



THE Y AXIS



**Missed the Holidays? Your Late Gift Still Matters!**

It's the thought that counts—no matter when it arrives.

Worried a late gift might upset someone?

**Good news:** Research shows recipients care more about the thought behind a gift than its timing.<sup>4</sup>



While gift givers often stress about being late, recipients see the gesture as meaningful and positive, regardless of the calendar.

**Your January challenge:** If you missed someone during the holidays, don't stress!

Send a thoughtful note. Drop off a small gift. Or plan a coffee date to reconnect.

Thoughtfulness and kindness are always in season—so take the opportunity to show you care.

**COMMENTS?**

Send comments to the editor:

[evan@thehealthycopywriter.com](mailto:evan@thehealthycopywriter.com)

# Click, Swipe, Tap to Get Moving in 2025

*Discover the top 2 fitness trends to improve your health*

Ready to boost your health in 2025? Grab your phone to get started.

According to the American College of Sports Medicine, the top two fitness trends are all about tech to keep you moving, motivated, and on track.<sup>1</sup>

The top 2 fitness trends in 2025 are:



## 1. Wearable Tech: Your personal health coach

From smartwatches to fitness trackers, wearable tech helps you monitor steps, heart rate, sleep, and even stress levels.



## 2. Mobile Exercise Apps: Fitness at your fingertips

No gym? No problem. Exercise apps bring workouts to your phone, whether you want

These gadgets turn daily movement into data you can act on—helping you set goals and celebrate progress.

**Get started:**

- Set a daily step goal, like 7,000 steps, and challenge yourself to hit it.
- Track your heart rate during workouts to see how hard you're working.
- Or monitor your sleep to make recovery a priority.

**TRENDS** ►

# Books Over Binge-Watching: A Smart Swap for Your Brain

*Study: Reading a book is good for your brain*

Did you know that swapping hours of screen-time for a good book can benefit your brain?

**Read this:** The time you spend on certain activities has a big impact on cognitive health, according to a recent study.<sup>3</sup> Reading a book stimulates your brain and supports better cognitive function.



Reading a book stimulates your brain and supports memory and thinking.

Excessive screen time like binge-watching shows or doomscrolling on your phone—can have the opposite effect. **BOOKS** ►

# Sweet News: Dark Chocolate May Help Prevent Type 2 Diabetes

*Treat yourself (in moderation) to protect your health*

Got any dark chocolate left over after the holidays? Eat it.

A recent study found that eating dark chocolate may help reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.<sup>2</sup> Translation: Your favorite treat might actually be good for you!

## Here's the bite-sized version of the study:

Researchers found that people who regularly ate small amounts of chocolate—particularly dark chocolate—had a lower risk of type 2 diabetes over time.

**Why? Dark chocolate is packed with flavonoids.** These are powerful plant compounds that can improve insulin sensitivity, lower inflammation, and support heart health.



## 3 tips for a healthier chocolate habit

Before you reach for that candy bar, remember that not all chocolate is created equal. Follow these tips to keep it healthy:

- **Go for dark chocolate with 70% cocoa or higher.** The darker, the better—more cocoa means more flavonoids and less sugar.
- **Stick to small portions.** One to two small squares (about 1 ounce) a few times a week is enough to reap the benefits.
- **Skip the extras.** Avoid chocolate with caramel, nougat, or sugary fillings—those add extra calories and sugar.

A little dark chocolate can be a tasty addition to a balanced diet while offering potential health perks. So go ahead—indulge mindfully and savor the benefits.



Your taste buds (and your health) will thank you!

► **TRENDS** guided yoga flows, HIIT circuits, strength routines, or stretching sessions. The best part? You can work out anytime, anywhere.

**Get started: Explore a fitness app that suits your goals.**

- **Start with a free app** offering beginner workouts or short 10-minute routines.

- **Need accountability?** Find an app with reminders or challenges to keep you on track.



## Tap into tech to get healthy this year

Wearable tech and fitness apps are more than trends—they're tools to make fitness simple, personalized, and fun.

Whether you're tracking steps, lifting at home, or trying your first yoga session, small actions add up to big results.

5 healthy habits to live longer  
[tinyurl.com/cmr7xn5t](https://tinyurl.com/cmr7xn5t)

So grab your tracker, download an app, and get moving!

# Recipe: Oat-Based Fruit Crumble

Hungry for warm, healthy and sweet easy-to-make dessert? Give this recipe a try:

## Ingredients - Crumble

1/4 C flour  
3/4 C rolled oats  
1 tsp cinnamon  
2 T pure maple syrup  
1 T olive oil

## Ingredients - Filling

3 Granny Smith apples, cored, peeled & sliced  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg  
2 T water

## Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.



Enjoy this oat-based fruit crumble for breakfast or dessert. Serves 4.

2. Combine rolled oats, flour, cinnamon, maple syrup and olive oil into a bowl. Mix until combined.

3. Prepare the filling. Combine apples, cinnamon and nutmeg in large bowl. Stir until well combined.

4. Transfer filling mixture to ovenproof dish and add water. Spoon crumble mixture over filling.

5. Bake for 35-40 minutes, or until golden and apples are soft.

## ► BOOKS Here's why...

### Reading engages multiple areas of the brain, improving:

- Focus
- Memory, and...
- Mental flexibility

In contrast, passive screen time often overstimulates the brain without providing the same mental workout.

## Small steps for big brain benefits

Ready to give your brain a boost? Try these tips:

**Schedule “reading time”:** Swap 30 minutes of



10 health benefits of reading  
[tinyurl.com/3dpea46a](https://tinyurl.com/3dpea46a)

screen-time or scrolling for a book before bed. It's a win-win—better brain health and better sleep.

**Start small:** Not a big reader? Pick short stories, articles, or books on topics you love. A few pages a day adds up!

**Keep a book handy:** Carry one in your bag or download an e-reader app. Waiting at the doctor's office? Read instead of scrolling social media.

**Make it social:** Join a book club or start one with friends to make reading a habit.

Less screen time, more story time—that's the secret to keeping your brain sharp and healthy. So pick up a book, relax, and give your mind the workout it needs!

## References

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