

OUTDOOR EXERCISE



As the weather is starting to improve, I'm trying to get outdoors for my exercise a little bit more. This week I am going to chat about the benefits of exercising outdoors and give some examples of ways to incorporate outdoor exercise into your routine easily. For this week's recipe, I have chosen my Superfood Salad. It's amazing any time of the year, but especially in Spring/Summer.

I have lots of challenges on Derval.ie and for the upcoming one – April 12th – I am incorporating an outdoor element. I think everyone is feeling a bit fed up of being at home, and doing home workouts – it can be tedious, so mixing it up with some fresh air can really help.

Outdoor exercise has mental benefits as well as many benefits for our physical well-being. Studies have shown that exercising outdoors can lower your heart rate and blood pressure. If you have a FitBit or similar device, why not compare your heart rate from a workout indoors to one outdoors and see if there is a difference. As a result of this, exercising outdoors can feel less strenuous than doing the same workout indoors. This also helps you to do more, which is a plus!

Exercising in the fresh air helps alleviate insomnia. I know many people who are finding it tough to get a good night's sleep these days, I'm definitely one of those people. My strategy for this is to increase my outdoor time with a walk and this definitely helps me drift off.

When we're lucky enough to get a bit of sunshine, exercising outdoors is a great way to enjoy the weather and get some much needed Vitamin D. Fresh air and natural light give us more energy – both for the body and mind. A walk before or during the work day is a great way to boost productivity. Because of the sunlight, hydration while exercising outdoors is vital.

Mixing things up by getting outside will also help you to mix up your usual routine. You might decide your outdoor exercise will be a walk or jog, or you could do your usual indoor workouts outdoors. This is particularly easy when doing bodyweight workouts. Some people think they need weights to have an effective workout, but bodyweight sessions are amazing for helping with coordination and balance. Keep it simple and you can't go wrong.

Outdoor exercise can be a chance to meet up with a friend or family member during a time where we're all craving that human interaction. A socially distanced walk, jog or workout with a friend is a brilliant way to catch up while moving your body.

Last but not least, outdoor exercise is guaranteed to improve your mood. Whether you need that mood boost at the start of your day, in the middle to break it up or afterwards to unwind – it will help at any time of the day. I love getting out on the weekends, I feel very fortunate to have lots of open space around my house perfect for getting some active fresh air.