



COPING WITH THE WINTER LOCKDOWN IN THE UK

With a new national lockdown coming into force across England, here's some ideas on how to cope – from staying connected to getting out in the open

Your daily outdoor exercise time ...

Under the new rules in England you can exercise outside once a day in your local area with one person from another household. "As long as you stay 2 metres away it is also the chance for some social interaction,".

While wet-weather clothing might be needed, why not take a look at Ordnance Survey maps and go on an adventure along some muddy footpaths, or find unexplored local areas on your doorstep? Also - don't forget that playgrounds are open, so children can burn off their energy too.

Indoor exercising

The benefits of exercise can be felt from even relatively short bouts of 15 to 30 minutes at a time, according to Stephen Buckley, head of information at mental health charity Mind.

Even if you don't have exercise equipment like treadmills at home, the benefits of exercise can be felt from even relatively short bouts of 15 to 30 minutes at a time including cleaning, dancing, using the stairs and online classes - even cleaning can make for a great workout.

Joe Wicks is bringing back his [online home workouts](#) for three days a week for lockdown 3.0, while there are plenty of [online classes](#) for yoga, dance, boxing and even – for cycling enthusiasts – "[zwinging](#)".

Online activities

The idea of yet more time online might seem unappealing, but a huge number of internet activities are now being run – and getting more sophisticated all the time.

Charities such as [Macmillan Cancer Support](#) have created packs for people to host their own murder mystery, art groups are holding [Zoom life drawing](#) sessions, and there is no shortage of quizzes to try out. Pottery, embroidery, cookery and



language classes are among other options, and offer the chance to develop a new skill and get to know new people.

Theatre, concerts and other events are also available online – and are sometimes free. Some are live while others are recordings: among them you can romp through the [British Museum's 2014 Viking exhibition](#), get a front-row seat to [a Met Opera performance](#) or explore the world of ice-age megafauna as part of the Natural History Museum's [series of online lectures](#).

Coping with working, and schooling, at home

With adults working from home – and children now joining them – headphones might be a necessity. But experts say a clear work/life balance also matters.

Make sure you take at least a 30-minute lunch break, ideally getting outside for some exercise, if you can. Try putting a reminder in your diary when you plan to finish working and communicate this to your colleagues so they know when you're contactable. At the end of the working day, turn off your computer and any other devices so you're not tempted to check work emails and try to take your mind off work by doing something else.

The sentiment is echoed by the charity [Young Minds](#), which emphasises it was also important for children to find mental space.

Parents might find the demand of childcare mean they end up working late into the evening, something which can disrupt sleep and mental health. If your current working arrangements aren't working for you and your family, speak to your employer about what support they can offer, including the option of working more flexibly, or working reduced hours.