

# ACSM Releases “Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends for 2023”



The American College of Sports Medicine® (ACSM) publication *ACSM’s Health & Fitness Journal*® (HFJ) has released its highly anticipated “Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends for 2023.”

The annual survey was launched in 2006 to explore changes in the fitness industry. It is used by wellness facilities and independent sport and exercise professionals to direct investment and remain on the cutting edge of the market.

The No. 1 trend this year is Wearable Technology.

However, the broader story told by the 2023 results, when compared to those of 2020 through 2022, is one of a relatively swift industry-wide reaction to COVID-19, a temporary pandemic status quo, and an eventual return to a more “normal” fitness landscape.

According to the survey’s author, former ACSM president Walter R. Thompson, Ph.D., FACSM, “The results of this year’s survey could very well be titled ‘post-pandemic recovery impacts the fitness industry’ or ‘what happened to online training and home gyms?’”

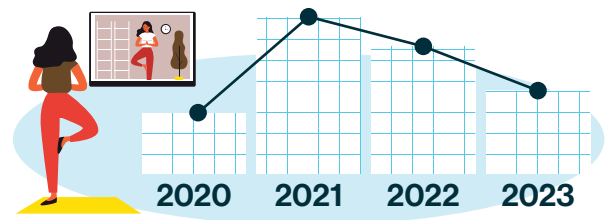
## Top 10



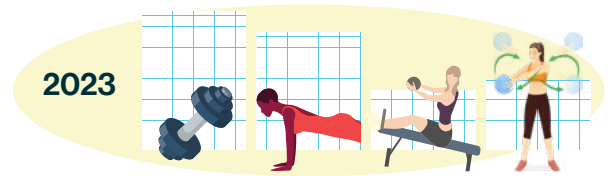
## Trends for 2023

- 1. Wearable Technology.** Think fitness trackers, smart watches, heart rate monitors and GPS tracking devices, including tech that can monitor heart rate, calories, sitting time, sleep and more.
- 2. Strength Training with Free Weights.** This activity incorporates the use of barbells, dumbbells and/or kettlebells.
- 3. Body Weight Training.** Predictably, techniques that focus on body weight as the primary resistance. Body weight training uses minimal equipment and space, making it an inexpensive and functional way to exercise.
- 4. Fitness Programs for Older Adults.** Programming focused on the aging population and its unique needs.
- 5. Functional Fitness Training.** Training to improve balance, coordination, functional strength and endurance to improve activities of daily living.
- 6. Outdoor Activities.** Pursuits like group walks, bicycle rides or organized hiking led by health and fitness professionals. Activities can be short events, day-long events or planned multiday excursions.
- 7. High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT).** These exercise programs typically involve repeated bouts of high-intensity exercise combined with periods of rest.
- 8. Exercise for Weight Loss.** This trend incorporates weight loss programs like dieting and cooking classes with an exercise routine.
- 9. Employing Certified Fitness Professionals.** Hiring certified health and fitness professionals who have completed educational programs and fully accredited health/fitness certifications.
- 10. Personal Training.** Personal training includes goal-setting, fitness assessment and exercise programming with a trainer in one-on-one settings.

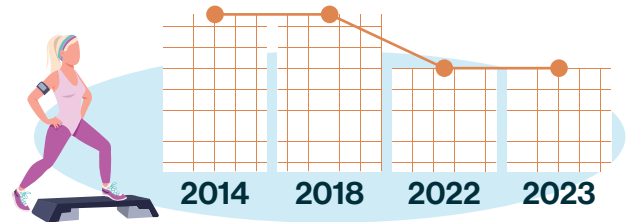
In 2020, **Online Training** came in at No. 26. In 2021, it was the No. 1 trend. In 2022 it dropped to No. 9, and in the 2023 results it fell to No. 21.



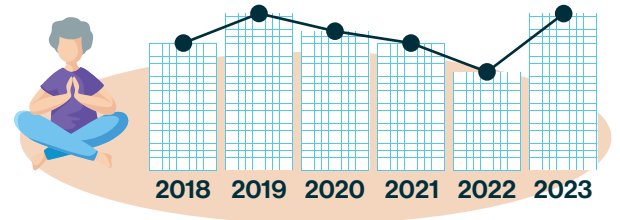
Fitness facilities seem to have gone back to basics in the wake of the pandemic: **Strength Training with Free Weights** was No. 2, **Body Weight Training** took the No. 3 spot and **Core Training** and **Circuit Training** ranked Nos. 11 and 12, respectively.



Other trends have remained relatively stable, regardless of the changes brought by COVID-19: **High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)**, for example, was the No. 1 trend in both 2014 and 2018, and it took the No. 7 slot in 2022 and 2023.



**Fitness for Older Adults** experienced fluctuations that seemed to be caused both by the pandemic and other external factors. It was No. 9 in 2018, No. 4 for 2019, No. 8 in 2020, No. 9 again in 2021, No. 11 in 2022 and No. 4 once more in 2023.



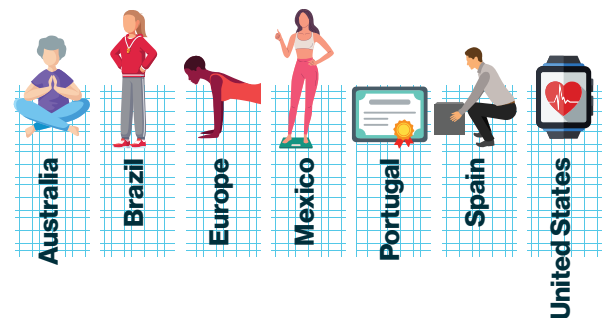
The 2023 survey comprised **42 possible trends** and polled **125,940 people**, including **30,000 ACSM certified professionals**, receiving responses from across the globe — from Australia to Malawi and Sri Lanka to Sweden.



**Personal trainers and medical professionals** — including M.D.s and physical therapists — made up the largest percentages of respondents. Fifty-five percent had more than 10 years of industry experience, and 29% had more than 20. Fifty-eight percent of respondents were female and 41% were male, and those surveyed represented a wide range of ages.



Trends differed slightly by region. Australia ranked **Fitness Programs for Older Adults** at No. 1. In Brazil it was **Personal Training**. Europe as a whole placed **Body Weight Training** in the top slot. Mexico favored **Exercise and Weight Loss Programs**. Portuguese respondents were most interested in **Licensure for Fitness Professionals**. In Spain, the No. 1 trend was **Functional Fitness Training**. And the United States reflected the overall global trend, placing **Wearable Technology** at No. 1.



Learn more at [ACSM.org/trends](https://www.acsm.org/trends)



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