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# Exercise in our 'new normal'

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We surveyed 340 people across the UK to find out how lockdown is affecting their exercise habits.

**INSIGHTS ISSUE NO.3**

[www.theyardcreative.com](http://www.theyardcreative.com)

In ISSUE No.1 we reported that COVID-19 lockdown was allowing people time to train.

**This new-found luxury of time has seen the emergence of 3 key COVID-19 fitness consumer types.**

Introducing the:



**The  
Fit Forty+**



**The  
Newbies**



**The  
Potential Burnouts**

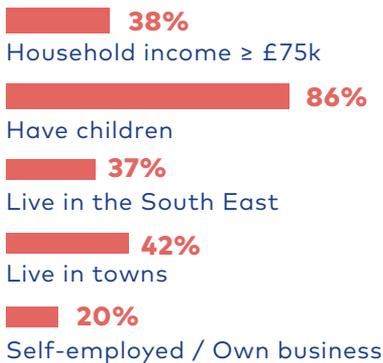
# THE FIT FORTY+

**Gen X** and **Baby Boomers** are exercising more since social distancing. Furthermore, a greater proportion are exercising more frequently per week than their younger counterparts, Gen Z and Millennials, suggesting that age really is just a number.



**Gen X and Baby Boomers**

## DEMOGRAPHICS



## BEHAVIOUR

**51%** exercising more

**89%** doing so 4 or more times a week

## MOTIVATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

The top reason for exercising more was **'I have more time' (32%)<sup>†</sup>**

**67%<sup>\*\*</sup>** stated **'changing my priorities'** would help them maintain this

<sup>\*</sup>Of the 73% who want to maintain their new frequency of exercise.

<sup>†</sup>This corroborates with Gen X being previously known as the time-poor generation, faced with numerous demands; from higher pressured jobs to looking after younger children and elderly parents.

## OUR VIEW

Gen X & Baby Boomers currently have the luxury of time but are aware that once they return to normality, they will need to balance their priorities in order to maintain their new frequency of exercise. Brands that can help these consumers address priorities at the same time as exercising, such as spending time with children AND working out, will have a real advantage.

## EXAMPLE

Family and child-friendly exercise can be seen at many major national gyms, such as [David Lloyd's PRAMA](#). Similarly, we're also seeing smaller gyms, such as [Rize](#) offer flexible, no-contract, family-friendly exercise classes. Brands like [Peloton](#) are offering family workouts too, with the added convenience that these can be done at home.

## THE CHALLENGE

**How can you help busy consumers multitask and achieve multiple goals?**

# THE NEWBIES

Lockdown has allowed some consumers to sample the benefits of exercising regularly. Many have increased their exercise frequency dramatically and are keen to continue this post-lockdown. Notably, we see this pattern across all demographics, showing that there is broad appeal.

The Newbies



Those who exercised once a week or less prior to social distancing

## DEMOGRAPHICS

These behaviours are shown evenly across all demographics.

## BEHAVIOUR

**70%** exercising more, and **59%** of those are exercising 4 or more times a week

**37%\*** are doing paid exercise, and only **4%\*** are doing free exercise\*

\*Of the 70%

## MOTIVATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

There's a fairly even mix of the motivations for exercise, presenting different messages for brands to use.

**28%** said this was to help their **'stress levels and mental health'**

**30%** said this was because they had **'more time'**

**24%** said this was to be **'healthier'**

The top feeling they had when exercising was **'a sense of accomplishment' (36%)**

## OUR VIEW

We predict there will be an opportunity to fill a gap in the male market for a brand that champions inclusivity, authenticity and those of any ability; a powerful contrast to the unattainable, alpha, buff bodies currently saturating the male market. We also anticipate that the frequency of exercise over time will mean The Newbies require a larger workout wardrobe, which presents a second spike for the athleisure market.

## EXAMPLE

SworkIt keeps users engaged in their exercise goals, no matter their fitness ability via a virtual library of over 800 workouts. Users choose workouts by selecting variables such as the type of exercise activity they want to do (e.g. yoga, cardio), their goals, and the amount of time that they have, (e.g. 5 or 60 mins).

## THE CHALLENGE

**How can you make it as simple as possible for consumers to stay motivated and keep up their new-found interest?**

# THE POTENTIAL BURNOUTS

For a number of consumers, managing a work-life balance in order to maintain their positive behaviour change, is a key theme. Practical steps such as leaving work on time or working from home, are cited by them as important factors in helping to keep up their new exercise frequency.



Those who picked at least one work-related factor for how they could maintain their new exercise frequency

## DEMOGRAPHICS

64%

No children

53%

Age 25 - 34

73%

Full time employment

67%

Household income £50k+

## BEHAVIOUR

79% exercising 4 or more times a week

82% stated they wanted to maintain their new exercise frequency

## MOTIVATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

'Finishing work on time' was the top reason for helping them maintain their new frequency, 'working from home' came second.

Top answers for how exercise makes them feel were 'a sense of accomplishment' and 'motivated', suggesting they clearly have a positive association with exercise.

## OUR VIEW

As we leave lockdown and are potentially faced with another recession, it's likely that the demands of work will be even greater. We anticipate, organisations that help to create a good work-life balance, are likely to see increased loyalty. From train operators that facilitate a productive commute to companies that review their flexible working rules now that they know their business can work remotely.

## EXAMPLE

After finding that employees who work over 70 hours a week were less productive than those that didn't, global tax firm [Ryan](#), radically changed its culture. By no longer tracking time and introducing flexible working, they experienced a reduction in voluntary turnover of staff as well as increased financial and employee performance.

## THE CHALLENGE

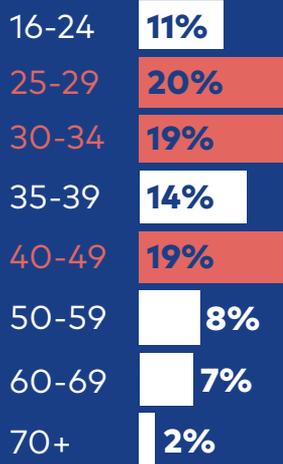
How can you improve the work-life balance for your colleagues and / or workforce?

# WHO?



\* 0.5% Prefer not to say  
0.5% Prefer to self-describe

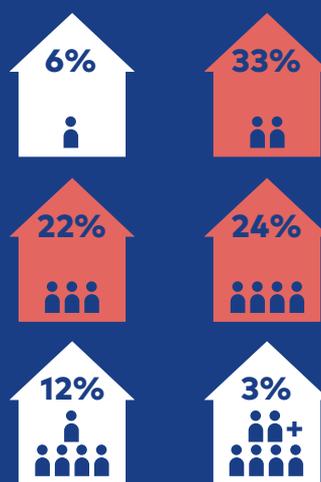
## AGE



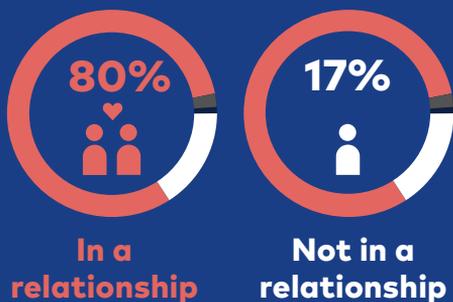
## HOUSEHOLD INCOME



## HOUSEHOLD SIZE

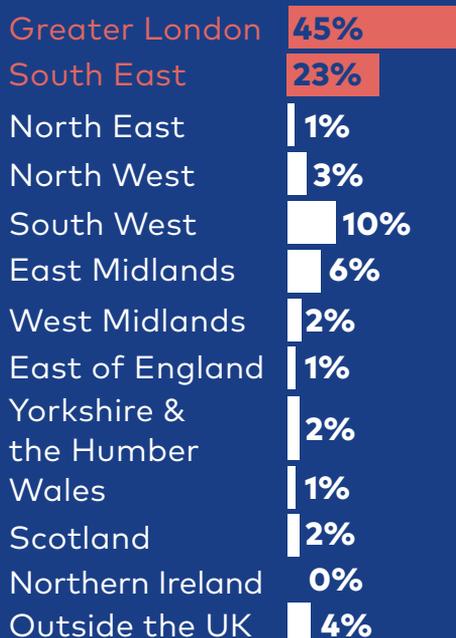


## RELATIONSHIP STATUS\*

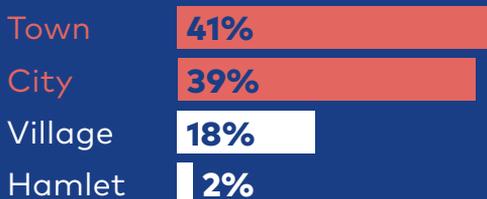


\* 2% Prefer not to say / 1% Other

## REGION



## LOCATION TYPE



# WHO?

Our respondents are mostly:



**FEMALE**



**GEN X &  
MILLENNIALS**



**IN A  
RELATIONSHIP**



**COMFORTABLE  
EARNERS**



**94% LIVING WITH  
AT LEAST ONE  
OTHER PERSON**



**LOCATED IN  
LONDON AND THE  
SOUTH EAST**



# False Sense of Fitness?

It's clear that people are exercising more. But what's less certain is whether they are seeing any desired results from this.

**In our latest blog, we explore whether there is a false sense of fitness - and what brands can do about it.**

**Read [here](#)**

# Are you ready for a post-COVID-19 world?

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