



# Millennials' Take on FITNESS

## They Like Short, Social and Fun Workouts

by Derek Flanzraich

**M**illennials are a big deal. Most businesses view them as trendsetters for good reason: Born between the early 1980s and early 2000s, they make up 25 percent of the population and represent \$200 billion in annual buying power. Like the baby boomers before them, they also have the power to profoundly influence other generations, both young and old.

Millennials have largely rejected previous fitness trends and instead paved a new path to health and wellness. In doing so, they've transformed both the business of fitness and the idea of what it means to be healthy. They've created a more personalized approach that encompasses the values of their generation.

### What They Are

Millennials are a fast-paced, well-informed group. They devour news and information as soon as it's released and then share it with others, usually via social media. This quick turnover cycle has led to an "out with the old, in with the new" mentality in many aspects of life. For a generation that strives to be trailblazers, things quickly become outdated. Millennials are always seeking new ways to get fit and eat healthy, even if it means creating something unique to them.

The Internet has allowed these young adults to find more like-minded people than ever before. They grew up with constant connectivity, which has allowed them to build larger

**For these stimulation junkies, multitasking is part of daily life, which is why conducive physical activities are typically accompanied by music, TV or scrolling Twitter feeds.**

communities of friends online as well as locally, and keep everyone apprised of their fitness goals and progress.

Millennials' overscheduled lives mean they value shorter, quicker and more convenient options, especially in regard to workouts and healthy meals. They are more likely than any other age group to track their own health progress and use technologies such as health and fitness apps which monitor such data as steps, heart rate and caloric intake as a complement to their fitness routines. Being healthy means more than weight loss or looking good to them. For this pivotal generation, health is increasingly about living a happier life.

### What They Like

Millennials' values and unique approach to health have fostered the growth of innovative fitness movements, health-focused stores and restaurants and alternative medicine. Here are the three biggest trends making an impact on the wellness industry.

**WHAT'S HOT:** Shorter, full-body workouts that are also fun.

**WHAT'S NOT:** Steady-state cardio exercises as a starting point for losing weight and improving health.

It's been increasingly shown that steady-state cardio workouts may be the most effective way to lose weight, but they also lack widespread appeal. Instead of sticking to a traditional treadmill, many millennials have flocked to workout regimens that regularly switch exercises or use high-intensity interval training, such as Zumba, SoulCycle and CrossFit.



Millennials understand that diseases caused by unhealthy societal norms, including being sedentary, are in many ways preventable, and they are making conscious choices to be well.

**WHAT'S HOT:** A more holistic approach to health.

**WHAT'S NOT:** Diets that emphasize rapid weight loss.

Millennials don't believe that weight is the major indicator of health as much as previous generations have. Instead, they increasingly think of weight as just one among many key components of a healthy lifestyle. A higher percentage define being healthy as having regular physical activity and good eating habits.

**WHAT'S HOT:** Alternative workouts that are customizable, fun and social.

**WHAT'S NOT:** Inflexible gym memberships and daily attendance.

Instead of hitting the gym, young adults tend to prefer new forms of fitness that can be personalized to their needs. They like obstacle races such as Tough Mudder, fun and distance runs like The Color Run, at-home fitness workouts like P90X, and bodyweight regimens.

As a group, millennials are redefining wellness and changing how following generations will view health. Their preferences for fun, personalized workouts and holistic wellness have fueled trends with far-reaching implications for the food, tech and healthcare industries, and that's just the start.

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