


Challenge yourself in the New Year

 Committed to keeping up your fitness regime beyond January? Let these tips help you stay motivated all year long.

New Year's resolutions should be named 'New Month's' resolutions because for most of us, they don't seem to stretch beyond bleak and dismal January.

But if you really are committed to sticking to your get fit regime this year (why else would you have made the resolution?), try these tips to keep you motivated once the new-year-new-you buzz has truly worn off. Remind yourself of your long term goals.

Fitness motivation post January

Forget that you want a quick-fix to lose the extra few pounds of Christmas pudding, and remind yourself of the more gradual changes you want to see in your health, fitness and body.

Fitness expert [Laura Williams](#) says: "Have a think about some non-weight goals. Focus on a new outfit or being able to swim a certain number of laps rather than just un-doing the Christmas damage."



Choose a challenge – focus
on being able to swim a few
laps to begin with

You could even bullet point three or so goals, and set them as targets for the year ahead.

But it's important to make sure each goal is realistic. The reason so many of us give up on resolutions so quickly is we

set our targets too high that they seem unachievable.

Rather than thinking you want to lose 7lbs by Valentine's Day, think you want be able to run 5km by the summer.

Adapt your fitness regime around your lifestyle

OK, so during January you were in the gym morning and night, walking to work and back, steering clear of sugar and banishing the booze altogether. But are you really going to keep that all up forever?

Now that you've kicked-off your healthier lifestyle, it's time to figure out how to fit it into your everyday regime so your work out or healthy lunch seems second nature.

Laura adds: "By now you should have figured out what you can and can't work with in the long term.

"Green juices and high intensity intervals seemed like a great idea in the New Year but now you need to find a way to maintain energy levels and weight loss without unrealistic routines."

Maybe you found that working out in the morning suited you better than evening classes, and is something you can keep up. Or maybe walking all the way to work took too much time, but getting off the bus a few stops early works just fine.

Whatever is it, re-evaluate everything you've done in the month, what you've enjoyed and haven't, and make those small changes that aren't so drastic.

"Try and figure out how much incidental exercise (think walking, stair climbing etc) you can fit into your daily routine. If you get the intensity right, this can be a great way to enhance fitness levels and burn calories," says Laura.

Or if you haven't found what really works for you...

Continue to try new things

And for fitness motivation post January, keep trying new things! Just because the idea of treadmill fills you with terror, doesn't mean a dance class won't do it for you.

"If you're not convinced a gym membership's the way forward, try and do without. There are plenty of ways to get fit that don't involve a lengthy commitment.

"Outdoor boot camp classes or studio-based sessions such as Zumba or a Pound class, which mixes cardio with drumming, can work out cheaper and are very sociable too, and you don't need to make a long standing commitment."



Pound away – Madonna's
favourite new exercise
regime

And if you're easily bored, you don't need to be loyal to one activity. Instead of settling for being Ms Pilates, stretch your limits and keep up the motivation by trying one new class every month. You're bound to find the one that you'll feel pumped for.



Try new classes to mix it
up

If classes altogether aren't for you, why not join a sporting team? Sometimes there's strength in numbers.

Get friends and family involved

We all know when it's only ourselves that's making us get up and go, that little voice creeps in our heads, and suddenly

we're eating a family size bag of Doritos and watching Come Dine With Me reruns.

"When you're not relying solely on your own willpower, it can be easier sticking to a regime," says Laura.

Knowing you're letting your best mate down if you don't make it, is a good motivator to stick those trainers on.

Get family members, friends and work colleagues on board, so you can build some team morale and help each other out when you're struggling for motivation. Whether it's starting your own netball team or training for a marathon together, friends and family can help boost the fun of fitness.

Spending quality time while getting fit, talk about two birds.

Sign up to a charity race

As well as being something you can do with loved ones and set as a long-term target, working out to raise money for a cause you care about can be the ultimate motivator.

More so, once you've earned yourself a sponsor or two, it's much harder to quite your get-fit goal of running the Race for Life.

Laura agrees, saying: "Having a goal outside of weight loss can help to give exercise an added dimension.

"You'll be surprised at the fun that can be had training for a charity race in the park with friends at the weekend, while running 5K carrying pink balloons will soon help you forget what hard work it is."

You'll feel extra proud of yourself once you complete your target, too.

Scottish Charity Challenges 2017

January

[7 – Great Edinburgh Winter Run](#)

February

21 – Cancer Research UK Edinburgh Snowflake Run

[25 – Glentrees Trail Marathon](#)

April

[9 – Kilomathon](#)

[23 – Great Edinburgh Run](#)

May

[10-14 – Action for Charity Edinburgh to Dublin Bike Ride](#)

[17-21 – St Columbas Celtic Challenge](#)

[27/28 – Edinburgh Marathon Festival](#)

June

[4 – Leith Dragon Boat Challenge](#)

[17/18 – Edinburgh Night Ride](#)

[25 – Cancer Research Race For Life – Holyrood](#)

July

[22-23 – BHF Glasgow to Edinburgh Trek](#)

September

[TBA – Maggie's Cultural Crawl](#)

[10 – Pedal for Scotland](#)

[22 – 24 – Do It For Charity Ben Nevis Climb](#)

October

[30 Sept & 1 – Bank of Scotland Great Scottish Run – Glasgow](#)

Thank you to David McLean, Group Fitness Manager at Edinburgh Leisure for the article!