

Surely, many of you have heard about fitness classes. It is a common belief that they are typically for women, and while we see more and more girls working out in the gym, boys tend to avoid fitness classes. Are they right? Maybe today, you'll change your perspective a bit.

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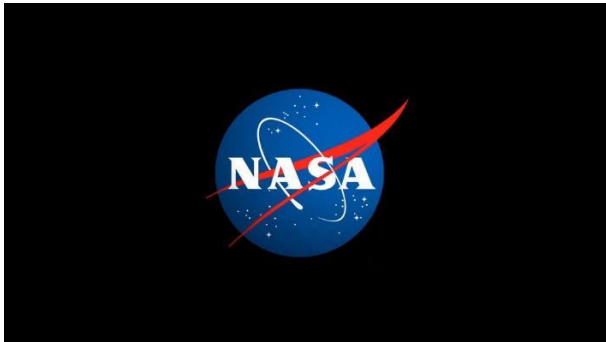


Photo: <https://www.nasa.gov/press-release/nasa-sets-coverage-for-annual-address-budget-media-callin-march>

Aerobics, which started it all in fitness, has its beginnings at NASA. Dr. Kenneth Cooper developed aerobic (oxygen-based) exercises for astronauts, aimed at delivering enough oxygen to the muscles through effort to produce energy. This energy was then derived from burning fat or protein.

Even though Dr. Cooper laid the foundation for fitness, he is more commonly associated with the Cooper test, a 12-minute continuous run. Dr. Cooper's wife, Jacki Sorensen, a dance teacher, enriched aerobic exercises with music and dance steps appropriately chosen to match the music. The first instructional fitness video was broadcast on television in 1969.

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Photo 1: https://www.vokyn.com/?product_id=229201847_33

Photo 2:

https://myfitness.gazeta.pl/myfitness/56,166737,15181423,Historia_fitnessu___od_NASA_do_pierwszego_pol

skiego.html

Two more influential figures in popularizing fitness were American actress Jane Fonda and Polish graduate of Warsaw's AWF, Hanna Fidusiewicz. Jane Fonda promoted fitness on American stages, turning it into a huge business. Hanna Fidusiewicz founded Poland's first fitness club in Warsaw named "Pod skocznią." Thanks to the "Health Academy" program, aerobics became popular nationwide.

In the 90s, supermodel Cindy Crawford promoted fitness by recording a one-hour, multi-stage full-body workout for women, sold in millions of copies on VHS tapes. A bit of technical history - do you know what a VCR is? A VCR is a device that allowed playing VHS tapes at home and watching recorded materials.

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Photo: <https://polki.pl/dieta-i-fitness/odchudzanie,tae-bo-aerobik-polaczony-ze-sztukamiwalki,10314075,artykul.html>

As we know, everything started with aerobics. However, it is not the only form of fitness that dominates today's gyms. Nowadays, depending on the needs of the exerciser, everyone can choose classes that focus on the whole body or specific areas.

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The most popular fitness classes

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FAT BURNING - a workout aimed mainly at burning as many calories as possible through full-body exercises. It includes elements of cardio training, intervals, and strength training. Participants primarily use their own body weight for exercises. Suitable for everyone, regardless of skill level.

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TBC (Total Body Conditioning) - a full-body workout performed to rhythmic music, combining aerobic and strengthening elements. Exercises can use body weight and additional weights such as dumbbells. It aims to achieve a slim, athletic figure. Suitable for everyone, regardless of skill level.

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BODY BALL - a general development workout that affects the entire body using gym balls. It mainly strengthens the back muscles and promotes correct posture. It is not as intense as the previously presented workouts. Recommended for everyone, regardless of skill level.

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ZUMBA - a class combining elements of cardio and strength training, performed to rhythmic music with a choreographed routine. Suitable for everyone, regardless of skill level.

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ABT (Abdominal, Buttocks, Thighs) - a workout aimed at slimming and strengthening specific body parts. Classes are conducted to music in isolated positions, focusing on specific muscle groups. Weights, bands, balls, platforms, etc., are used during the workout. Despite higher intensity, the classes are suitable for everyone, regardless of skill level.

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PILATES - exercises focusing primarily on core muscles through calm and precise movements. In addition to strengthening exercises, stretching and relaxing exercises are also performed. This form is health-promoting and therefore dedicated to everyone.

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CROSSFIT - a general development workout designed to improve overall body fitness and strengthen all muscle groups. Exercises combine elements such as running, jumping, rope work, weight lifting, crunches, and throws. It is a very intense form of training for those who like challenges.

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STRETCHING - stretching exercises aimed at improving muscle flexibility and overall body fitness. The training consists of series of exercises where muscles are tensed and relaxed. It is also an excellent supplementary workout for other forms of activity. Suitable for everyone, regardless of skill level.

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AQUA FITNESS - fitness exercises performed in water of varying depths. Exercises are performed to rhythmic music and aim to activate the entire body. Additional equipment such as foam noodles and weights are used, although they are not very heavy as the water resistance provides additional muscle stimulation. One does not need to know how to swim to participate. Due to the buoyancy of the water, this training is a good alternative for people with higher body weight as it puts less strain on the joints. Suitable for everyone, regardless of age and skill level.

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There are always new exercise options appearing on the market. Therefore, it is impossible to list them all today. When choosing fitness classes, you should visit a club where qualified staff can help you choose the right classes based on your skills and expected results.

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Can you only work out in a gym?

As mentioned, classes can be held not only in a gym but also in a pool, and you can even work out at home. Thanks to readily available home workout options, exercises can be performed in the comfort of your own room. This is an ideal solution for those who do not have professional fitness clubs nearby or for those who feel uncomfortable working out in front of others.

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Are fitness classes only for girls?



Photo: <https://fine-fitness.de/crossfit-calw/>

Group classes are still often seen as a female form of exercise, so men tend to choose gym workouts. However, doing only strength exercises is not always the best option. What good are beautiful muscles if overall endurance and stamina are at a low level? More and more

fitness clubs offer classes specifically designed for men. For instance, the previously mentioned CrossFit is an excellent choice, with more men attending these classes.

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How to start?

First and foremost, start smart. If you are a beginner, choose classes where you use your own body weight. There will come a time when you will be ready to move to a more advanced level with weights. Remember to participate in such classes at least twice a week and don't forget about proper nutrition. As has been emphasized many times, to achieve the best training results, exercises should be combined with a well-balanced diet.

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It's Your Turn.

Put on comfortable clothes, prepare some water, and let's go. Today's suggestion is a fitness workout with elements of kickboxing. This training is prepared for children and youth. No excuses, give it a try...

<https://youtu.be/-NgJJaopb8>

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Fun Facts

1. Listening to music during exercise influences its intensity because the rhythm affects the pace of the exercises.
2. Tired? Exercise. During exercise, the body produces endorphins, which positively affect our mood.
3. Serotonin, a hormone produced during exercise, influences thought processes, creativity, memory, and mood.
4. Exercise - drink water. Dehydration during exercise negatively affects muscle and brain function, causing muscle pain and fatigue.
5. During fitness exercises, you lose weight all over your body because it decides where to draw fat from to convert it into energy. You can only strengthen the muscle groups you care about the most.

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TEST

1. Who is considered the precursor of fitness exercises? (Dr. Kenneth Cooper)
2. For whom were fitness exercises originally designed? (Astronauts)

Iceland 
Liechtenstein
Norway grants

3. Name two women who had a significant impact on popularizing fitness exercises.
(Jane Fonda, Hanna Fidusiewicz)
4. What is the basic form of fitness? (Aerobics)
5. What is the goal of FAT BURNING exercises? (Burning fat)
6. What does TBC stand for? (Total Body Conditioning - full-body workout)
7. What equipment is used during Body Ball classes? (Balls)
8. Can stretching be an additional element in other forms of training? (Yes, because it is stretching exercises that play an important role in other forms of training)
9. Why is aqua fitness a good alternative for people with higher body weight? (It puts less strain on the joints)
10. Name two hormones produced by the body during exercise that improve our mood.
(Endorphins and serotonin)