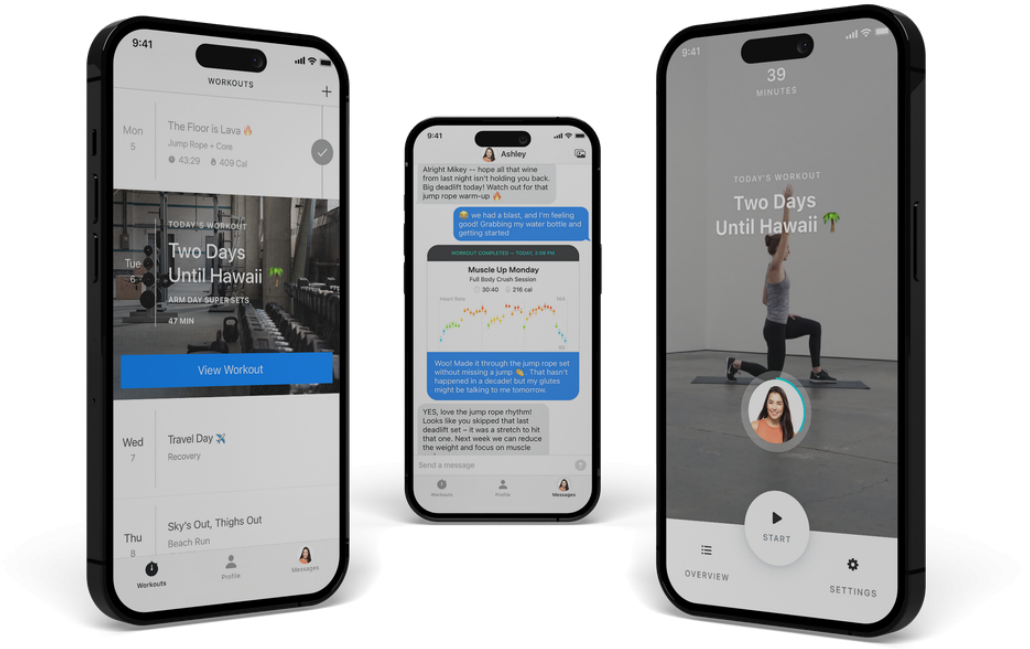
If you can’t motivate yourself to exercise, try this app



If you’re anything like me, making yourself work out is hard. You set an alarm but then can’t convince yourself to get out of bed. You’re done with work and have your clothes and sneakers packed, but tasks that seem more pressing just keep coming up, and oh look, they just released another episode of *Billions,* and do you really feel like leaving the house?

Many people’s answer to this conundrum is a personal trainer — someone you meet with once a week or so who walks you through various customized exercises and shouts encouragement. If you don’t show up to your workout, you probably still get billed for the session and — more importantly — your trainer will be upset with you, and that’s no fun. But personal trainers can cost well over $100 per hour, which just isn’t an accessible price for many people (myself very much included). That’s why I’ve avoided getting one for many years, even though I’m sure it could be exactly the motivation I need to leave my couch

and get some reps in.

If you are also in this situation, I have found a good compromise, and I would like to make sure you're aware of it. It's called Future Personal Training.

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To be clear, Future is not *cheap* by any means: memberships are currently . This is not Planet Fitness. But compared to the cost of a personal trainer at my gym in New York City, who might charge close to that amount *per session*, you'll probably save. Still, you may well be in a region or part of a gym where good personal trainers are more affordable, so make sure to do some research before signing up.

Future is a virtual personal training service. You download the app, answer a few questions about your fitness level and workout preferences, and are then able to select a personal trainer from a few provided options. These personal trainers are real people (no AI here), and you can scroll through their bios and qualifications to get a sense of who might be a good fit for you. One warning I will give: even if you answer the quiz questions identically, you will not be given the same set of trainer options each time. So if you see a trainer you really want, just go ahead and grab them.

The trainer I selected sent me a video greeting, and then we scheduled a video call. Here, I told her what I've told you: I wanted to be exercising more, but it felt a bit like a chore, and I had trouble motivating myself to do it. Basically, I needed someone who could assign me a few fun workouts a week and hold me accountable for doing them. I've been using Future for over half a year now, and my trainer has done exactly that. I've discovered working out again, and it turns out, it's pretty fun.

It’s much harder to blow off a workout when you feel like a real human is waiting for you to get it done

Through the Future app, you have an open chat with your coach. Mine will message me encouragement every so often and will check in now and again to see how it’s going. She assigns me workouts on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and I’ll message her as I’m doing them if I have any questions or feedback. Coaches can adjust things on the fly. I let my coach know at one point that I’d moved to a gym with a pool, and she started building swimming into my assignments; I told her my gym had gotten rid of its foam rollers, and she swapped in replacement exercises. She gets the data from my smartwatch at the end of each workout and can use that to roughly see if the level needs adjusting.

As time has gone on, I’ve gotten to know my coach on a personal level as well. She asks me how my weekend went and sends pictures when she gets back from vacation. I’m sure your mileage on this one varies by the coach you select, but it’s much harder to blow off a workout when you feel like a real human, who you know, is waiting for you to get it done.

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a:hover]:text-gray-63 [&>a:hover]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a:hover]:text-gray-bd dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-underline-gray [&>a]:shadow-underline-gray-63 dark:[&>a]:text-gray-bd dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-gray”>Image: Future
Future’s assigned workouts look largely like lists of exercises complete with reps, weights, and instructional videos. When you’re done with an exercise, you press the “next” button. It’s a bit like doing a Fitbod workout, if you’ve ever used that. But what’s different from Fitbod (apart from the fact that your workouts are designed by a real human) is that your coach maintains a virtual presence throughout. A

little bubble with my coach’s head in it lingers in the corner of my screen during every exercise, and it really does give me the feeling that she’s watching me as I squat or crunch. Irrationally or not, it makes me think more about my form as I work. There’s an audio component as well. My coach records a quick but very motivating introduction to each workout that plays as I warm up and also makes clarifications about certain exercises that might be more confusing. It feels like she’s kind of hanging out in my head.

The most important aspect of a workout is that I do it

I have to note that there’s one thing you *don’t* get out of Future that you would out of an in-person personal trainer, and that’s form correction. Your coach can certainly give you tips on your form, and you can ask them questions, but they’re not actually watching you complete the exercises and won’t be able to tell you if you’re doing them wrong. If form correction is a priority for you, then Future probably isn’t your pick.

But that’s a benefit that I’ve personally been willing to give up. Because to me, the most important aspect of a workout is that I do it. And when I feel like I have someone by my side, encouraging me as I work out — even if that’s not literally true — the whole prospect of doing it feels less intimidating and more like a fun, social affair. And when I know that person will be cheering me on in the chat as soon as I finish, I’m more motivated to make sure I get the workout done and that I do it right. If you’re someone who would benefit from something like this and Future is in your budget, it’s worth giving it a shot.

https://www.theverge.com/23935105/future-personal-training-fitness-app-price-features