



## TAKE TEN

Brought to you by the American College of Sports Medicine [www.acsm.org](http://www.acsm.org)

# 10

## SHAREABLE RESOURCE

by James A. Peterson, Ph.D., FACSM

# Ten Sought-After Functions in Workout Apps

**1 ADVISE AND CONSENT.** Arguably, most individuals need information and feedback from knowledgeable sources, if they are to maximize the benefits that they achieve from their exercise efforts. For many of those people, the source of such assistance is certified personal trainers, who are paid for their expertise and help. In that regard, a viable alternative for individuals who don't want or can't afford such an expense is the expansive array of personal training apps that are available.

**2 EYE ON THE PRIZE.** Individuals who want to attain improved results from their workouts can use an exercise tracking app to keep a record of their efforts. As a rule, such an app can be employed by people to monitor and track their fitness-related activities, such as exercises performed (e.g., aerobic strength training, stretching, etc.) and results achieved (e.g., miles run, minutes on a machine, reps performed, weight lifted, etc.).

**3 TALLY HO!** One of the most popular functions of a workout app is to provide individuals with a reasonable estimate of the number of calories that they consume and expend over the course of a day. Not only can such information be used to help them manage their weight (loss or gain), it also can be employed to ascertain whether engaging in a particular activity is resulting in the desired caloric expenditure outcome, relative to the time and energy spent in that effort.

**4 EXERCISE IN A NUTSHELL.** Although making significant changes to the body requires more than a 5- or 7-minute workout performed once a day, these relatively brief exercise routines (which typically are undertaken in a non-stop, high-intensity manner) can be a viable option for anyone looking for a quick workout. Although most of these 5- to 7-minute exercise routines are bodyweight-based regimens of strength training, others offer a more mind-body focus, for example, yoga, meditation, etc.

**5 THE RHYTHM OF EXERCISING.** Workout music apps are available that feature music playlists with a specific beat. These apps are not only designed to entertain the individual exerciser, they also can provide high-energy motivation. The music selected can be personalized and geared to personal tastes, as well as synced to the pace of the workout.

**6 MUSCLES MATTER.** As a core component of fitness, muscular fitness should be a developmental focus of anyone who wants to attain total fitness. In that regard, there are a number of well-polished strength training workout apps. The best ones provide a variety of strength workouts, based on either bodyweight or the equipment the exerciser plans

to use. They offer the ability to personalize the workouts, as well as include video footage, showing how to perform the exercises.

**7 OUT FOR A JAUNT.** Thanks to an ever-expanding variety of virtual bike training apps, indoor cycling training sessions can be tailored to the fitness level and personal interests of the individual exerciser. These apps are designed to provide exercisers with an array of challenging options (e.g., personalized training plans, full spectrum of cycling fitness, adjustable training volume, competition, etc.), as well as eliminating much of the boredom of indoor training.

**8 PICTURE PERFECT.** Designed to appeal to both men and women of all fitness levels, video workout apps offer exercise regimens that can be mixed and matched to suit the interests of the individual participant. Many of the apps feature advice and instruction from relatively well-known experts in the fitness industry. Almost all of the workouts can be conducted anywhere, for example, home, work, gym, etc.

**9 COMPETITIVE EDGE.** Several workout apps have a competitive twist to them. The nature of the twist ranges from individual exercisers competing (in the exercise arena) against themselves to seeing how they match-up (performance-wise) against others. In the latter instance, the app's relatively large subject database serves as a measuring stick that can help motivate and inspire exercisers to optimize their fitness efforts.

**10 THE GIFT OF HEALTH.** A few workout apps have been developed that combine exercise with philanthropy. In essence, these apps arrange for charitable donations, either from sponsors or the individual exercisers themselves, based on the person's performance in a particular activity (e.g., 10k run) or fitness effort (e.g., number of pounds lifted). The underlying objective of this type of app is to raise money for a noteworthy cause, while boosting the individual's workout results.

**James A. Peterson, Ph.D., FACSM,** is a freelance writer and consultant in sports medicine. From 1990 until 1995, Dr. Peterson was director of sports medicine with StairMaster. Until that time, he was professor of physical education at the United States Military Academy.