



Your exercise routine

Stepping up your exercise regime could soon make others green with envy.

WALKING

Emissions-free, highly economical and available to virtually everyone, walking is a win-win for both your body and the environment. But in our high-tech modern lives, where emailing a colleague is far easier than walking down the hall to ask a question, many of us frequently fail to take the 10,000 steps a day recommended for healthy adults. Simply changing a few sedentary habits may be enough to tip your incidental exercise to the magic figure. Take the stairs instead of the lift, park the car further away than necessary if you are driving or (as a rule) walk to the shops instead of jumping in the car. Get motivated at www.10000steps.org.au



Clockwise: At the gym, yoga and other types of exercise that don't involve electric treadmills and bikes may be greener options; similarly, there are swimming alternatives to pools that don't involve as many chemicals or electricity for water heating.



YOGA

While yoga may feature in almost every gym and community hall across Australia's cities, the physical practice (called *asana*) is just a tiny aspect of the ancient philosophy of yoga, which emphasises, among other ethics, the shunning of greed. Known in Sanskrit as *aparigraha*, this eco-friendly ethic reminds yogis that excessive consumption doesn't lead to inner peace. Sydney yoga teacher Katie Spiers' user-friendly *Spiritual Survival and the City* (Hardie Grant books) is a good read for those wanting to learn more.



SWIMMING

While swimming is fantastic for your body, if your daily dip is in a heated, chemical-filled swimming pool, chances are it could be more planet-friendly. Those lucky enough live by a beach, river or ocean pool should take the chemical-free option over an indoor pool and remember that your post-swim shower offers another chance to green up the experience: try to keep it short and sweet. Those looking for incentives to get their togs on can take on social and fundraising swims: www.oceanswim.com has a calendar of national events.



CYCLING

If there's a cyclist's utopia, it must be in Europe. Danish parliamentarians cycle to work, Paris offers urban cycle stations with cheap rentals and convenient drop-off points and a general culture of cyclists not being abused by car drivers prevails. Not so in Australia, where urban cyclists are treated poorly in almost every city as they take their exercise with a double dose of traffic and abuse. In Sydney, where cycling is hair-raising at the best of times, change may be in the air. The City of Sydney Council has allocated \$70 million to build a cycle network during the next four years and now offers free cycling confidence courses for residents wanting to safely navigate the Sydney roadways (www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au). Why not encourage your own council to do the same?



GYM JUNKIES

With all those televisions blaring as you sweat it out on an electric treadmill or in a spin class, the average gym experience can easily become an exercise in carbon emissions. While you may not be able to control the gym's policies (although as a member, they will surely listen to your suggestions), you can ensure your own contribution is greened up a bit. Ride, walk or arrive on public transport rather than by car, make sure you take a reusable water bottle or use the bubbler to stay hydrated rather than buying disposable bottles and think twice before glamping up — your body doesn't care if you work out in old trackies rather than the newest Spandex gymwear.

