

Need motivation to exercise? Try the buddy system

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(HealthDay)—Exercising with a buddy can give you both mental and

fitness boosts.

In fact, under the right conditions, the intensity and duration of exercise among workout partners can be more than twice that of solo efforts, according to research led by Kansas State University's Dr. Brandon Irwin.

Here's how to make the most of a buddy relationship.

Studies show that the best exercise partner is someone about 40 percent more fit than you are—this will motivate you to work out longer and harder. It's called the "Kohler effect"—the ability to perform at a higher level when working with a stronger person.

But if you're a novice, you don't want someone so far advanced that you could hurt yourself trying to keep up. If you're in a [fitness](#) class and need to pair up, choose a slightly more experienced participant.

If you like exercising at home or if logistics make it hard for you and your buddy to get out of the house at the same time, consider being internet partners—you can exercise simultaneously through a video chat.

Although a human [partner](#) is the better motivator, if you can't find one, try a virtual buddy. Many fitness apps let you create this motivational helper.

Finally, if you're the one providing the motivation, here's a surprising finding to keep in mind: Motivate through actions, not words. Research found that when exercising with someone who is slightly better than they are, participants exercised longer when that person was not verbally encouraging them.

More information: The American Council on Exercise has more on

[effective ways to motivate your exercise partner.](#)

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