

# Pack Your Beach Bag... and Don't Forget This Workout!

AS YOU HEAD TO THE BEACH TO ENJOY SOME SAND, SUN AND WATER, YOU MIGHT WANT TO FIT IN A WORKOUT.

By Leah Schultz

If your beach has stairs this is an excellent place to start. Running up and down the stairs allows you to work out thigh muscles. No stairs? Not a problem. Sand dunes are an incredible substitution. If you are fortunate enough to have both stairs and dunes at your beach you can switch off doing your reps on these two to help keep your routine from becoming stale.

workout is cardiovascular, and a run along the beach is an excellent way to do this. If your beach has a sidewalk, you can run there, or you may choose to run on the sand. Using the sand kicks the workout up a notch by adding resistance while bringing you closer to the water's edge. Want to mix it up even more? Many people enjoy doing their run in ankle-deep water. Either of these three options is an excellent way to keep the running from getting monotonous. If you aren't a runner, that's OK. Walking is an alternative that allows you to still get your heart rate up.

So what about just having fun? Many beach activities create an opportunity for exercise. Gathering seashells or rocks works your hamstrings, lower back, and quadriceps. With this, it's important to remember to bend at the knees. And let's not forget that building a sandcastle or flying a kite is not only fun but also a good toning workout.

Going to the beach with a group of friends is not only a social summer norm it's also the opportunity for some group exercise. "The best exercise equipment you can bring is a Frisbee or a ball, something that will keep you moving," says David Van Daff,

senior director of Bally Total Fitness in Chicago. Paddleball, keep-away, and volleyball are fun ways to get your heart-rate going.

Another way to change things up is by using the water. Swimming gives you a workout that involves strength, flexibility and the heart muscles. "Swimming is excellent cross-training," says Van Daff. Playing catch in the water and surfing are two recreational water activities that to many are more appealing than just swimming laps and both provide excellent physical fitness.

Regardless of what beach activity you do, it is especially important to drink plenty of water before and after a beach workout. Also, make sure to bring a bottle along so that you can drink between exercise sets, or about every 15 minutes. Although your clothing can remain the same for both indoor and outdoor activities, you do need to add one item when heading into the sun — sunscreen. For a beach workout, this is as important as wearing the correct pair of shoes.

Bring your workout to the beach and enjoy adding variety to your workout routine. "Don't focus on the workout and calories," says Van Daff. "Look for ways to have fun and be active, rather than just sit there and sun." **e**



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Other equipment-free toning workouts like sit-ups, push-ups, squats, jumping jacks, and elbow-to-knee crunches can be brought from the gym to the beach.

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