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Outdoor spaces for fresh air and exercise

Lifestyle · Lifehacks · Healthy Living 18 May 2025 Dr Malini Saba

Living in a fast-paced area like the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) can often feel like a race against time. With the constant hustle and busy schedules, it's easy to forget that our homes can be more than just places to sleep. They can actually play a huge role in helping us stay healthy, active, and energized.

Think about it: your home isn't just a roof over your head. It can be a space that actively supports your physical health. Whether it's encouraging you to move more, giving you access to natural light, or even providing areas to exercise, your home can help keep you fit without even trying too hard. Let's look at ways, your home can support your health, from providing opportunities for daily exercise to encouraging natural movement.

Walkable spaces

Mumbai's streets can feel crowded and chaotic, and walking might not always be at the top of your to-do list. But here's the thing: walking is one of the easiest (and best) ways to stay fit. It helps with your heart health,

lowers the risk of chronic diseases, and is a great way to clear your mind. Now, what if your home was designed to make walking a little easier? Imagine living in a place

where you're encouraged to walk, whether it's inside the house or outside in a nearby park. Simple things, like a layout that promotes movement, taking the stairs instead of the

elevator, or even walking to a local café, can make a huge difference.

Homes that are located in walkable neighbourhoods, naturally encour-

age more walking. This is great for your cardiovascular health, and in a busy city like Mumbai, it's one way to stay active even on hectic days. Plus, walking doesn't require a gym mem-



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bership or special equipment. All you need is a pair of comfortable shoes!

Fitness areas at home

Let's be real: between work, social life, and Mumbai's never-ending traffic, it's tough to find the time to hit the gym regularly. But having a fitness space in your own home

makes working out so much easier. Whether you set up a small gym in a corner or simply leave room for a yoga mat, having a dedicated space for exercise means you can fit a workout into your schedule, no matter how busy you are.

Whether it's a few bodyweight exercises, a quick yoga session, or even strength training with dumbbells, working out at home can help keep your body strong and healthy. And because you're not relying on having to leave the house, it's way more convenient—and let's face it, you're more likely to actually do it!

Having a fitness area at home also means you can work out whenever you feel like it—no rushing to make it to the gym in time. Plus, it gives you the flexibility to do whatever makes you feel good, whether that's a fast-paced HIIT workout or a more relaxing yoga flow.

Natural light

We all know how a good dose of sunshine can lift our spirits, right? Natural light doesn't just make your home feel brighter and happier; it's actually vital for our health. Exposure to sunlight helps regulate your body's internal clock, keeps your mood up, and gives you that much-needed Vitamin D, which is essential for strong bones and a healthy

immune system.

In a city like Mumbai, where many people live in apartments with little access to outdoor spaces, it's super important to make the most of the natural light you have. Homes with big windows, glass doors, or open layouts let in more sunlight, and that can really make a difference in your overall health and well-being.

Sunlight also helps improve your sleep, boosts your energy, and even makes you feel more productive. So, the more natural light you can get into your home, the better. It's not just about brightening up your living room; it's about taking care of your body and mind, too.

Stair usage

Okay, here's a simple, effective way to get your heart pumping: use the stairs! It might sound basic, but taking the stairs actually a great way to stay active throughout the day. It works your legs, tones muscles, and gets your blood flowing, which is fantastic for your cardiovascular health.

If you live in a building with multiple floors, consider ditching the elevator in favour of the stairs. Sure, it's a small change, but it adds up. Every time you take the stairs instead of the lift, you're giving your body a

little extra workout.

In Mumbai, where many apartments are high-rise buildings, incorporating stairs into your routine is a simple way to add some movement to your day without it feeling like a workout session. Plus, it's totally free!

Movementfriendly layouts

Is Did you ever notice how some homes just seem to make you want to move around more? Maybe it's the open layout that encourages you to get up and walk between rooms, or the furniture arrangement that naturally leads to stretching. Little things like that can make a big difference when it comes to staying active.

The way your home is laid out can actually make it easier to move. For example, open-plan layouts often encourage more walking around. Even small things like leaving space to do a few stretches or creating areas where you can stand or walk while working can make movement a part of your daily routine.

It's all about designing your space in a way that supports activity. Even in small apartments, simple changes can make it easier to move throughout the day and it doesn't have to feel like a workout. Just get

up, walk to the kitchen, do a little stretch, and you're already moving!

In Mumbai, having a little outdoor space at home can feel like a luxury, but you've got a balcony, terrace, or even a rooftop, you've got a great opportunity to get some fresh air and exercise.

Just stepping outside for a few minutes to stretch or take a walk around the terrace can give you a break from sitting indoors all day. Plus, the fresh air is great for your lungs, and the sunshine can do wonders for your mood and health.

Having a dedicated outdoor area also means you have space for activities like yoga, light stretching, or even a quick if home workout. And in a busy city like Mumbai, these little moments of relaxation and movement can help reduce stress and improve your mental wellbeing, too.

Bottom line

At the end of the day, your home should do more than just shelter you; it should support your health and help you live a more active, healthy life. Whether it's through walkable spaces, natural light, a designated workout area, or even a few flights of stairs, your home can be designed to encourage more movement and better habits.

So, when you think about your home, think about how it can help you live a better, healthier life. It doesn't have to be complicated. A few simple changes can make a huge difference in how you feel every day. And in a city like Mumbai, where space is limited and time is precious, having a home that nurtures both your body and mind is more important than ever.

After all, your home is where you begin your day, and it should be a place that helps you thrive.

The author is a self-made businesswoman, psychologist, philanthropist, fitness enthusiast, author, environmentalist, passionate cook, and a global advocate for women, girls, and human rights, with a deep interest in real estate, innovation, and female empowerment.

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