense than tai chi