

**Making Everything Easier!™**

**4th Edition**

# **Fitness** **FOR** **DUMMIES®**

## **Learn to:**

- Get in shape and stay that way
- Set realistic goals and stick with your program
- Stay motivated with social and digital support sources

**Suzanne Schlosberg**

**Liz Neporent**

*Bestselling authors of Weight Training  
For Dummies*



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A Massage

# ***Fitness For Dummies<sup>®</sup>, 4th Edition***

**by Suzanne Schlosberg  
and Liz Neporent, MA**



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## Dedication

To all who are striving to improve their fitness.

## Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments through our online registration form located at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

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# Introduction

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So you want to get fit? You've come to the right place. Though we can't lace up your sneakers and lift you onto a moving treadmill, we can do the next best thing: explain the benefits and basics of exercise, cover the best workout programs and products, and give you some long-distance encouragement.

That's what we've been doing since the first edition of *Fitness For Dummies* was published back in the prehistoric mid-1990s, before you could tweet your bench-press stats or "friend" a fellow swimmer halfway around the globe. So much about fitness has changed since then — the equipment and training theories, the classes and gadgets. So once again, we've overhauled this book, adding chapters and substantially revamping others.

To understand how the field of fitness has been transformed, consider this: The first edition of *Fitness For Dummies* contained exactly four paragraphs about the Internet. Even in the 3rd edition, you couldn't find the word *podcast* or a mention of phone apps. But the book you're holding right now, the 4th edition, is loaded with tips on using the Web to get fit.

If you're a technophobe or just staunchly old-school, don't worry: Some of today's most popular fitness trends are among the most time-honored and low-tech. For example, kettlebells — cast-iron weights that were all the rage in Czarist Russia — have made a comeback. Yoga, dating back thousands of years, is more popular than ever; so is Pilates, developed more than a century ago. And one of

today's trendiest and most useful workout gadgets, the physioball, is really just a glorified beach ball.

As always, the fitness field offers something for everyone, from gamers to grandmas — and heck, grandmas who are gamers. (Attention gamer grandmas: Check out Wii 10 Minute Solution: Knock-Out Body!) In *Fitness For Dummies*, 4th Edition, we strive to cover fitness from all angles.

## About This Book

*Fitness For Dummies*, 4th Edition, updates you on all the latest — the good, the bad, the totally cool (free workout podcasts) and the totally weird (shoes shaped like feet). But our main mission remains the same as it was the first three times around: to get you jazzed to move, to make you a savvy consumer of fitness products and information, and to help you tackle your worries, whether you fear the chest-press machine or panic at the thought of attempting a spinning class.

*Fitness For Dummies*, 4th Edition, tells you the stuff you really want to know, such as:

- Will exercise really help me lose weight?

- Which weight-training exercises are best for beginners?

- What's the difference between yoga and Pilates?

- Is it safe to exercise in the third trimester of pregnancy or the ninth decade of life?

- Will diet soda help me lose weight?

Can I really get in shape with a phone app or a Wii fitness game?

Which brands of home exercise equipment are most reliable?

How do I know whether I should join a gym or buy a DVD?

Can I actually get a “Rock Solid Bod in 6 Weeks,” like the Web sites say?

This book is basic enough for the fitness rookie to follow, but it’s also intended for workout veterans who want to brush up on the latest fitness concepts, gadgets, and training techniques.

This is no textbook, so if a particular topic piques your interest, turn right to it; let the table of contents and index be your guides. Also, in every chapter we define terms and point you in the direction of any information that may help you.

## **Conventions Used in This Book**

We use few conventions in this book because we want you to be able to pick it up and start anywhere. But two conventions to keep in mind are the following:

New fitness jargon appears in italics, *like this*, along with a brief definition. Use these terms to impress your friends or the trainer you just hired using the guidelines in Chapter 20.



Web sites appear in a special font, like this, to distinguish them from other text. Jump on over to your computer or smart phone and check them out.

## What You're Not to Read

We intended for this book to be a pleasant and practical read so that you can quickly find and absorb the information you want. However, we sometimes couldn't help going a little bit deeper or relaying information that expands on the basics. You may find this information interesting, but you don't need it to understand what you came to that section to find.

When you see a sidebar (a gray-shaded box of text) or text flagged with the Technical Stuff icon, know that the information is optional. You can lead a full and happy life without giving it a glance. (But aren't you curious? A little?)

## Foolish Assumptions

Before we could write this book, we had to make some assumptions about who you, the reader, might be. We assume that

You're just beginning an exercise program, thinking about starting one, or returning to a healthier lifestyle after a few years in the recliner. Or you may have been working out for years and are

looking for advice on how to reinvigorate your routine.

You're interested in sorting out all the different options for fitness activities so you can decide which are best for you.

You want to get the lowdown on all the latest fitness research, bargains, classes, equipment, and gear — anything that has to do with getting you into shape.

You'd like to become more knowledgeable about exercise and fitness so you can avoid mistakes and injuries.

## **How This Book Is Organized**

*Fitness For Dummies*, 4th Edition, is divided into seven parts, and the chapters within each part cover specific topics in detail. You can read each chapter or part without having to read what came before, although we may refer you to other sections for more information about certain topics. Here's a brief look at the seven parts.

### **Part I: Getting Your Butt off the Couch**

In this part, we give you the tools to start a fitness program. First, we explain the key components of fitness (did you know that being able to balance on one foot is as