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Will the Wii Fit Keep Me in Shape?



Wii Fit is a video game by Nintendo designed to get gamers off the couch and improve their fitness. Using the Wii Balance Board, players play mini-games in four fitness areas: **yoga, aerobics, strength training** and **balance**. The Wii Balance Board records body mass index and length of time the games are played, and tracks performance.

Many people find the Wii Fit mini-games to be fun, and they do involve more physical activity than traditional video games. But when it comes to Wii's usefulness as a fitness tool, the game has supporters and detractors.

Supporters say that **the whole family can use Wii Fit**. The emphasis on controlled movement rather than exertion makes Wii Fit especially good for older people and those who are out of shape or reluctant to exercise in public. The convenience and the fun factor keep people coming back, and they can monitor their progress on the tracking feature.

Detractors say that **the activity level does not rise to the level of a real workout**. A study sponsored by the American Council on Exercise measured the physiological response to six most challenging Wii Fit mini-games:

- **Free Run**
- **Island Run**
- **Free Step**
- **Advanced Step**
- **Super Hula Hoop**
- **Rhythm Boxing**

Their conclusion? The required energy expenditure fell below the American College of Sports Medicine guidelines and provided only a **very mild workout**. The game did, however, win praise from fitness professionals for the yoga poses and balance games designed to improve body awareness and posture.

Wii Fit is fun and does have some benefits, but it should be **combined with, not replace, other types of exercise**. We can design a workout for your level of fitness that combines Wii Fit and traditional exercise.