

GREEN FITNESS: THE IMPACT OF NATURE ON SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

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ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
<p>The article is dedicated to the topic of "Green Fitness" and its importance for health and well-being. Green fitness involves engaging in sports activities outdoors in a natural environment, such as running, yoga, cross-country running, cycling, and open water swimming. The article discusses the benefits of each type of activity for physical and mental health, as well as their impact on overall human well-being. Practical advice is also provided on organizing green fitness activities and ensuring safety during outdoor workouts. This article aims to draw attention to the importance of outdoor sports and inspire readers to lead an active lifestyle in harmony with nature.</p>	

Introduction

With the growing awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and caring for the environment, modern fitness trends are increasingly oriented towards nature. Green fitness, or environmentally conscious fitness, stands out among them as one of the most relevant and attractive directions. Green fitness is not just about physical exercises outdoors but also about harmonious interaction with nature, which contributes to improving physical and mental well-being.

Historical Context:

The idea of green fitness traces its roots back to ancient times when physical activity and caring for nature were an integral part of daily life. In various cultures, people spent time outdoors, engaging in physical exercises in parks, gardens, or fields. For example, in ancient China, morning exercises such as tai chi and kung fu, which combined physical exercises and meditation, were practiced outdoors. In the modern context, the concept of green fitness has gained new development in response to challenges facing contemporary society, such as sedentary lifestyles, environmental pollution, and the pursuit of ecological sustainability. This approach combines the principles of a healthy lifestyle and environmental care, inspiring people to engage in more active and conscious interaction with the environment.

Ideas of green fitness are embodied in various types of activities, including outdoor workouts, ecological yoga practices, active mountain hikes, and bike rides in urban parks. These forms of exercise allow people to enjoy the benefits of physical activity outdoors while reconnecting with nature and maintaining an environmentally healthy lifestyle.

Green fitness not only contributes to improving the health and well-being of individuals but also fosters a more responsible attitude towards the environment as a whole. In light of global environmental challenges, this approach is becoming increasingly important, stimulating innovations in the field of fitness and contributing to the creation of a healthy and sustainable planet for future generations.

## **Improvement of Physical Health:**

Regular outdoor physical activities contribute to strengthening the cardiovascular system, improving endurance, and enhancing strength. The natural environment naturally stimulates movement, allowing for more intense and prolonged exercise sessions.

**Reduction of Stress Levels:** Spending time in green areas reduces stress levels and improves mood by releasing endorphins, the "happiness hormones." This makes green fitness an ideal way to combat depression and anxiety.

**Increase in Motivation:** The variety of natural landscapes and the opportunity to explore new places make outdoor physical activity more attractive. This helps maintain high levels of motivation and commitment to regular workouts.

**Social Interactions:** Engaging in outdoor sports often involves group activities, which promotes social connections and fosters a sense of community.

## **Types of Green Fitness**

1. **Yoga in the Park:** Outdoor yoga practice is becoming increasingly popular among enthusiasts of this ancient discipline. It combines the beneficial aspects of physical activity and psychological relaxation, allowing for harmony of body and mind.

**Advantages of Outdoor Yoga:** One of the main advantages of outdoor yoga practice is the opportunity for complete immersion in the surrounding nature. Green parks and squares create an ideal atmosphere for secluded and tranquil yoga sessions, which contribute to improved psychological well-being.

Outdoor yoga practice enhances flexibility and body strength. Exercises performed on grass or sand require extra effort to maintain balance and stability, which promotes the development of the muscular corset and overall physical fitness.

In addition to physical benefits, outdoor yoga practice promotes mental tranquility and emotional balance. The sounds of nature, fresh air, and natural lighting create a favorable environment for meditation and relaxation, allowing for stress and tension relief.

**Practical Tips:** To practice yoga outdoors, it is necessary to choose a comfortable place with no external noise or movement. Parks, forests, or lake shores are ideal for this purpose. It is recommended to use a special mat or thick towel for comfortable execution of asanas.

It is also important to consider weather conditions and choose suitable times for practice. Morning yoga at sunrise or evening practice at sunset are particularly favorable for creating a harmonious combination of physical activity and peace of mind.

2. **Cross-Country Running:** Cross-country running, or trail running, is one of the most effective forms of physical activity, popular among enthusiasts of a healthy lifestyle. It provides an opportunity to overcome various obstacles and terrains, making it one of the most diverse forms of running.

**Advantages of Cross-Country Running:** One of the main advantages of cross-country running is its ability to strengthen muscles and the cardiovascular system. Running on uneven terrain requires the body to exert extra effort to overcome inclines, descents, and obstacles, which promotes strength and endurance.

Additionally, cross-country running trains coordination and balance. Running on rough terrain requires constant adjustment to the changing landscape and quick reactions to obstacles, which contributes to the development of movement coordination and balance.

**Practical Tips:** For cross-country running, it is recommended to choose locations with diverse landscapes, such as forest trails, mountain paths, or parks with uneven terrain. It is also important to select proper footwear with cushioning and good protective coverage to prevent injuries.

Before starting training sessions, warm-up and stretching exercises are necessary to prepare muscles and joints for the workload. It is also essential to consider weather conditions and dress accordingly, choosing lightweight and breathable clothing.

3. **Cycling Excursions:** Exploring forest and park trails by bicycle improves cardiovascular health and promotes calorie burning. Cycling excursions are an excellent way not only to enjoy the surrounding nature but also to enhance one's health. This activity is accessible to almost everyone and brings a plethora of positive emotions and benefits to the body.

**Advantages of Cycling Excursions:** One of the main benefits of cycling excursions is their positive impact on the cardiovascular system. Regular bike rides contribute to strengthening the heart, improving blood circulation, and reducing the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

Additionally, cycling excursions are excellent for calorie burning and maintaining a healthy weight. Even a short bike ride can help burn excess calories and improve metabolism.

**Practical Tips:** To reach the maximum benefits of cycling excursions, it is important to choose a suitable route. Park and forest trails provide a pleasant environment and offer a good atmosphere for sporting activities.

Safety rules on the road should also be considered, and wearing a protective helmet while cycling is essential. Regular bike maintenance is also important for its reliable operation and prevention of possible accidents.

**Swimming in Open Waters:** Engaging in swimming activities in rivers, lakes, or the sea develops endurance and strengthens all muscle groups. Swimming in open waters offers an excellent opportunity to combine physical activity with nature. This sport has a number of unique advantages that can positively impact your health and overall well-being.

**Advantages of Swimming in Open Waters:** One of the main advantages of swimming in open waters is its comprehensive effect on the body. Firstly, swimming improves endurance and enhances the cardiorespiratory system. This helps strengthen the heart and lungs, increase endurance, and improve overall physical condition.

Additionally, swimming effectively trains all muscle groups, as almost all parts of the body are involved in movement in the water. This promotes the development of strength, flexibility, and coordination of movements.

Another advantage of swimming in open waters is its therapeutic effect on the nervous system. Contact with nature and water elements promotes relaxation, reduces stress, and improves psychoemotional well-being.

**Practical Tips:** Before starting swimming activities in open waters, safety measures must be ensured. Make sure that the chosen swimming location is safe and matches your skills. Avoid swimming in prohibited or dangerous areas, especially if you are unsure of your abilities.

It is also important to consider weather conditions and the condition of the water. Avoid swimming during storms or strong winds, as well as in places with strong currents or waves.

## Conclusion

Green fitness offers an effective way to improve physical and psychological health, combining the benefits of regular physical exercise with the healing power of nature. It provides a unique opportunity to enjoy sports while exploring the beauty of the surrounding world. Encouraging and developing green fitness can contribute to improving public health and well-being, making an active lifestyle accessible and attractive to a wide range of people.

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