

# Great Ways To Keep Your Mind Sharp

**W**hen you think about exercise, you likely envision using the treadmill or lifting weights. But every bit as important to your long-term health and wellness are activities that keep your mind sharp and your cognitive abilities strong and limber.

Here are several things you can do to help keep your mind sharp:

- **Solve a Crossword Puzzle:** A crossword puzzle asks you to reach into your long-term memory bank to solve clues. You may be filling in boxes, but well-constructed crossword puzzles will require you to think outside the box, as sometimes clues are a bit trickier than they seem at first glance, relying on word play or double meanings to work. A relaxing way to unwind and concentrate, consider adding this ritual into your morning.

- **Get More from Nature:** On your next nature hike, don't check out mentally. Set goals and keep your senses alert, paying attention to sounds, sights and smells. New tech, such as Casio WSD-F30 Pro Trek Smart Outdoor Watch, can help. The watch features apps to support your hike, including Location Memory to record information on trails and viewpoints along the way, as well as Moment Setter to notify you when you reach your targeted altitude.

- **Learn a Language:** A multilingual brain works more efficiently, and it is never too late to pick up a new language. There are many languages apps available to help, some of them free, as well as more traditional taped audio lessons you can pop on while commuting to work or doing chores around the house.

- **Make Math Fun:** Want to build your critical thinking skills and improve your ability to problem solve? Delve into mathematics with fun math puzzles found online. Free online software, such as ClassPad.net, includes resources to help you solve problems, from simple calculations to statistics, graphing and more.

- **Get Sleep:** Sufficient high-quality sleep is one of the most fundamental

ways to maintain a sharp mind and keep your brain healthy through the years. Between 7-9 hours a night is ideal for adults, according to the National Sleep Foundation. If you aren't sleeping well, or feel foggy during the day, consider how to shift your evening routine to get more and better quality sleep.

From math puzzles to crossword puzzles to nature walks, prioritizing workouts for the mind will help you stay sharp. (StatePoint)



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