

## 8 Energizing Gifts to Share the Joy of Fitness

The best gift is often one that you would most like to receive yourself. With active gifts, you can add even more to the enjoyment by actually sharing your present with those you love. When you enjoy physical activity together, you'll be sharing all the benefits of fitness. During this stressed-out, food-centered time of year, we could all use some simple pleasures, especially when they include "side effects" like weight management and stress reduction.

### 1. Start an active family tradition during the holidays.

Many active traditions - walking around to see holiday lights or sledding in the park - cost nothing. Others - a shiny new toboggan or bikes for the family - are well worth the cost, since they promote family togetherness, and physical health.

### 2. Make an active holiday date with friends.

Here is a no-cost idea for difficult economic times. Skip the usual gift (or cookie) exchange among friends or coworkers. Instead, find fun, active ways to celebrate together, like a downtown holiday stroll or a photo "safari" in a local park.

### 3. Give a coupon for future physical activity and fun.

Certificates for future needs also make inexpensive (and always appreciated) gifts. Possible coupons include dog walks, snow shoveling, and yard work. Or make dates to share active fun: dance lessons, X-country skiing, or winter walks.

### 4. Support local businesses with fun outdoor activities.

Winter brings plenty of opportunities for outdoor fun and gift-giving. Stuff someone's stocking with day passes for an ice skating rink, Nordic ski center, or downhill ski lift. If you're an expert, include an offer for personalized instruction.

### 5. Warm up someone from head to toe for outdoor fun.

Consider a small gift that makes a big difference during winter activities. Hats, scarves, mittens, gloves, or socks - in bright, fun colors - are an inexpensive way to help someone look good and feel comfortable during their time outdoors.

### 6. Purchase a "two-fer" at a fitness center, gym, or yoga studio.

Watch for holiday specials at local fitness facilities or worksite wellness programs. You can often pick up good deals on two-for-one classes or personal training sessions. Invite a family member or friend to have fun getting fit with you.

### 7. Order an interactive game or fitness/dance/yoga DVD.

While interactive video games do not provide the same fitness benefits as the real sport, they do get gamers off the couch and moving. Instructional DVDs are generally less expensive and may be more beneficial, especially if they are really fun!

### 8. Wrap up a simple fitness gift for everyone on your list.

Fun gifts to encourage physical activity are available for every age and interest. Visit a toy department or athletic store for ideas, such as Nerf® and Koosh® games, balls of all sorts, jump ropes, yoga mats, small weights, and water bottles.