



David Fairlamb

THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

See the outdoors as an opportunity to mix up your exercise and enhance your physical and mental wellbeing. Explore the variety of locations around the gorgeous North East – it's all free!

FITNESS TIP

Choose a different location to exercise as often as possible and vary the type and intensity of your workout. Try exercising alone, at a more gentle pace, with family members, or in small groups of up to six to vary your approach.

Don't miss David's tips every Saturday in your Journal

WE are never more grateful for our freedom than when we have been restricted in our movements or who we can spend our time with.

One of the best ways to keep mentally and physically well during these restricted times is by making full use of what you have naturally around you – the great outdoors!

'Green exercise' is a term used to define exercising in the presence of nature.

Utilising an outdoor environment for exercise can be done safely in a family or single household unit or in groups of up to six.

The benefits are many – it's free, sunshine naturally boosts our serotonin levels to help improve mood and connecting with nature can offer an inspiring backdrop to your workout and, like indoors, you can make it as leisurely or as intense as you like.

Wilderness areas and exercising near water are proven to be most beneficial to mental health according to one UK study.

Here in the North East we are blessed with both in abundance.

We have 40+ miles of outstanding coastline in Northumberland with a variety of ways to access them including steps, ramps & dunes – all of which can be used to vary an exercise routine.

Exercising on the sand can reduce the impact on your joints – and there is something naturally uplifting about breathing in the fresh sea air.

Join a local early morning beach yoga class for something gentle or pop along to my Tyne-mouth Beach Bootcamp on Saturday and Sunday mornings – they are an incredible way to kick-start a day.

Heading for lumpier terrains around the Cheviots, Coquetdale, Kielder or Hadrian's Wall can make a leisurely walk that little bit more challenging.

Every workout is progress

Motivational quote of the day

When taking in the views, you might even forget that you're exercising. Other outdoor activities to consider:

- Visit a local park;
- Exercise in the garden;
- Explore the Waggonways by bike;
- Try the new segregated cycle path from Whitley Bay to Tyne-mouth;
- Enjoy a brisk walk along the banks of the River Tyne.

It's half term next week so include the kids in your planned activities – get them out and about away from their mobile devices and games consoles.

According to one UK government report, three quarters of UK children spend less time outside than prison inmates.

A survey published in the same year found that one in nine children had not set foot in a park, forest, beach or other natural environment for at least a year.

Increasing obesity and lower mental wellbeing in children has been linked to a lack of physical activity.



> Exercising outside is proven to be beneficial to mental health