

Home isolation – tips to stay active and engaged

The information below is designed to provide Western Health staff with tips and strategies to stay active and engaged during home isolation.

Routines

While lots of other things may have changed around you, make sure you try to establish a daily or weekly routine that will help to provide you with structure and purpose. Set your alarm to get out of bed at your normal time, have breakfast, take a shower and get dressed and out of your pyjamas. Plan out some activities each day to give you a sense of achievement and productivity.

You may choose to include things like:

- Regular daily exercise
- Staying in touch with family and friends
- Eating healthy meals at regular times
- Relaxation/meditation
- Education and Leisure activities



Keep moving - Exercise

Exercise is particularly important as it supports your physical and mental health. While you may not be able to complete your normal fitness activities at this time there are still plenty of ways you can work out at home.



Here are some websites/fitness programs to check out:

- P.E. with Joe on YouTube
- 28 by Sam Wood – free workouts on Facebook
- <https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/covid-19/staying-active-at-home-during-covid-19>

If you have a treadmill or exercise bike you can use that for your daily workout, or even just jump on the trampoline with your kids.

You can also incorporate exercise into other activities such as sweeping pathways/driveways, cleaning the house, or doing some gardening.

Make sure you follow any recommendations you have been given in relation to staying at home along with the current restrictions in place when you are planning your exercise.

Stress management and sleep

Managing stress and anxiety at a time like this is very important – along with getting enough sleep.

It may be tempting to watch the news or check for updates more frequently, but for many this may lead to increased anxiety. Consider a break from watching the news/reading newspapers if you want to disconnect for a while, or alternately set limits on how much you will watch or read.

You may also want to set aside a space in your environment that is technology free – an area that you use just for relaxation or meditation.

Some ideas that may assist with stress management:

- Yoga and meditation – if you normally attend yoga, Pilates or meditation check to see if your studio is offering online options you can participate in. If you have children at home try “Cosmic kids yoga” on YouTube. You may also want to search for “Guided meditation” on YouTube.
- Check out apps like headspace for mindfulness training
- Regular exercise may also be beneficial to help with stress management.



Getting a good night's sleep is also important for health and wellbeing. Suggestions to help develop healthy sleeping habits include:

- Set a “sleep” routine – go to bed and get up at the same time each day (you may want to align this with your normal daily routine so that when you return to work it is not such a big change)
- Don't ignore feeling tired – go to bed when your body tells you to
- However.....don't go to bed if you're not feeling tired, this will reinforce habits of lying in bed awake
- Keep technology and screen time out of the bedroom. If you are using your bedroom as a second living room area then your brain will associate the room with this which may impact sleep
- Ensure your bed is as comfortable as possible – clean sheets, comfortable pillows will help
- Keep the room as dark as possible and at a comfortable temperature
- Reduce noise – if you cannot control the noise then consider the use of earplugs to help
- Avoid drugs and other medications where possible (unless medically advised) – this includes cigarettes, alcohol and sleeping tablets
- Consider the use of relaxation techniques as part of your bedtime routine. Consider writing in a journal or noting something to look forward to the next day

Educational ideas to try

Try some online cooking courses or get a free Harvard degree via their online platform. You can even learn a language! Here are some options to try.

- Cooking courses

<https://www.delicious.com.au/entertaining/chefavirus-pandemic/cmxaqi5m>

- Learn a language

<https://www.inc.com/larry-kim/9-places-to-learn-a-new-language-online-for-free.html>

- Free online learning courses

<https://online-learning.harvard.edu/catalog/free>

<https://www.coursera.org>

Social ideas to try

Staying socially connected will support your overall wellbeing and provide some balance to your day. Platforms such as FaceTime, zoom, WhatsApp or video chats make catching-up with friends and family easy. You can even virtually join work colleagues for lunch, allowing you to stay connected and make the return to work less daunting.

Sometimes it can be hard to find things to talk about so why not play a game, share jokes, do magic tricks or reveal your musical talents! You can even watch a movie virtually with friends or just pick-up the phone to have a chat.

Here are some online game options to try:

- Scattergories

<https://scattergoriesonline.net/new-game.xhtml>

- Pictionary

<https://skribbl.io/?o3UYRy3Xqfi5>

- Trivial pursuit using Kahoots

<https://kahoot.com/home/family-friends/>



Some other social activities you can try are: attending a virtual concert / music performance; you can do this alone or virtually with friends!

Here are some websites to checkout:

- Billboard

<https://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/pop/9335531/coronavirus-quarantine-music-events-online-streams>

- Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

<https://www.mso.com.au/tickets-and-performances/upcoming-streams/>

- The Australian Ballet

<https://australianballet.com.au/tv>

- Melbourne Recital Centre

<http://live.melbournerecital.com.au/australian-string-quartet-performs-quartet-and-country/>



Personal projects

With some additional time on your hands, now may be the perfect time to start or finish a personal project or do something you have been putting off. Here are a few ideas:

- Put together a photo album or photo book
- Master a new skill in the kitchen or workshop
- Organise your cupboards, shed or garage
- Learn to play a new piece on the piano or guitar
- Finish that quilting or sewing project
- Write someone a letter or email
- Sort out your birthday calendar
- Start your Christmas shopping online



Leisure ideas to try

Being home provides a fantastic opportunity to engage in some of your favourite leisure activities that you wouldn't normally have time for.

These may include:

- being creative or artistic,
- reading that stack of books on your bedside table,
- completing a 1000 piece puzzle,
- cooking some new recipes,
- getting stuck into the garden,
- catching-up on some shows on demand or
- taking the time to listening to some music.



You may also like to explore some new activities. Here are a few ideas:

Read some new books

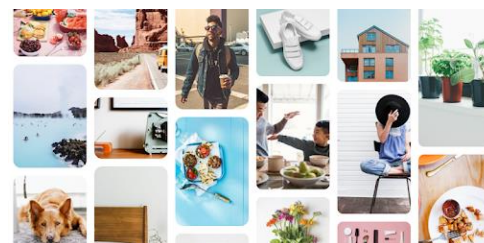
If you have run out of books to read jump online and learn how to use your local library's electronic resources. There are books, magazines, audiobooks, movies and more — all for free.

Borrowbox is also a great free app where you can borrow books from the comfort of your own home and all you need is a library membership <https://www.borrowbox.com>.

You can also check out the Wheeler Centre for the literary scene. There's plenty of podcasts and videos to choose from, live-streamed events with authors and other bookish features on offer <https://www.wheelercentre.com/>. Lastly, check out the State Library of Victoria which also has online events <https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/>.

Build a Pinterest board

If you're feeling like being creative but don't have the equipment, start to plan by building a Pinterest board. The boards you create can be of any theme – indoor plants, redecorating your home or a room in your house, travel ideas and so much more. Here is the link to Pinterest to help you get started <https://www.pinterest.com.au/>.



Take a virtual holiday

Overseas trips may be on hold for now, but you always take a virtual holiday or get busy planning your next adventure oversea, interstate or locally! Here are some links to get you on your way.



- Travel locally in Melbourne

<https://www.visitvictoria.com/Regions/Melbourne/Things-to-do/Itineraries/Virtual-Melbourne>

- Checkout the sites of Australia

<https://www.australia.com/en/things-to-do/arts-and-culture/virtual-tours-of-australias-top-cultural-experiences.html>

- Travel the world visiting the Northern lights, San Diego Zoo in California or even walk through the streets of Disney Land

<https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2020/apr/06/10-best-virtual-tours-of-worlds-natural-wonders-everest-patagonia-grand-canyon-yosemite>

<https://www.skylinewebcams.com/>

<https://www.escape.com.au/travel-advice/virtual-holidays-how-to-travel-the-world-while-youre-stuck-at-home/news-story/402c8b461c1ab419ef995a926ccc1091>

Get into podcasts

Listening to podcasts is also a great way to spend your time. Podcasts can take you away to faraway places, provide education or motivation. Just plug into your search browser “best podcasts to listen to in 2020” to get you started.



Visit an open house, museum or even the zoo

From the comfort of your couch you can visit a range of places including:

- The Melbourne Zoo
<https://www.zoo.org.au/animals-at-home/>
- The Melbourne Museum
<https://museumsvictoria.com.au/museum-at-home>
- Science Works
<https://museumsvictoria.com.au/scienceworks/>



The Visiting Victoria website also has lots of great links to information, <https://www.visitvictoria.com/Regions/Melbourne/Things-to-do/Itineraries/Virtual-Melbourne>, and for those interested in Melbourne architecture, you can visit Open House Melbourne <https://www.openhousemelbourne.org/>.

Explore Gardening

Gardening is a great way to get some fresh air and exercise, as well as Vitamin D. If you are lucky to have a garden, try to make it part of your routine to get outside and use it. Even if you don't particularly enjoy gardening, stepping outside into the fresh air and hopefully the sunshine will make all the difference to your day.



Here are some gardening ideas and ways to escape if you don't have a garden:

- Visit Melbourne & Victorian gardens virtually:
<https://gardendesignfest.com.au/gardens/>
<https://opengardensvictoria.org.au/>
<https://www.rbq.vic.gov.au/initiatives/virtual-garden/>
- Browse the Gardening Australia website for videos and gardening ideas
<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/>