TOPIC 9
Fitness choices

OVERVIEW
9.1 Meanings of exercise
9.2 The value that people place on exercise and fitness
9.3 Individual fitness activities
9.4 Group fitness activities
9.5 Settings for exercise
9.6 Advertising and promotion
9.7 Motivators and barriers to participation
9.8 Topic review

OUTCOMES
In this topic students will:
• describe factors that contribute to effective health promotion (P5)
• propose actions that can improve and maintain an individual’s health (P6)
• plan for participation in physical activity to satisfy a range of individual needs (P10)
• form opinions about health-promoting actions based on critical examination of relevant information (P15)
• use a range of sources to draw conclusions about health and physical activity concepts (P16)
• analyse factors influencing movement and patterns of participation. (P17)
In our everyday lives we engage in a variety of physical activity, from washing the car and doing the housework to getting dressed for school or work. Completing these types of task requires a small amount of effort and often we use only our upper body to do them.

Although these activities require the expenditure of a certain amount of energy through the movement they involve, their contribution to overall health and fitness is minimal. In order to gain health and fitness benefits, it is necessary to engage in moderate to vigorous activity. Individuals who choose to lead an inactive lifestyle are at risk of developing many lifestyle diseases. Inactivity is a major risk factor of coronary heart disease and contributes to other risk factors, including obesity, high blood pressure, stroke and diabetes.

9.1 Meanings of exercise

The reasons why people participate in exercise and what exercise means to them is varied. It may mean an enjoyable experience that aids in stress release and relaxation, or it may be an activity that is planned to achieve benefits such as weight loss and improved cardiovascular efficiency. Exercise may simply mean hard work. Regardless of what exercise means to different individuals, people generally take on exercise for the health and fitness benefits that result.
Application
Meanings of exercise — survey
Conduct a survey of 10 or more people. Select people from a variety of age groups, both genders, different cultural backgrounds and a range of exercise experience. Ask them the question “What does exercise mean to you?”

Inquiry
Meanings of exercise — survey results
Answer the following questions using the results from the survey in the application above.
1. Suggest reasons for the wide range of opinions about exercise among people.
2. How does the meaning of exercise change with age? Suggest reasons for this change.
3. What does exercise mean to you?
4. What things have influenced your opinion about exercise?
5. Do you regard exercise as an important component of lifestyle? Explain.

9.1.1 Exercise as a form of physical activity
Physical activity in the form of exercise has always been considered positive lifestyle behaviour. Exercise itself is a special form of physical activity because it is planned, structured and consists of repetitive bodily movements. Performing a series of push-ups and sit-ups is considered exercise because movements are repeated with the intention of improving selected components of fitness, in this case, muscular strength and/or muscular endurance. The different types of physical activity are shown in table 9.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Play</strong></td>
<td>Activities engaged in for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Play" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Games</strong></td>
<td>Activities that one engages in for amusement or a form of competitive activity or sport played according to rules</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Games" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 9.1 Types of physical activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>Activities involving physical exertion and skill, in which an individual or team competes against another or others for entertainment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation (active)</td>
<td>Travel between destinations by walking, cycling or other non-motorised modes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chores</td>
<td>Routine tasks, for example, jobs done around the home.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>Activities requiring physical effort, carried out to sustain or improve health and fitness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational activities</td>
<td>Leisure activities. Leisure is discretionary time, which is time outside of work and study commitments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise varies in intensity or the amount of effort we put into performing the movements. Intensity can be categorised as light, moderate or vigorous and is measured in a number of ways. **Light exercise** is activity that requires approximately three to four times as much energy as rest. It is equivalent to brisk walking. Needing more effort is **moderate exercise**, which is activity that requires approximately five to six times as much energy as rest. It is equivalent to jogging at a comfortable pace. The highest level of intensity is called **vigorous exercise**. It is activity that requires seven times or more energy as rest. It is equivalent to a fast jog or activity that makes the person ‘huff and puff’.

The easiest method of assessing the intensity of effort is to use the talk test, which measures intensity in terms of the subject’s ability to maintain conversation while exercising.

- **Low intensity** — at this level the person is able to sing while doing the activity.
- **Moderate** — normal conversation can be held while performing the activity.
- **Vigorous** — there is insufficient breath to carry on conversation while exercising.

However, athletes in training and those who are genuinely trying to monitor cardiorespiratory fitness improvement use the heart rate’s response to exercise as the basis of measurement. Exercise causes your heart rate to increase in proportion to your exercise intensity. In other words, the harder you work, the higher is your heart rate. This relationship continues until you approach exhaustion where maximal values are attained. At this point, your heart rate begins to level off.

Training at a level of intensity that is too close to your resting heart rate provides little, if any, benefit to fitness. Alternatively, training at near maximal values quickly leads to exhaustion and subsequently is of little value. In between resting and maximal values is a zone called the **target heart rate (THR)**, which can be used to help you train at a level of intensity where performance benefits are maximised.

To find your target heart rate, calculate your maximal heart rate, which is approximated by subtracting your age from 220. For example, a 20-year-old person would have a maximal heart rate of 200 beats per minute (220 minus age).

For exercise of moderate intensity, the target heart rate is 50 to 70 per cent of the maximal heart rate. For exercise of vigorous intensity, the target heart rate is 70 to 85 per cent of the maximal heart rate.

The target heart rate zones are illustrated in figure 9.2. People beginning exercise programs should aim to hold their heart rate in the moderate intensity zone. As fitness improves, the target heart rate is increased to 70 to 85 per cent of maximal values (vigorous zone). Only well-trained athletes are able to work at the anaerobic threshold zone and then for only limited periods of time.
Examples of activity that are considered light, moderate or vigorous are illustrated in table 9.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical activity intensity</th>
<th>Examples*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Light activity             | • Swimming for recreation  
|                            | • Strolling around the shops  
|                            | • Flying a kite  
|                            | • Gardening (e.g. light weeding)  
| Moderate activity          | • Walking for pleasure  
|                            | • Cycling on level ground  
|                            | • Putting away groceries  
|                            | • Handwashing a car  
|                            | • Operating heavy power tools  
|                            | • Horse riding  
| Vigorous activity          | • Jogging or running  
|                            | • Step aerobics  
|                            | • Playing an energetic sport (e.g. basketball, football or tennis)  
|                            | • Carrying heavy loads (over 25 kg)  
|                            | • Pushing a non-motorised lawnmower  
|                            | • Loading a truck  

*Dependent upon age, ability and fitness.

Physical activity of moderate intensity benefits people of all ages, with greater benefits going to people who are able to partake in vigorous activity. This is illustrated in figure 9.3.

There is increasing evidence that these benefits occur soon after adopting an active lifestyle. Physical activity should start as a lifelong habit in childhood. Its benefits are greatest if activity is maintained throughout life.

Australia’s Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines (Australian Department of Health) suggest the following in terms of physical activity.

**Young people aged 13–17 years**
- **Frequency:** every day
- **Intensity:** moderate to vigorous
- **Duration:** 60 minutes and up to several hours. This can be accumulated across the day.
- **Type:** a range of activities including activities that strengthen muscle and bone on at least three days per week.

**Adult recommendations**
- **Frequency:** most if not all days per week
- **Intensity:** moderate to vigorous
- **Duration:** accumulate 2½ to 5 hours of moderate intensity physical activity or 1¼ to 2½ hours of vigorous intensity physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both moderate and vigorous activities, each week
- **Type:** a range of activities including muscle strengthening on at least two days per week.

Figure 9.4 shows how Australia’s Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines relate to frequency, intensity, duration and type of activity. Proportionally, we need more of level one type activity, progressively decreasing to lesser amounts of levels two and three and little of level four.
FIGURE 9.4 The physical activity pyramid


Inquiry
Exercise as a part of lifestyle
1. Examine your own lifestyle and determine your level of activity. Do you engage in sufficient moderate activity each day? Keep a record of the physical activity (type and frequency) you engage in over a two week period.
2. Are you meeting the recommended level of physical activity for your age group?
3. Identify ways in which you could increase the amount of activity you engage in each day. Include both planned exercise and opportunities for incidental activity.
4. To what extent should exercise be a part of lifestyle?

9.1.2 Exercise and its relationship to fitness
What does it mean to be fit? Fitness is a difficult concept to define as it means different things to different people. If we consulted the authorities we would discover a variety of definitions, including:

- the ability to carry out daily tasks with vigour and alertness, without undue fatigue and with enough reserve energy to enjoy leisure time pursuits and to meet unforeseen emergencies (World Health Organization)
- the capability of the heart, blood vessels, lungs and muscles to function at optimal efficiency (Getchell, 1979).
Application
Meanings of fitness — survey
Design a survey to investigate the meanings of fitness. Survey a range of people from different age groups. An example of a fitness survey is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>What does it mean to be fit?</th>
<th>What do you need to do to improve your fitness?</th>
<th>Do you consider yourself to be fit? Why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-mate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inquiry
Fitness survey
Use the results from the survey in the application above to help you answer the following questions.
1. Is fitness important to people?
2. Do people know how to maintain or improve their fitness? How could they get this information?
3. What does it mean to be fit?
4. Identify your own fitness goals. What do you need to do to achieve these goals?

Consider the fitness levels of an Australian basketball player and an Australian marathon runner. Do they both satisfy the definitions in regard to individual fitness? Do these definitions give us an accurate determination of each individual’s fitness level? Can we gain an accurate comparison of fitness levels between these athletes? As basketball and distance running are very different in their physical demands and skills, we need to look at fitness in regard to the components needed to perform physical activity.

Physical fitness refers to a set of attributes that people have or achieve and that relates to the ability to physical activity. These attributes can be divided into two sets of components.

1. Health-related components include
   - cardiorespiratory fitness
   - flexibility
   - muscular endurance
   - strength
   - body composition.

2. Skill-related components include
   - speed
   - power
   - coordination
   - balance
   - agility
   - reaction time.

**FIGURE 9.5** The components of fitness required to play basketball include strength, speed, agility and coordination.
For those people who wish to improve their general health and fitness, it is necessary to undertake a regular, moderate intensity exercise program that incorporates the health-related components. For those people who wish to improve their fitness levels in order to improve sports performance, exercising at a moderate intensity is not sufficient. A planned training program is needed. It should incorporate specific exercises to improve the fitness components required of the sport or performance. The intensity of exercise needs to be vigorous and can be measured by heart rate. Both the intensity and frequency of exercise increase as fitness gains are achieved.

Regardless of your fitness requirements, including exercise as a regular lifestyle behaviour is essential to improve and maintain health and fitness. The specific exercise program adopted must meet your specific needs.

9.2 The value that people place on exercise and fitness

In the past, people did not need to plan for physical activity. Work was much more labour intensive, so fitness was achieved through work. As technology was introduced in the workplace and home, and physical labour was replaced by mechanisation, the need for planned exercise to improve health and maintain fitness became apparent. As people’s lifestyles became more sedentary, the incidence of lifestyle diseases increased. The fitness boom in the 1970s and 1980s resulted from an increase in community concern about the morbidity and mortality rates associated with lifestyle diseases, particularly coronary heart disease. Activities such as aerobics and fun-runs became popular as they led to improved cardiovascular functioning. Although the fitness boom and health promotion programs have led to an increased awareness about the importance of physical activity and fitness, statistics reveal that almost half of the adult population in New South Wales are still insufficiently active. Females are less active than males.

9.2.1 Changing attitudes to fitness

The latest report on physical activity from HealthStats NSW, published October 2017, revealed that almost half the adults in New South Wales did not engage in sufficient physical activity. The report found that:

- 42.8 per cent of adults aged 16 years and over (38.9 per cent of men and 46.5 per cent of women) undertook insufficient levels of physical activity (less than 150 minutes of moderate or vigorous activity a week; or 150 minutes of activity, or more, over fewer than five sessions a week)
- 29.8 per cent of persons aged 18 years and over (32.8 per cent of males and 27.0 per cent of females) in New South Wales were sufficiently active in the last week (more than 300 minutes of physical activity over five sessions)
- 21.0 per cent of students aged 12–17 years (25.0 per cent of boys and 16.7 per cent of girls) undertook adequate levels of physical activity
- In summer 63 per cent of students and in winter 51 per cent of students in years 6, 8 and 10 undertook adequate levels of physical activity, as estimated from the 2010 NSW Schools Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey. (State of New South Wales NSW Ministry of Health, www.health.nsw.gov.au)

Further information from HealthStats NSW reveals that, following a peak in 2003, the trend for the general population doing insufficient physical activity has shown a gradual decline and now appears to have plateaued (see figure 9.7).
However, this trend does not reflect problems in specific age groups. Examination of figure 9.8 shows that, while insufficient physical activity is an issue for a small percentage of those aged 16–24, as people age they are less inclined to exercise. This peaks in the 75+ age group where medical issues may make it difficult to achieve suggested activity targets.

People’s attitudes to fitness determine whether they participate in regular physical activity. Attitudes to fitness are influenced by a number of factors.

- **Age** — statistics show that people who are aged between 16–34 years are the most physically active of all age groups. Older age groups have lower levels of adequate activity and are more sedentary.
- **Gender** — males are more active than females. Reasons for this in Australia appear to be associated with stronger influences on physical activity from school and family on boys than on girls. For example, participation in extracurricular sporting activities here is lower among girls than among boys.
- **Family** — adolescents who have parents who are active or support them in their activity generally value fitness.
- **Peers** — the attitudes of a person’s peer group can put pressure on that person. If the peer group does not value exercise and is not active, others in the group can feel pressured into adopting the same values and behaviours.
- **Media** — the media are a powerful channel through which the fitness message is given. Awareness raising of the benefits of fitness and the types of activities and sports available can positively impact on the attitudes of individuals.
• Past experience — the physical activity that adolescents experience within the school setting or local community can directly affect the decisions of adolescents to continue to be active as they get older. Research shows that if children’s experiences with activity are fun and foster skill development, they are more likely to adopt physical activity as a lifelong behaviour.

• Cultural — women from non–English-speaking backgrounds (NESB) are more likely to be sedentary. They often do not receive the social support they need to be active. People from a NESB are significantly less likely to be adequately active (NSW Health).

• Socioeconomic status — people with a lower level of education are more likely to be sedentary. This could be attributed to a lack of knowledge about the benefits of fitness and a lack of opportunity, funds or facilities.

The degree to which an individual values fitness is determined by a combination of many factors. As a person grows older, the value they place on fitness may change many times. For example, a person who suffers from heart disease later in life and who has never engaged in exercise may now recognise the importance of regular exercise to improve their cardiovascular efficiency.

![FIGURE 9.9 Parents can have a positive influence on their children's attitudes to exercise and fitness.](image)

### Application

**Changing attitudes to fitness — survey**

Use the following survey to gain a range of opinions about the value people place on fitness. Survey at least 12 people from a variety of age groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey: attitudes to fitness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Name: ..............................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Age: .................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often do you exercise?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What intensity do you exercise at?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Why do/don’t you exercise?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you value fitness?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. What factors have influenced your attitude to fitness?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Has your attitude to fitness changed over time? Why?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inquiry
Fitness and values
1. From the people you surveyed in the application above, what value do people place on fitness?
2. Are there any similarities in attitudes and values?
3. What reasons are given that support the value of fitness?
4. What are the predominant factors that influence people’s attitudes to fitness?

9.2.2 Fitness as a commodity
The commodification of exercise and fitness became increasingly apparent during the fitness boom of the 1970s. The individual, community, government and business sectors became aware of the need for everyone to participate in activities that improved their health. Companies recognised that fitness could be a profit-making commodity. The establishment of fitness centres, along with a renewed interest in many physical activities, became commonplace.

Fitness centres provide a range of activities designed to meet every exercise and fitness need. They promote a range of services, have fully trained personnel and provide a wide range of exercise equipment based on the latest technology. Through advertising, the fitness industry aims to convince the consumer that the easiest and best way to get fit is by using their services. Advertising within the fitness industry can be presented in many forms. Advertisements often depict male and female bodies that mirror society’s perception of the perfect body. The use of special deals, a range of fitness activities, extended hours and child minding facilities further appeal to the consumers.

SNAPSHOT
How to do a fitness audit (and why it’s a good idea)
By Cassie White, Health Journalist, ABC RN Life Matters

What’s more terrifying than being financially audited by the tax office? Having your fitness regimen audited by a personal trainer.

FIGURE 9.10 Most Australians could benefit from increasing their level of physical activity.

The goal of an audit is to objectively and systematically determine whether you meet fitness requirements. It means it’s the time to drop a truth bomb on your exercise habits. And since we’re auditing, let me throw a few numbers at you.

Let’s start with Australia’s physical activity guidelines. These are evidence-based recommendations about how much physical activity you should get every week.
They make three broad suggestions:
- **Move more** — adults are encouraged to accumulate 2.5 to 5 hours of moderate intensity exercise, or 1.25–2.5 hours of vigorous intensity exercise per week, or a combination of both.
- **Sit less** — we’re told to break up extended periods of sitting.
- **Get strong** — do muscle strengthening activities (e.g. go to the gym, or do body weight exercises) at least two days per week.

All up, that’s a requirement of five hours of physical activity per week. In case you were wondering, there are 168 hours in a week.

So where are we as a nation right now?
According to the most recent Australian Health Survey, about 70 per cent of Australians don’t move nearly enough. Less than one in five adults take 10,000 steps per day, which is the minimum amount we need just to function — not to be fit. But enough numbers. It’s time to find out where you stand, and put a system in place to have you meeting the criteria.

**What is fitness?**
Your overall fitness level can be broken up into three components:
- **Cardiovascular fitness** — your body’s ability to transport and utilise oxygen. This includes activities like walking, running, cycling, swimming and aerobics.
- **Balance and flexibility** improve the full range of motion of your muscles and joints. Yoga, tai chi and Pilates can all help you achieve this.
- **Musculoskeletal fitness** helps strengthen muscles, improve bone density, maintain a strong core and help you maintain a healthy weight.

All three forms of exercise are necessary for a strong, durable and healthy body.

**Performing your fitness audit**
First: what are you already doing?
It might be confronting to find out you’re not moving enough. But you might be moving more than you think. Start with the big ticket items. So the group fitness classes, brisk walks, weekend runs with friends, laps at the pool or gym sessions.

Next, think about your incidental exercise, which is often unplanned. Don’t include walking up a single flight of stairs. But do count other activities you might not consider exercise — your bike ride to work, walking the kids to school, playing in the park on the weekend and even vigorous gardening (just be careful not to swing the mattock too hard!).

Next: keep tabs on how much you’re moving throughout the day, every day.
Most smart phones come with apps that will help you track your physical activity, so try using one for a week to get a better idea of what you’re really doing. Another option is to buy a cheap pedometer to track your steps.

Or go old school, and write everything down. If you walk to the shop for ten minutes to get the paper, add that in. Playing soccer in the park for 15 minutes when you get home from work — that also counts. And don’t forget, if you’re really huffing and puffing after you exercise, then you’re likely doing vigorous exercise and that counts for double. So a 10-minute run equals a 20-minute walk.

Then: tally up your minutes to find out what’s really going on. If you’re nowhere near the mark, don’t panic. Now’s the time to get moving.

Like most things in fitness, I recommend gradually building up your exercise time, rather than trying to go from zero to 100 in one hit. Otherwise, you’ll likely feel overwhelmed and throw in the towel. Chances are, once you get started and begin to experience the benefits of exercise, you’ll prioritise finding more time in your life for it.

Sometimes the process of doing an audit is enough to help us shift our thinking around activity, and suddenly we start to look for opportunities to move more.
Most common excuses not to exercise:

- ‘I can’t afford it’
  It’s true, not everyone can afford a trainer. But gym memberships are about $20 a week for a huge variety of classes and equipment. You probably spend more on coffee or beer. Also, walking and jogging are free.

- ‘I’m tired’
  Yep, we all are. Turn off the telly, put away your phone and go to bed earlier.

- ‘I’m busy’
  I have corporate clients who work long hours every day, carry massive amounts of responsibility, then go home to young families. They make time to exercise.

- ‘I don’t like exercise’
  Chances are you’ve never really tried it. This is a great way of not taking responsibility for yourself.

Where is your spare time?

If you work out that you really need to do more, the next step is figuring out how. This will mean overcoming the classic barrier for not exercising — not having enough time. The truth is, many of us have more time than we realise. So, again, this is going to require you to be honest with yourself.

Where in your day do you have time to do something active?

A simple way I help people find extra time in their day is to break their day into 30 minute blocks. You then look at what you are doing in each block. Often people are surprised to find they have more time than they realised. There’s often at least one period of 30 minutes in their day where they’re not doing anything. I tell them to fill that time with something active.

Next, think carefully about all the time during your day when you’re ‘busy’. How many of those minutes are you actually just wasting time? Be totally honest here — remember, you’re being audited. What you’re looking for are any times you might be able to fit in some exercise. All these sessions of 30 minutes add up, so over the course of the week, you’re getting close to what's recommended in the guidelines.

What systems can you put in place to free up more time?

- Do Sunday meal preparation so you can exercise after work, instead of going home to cook dinner.
- Organise with the boss to take a slightly longer lunch break 2–3 times a week and either stay back later/start earlier, so you can exercise during the day.
- Record your favourite shows during the week and binge-watch them on the weekend.
- Wake up 30 minutes earlier every morning.

Finding your exercise

Once you’ve carved out your exercise minutes, it’s time to choose what to do. That’ll depend on your budget, location and schedule. Also try and find things you enjoy. It doesn’t have to be running, it might be a dance class or tai chi.

**FIGURE 9.12** Bodyweight exercises are free, require no fancy equipment and can be done almost anywhere.

Whatever your circumstance, there are plenty of options and going for variety can help stop boredom. The other advantage of doing a few different things is that you’re likely to be working different parts of your body and developing different types of fitness.

I also recommend going with the most convenient option. Give yourself as little wiggle room to make excuses as possible. Sure, if you’ve got hours to kill, get in the car and drive to the gym. But if it’s early in the morning and
You've only got 30 minutes, roll out of bed and go for a fast walk. If you allow your brain to get involved, all sorts of bad can happen.

Also let your time determine the form of exercise you do. For example, if you've only got 20-30 minutes, do something vigorous that really gets your heart rate up. Make your session short and sharp.

Do what you want, but always do these things
Walk. It's a fantastic form of low-impact exercise. If you're someone with a lot of injuries — especially hips and ankles — walking is a great way to get your heart rate up and get moving.

You also need to include two muscle-building activities each week. If you aren't at a gym, bodyweight exercises are fantastic: squats, lunges, push-ups, planks and hip extensions.

Finally, lying on the couch is very important. Especially if you're someone who's quite into fitness, you need to give yourself a chance to recover.

Cassie White is a Sydney-based personal trainer, yoga coach and health journalist.


Application
Fitness centres
Research your local fitness centre to find out the following information:
• services offered
• cost for each service
• payment plans
• special offers or package deals
• equipment available
• expertise of staff
• availability of staff for individual support
• facilities for the disabled
• child-care facilities.

Inquiry
Fitness commodity — local fitness centre
1. Would the fitness centre you examined in the application above meet your fitness needs? Explain.
2. Do you think this fitness centre is value for money? Explain.
3. Before paying to join this fitness centre, what could people do to determine if it is worthwhile?
4. Why has the fitness industry continued to be a viable, profitable industry?

People should recognise that gyms are not a quick fix to their health and fitness needs. To improve your fitness level takes effort and commitment to planned exercise. However, the fitness industry does provide a range of beneficial services and expertise. Fitness centres meet the fitness needs of a large number of people. For many people, they provide the expertise and environment they need to improve their fitness. It is important for people to determine their fitness needs and investigate the services, cost and expertise offered by fitness centres before they make a financial commitment and join a gym.

If you decide that the local fitness centre is not what you want, the fitness industry offers many other services and products to aid you in your goal of improved fitness and health. If you require motivation and expertise, employing a personal trainer may suit your needs. If you are not comfortable ‘sweating it out’ in the company of others, a wide range of online and downloadable exercise videos and DVDs are available. Fitness clothing, nutritional supplements, home gyms and exercise machines are other products on offer.
FIGURE 9.13 Fitness centres can provide a range of services and facilities including aerobics, battle rope, yoga, power boxing, weight training, step class, personal trainers, nutritional advice, saunas and spas.

The fitness industry has incorporated the latest technology into many products, providing convenience and up-to-date information. Communication with members is now more likely to take place through social media than through radio and newspaper advertising, while the smartphone has become the tool that has taken the fitness experience to a new level. Those who feel they are time poor can instantly connect to YouTube or virtual training apps and complete a session either at home or in the office.

Club branded wearable apps, usually with headphones, provide users with almost everything they need for a total fitness experience. Apps are becoming the ultimate fitness tracker, with body sensors able to crunch data from multiple tracking devices and have it instantly processed and available to the wearer or fitness trainer for analysis. Some club mobile branded apps have additional functions where fitness class vacancies appear on screen, class passes are provided, cancellations can be made and even virtual workouts conducted. Programmable wristbands and Fitbit activity trackers are popular, with at least one brand that targets behaviour modification — these have the ability to detect performances falling short of goals and can even provide a mild shock as negative reinforcement.

Wearables apps are currently at the cutting edge of technology, able to create a workout that is smarter, enjoyable and more expedient than that experienced generations ago. Smartphone owners these days use apps regularly, with the fitness experience being a high priority for some. Incorporated in the phone, or with links to data tracking tools through body sensors, the screen is in essence a dashboard, providing a single view of the wearer’s well-being and fitness with steps, distance, heart rate, kilojoules expended and intensity being accessible at a glance. Some apps have the technology to simulate the experience of having a personal trainer with them providing advice, encouragement and motivation — all through the headphones.

FIGURE 9.14 Fitness is a commodity. A wide variety of services and products are aimed at improving your fitness.
Even equipment such as treadmills and bicycle ergometers have a new look. Some have integrated television screens while most have heart rate monitoring devices. Sessions, particularly on bicycle ergometers, are often conducted in teams, with some gyms capable of projecting individual data onto big screens, enhancing motivation, effort and reward. Some gyms have also adopted very flexible operating hours, providing 24 hour access to members to cater for people who cannot attend specific sessions.

**Inquiry**

**Commodification**

Choose one of the following physical activities and investigate its commodification:
- HIIT training
- running
- swimming
- aerobics.

Consider the following questions in your investigation.
1. What equipment has been specifically designed and produced to aid performance in this activity?
2. How has the commodification of this activity influenced participation (consider cost, image, motivation and accessibility)?
3. Has the commodification of exercise and fitness had a positive or negative effect on the individual's level of health and fitness?

### 9.3 Individual fitness activities

There is an incredible range of physical activities on offer, from the commercially driven activities that offer fun and challenge, such as indoor rock climbing, to the more traditional exercise types. The challenge for the individual is to find an exercise type that meets their fitness needs and that is enjoyable.

What type of exercise should you choose to improve your fitness? Do you prefer exercising by yourself or in a group? Have you got the time or the money to join a gym? Does working out at home best meet your needs? It is not always an easy choice to make. Having a good knowledge of the range and variety of fitness activities available definitely helps you make the correct choice.

In the past, jogging or swimming were the practical options to improve fitness for people who preferred to exercise by themselves. Today many individual fitness activities are available, some of which require specific knowledge and skills. Raised awareness of health has led to the revival of many fitness and recreational activities and the emergence of new ones. Activities such as indoor rock climbing, in-line skating, snowboarding and power boxing are examples of fun and challenging fitness activities that are now available.

#### 9.3.1 Power walking

One of the easiest low impact activities is power walking. Brisk walking for 30 minutes each day at a pace of around four to six kilometres per hour improves fitness and overall health. It is just a matter of putting on a comfortable pair of shoes and heading out the door. One of the benefits of power walking is that you can do it anytime, such as in your lunch hour or before or after work. Power walking is safe, cheap and convenient.

Walking is an excellent exercise for heart health and for health in general. If you walk regularly you tend to:
- feel more confident, happy and relaxed
- control your weight better
- have lower blood pressure and lower cholesterol levels
- have stronger bones
- be less likely to have a heart attack and recover better in the event of one
- be less likely to have a stroke
- be less likely to develop diabetes in middle age (*Facts on Walking for Pleasure and Health*, Active Australia).
To have a greater impact on fitness, walking at a greater intensity, uphill or carrying a load is required. To maintain motivation when power walking, change your route, include regular bushwalks and walk in parks.

The benefits of walking are recognised by many people. It is a recommended form of exercise for people recovering from heart disease because it is low impact. It is one of the most popular forms of exercise for people across all age groups.

9.3.2 Running
Running is an activity that can be done only at moderate or vigorous intensity. It is an effective aerobic activity because it involves movement of the whole body. Running is a convenient and time-efficient form of exercise. For those people who don’t have a lot of spare time, a 20 minute run could be a good fitness option. It is advisable to run on grassed surfaces rather than the road to reduce stress on the joints. Cross-country running is a great way to maintain motivation.

It is important to start slowly and increase intensity as your fitness level improves. This can be done by increasing the distance run, incorporating speed play, or running in more challenging environments such as hilly areas.

9.3.3 Swimming
Leisurely swimming is sufficient to gain health benefits. Swimming laps using various strokes improves cardiovascular efficiency. Swimming is an activity that can be enjoyed all year round for most people. Heated indoor pools cater for the need to have swimming facilities available all year. Swimming is relatively inexpensive and requires little equipment, making it a cheap and convenient form of exercise.

Swimming is not restricted to the local community pool. Pools can be found in leisure centres and resorts. The popularity of swimming as a fitness activity has led to the emergence of aquarobics. As one of Australia’s favourite physical activities, swimming is an effective conditioning activity that is low impact, but uses both the upper and lower body, giving a total body workout. It is often recommended as a form of exercise for asthmatics as it helps to build up lung capacity, and for people rehabilitating from injury, due to its buoyancy effect.
Inquiry
Swimming fitness
Use the Swimming — health benefits weblink in the Resources tab for more information.
1. Read the information about the benefits of swimming.
2. Use the information to evaluate swimming as an individual fitness activity.

9.3.4 Cycling
Cycling is an activity that most people enjoy in their youth but many stop doing as they get older. Like running, cycling provides a good cardiovascular workout. Cycling at a vigorous intensity (more than 16 kilometres per hour) has beneficial effects on fitness.

Your decision to start cycling may be influenced by the cost of a bike or the area you live in. Busy city roads are not the ideal place to exercise. Some communities have recognised this and built cycle paths through their suburbs in an effort to encourage people to cycle and to improve the safety of cyclists.

The introduction of the mountain bike has broadened the choice of terrains people can ride over. People can now ride on rugged surfaces through the bush. For those people who don’t like road riding, this is a great option.

The benefits of cycling to health and fitness are well recognised. The fitness industry has endeavoured to make cycling accessible to everyone by producing stationary bicycles. These are available in most gyms or can be bought for home use. The introduction of indoor cycling classes, known as ‘spin’, at fitness centres has become a popular fitness option. It is particularly appealing to those people who are not confident road riding or cannot afford their own bike. It is also a great option in bad weather.

The most popular form of cycling is road cycling, with more than 15 per cent of Australians riding a bicycle in a typical week. While many of these are recreational and utility riders, a large number are members of various clubs or social groups who choose to ride because they simply enjoy the experience and comradery. The upper level of cycling is racing, with individuals and groups all over Australia regularly participating in fun rides, marathons and professional races. Many of these are conducted on open roads and may take days to complete. The Sydney to Wollongong bike ride is an example of a one-day fundraising ride with 10000 riders participating annually.

Cycling is an excellent fitness activity and is preferred by many as considerable body weight is taken off the knee joints. However, the large leg muscles are still required to do much of the work, challenging the cardiorespiratory system to respond and continually improve its efficiency. Cycling also has a social side, with the pain of a tough ride frequently broken up by coffee stops. It is not uncommon to see large groups of cyclist on country roads making their way to the next stop.

New lightweight, aerodynamic bicycles with drop handlebars, multiple gears and high pressure tyres make the modern bike faster, more efficient and easier to ride up steep gradients. Helmets, Lycra bodysuits and sun protection clothing assist with safety from the elements, while new laws in New South Wales make it safer for cyclists sharing the road with motor vehicles. For example, when cars are passing cyclists, they must allow at least a 1-metre distance between the vehicle and the bike in zones of 60 kilometres per hour or below.
At the high end of cycling for fitness is chain gang cycling, where high-speed training sessions are conducted on the road in two lines. Those behind the leaders gain some benefit from drafting. Off-road fitness training can also be conducted in gyms, where cyclists do circuits with an emphasis on leg speed and development in low impact, high intensity spin classes.

9.3.5 Weight training programs

Weight training programs can be undertaken at home or in a gym that has the appropriate equipment. Programs can be isometric, isotonic or isokinetic. Weight training is a good option for people who want to improve the specific fitness components of strength and muscle endurance.

In isometric training, muscles develop tension but do not change in length. A typical isometric exercise would be pushing or pulling against an immovable object. By devising a series of exercises that are isometric in nature the individual can do their training program in a variety of places. They do not need a specific environment in which to exercise. The best gains in fitness are made in isometric training programs using six to eight repetitions of exercises, each lasting six seconds.

Isotonic weight training programs involve lifting weights through a full range of movement. This type of training requires the use of free weights and can incorporate weight machines. It is usually done at a fitness centre or gym, but can be done at home if the equipment is available. This is the traditional type of weight training and is the most popular.

Isokinetic weight training involves the use of elaborate machines that allow maximum muscle tension through the full range of movement. Isokinetic machines are designed so that the muscular force exerted by the body is equalled by the resistance of the machine. This type of training equipment is available in some fitness centres. The major advantage of this type of training is that strength gains will be constant throughout the full range of movement because the level of resistance is constant.
Weight training can be used to add muscle bulk, increase strength, improve power or develop endurance. Weight training requires specific skills and knowledge, so it would be beneficial to seek expert advice on the correct use of equipment, the number of repetitions and sets to be undertaken and the types of exercises for each major muscle group. A weight training program can be designed to meet individual fitness requirements.

**Application**

**Weight training**

Participate in a weight training session at your local gym or in your weights room at school that incorporates the three types of weight training, then complete the following.

1. Identify the exercises that were isotonic, isometric and isokinetic.
2. Identify the muscle(s) each exercise was designed to work.
3. How many sets and repetitions did you do of each exercise?
4. Identify safety guidelines for weight training.
5. What are the benefits of each type of weight training?

### 9.3.6 Tai chi

Tai chi is one of the martial arts systems. It is enjoyed by many people and, due to its slow controlled movements, is popular with all age groups. It involves slow, even, circular and coordinated movements. Tai chi is an exercise incorporating movements in coordination with your mind and respiration.

Tai chi is a series of exercises combined into a routine. Instruction with a master over a period of time is necessary to become proficient. Practising some simple tai chi forms repeatedly improves physical well-being. In the tai chi practice, the principles of balance, which include joint involvement (ankle, knee, hip), lower body awareness and posture, are explored. The benefits from this type of exercise are particularly applicable to older people, although the benefits can be enjoyed by all. Due to its focus on controlled, correct movement and balance, tai chi can benefit people who suffer from arthritis, lower back pain and stress. Tai chi is a great exercise option, particularly for people seeking a holistic approach to improved health and fitness.
9.3.7 Pilates

Pilates is a program that focuses on the development of core muscles, resulting in improved body balance, posture and alignment. Added strength and flexibility to the large torso muscles enables better control of the back and limbs, leading to improved coordination and balance.

In recent years, Pilates has become popular with people from all sports including golfers, footballers and gymnasts as well as dancers. In activities where core strength is important to stabilise the spine and enable safer, more forceful movements to be made, Pilates is an ideal fitness choice.

Use the Pilates weblink in the Resources tab to explore further.

9.3.8 Yoga

Yoga originated in India. Today, many different types of yoga exist. Yoga is holistic in nature, emphasising the body’s energy flow. It focuses on breathing exercises, known as pranayama, and physical postures called asanas. The specific breathing exercises address poor breathing habits and better utilise the muscles used in breathing. The physical postures and exercises improve muscular tone, strength and flexibility allowing energy to flow more freely throughout the body.
Yoga is beneficial because it: re-energises the body, giving a feeling of being more powerful; reduces stress; induces calmness; improves flexibility and muscle tone; and improves immunity.

As yoga ranges from gentle to demanding, it is suitable for everyone. It is important to choose a teacher and a class that suit your specific needs. Yoga is a popular form of exercise with people of all age groups and fitness levels. The benefits of yoga have been recognised by the fitness industry. As a result, many commercial fitness centres offer classes in yoga. An example is the ‘yoga/stretch’ class available at some centres. This class involves traditional yoga postures and stretching exercises. It is designed to be a total mind and body experience where you improve your flexibility, increase your strength and relax your mind while learning proper breathing techniques.

9.3.9 Emerging individual fitness activities
While activities such as swimming, running and cycling represent traditional ways of improving fitness, alternative methods are constantly being promoted, many with considerable appeal. Fitness facilities and home gyms offer an array of equipment and activities that challenge our physical demands, often with the lure of burning fat or expending kilojoules.

Treadmills, rowing machines and cross-trainers can be used in the privacy of your home to provide challenging cardiovascular workouts. These are also available in fitness centres, along with elaborate weight training machines, free weights, sport-specific training equipment, step machines, and warm-up and stretch rooms.

Many fitness establishments promote fitness activities that combine aspects of self-defence with gruelling fitness workouts that challenge our highest levels of fitness. Individuals can do martial arts, shadow boxing and, with the help of personal trainers, individual circuits.

There has been a rapid growth in the personal training industry in recent years. With expansion of the fitness industry, many people engage personal trainers, to provide individual assessment, develop an appropriate program, instruct on equipment usage and act as a motivating partner.

HIIT
Another emerging and highly popular fitness activity is high intensity interval training (HIIT) as it is physically demanding yet time expedient and highly adaptable to many environments. HIIT is a form of interval training where repeated periods of intense anaerobic work are alternated with brief periods of recovery. With the inclusion of well thought out activities, it can make fitness a fun experience.

If done on a field and with a focus on sprinting, one interval could involve short sprints followed by recovery walking. The type of activity could be changed for each interval — from sprinting to sprinting backwards,
sprinting on hands and legs, hopping, and so forth. In the gym, an interval could last 30 seconds, the first 20 seconds being spent on performing an activity such as squats followed by 10 seconds of rest. After two intervals, the activity may change to lunges, push-ups, jumping jacks, burpees, crunches and whatever else participants like to include.

In fact, HIIT can be readily adapted to a range of exercise modes including swimming, cycling, cross training and specific fitness classes. Activities need to be interesting and challenging while the level of intensity is very high during the work phase (at approximately 80 per cent MHR) and mildly active (such as walking) during the recovery phase. Work phases can vary considerably in time, but must be sustainable while high in intensity without being totally exhausting. Progressive bouts of HIIT will result in a gradual improvement in fitness.

Application

Individual fitness activities

Investigate the range of individual fitness activities available in your local area. Determine two activities that would suit your ability and fitness needs and participate in them.

Inquiry

Assessment of fitness activities

1. List the benefits of each activity you located in the above application.
2. Who would these activities suit?
3. How much does each activity cost?
4. What is the time commitment involved for each?
5. Where could you get further information about each activity?
6. Evaluate each activity in terms of your personal needs.

Inquiry

Ranking fitness activities

The section of work just completed focused on individual fitness activities, namely power walking, running, swimming, cycling, weight training, tai chi, Pilates and yoga. Use the following ranking chart to prioritise the activities in terms of interest to you as part of an individual fitness program. Justify your ranking. In the final column, insert a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ regarding whether you have access to these facilities in your area. Use the information for a class discussion about fitness activity preferences.

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9.4 Group fitness activities

For those people who seek the company of others in their quest for fitness, there are numerous group fitness activities to choose from. Fitness and leisure centres provide a range of fitness classes including step, pump, flex, power boxing and dance.

Many communities have the facilities to offer a range of team sports such as netball, soccer and hockey. Indoor facilities provide the opportunity to participate in indoor sports such as indoor cricket and basketball. Tennis and squash courts can also be found in most communities. They provide the individual with the opportunity to join a friend for a social game without being part of a formal competition.

Group fitness activities provide the opportunity to meet new people and establish friendships. They allow the individual to feel part of a group. Group activities are an appealing fitness option for many people.

9.4.1 Aerobics

Aerobics classes incorporate various conditioning exercises performed to music. A typical aerobics routine involves a warm-up phase, conditioning phase and cool-down phase. Aerobics can cater for a variety of ability and fitness levels. Classes can be designed to be low impact or high impact. Individuals within the class can change the intensity of the exercise being performed to meet their needs. Aerobics improves cardiovascular efficiency, strength, flexibility and agility. The use of energetic music and the instructions and encouragement of the instructor help to increase motivation.

A variation on the traditional aerobics class is the ‘fat burner’, which is a combination high and low impact class. The exercises are designed to increase participants’ heart rate to between 130 and 140 beats per minute to promote greater kilojoule expenditure. Benefits include improved cardiovascular endurance, strength and muscle tone. This class is suitable for everyone, but is specifically for those people who want to improve cardiorespiratory fitness and lose weight. ‘Blitz tech’ is a combination of high and low impact aerobics with very little choreography. It includes easy movements and equipment keeping the intensity high. This type of class is suitable for everyone as you can work at your own fitness level.

9.4.2 Aquarobics

Aquarobics or water aerobics evolved from aerobics. It involves doing conditioning exercises similar to those performed in an aerobics class in water. As water is much more resistant than air, aquarobics provides a good whole body workout. Participants move in the water following an instructor.

Aquarobics is an excellent fitness option for people who have back or joint problems, the elderly and the overweight due to the cushioning effect of the water. The use of hand weights can increase the intensity of exercise.

SNAPSHOT

Aquarobics

Aquarobics classes have proved popular with people who may not have otherwise been involved in exercise. Aquarobics is an extremely enjoyable class from which many benefits such as rehabilitation, fitness and social integration can be gained.
Benefits
• Exercise in water is easier as it supports body weight
• Reduces stress on joints
• More comfortable environment to exercise in
• Allows a full range of movement without excessive strain
• Increases circulation and promotes relaxation
• Reduces stress levels
• Potential weight loss through caloric expenditure and increased muscle tissue

Class descriptions
Power
A high energy workout for overall fitness and toning guaranteed to increase the heart rate.

Tone
A toning and firming class using weights and water as a resistance. Suitable for all fitness levels.

Deep water
Using buoyancy belts there is no impact on joints.

Gentle
Designed for seniors. Beneficial for those with blood pressure, arthritis, joint problems or injury rehabilitation.

Seniors
Designed for the more active seniors.

Special needs
Designed for people suffering from MS, stroke, Parkinson’s and arthritis, back, hip, knee injury, pre- and post-operation.

What to bring
Swimwear and towels are required.

Who can participate
Aquarobics is for all levels. The program offers a variety of options so that you can work out at your own level. It is essential that each participant is able to swim.

Source: Sutherland Shire Council, brochure for Sutherland Leisure Centre, New South Wales. © Sutherland Council Leisure Unit.

Inquiry
Aquarobics
Read the snapshot about aquarobics, then use the PMI chart below to list points that you consider to be favourable, unfavourable and worthy of further consideration. Summarise the points considered ‘interesting’ from the group and use them as the basis of a class discussion in evaluating aquarobics as a group fitness activity.

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<th>Minus</th>
<th>Interesting</th>
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9.4.3 Pump classes
Pump classes are non-aerobic fitness classes that use barbells to improve muscle tone, strength and endurance. The instructor leads participants in working out the major muscle groups of the body to music. The weights are adjustable to suit all fitness levels. This type of class is suited to people who would like an introduction to weight training and who wish to improve muscle tone and body shape.

Another non-cardiovascular fitness class is the ABT or abdominal, butt and thigh class. Participants use hand weights to direct the workload to specific areas such as the abdominals, buttocks and upper legs. The movements are slow and lead to improved muscle tone, strength and muscular endurance.
9.4.4 Step classes

This class incorporates aerobic moves to music using a stepped platform. The platform is adjustable to suit the individual’s fitness level. Step classes improve cardiovascular fitness and muscular endurance. As the moves are choreographed to music, classes are divided into advanced and beginners, depending on the complexity of the moves. Step classes provide a further challenge for people who want a variation to the standard aerobics class. This class is suitable to all levels of fitness. Variations on the step class include easy step, which is designed for beginners as it has less choreography, and step moves, which is for advanced participants. Step moves is highly choreographed, incorporating high intensity and dynamic movements.

9.4.5 Spin classes

Spin is also known as cycle classes or RPM. In this demanding fitness activity, participants or ‘spinners’ perform routines on stationary exercise bicycles that simulate outdoor cycle training. Music is used to enhance the atmosphere while the instructor leads the group through a range of cycling speeds designed to engage both the aerobic and anaerobic energy systems.

A typical session consists of a warm-up followed by instructor-led routines that imitate hill climbs, sprints and interval training. How hard you exercise is up to you, but it is important for spinners to set their own goals for each session. Should you wish to focus on your aerobic fitness, your level of intensity will be moderate, interspersed with infrequent bursts of speed. If you wish to focus on both anaerobic and aerobic fitness, there will be frequent periods of high intensity combined with periods of moderate effort. Intensity is raised by both increasing the speed at which you cycle and/or increasing the cycling resistance using the dial on the cross-bar of the bike.

Spin is excellent for improving cardiorespiratory fitness. It is also beneficial as a form of exercise for people who experience joint injuries or tendonitis. Use the Spin class weblink in the Resources tab to view a video.

9.4.6 Circuit training

Circuit training can be used to improve both fitness components and skill level. It involves the progressive use of a circuit of different types of exercise. Each exercise is performed for a specified number of repetitions or for a prescribed time period before moving to the next exercise. The exercises are separated by a brief timed rest interval. Each circuit is separated by a longer rest period. The total number of circuits performed during a training session may vary from two to six.

Circuits can be anaerobic or aerobic in nature, depending on the type of exercise, the time spent on each exercise and the number of circuits performed. Circuits can be designed to focus on strength and muscular endurance or cardiovascular fitness and flexibility.

Use the Circuit training weblink in the Resources tab to see a circuit in progress with some good ideas for exercises.
9.4.7 Team games

Participating in team games is one of the most popular types of exercise available. Team games provide the opportunity to participate at various levels from social to high level competition. The social aspect of exercising with others is very appealing to some people. Team games provide the opportunity to develop new friendships and be a part of a team. Often people are more motivated to exercise if they know other team members are reliant on them.

A vast range of team games is available in most communities. Netball, soccer, basketball,
rugby league and rugby union are examples of team games that are played by a range of people with varying ability levels. Indoor sports such as European handball, indoor soccer, indoor cricket and indoor netball offer the benefit of being able to play all year round regardless of weather conditions.

Participating in a team game requires people to participate at set times and usually involves a cost to cover affiliation fees and uniform. Depending on the level of competition, the individual may be required to devote a lot of time to training. Before joining a team, it is important to be clear about the commitment required. For many people who decide to participate in team games, the social and physical benefits provide the motivation to continue playing.

**Application**

**Participation in team games**

Investigate the range of team games available in your community and interview people who participate in them. The interview questions should include the following:

- Why do you participate in this team game?
- What are the benefits of participating for you?
- How did you first get involved in this team game?
- How often do you play and train?
- How much does it cost to participate?

**9.4.8 Exercise for specific groups**

The exercise and fitness needs of people change over time. Young children and the aged are limited by their physical capacities. Pregnant women need to alter their exercise regime to accommodate their changing body. The competitive athlete needs to exercise at a much higher intensity to achieve a competitive fitness level. These groups need to modify their exercise type and intensity to meet their specific needs. Regardless of the capabilities of people, exercise should be encouraged and made available to ensure everyone has the opportunity to improve their health and well-being.

**Pregnant women**

Exercise during pregnancy used to be considered dangerous. New research shows that exercise is not only safe, it should be undertaken. Research has found that there is no substantial difference in the pattern of delivery of the baby between non-exercising women and women who exercised at a moderate level during pregnancy. Women who exercised heavily during pregnancy are more likely to give birth at full-term. Like everyone else, pregnant women benefit from regular physical activity.

An exercise program can benefit pregnant women in many ways. The maintenance of healthy heart and blood vessels and improved muscular strength (particularly upper body and abdominal strength) can aid in posture and carrying the baby. Common disorders associated with pregnancy, such as lower back pain and leg cramps, can be eased. Exercise can help prevent varicose veins by improving circulation. By maintaining or improving fitness, pregnant women are able to control unnecessary weight gain, feel better about themselves and cope with the demands of labour.

Following are guidelines for maintaining fitness during pregnancy.

- Consult your doctor about your exercise program.
- Listen to the messages your body gives you.
- Work on good posture.
- Exercise gently.
- Exercise for fun.
- Realise that slowing down is normal.
- Do not overextend your joints beyond their normal range of movement.
- Always warm up and cool down.
- Strengthen your abdominal and pelvic floor muscles.
- Exercise carefully if you are lying on your back.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Modify your exercise program. (*Mum’s the Word. Exercising During Pregnancy, NSW Sport & Recreation.*)

**Children**

The age of children impacts on their:
- capacity to learn skills
- level of motivation to be active
- physiological capabilities
- susceptibility to injury.

Children have lower levels of motor control and are unable to process much information at one time. For young children, the focus should be on fun, skill development and activity, not competition and ‘win at all costs’. If children enjoy activity when they are young and are taught how to perform fundamental movement skills correctly, they are more likely to continue exercising as they get older.

**People training for fitness**

For athletes whose primary goal is to maintain a high level of fitness so that they can be competitive, it is essential that a specific training program be followed. This program includes fitness activities that reflect the energy system being utilised in competition and needs to be of high intensity. Following the FITT framework (see topic 5) for program design is necessary. The principles of progressive overload and specificity need to be applied in the design of a program. People who train for fitness need to be constantly challenged so that they continue to improve as they train towards their peak.

**The aged**

Regular physical activity can be very beneficial for older people. As we age there is a gradual decline in our physiological capabilities, such as reduced heart/lung capacity, bone density and muscular strength. However, if people remain active as they age the rate of decline can decrease or be delayed.

The reasons why older people exercise need to be considered when designing exercises specific to this group. Most older people exercise to be with others, make new friends and have some fun in addition to the health benefits gained. This has
implications for fitness service providers when designing exercise classes for older people. A general exercise class (for example, super circuit, aerobics, aquarobics) requires a longer warm-up and cool down together with a reduced aerobic segment. A specific relaxation component will also be popular. Without doubt, the principal focus of such classes should be the pursuit of fun and enjoyment.

Modified low to moderate exercise can be beneficial to older people. The physical, social and psychological benefits lead to improved well-being. Older people will be encouraged to exercise if they are able to participate in gentle exercises designed specifically for their needs.

9.4.9 Emerging group fitness activities

Motivation to improve and maintain fitness often requires the support of activities that are different, interesting and challenging. Traditional fitness activities such as circuits and team games are popular with most, but may be inconvenient, time consuming or may not have personal appeal. Group fitness activities such as boot camps have an emphasis on fun, challenge and opportunity for maximal workout and are becoming popular because classes are conducted over a short period, usually four weeks, and offer quick results. Within fitness centres, classes such as dance and core are also popular, the latter due to its focus on strengthening the abdominal and back regions of the body through controlled exercises such as pushing, pulling and rotating.

New ways of getting involved in group fitness activities are constantly evolving to meet demand for a fitness experience that is convenient, challenging, personally rewarding and socially satisfying. Wearable fitness trackers for monitoring, together with iPhone-embedded apps and recording and monitoring features, are all part of the new experience. But what about an equally inspiring group setting where participants can gather, communicate, perform, support and share experiences — and then connect through social media? Some ways that this can happen are listed below and may even be available at nearby fitness centres.

- **Zumba.** This type of activity combines dance and aerobic sequences with music. Well-known aerobic movements such as squats, lunges, on-the-spot steps, turning step and grapevine are choreographed to fit music that is mainly of Latin American origin such as the samba and salsa. Sessions normally last an hour and consist of continuous songs or instrumental music to which dance moves are created, each song demanding the learning of a sequence of pre-choreographed steps.

- **Gyrotonic.** This modern form of ‘yoga for dancers’ combines movements associated with yoga, swimming, tai chi, dance and gymnastics. With a focus on balance, controlled breathing, coordination, core strength and flexibility all combined in fluid movement sequences, this type of exercise is becoming popular as joints are not stressed and it is safe for seniors.

- **Pop Pilates.** Once again, this is a blend of a number of activities to create a fitness experience that is different and possibly more appealing. In this case, Pilates, dance and music are combined into sequences that aim to provide a full body workout.

- **Krav Maga.** Activity here focuses on incorporating self-defence movements into fitness workouts. As interest in self-defence particularly among women has increased, Krav Maga provides the opportunity to combine a highly demanding fitness workout focusing on strength, cardio and defence skills learning within a combatant environment.

- **Combined workout formats.** Instructors are continually looking for innovative ways to take clients to a new level of fitness within a captivating environment. Doing the same movements each time we go to the gym stimulates neither the imagination nor the level of motivation. What is happening now and will continue to be developed into the future is for instructors to incorporate existing fitness protocols into experiences that address the specific needs of their clientele. Imagine the best of what boxing, HIIT, rowing, treadmill running, aerobics and cycling could do if put into a circuit supported by music, wristband technology and big screen feedback.

- **Barre Body.** This combines movements from yoga, Pilates and ballet barre conditioning into a unique activity. It may involve stretching, sculpting and even interval training in movements drawn from ballet, yoga and Pilates. While not as physically demanding as other activities such as HIIT, it does aim
to significantly improve balance, alignment, core strength and flexibility, particularly in the lower body. Hand weights, exercise ball and resistance bands are used extensively in high repetition/low resistance exercises.

Many emerging group fitness activities are supported by child-care facilities, massage, sauna, spa and perhaps a physiotherapist and nutritionist. In addition, sessions are conducted by qualified instructors who not only motivate the group, but ensure that participants work within their fitness level. Fitness gyms for women are also becoming popular and attract clientele who may feel intimidated in some gyms that may be male dominated.

Application

Group fitness activities

1. Identify the types of fitness class available in your local area.
2. On separate days, participate in two of these classes.
3. Write a report comparing the two types of fitness class. Include the following in your report:
   - the benefits of each class
   - the availability and cost
   - the nature and difficulty of each
   - who it would suit
   - time commitment required
   - sources of further information for each
   - your personal reflections on participation.

9.5 Settings for exercise

The environments in which people exercise vary according to their fitness needs, facilities available and cost of activities. People who do not have the time or desire to go to a fitness centre to exercise may prefer to exercise at home. In addition to fitness centres, many communities offer other sporting and recreational facilities. Tennis courts, squash centres, leisure centres, golf courses, indoor sports centres and bicycle tracks are just some of the facilities that may be available.

For people who prefer to exercise in a group, exercise clubs and cultural groups provide a range of physical activities. It is important that the setting chosen to exercise in is an enjoyable and convenient environment that meets the individual’s needs. If not, the likelihood of the person continuing exercise is reduced.

9.5.1 Exercise at home

It is often difficult to find time to go out and exercise. For people with children or those who work long hours, exercising at home may be the most practical option. Many people who can afford the equipment have set up home gyms. Weights and weight machines are available at most sports stores. Aerobic exercise machines such as treadmills, steppers and stationary bicycles can also be purchased. If exercising at home is the only option available, weights combined with an aerobic machine provides a better workout.

Not everyone who wants to exercise at home can afford expensive exercise equipment. A range of exercises can be done with relatively little equipment. Another option is an online subscription to exercise program videos or DVDs. There are many exercise videos and DVDs on the market that provide exercise instruction. Aerobics, step and pump classes can be done in the home by following the instructor on the online videos or DVD.

Nowadays, going online for subscriptions and workouts is increasing in popularity. In fact, highly motivated people do not need to attend gyms anymore as their personal fitness goals can be achieved from home. It is possible to pay for membership online and select the type of contract and payment system. This can be
followed by access to online streaming of workouts that fit a person’s level and schedule. There is usually a free trial and then a commitment to monthly or annual payments.

The advantage here is certainly convenience, having 24/7 access to streaming and the possibility of a customised workout plan. However, the big disadvantage is a total reliance on self-motivation to engage in regular sessions with the same sense of commitment and enthusiasm that would develop under the care of a personal trainer.

One of the downsides to exercising at home is maintaining the motivation to regularly exercise. It is easy to be distracted so it is important to plan a set time in the day that is devoted to exercise.

### 9.5.2 Community facilities

Availability of and access to community exercise facilities vary. In larger communities the existence of a wide range of facilities provides the individual with greater exercise choice. The likelihood of finding a fitness activity that suits your needs is greater for people who live in large towns and cities. Most councils now have outdoor exercise equipment permanently established in areas surrounding ovals and grounds and in parks and reserves.

Equipment is generally of all-weather construction, and has soft, rubber ground cover with shadecloth or trees for sun protection. Fitness equipment varies but is usually a mixture of benches, strength equipment either fixed or with adjustable resistance, and cycling/stepping type equipment to address aerobic needs.

Community leisure centres provide the convenience of a large number of activities at one venue. These centres cater to a range of needs by providing a variety of activities such as aerobic classes, step and pump classes, weight training, swimming, boxing, yoga, martial arts and circuit training. Centres can include pools, indoor courts that cater for basketball, badminton, volleyball and gymnastics. Some open out to running tracks.

The popularity of team sports for both player and spectator has ensured that playing fields and sporting facilities exist in many communities. Running tracks, golf courses, tennis courts and squash courts are other facilities that may be available. Most communities recognise the importance of regular exercise and encourage participation by providing facilities and keeping costs relatively low compared to commercial facilities.

### 9.5.3 Fitness centres and personal trainers

Fitness centres are a popular choice for many people who exercise to improve fitness. Most fitness centres provide a range of fitness classes and weight training facilities. Classes can include aerobics, step, pump, flex, body sculpt, yoga, tai chi, cycle and power boxing. Each class varies in intensity of exercise and level of choreography and there is generally a class suitable to every ability level. For people who prefer resistance training, most fitness centres have a range of weights and weight training machines. Treadmills, steppers and stationary bicycles can be used to improve aerobic fitness. Fitness centres provide the convenience of being able to combine an aerobic workout with resistance training to achieve a good whole body workout.

Commercially run fitness centres provide many services designed to aid customers in their efforts to improve their fitness. The inclusion of child-minding facilities is an appealing service to many parents. Fitness centre personnel can provide information on training, technique and nutrition.
Personal trainers are available either as a centre employee or a self-employed trainer. For people who have little knowledge of resistance training and general exercise principles, personal trainers are an excellent resource. Not only do they have the expert knowledge, they are great motivators for many people. It is important to check the credentials and experience of personal trainers before employing them. There are a number of qualified organisations that teach fitness professionals. You can contact the Fitness Industry Association for verification of qualifications. As with any service provider, there are good and bad personal trainers. It is important to choose one that meets your needs.

SNAPSHOT

Why PTs are your best choice
By Pete Tansley

What do Novak Djokovic, Michael Phelps and Stephanie Gilmour have in common? Apart from being No.1 in their sport, they all have a team of personal trainers to help them stay on top. If the world’s best athletes have a personal trainer, then you, too, could benefit from one. Having a personal trainer used to be reserved for the elite and mega-rich. Today, they’re a necessity rather than a luxury.

Here are six reasons why you should invest in a personal trainer:

1. A personal trainer will offer an objective eye.
   Personal trainers are not paid to make you feel good. No tennis player hires a coach to commend them on their swing and shout ‘well done old chap!’ as they mis-hit another serve.
   A personal trainer will offer technique corrections and constructive criticism to improve your workouts and meal plan. When you’re not on the right track, they won’t go easy on you, and nor should they. They will tell you where you’re going wrong, offer positive encouragement, suggest improvements and keep you accountable for your actions.

2. A personal trainer will help you master your technique.
   While a training partner (or even a mirror) can help you with form correction, nothing beats live coaching from a trainer.
   A recent client of mine, who has been lifting weights longer than I have been alive, managed to increase his personal best on his deadlift by 10% after just one personal training session. Sure, that might not be the case for every single session with a trainer, however, it proves a point; there is nothing quite as powerful as coaching during a session. A training partner or a mirror will often not pick up on the intricacies of some exercises.

3. A personal trainer will prevent a plateau.
   Two months have gone by and you have made fantastic progress. You’ve improved your aerobic capacity, doubled your strength, and friends are asking what your secret is.
   Then it strikes; the dreaded plateau. No matter how hard you exercise or how closely you adhere to your meal plan, nothing changes. A personal trainer is your best defence against reaching a plateau and will employ two key techniques to prevent it: variety and assessment.
   Variety is used to shock your body, both physically and mentally, as workouts can become stale after some time. A personal trainer will change your program when necessary to ensure progress.
   Ongoing assessments can also prevent a plateau. Don’t worry; it’s not HSC maths. The assessment may include body fat percentage, weigh-ins and strength or fitness tests to track progress. If progress slows, your personal trainer can use this feedback to design the next phase of training.

4. A personal trainer will create a customised plan.
   Anybody can download a workout and meal plan from the internet and get started. The problem with these cookie-cutter plans, however, is they do not take your requirements into account.
   What injuries do you have? How many times per week can you work out? Are you able to access a commercial gym, or are you confined to training in the park or living room? Do you have any food sensitivities or allergies? Are you a total beginner in the kitchen, or a budding Masterchef? All of these questions need to be answered before a plan can be devised.
   I even ask the relationship status of my clients before creating their plan. This is not for my benefit; I am happily married! However, a client’s relationship status can have an impact on eating habits. Somebody who is single tends to eat out more often than somebody who enjoys meals at home with their partner.
   All of these angles need to be considered for both training and nutrition, which is why customisation is the key.
5. A personal trainer has been there before. It amazes me how often people select personal trainers without looking at their experience. Think about it; would you hire a skydiving instructor who had never jumped before? I doubt it. You want someone with plenty of skydiving experience before you put your life in their hands. A personal trainer is no different. They should be in good shape themselves and have a list of clients they have helped.

6. A personal trainer will create more than just workouts. As you can see, hiring a personal trainer is much more than just a workout. They will cover all angles of your lifestyle, from training and nutrition through to supplements and lifestyle management.

Choosing a personal trainer
There is no obvious place to find a trainer. Here are some pointers so you do not get stuck at this stage:

Firstly, tap into your network. Ask your friends, family and co-workers if they have someone they are happy to recommend. You can also look around your gym or park. Watch to see who looks approachable and who seems to be offering workouts that suit your level.

Do they seem present in the session? Does it look like they actually care about their client? If they are looking around or checking their mobile phone during the session, keep searching. If the trainer seems to have the same repeat clients week after week, that is a good sign.

Online can also be an effective search tool.
Secondly, it’s about finding the right price, personality fit and location that suits your needs. Most trainers will provide an initial consultation to begin with. Don’t feel pressured; if they are the right fit for you then get started right away to reap the rewards. If not, do not feel obliged to begin. Keep looking until the right trainer comes along.

Education and qualifications are also important, and so is their track record. Ask to see some recent testimonials of clients they have worked with. A trainer is always going to tell you how fantastic they are but a current or former client will give honest, transparent feedback without any sales jargon.

Source: UltraFit magazine and Pete Tandley

Application
Personal trainers
Investigate the services and expertise of two personal trainers in your local area. Use the profile of a personal trainer (in the following case study) as a guide, then complete the questions in the following inquiry.

CASE STUDY
Profile of a personal trainer
Name: Mary Lougis
Qualifications:
• registered fitness instructor
• Diploma, Sports Science
• registered nurse
• level one swim coach.
Experience:
• 10 years experience as a personal trainer
• 15 years experience as a registered nurse
• State level swimmer
• Winner, New South Wales bodybuilding competition; runner-up in Australian NABBA.
Location: Inner west, Sydney area and mobile service.
Cost: $50 per hour at gym, $60 per hour mobile service.
Inquiry
Selecting a personal trainer
1. What qualifications has each trainer achieved? Do you think there is a need for standardisation of qualifications for personal trainers?
2. Do they have any particular areas of expertise; for example, rehabilitation?
3. What are the benefits of using a personal trainer?
4. Identify the different methods of the trainers being investigated.
5. Which personal trainer would you select as the best to meet your fitness needs? What factors led you to this decision?

9.5.4 Exercise clubs
Exercise clubs have grown in popularity as they are an excellent way to enjoy exercise on a regular basis in the company of friends. They provide organised activity and the opportunity to meet others with the same exercise interests. There are many clubs in New South Wales that cater to both the social exerciser and the competitive athlete. Running, walking and cycling clubs can be found in most communities.

The focus on walking as a form of exercise to improve health and fitness is apparent in New South Wales. The establishment of walking for pleasure clubs by the New South Wales Office of Sport promotes walking as a good health and fitness exercise option. These clubs plan weekly or fortnightly walks in settings such as national parks, beaches and other places of interest. Exercise clubs are a great way to get into exercise on a regular basis.

9.5.5 Cultural groups
Multiculturalism is a part of Australian society. The establishment of a variety of cultural groups provides many benefits not only to people of that culture but to every Australian. Cultural groups keep alive many different aspects of the culture. Included in this is the opportunity to participate in culturally based forms of physical activity and exercise. The formation of cultural dance groups is a good example of the activities that cultural groups offer.

A variety of factors influence people’s choices of fitness activities. People participating in the same sport or activity may have totally different reasons for participating, such as physical abilities, cost, availability, health benefits and friendships.

Inquiry
Evaluating the appropriateness of my fitness program
Using the information you have read in subtopic 9.5, complete a draft of the type of fitness activities that are available in your area and that you like. Use the following questions to evaluate the appropriateness of your choices. Go to the Start exercise weblink in the Resources tab for more information.
1. Does this fitness activity suit my fitness needs?
2. Could I continue to participate in this fitness activity? Why or why not?
3. Are other fitness activities more suitable for me?

Resources
Weblink: Start exercise
9.6 Advertising and promotion

Advertising is a powerful tool. A good advertisement can be very persuasive in influencing people to buy a particular product. Advertisements for fitness and exercise services can be found in or on magazines, newspapers, television home shopping channels, commercials, radio and the internet. Commercial fitness centres do letterbox drops of flyers promoting their facilities.

Promotions aimed at enticing the consumer to buy a product or service can often sound too good to be true. It is important that consumers take the time to investigate the product or service they wish to buy before committing time and money to it.

9.6.1 How do you know who to believe?

The first step in finding out who to believe is by checking to see if the product or service is endorsed by a recognised fitness or health institution. Does the person offering the service have any qualifications? What is the basis of their expertise? These are things you should investigate when determining the reliability of the source of information. Generally, well-recognised brands and products endorsed by Australian fitness industry or health organisations such as the Heart Foundation are reliable.

Inquiry

Fitness and exercise services

Use the Personal trainers — how to choose one weblink in the Resources tab to explore further.
1. What information is provided about the personal trainer in figure 9.31?
2. Who is the advertisement targeting?
3. What does the advertisement offer?
4. List other information that you require to make an informed decision about the use of a personal trainer.
5. What do you think would be the benefits of the service?
6. How would you establish if the claims are believable?

Resources

Weblink: Personal trainers — how to choose one

9.6.2 Promotional techniques

Promotional techniques are often used to attract customers to products and services. Targeting specific groups and offering limited offers are some promotional techniques used. Don’t be fooled by the slick advertising of products. Take the time to:
• compare products
• seek advice from people in the fitness industry
• investigate the quality of the product or service advertised.

Following a long list of complaints about gym memberships, the NSW Department of Fair Trading has prepared a factsheet for points to consider before joining a gym (see Snapshot below).
SNAPSHOT

Gym memberships
8 things you should know
Before you sign up to a gym membership you should be aware of the following:

1. **Shop around**
   Don’t be pressured into signing up on the spot. Visit a number of gyms to work out which is the best value for money, has the best facilities, service and location for you. Consider trying a casual membership for a month or a few visits to see if the gym is right for you.

2. **Be cautious of ‘great deals’**
   Be wary of special offers, promotions and verbal promises. Some deals may not be as good as they seem, once you read the fine print.

3. **Read the fine print**
   Never take the salesperson’s word for it. Always take the gym contract home and read all the terms and conditions before you sign it. Know what you are getting into before you commit. Check that the fees listed on the contract are the same as the price that has been quoted to you. Also check the administration fees for setting up or renewing your membership. These are non-refundable even if you cancel the contract during the cooling-off period.

4. **Check the cooling-off period**
   Check if the contract has a cooling-off period which allows you to cancel the membership in writing within a limited time period.

5. **Where will you be in 6 to 12 months?**
   The gym may not be easy to access if you change jobs, work different hours or move house and you may still be locked into the contract for months to come. Consider a 3- or 6-month membership — they are often no more expensive than a 12-month one.

6. **Direct debit**
   Many gyms ask for payments by direct debit. Just because your membership expires doesn’t mean the direct debits stop. You often need to provide the gym with 30 days written notice to stop the direct debit deductions. Check the contract before you sign. If the fitness centre continues taking payments, talk to your financial institution.

7. **Cancelling your membership**
   If you need to cancel your membership, check your contract to see what is required. Even if the contract requires you to visit the centre to cancel in person, it is also wise to do it in writing. Then you can prove the date you requested the membership to end. Remember, a membership means you have a binding agreement and you may have difficulty cancelling early. Some gyms charge up to $300 for cancelling a membership, so read the terms and conditions in your contract before you sign.

8. **If things go wrong**
   If you have a dispute with a gym, check if it is a member of Fitness Australia. If the gym is a member, Fitness Australia will help negotiate your dispute if you submit it to them in writing. If the gym is not a member of Fitness Australia or you cannot resolve the issue, call Fair Trading on 13 32 20 or visit www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au for help and advice.

**Case study**

**Vanessa’s story**
Vanessa heard about an offer for a 2-week ‘obligation free’ trial for a gym and decided to try it out. In order to get the free trial the gym staff asked Vanessa to fill out a form which included her credit card details. She was assured that she would not be charged if she decided not to join the gym after the 2-week trial ended.

Two weeks later Vanessa decided not to join the gym. She called the gym to let them know but later realised that they had still charged her credit card a $60 monthly membership fee. She spoke to the gym manager who told her that the form she signed was a membership contract and could not be cancelled.

Vanessa called Fair Trading, who explained her rights and how to get the gym to refund her money. Vanessa followed the advice and got all her money back and her membership cancelled.

**Source:** NSW Department of Fair Trading

9.6.3 Accuracy of information
One technique used in advertising is to promote products through glossy, attractive advertisements that appeal to the senses of the consumer, but really give little information about the product. Compare advertisements
of similar products or services to determine the amount of information given. It is wise to talk to the service providers and ask questions regarding their expertise and qualifications before using that service. It is illegal to give false information in advertising, although information can often be misleading. If you have concerns about the accuracy of information, investigate the information supplied by asking people with more knowledge or experience in that area.

### Application

**Advertising and promotion of fitness products**

Collect a number of advertisements of fitness equipment, fitness centres and fitness services from print media, or compile a video collection from television. Analyse the advertisements, considering the following points:

- What is being promoted? How does it help to improve health and fitness?
- What promotional techniques are used?
- How accurate do you think the information is?

Present your information to the class.

### 9.6.4 Ethics of advertising

As with any commercial industry, the fitness industry uses many advertising techniques to attract customers and make money. There are many genuine fitness products and service providers available. It is important that people understand that there is a range in the quality of service and product available. The claims made in advertising can be misleading and may even be false.

### Inquiry

**Advertising and promotion**

Critically analyse the advertisement in figure 9.32.

1. What information is provided?
2. Who is the advertisement targeting?
3. What does the advertisement offer?
4. What promotional techniques are used?
5. What are the benefits of this fitness centre?
6. How can you determine if the information is believable?
7. From the information provided, do you think this gym would suit your fitness needs? Explain your answer. What other information would you require?

### FIGURE 9.32 Online advertisement for a fitness centre

**JIM'S FITNESS**

COME IN TODAY FOR A FREE TRIAL WORKOUT. LIMITED OFFER — NO JOINING FEE WHEN YOU SIGN UP FOR 12 MONTHS!

HOME FACILITIES CLASSES PERSONAL TRAINING MEMBERSHIP FIND US

LET US HELP YOU REACH YOUR FITNESS GOALS.

Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 6am-9pm
Sat and Sun 6am-7pm

Address: 5 Sweat St Newtown, NSW 2042

Contact: Ph: (02) 1234 5678

PERSONAL TRAINING AND GROUP FITNESS CLASSES AVAILABLE
9.7 Motivators and barriers to participation

For some people regular exercise is a difficult task. While there are many barriers that prevent or deter people from participating in regular physical activity, there are also many enablers. Figure 9.33 shows how enablers and barriers can change across the lifespan.

**FIGURE 9.33** Enablers and barriers to participation in physical activity across the lifespan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENABLERS</th>
<th>5–12 years</th>
<th>12–18 years</th>
<th>18–64 years</th>
<th>65+ years</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Money</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Injuries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sedentary job</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family responsibilities</td>
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<td>Time and money</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
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<td>Cognitive ability</td>
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<th>BARRIERS</th>
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<td>Illness</td>
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<td>Money</td>
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<td>Sedentary job</td>
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<td>Transport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive ability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Inquiry**

What are your barriers to participation in physical activity?

Use the Barriers to exercise weblink in the Resources tab to take an online quiz or find an alternative online.

1. How many barriers do you need to overcome?
2. How do you think you might overcome these barriers?

**Resources**

Weblink: Barriers to exercise

9.7.1 Access to facilities

The availability of and access to exercise facilities impacts on participation in exercise. Physical isolation and financial circumstances can limit access to facilities. For people who live in isolated communities, the facilities available are limited or even non-existent. Both socioeconomic and environmental factors affect ability and desire to participate in physical activity. For example, financial circumstances may prevent some people from being able to afford gym memberships or any form of home fitness equipment. Environmental circumstances such as excessive cold, heat or humidity may also act as a deterrent.

9.7.2 Convenience of use

The issue of time can affect people’s ability to exercise. People are more likely to participate in exercise, join a team or use a gym if it is convenient to do so. This may mean it is close to home or on the way home from work. For adolescents, it may mean that they can get there easily by public transport. If it is difficult to get to and from facilities, people are more likely to opt out of exercising.
9.7.3 Cost
The ability to afford to join a fitness centre, and buy fitness products or exercise clothing and shoes can be a barrier to people exercising. Lack of money can restrict the range and type of activities available. Many physical activities are very costly. Playing in a social competition, using a fitness centre or a swimming pool means a financial commitment. Some people are not able to make this commitment. The limited range of exercise choices that are left may not be appealing, so participation in regular exercise decreases.

9.7.4 Feelings about fitness and exercise
The exercise experiences people have when they are young can affect their attitudes to exercise. When these experiences are unpleasant, negative feelings about fitness and exercise develop and can form a barrier to exercise for adults. It is important that exercise is fun and not intimidating to young people, so that they develop positive attitudes to exercise.

9.7.5 Exercise as a priority
In people’s busy lifestyles today exercise may not be a priority. Some people work long hours at stressful jobs. They do not perceive exercise as a priority, as they have more important deadlines to meet and work to do. For some people who do not recognise the important health benefits of regular exercise, exercise is not important. The challenge is to educate people about the benefits of regular physical activity and to introduce them to enjoyable activities that suit their fitness needs.

9.7.6 Influence of other responsibilities
For many parents, particularly mothers, the commitment of raising children can be a barrier to exercise. Lack of personal time is especially an issue when caring for small children. In some cases, parents do not get time to themselves until early evening. By then they are often too tired to exercise. It is not uncommon for parents to become spectators as their children grow and begin to participate in activity and sport.

Parents need to manage their time to include some activity in their lifestyle. They can become active by increasing their incidental activity; for example, doing the housework more vigorously, walking the children to the shops or getting involved in their children’s sport in some capacity. Sharing family responsibilities between parents or caregivers allows each time to engage in exercise.

Inquiry
Overcoming barriers to exercise
Some of the common barriers to exercise we hear are:
- ‘I don’t have enough time’
- ‘Exercise is boring’
- ‘I don’t know how to be active’
- ‘I’m too tired’
- ‘It’s too hot’, ‘It’s too cold’, ‘It’s raining’
- ‘I don’t feel like it’.

Use the Physical activity barriers weblink in the Resources tab for more information. Suggest ways to overcome these barriers.

Resources

Weblink: Physical activity barriers
9.8 Topic review

9.8.1 Summary

- Children and youth up to 17 years of age should exercise for 60 minutes per day, every day. The time can be accumulated.
- Adults should accumulate 2½ to 5 hours of moderate exercise over a week.
- Regular moderate to vigorous physical activity and exercise should be a lifelong behaviour that starts in childhood and is carried on throughout life.
- Regular physical activity has many positive health benefits. Improved fitness is linked with reduced risk of all-cause morbidity and mortality.
- The value that people place on exercise and fitness varies across the population and may result from a combination of many factors.
- A significant section of the Australian population does not value fitness and exercise. This is reflected in statistics that reveal a large group of people fail to meet the recommended levels of physical activity.
- People of all ages gain health benefits from regular, moderate physical activity.
- The commodification of fitness has led to the availability of a much wider range of fitness products and services.
- There are many ways in which the individual can choose to exercise for fitness. They include a wide variety of individual and group fitness activities that can be done in a variety of settings.
- Individuals need to determine their fitness needs and investigate the range of exercise types on offer so that they choose an activity that meets their needs, is enjoyable and that they will be likely to continue.
- The fitness industry advertises and promotes many fitness products and services. Quality and value for money is something consumers should consider before making a financial commitment. Consumers need to investigate the accuracy of the information being provided, the qualifications and expertise of people providing the service and the quality and reliability of products being offered.
- There are a number of barriers to people's participation in fitness activities, many of which can be overcome.

9.8.2 Questions

Revision

1. Describe how we can improve our health through physical activity. (P6) (3 marks)
2. Briefly explain the extent to which exercise should be a part of lifestyle. (P15) (3 marks)
3. What does it mean to be fit? (P15) (1 mark)
4. *'Australians value exercise and fitness.' Discuss this statement. (P17) (5 marks)
5. How do Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for children differ from those of adults? (P10) (4 marks)
6. What is meant by the commodification of fitness? How has it been beneficial in improving people's attitudes to fitness? (P17) (5 marks)
7. Identify and discuss four factors influencing people's attitudes to fitness. (P17) (4 marks)
8. How has your attitude to fitness been formed? Discuss the factors that have influenced your attitude. (P17) (5 marks)
9. How is technology changing our approach to fitness? (P10) (3 marks)
10. Investigate four emerging group fitness activities in terms of personal appeal and ability to address your fitness needs. (P10) (6 marks)
11. Identify two individual and two group fitness activities and outline the benefits of each. (P15) (4 marks)
12. Identify the important considerations of designing exercise for the aged, children and pregnant women. (P5) (3 marks)
13. Outline the exercise needs of a person intent on improving their fitness. (P5) (3 marks)
14. Investigate your local fitness centre in terms of the services it provides and ability to meet the fitness needs of the community. (P15) (5 marks)
15. Describe the role of a personal trainer. (P15) (1 mark)
16. Identify one cultural group in your community. Describe a culturally based form of physical activity practised by group members. (P16) (3 marks)
17. What benefits does regular physical activity provide? (P15) (3 marks)
18. Outline the things you should consider before believing an advertisement for a fitness service or product. (P16) (2 marks)
19. Identify issues that you need to be aware of before purchasing a gym membership. (P15) (3 marks)
20. Identify and describe three barriers to participation in regular exercise. Explain how these might be overcome. (P17) (6 marks)

Extension
1. Describe your main motivations for exercising. How do these compare to people of different age groups and activity levels? (P17) (5 marks)
2. Investigate methods by which aerobic fitness can be improved within a fitness centre. (P5) (5 marks)
3. Determine why it might be necessary to be critical of advertisements for fitness products and services. (P15) (3 marks)

Note: For an explanation of the key words used in the revision questions above, see Appendix 2, page xxx.

9.8.3 Key terms
commodification is the process of turning something into a commodity that can be bought and sold. p. 319
A commodity is a product that exists to generate profit. p. 319
exercise is planned, structured and repetitive bodily movement. It is performed to improve or maintain one or more components of physical fitness. Exercise is a subset of physical activity. p. 310
light exercise is activity that requires approximately three to four times as much energy as rest. p. 312
moderate exercise is activity that requires approximately five to six times as much energy as rest. p. 312
physical activity is any movement that results in some expenditure of energy. p. 310
repetitions are the number of times an exercise is repeated without rest. p. 328
A set is the number of repetitions done in succession; for example, one set may equal 12 repetitions. p. 328
target heart rate (THR) is a predetermined pulse rate to be obtained during exercise and is expressed as a percentage of maximum heart rate. p. 312
vigorous exercise is activity that requires seven times or more energy as rest. p. 312