

Lesson 1

What Is Physical Fitness?

What You'll Do

- Describe the relationship between fitness and exercise.
- List the four parts of physical fitness.
- Describe the physical benefits of exercise.
- Explain the mental, emotional, and social benefits of exercise.

Terms to Learn

- physical fitness
- exercise
- strength
- endurance
- flexibility

Start Off Write

What are some benefits of exercise?

Javier likes to skateboard. He and his friends try new tricks almost every day. They don't think of themselves as athletes. But they are in good shape.

You may not think of skateboarding as a sport. But it can improve your physical fitness. **Physical fitness** is the ability to do daily physical activities without becoming short of breath, sore, or very tired.

Physical Fitness and Exercise

Physical fitness means different things to different people. For children, it may mean playing without getting tired. For some people, it may mean being able to do chores. An athlete might think that physical fitness is being able to play his or her best. In any case, physical fitness helps you do the things you need to do every day.

Sometimes, people spend too much time watching TV or using the computer. As a result, their physical fitness suffers. People need to exercise to improve their physical fitness. **Exercise** is any physical activity that maintains or improves your physical fitness. Chores, such as raking the leaves or mowing the lawn, are exercise. Playing at the park with friends is exercise. Physical education class and walking to school are also exercise. For Javier, skateboarding is exercise. If you start exercising now, you're more likely to keep exercising as you get older. Regular exercise can help you stay healthy throughout your life.

Figure 1 If you start good fitness habits now, you can benefit from lifelong health.

