

The Handbook Reviews Team is a health products & services reviews team, independent of HelpGuide.org's mental health editorial team. We have thoroughly researched and tested the products and services we write about and may earn a commission based on purchases made through our links. [Learn more.](#)

Home / Handbook / Healthy Living

# Best Workout Apps, Tested by Our Expert Team in 2024

Updated: November 13, 2024

We tested and researched multiple platforms to determine the best workout apps for reaching your fitness goals.

By [Nicole Hernandez, PT, DPT](#)

Writer

Fact-Checked by [Lindsey DeSoto, LD, RD](#)

Reviewed by [Chris Kacyon, MS](#)

Medical Reviewer

Edited by: [Lawrence Robinson](#)

Managing Editor

---

## Table of Contents

---

[Exercise is a powerful tool](#) to enhance your physical fitness, improve your mental health, and support overall [well-being](#). But getting started or staying consistent can feel challenging. If you can relate, this review is written for you.

Our Handbook Team created a list of the best workout apps by researching multiple platforms, consulting with medical and fitness experts, and testing features ourselves. The ones that made the cut offer a great user experience. But most importantly, they provide enjoyable and motivating ways to stay active and meet your goals.

---

## Key Takeaways

- We chose Caliber as the best overall workout app because of its effective coaching and flexible pricing structure.
- Our testers spent hours using each app, testing workouts, and interacting with personal coaches so that we could select the best apps for our readers.
- Most workout apps cost between \$12 to \$200 per month.

## What you need to know about the best fitness apps

# HelpGuide *Handbook* for Best Fitness Apps

---



The best workout app depends on your fitness goals and budget.



Our best overall pick is Caliber, which offers four different plans.



Most apps offer at least a one-week trial period to determine if they're right for you.



Workout apps cater to all fitness levels, including beginners.



If you have a pre-existing health condition, talk to your doctor to ensure you can safely start an exercise program.

## Best overall: Caliber

### Best Overall

[Visit Site](#)

Caliber offers various training and pricing structures to fit anyone's fitness or weight loss goals. We love how it's convenient, keeps you accountable, and provides effective coaching.

---

#### Key features

+

---

#### Pros and cons of Caliber

+

## Our final verdict

If you're searching for the most well-rounded fitness app to keep you accountable to your personalized goals, Caliber is the best choice. Our team highly praises this app for

its variety of programs designed to meet your targets, regardless of your fitness level.

We chose to test the Premium plan, which starts at \$200 monthly (although they want you to commit to three months, which totals \$600). This plan comes with one-on-one personal training and a virtual appointment with your coach once per month. If you want to see your coach weekly, it can cost up to \$1,400 across three months. We know paying up to \$1,400 can be a hefty investment. Still, if you compare that cost to an in-person trainer charging up to \$150 per hour in some areas, Caliber's Premier access to all the app's features can be relatively good value. And if you disagree, you can cancel it within the 30-day trial period.

When our testers signed up for the Premium plan, they received an [exercise plan](#) tailored to their personal needs and available resources. They especially love how the exercises come with detailed written and video instructions. If you feel lost, you can send the trainer a video through the app to check your physical form.

## From our tester

"I was given a coach that I relate to and who helped me stay accountable. She was my age and a mom, so she understood my struggles. She was also very nice and helpful. I felt that my workouts were very relevant to me. I got a mix of intense and low-impact exercises due to my restraints and needs."

We also appreciate how Caliber offers other options. Our testers are impressed by how many fitness features are available with the free version, customizing your profile to your workout frequency and self-reported goals. You get home workouts generated using artificial intelligence (AI) based on your available equipment and have the freedom to edit or exchange exercises. You can also set your schedule and track your weight, sets, and repetitions for future reference.

*Enter your workout data in the app to track what you've done and see your progress over time.*

We think this is an impressive amount of features for a free app. But if you want to unlock data tracking (like syncing nutrition data from its partner app [Cronometer](#)), you can upgrade to the Plus plan for \$12 per month, which comes with a one-week trial period. This can be worth it if you have specific goals, like [weight loss](#).

## Best for personal training: Future

### Best for personal training

[Visit Site](#)

Future is a fitness app that specializes in flexible and individualized personal training. We love that you're assigned a certified personal trainer who is available to answer questions or modify training programs most days of the week.

**Key features** [+](#)

**Pros and cons of Future** [+](#)

## Our final verdict

Future earns a spot in this review because it offers highly customized coaching from a certified personal trainer who can accommodate your goals and restrictions. The biggest standout to our team is how accessible the coach is—our testers could reach out during the week for exercise modifications or questions, which is more access than you'd get from many in-person one-on-one coaches.

This app can be quite valuable despite its monthly cost of \$199 (\$179, \$169, or \$149 per month if you commit for three months, six months, or a year, respectively). A

personal trainer at the gym may cost up to \$150 per month, but you may not have frequent communication with them for accountability or program adjustments from the start. We like how Future offers an in-app communication channel between coaches and clients, encouraging you to discuss your program, ask for adjustments, or get feedback based on your performance. One of our testers notes how they can text their trainer during the week with quick responses, and if they miss a workout, the trainer checks in to see if a schedule adjustment is needed.

## From our tester

"I met with my coach virtually once for a 20-minute meet and greet. Before we met, I messaged her about my goals, likes and dislikes, and other information for a productive call. I used Future while traveling back and forth for work, so we figured out some alternatives for workouts at the hotel when I needed them. She did an awesome job accommodating my preferences and was super responsive!"

*Future's virtual trainers do a great job holding clients accountable, checking in periodically to see how they can modify your workout or further challenge you.*

Future allows a one-month trial period to try out the app before fully committing (similar to Caliber). However, you do have to pay upfront and will be refunded if you decide to cancel. But if you consider stopping because you're unhappy with your coaching, our testers encourage you to switch trainers first. One of our testers easily switched

coaches and was impressed by the simple process. "My previous trainer gave the new one the notes I had sent to him to brief him on the types of workouts I was interested in, and she picked right up where he left off," they say.

Otherwise, we understand virtual personal training isn't for everyone. In fact, our testers don't recommend paying for Future if you're a beginner because the program and its exercises can feel complicated despite the video instruction. Rather than paying top dollar for virtual training, some beginners may find more value in hands-on personal training or group sessions to learn exercises you can also try on your own. Or, if you don't feel comfortable visiting a gym yet, you can opt for a less expensive app with various training options to explore [from home](#).

Learn more in our Future Review.

## Best for beginners: iFit

### Best for beginners

[Visit Site](#)

iFit is an app that offers various live or on-demand workout classes led by coaches worldwide. Based on our testing, this platform is perfect for beginners who want to try different types of training and discover which workout is most fulfilling and motivating.

---

#### Key features

+

---

#### Pros and cons of iFit

+

## Our final verdict



If you're [new to exercise](#), iFit is one of our favorite options. It offers more than 60 types of workouts and thousands of classes, which is ideal if you're looking to discover your favorite types of exercises that will inspire you to reach your goals. We found it impossible not to be motivated by the beautiful class settings worldwide—who doesn't want to do Pilates in Aruba?

*You get to choose between various classes set in locations around the world. One of our testers gravitates toward rowing in a lake, walking through a forest, or performing yoga on a mountain top*

Although iFit is designed to connect to Proforma, NordicTrack, and Freemotion equipment, you don't need these fitness machines to start training. One of our testers tried the mobile version, iFit Train, available on Apple or Android devices for \$14.99 monthly with a 30-day trial period.

"Downloading and subscribing to the app was quick and easy. I filled out a detailed questionnaire about my body measurements, interests, goals, and trainer personality preference for your classes," says one tester. You may also choose to activate the AI Coach designed to help support your goals by scheduling a fitness plan, sending reminders, or creating a custom fitness plan. However, this feature is in Beta at the moment, so it's not consistently available just yet. "But it does sync with Strava, Apple Health, Garmin Connect, and Google Fit if you're looking to track workout data," they add.

Our team likes the mix of workouts available for all fitness levels, and some are specifically recommended for beginners. For example, you can take the Beginner Incline Series from a trainer in Lake Tahoe or a Moab Beginner Series to start your biking journey. Most workout options are cardio-based, like running, cycling, elliptical,

and walking. But iFit also offers yoga, Pilates, barre, high-intensity interval training (also known as HIIT), and strength training.

## From our tester

"When I did a Pilates session, all I needed was 30 minutes, my phone, and a yoga mat. I like that the workout starts with a warm-up to get your heart pumping in a reasonable timeframe and a cool-down to lower your heart rate slowly at the end. Those components are important, so the session isn't a shock to my system. I also appreciated that my class trainer provided time to rest during the session."

But what we love to see is its mindfulness training. Not every training program offers the mental component of healthy living. Mindfulness training sets it apart from other apps, especially for beginners looking to start on the right foot. Research shows that incorporating [mindfulness](#) into a fitness program can help manage stress, promote [self-awareness and self-acceptance](#), and [cultivate positivity](#). It can also support healthy lifestyle changes and recovery as you continue your fitness journey. Although iFit doesn't have more in-depth nutrition tracking or guidance, it does provide surface-level lessons as a resource.

The main downside of iFit is its lack of accountability. We find its workouts motivating and fun, but sticking with it without self-discipline can feel hard without a community or coach. Our team encourages you to try iFit with a friend to keep it going.

## HelpGuide Handbook Tip #1

"Prioritizing the social aspect of exercise can make challenging workouts more enjoyable and enduring," says [Chris Alvarado](#), a certified exercise physiologist and cardiac program specialist at Queens Medical Center in Honolulu, Hawaii, "Having a workout partner not only adds to the fun but can be a huge motivator on days when you just don't feel like doing a workout."

## Best for variety: Aaptiv

### Best for variety

[Visit Site](#)

Aaptiv stands out as one of the most diverse workout apps. Its primary focus is physical health, with thousands of exercises and multiple on-demand classes. But we love how it also offers sleep and meditation categories for those looking to build better wellness habits.

---

### Key features

+

---

### Pros and cons of Aaptiv

+

## Our final verdict

Do you enjoy switching up your workouts to keep you on your toes? If so, our team recommends Aaptiv, one of the most diverse workout apps we've tested so far. You can attend various on-demand workout classes or use the AI-powered SmartCoach feature to develop workout plans based on your goals.

Our testers count 16 workout categories, including walking, Pilates, [mobility](#), boxing, yoga, and strength. We also notice [meditation](#) and [sleep categories](#), which are important for a more holistic approach to fitness, recovery, and healthy living.

“Sleep is an incredibly overlooked aspect of a health and fitness routine. Without a proper sleep routine, your body may not recover appropriately after workouts, hindering progress. Meditation also provides exceptional benefits such as increased focus, increased healthy-habit adherence, and lower stress levels.”

– Chris Alvarado, certified exercise physiologist and cardiac program specialist at Queens Medical Center in Honolulu, Hawaii

Not only does Aaptiv offer a variety of workouts, but it also offers different ways to search for what you need. “You can choose a workout collection, like Mobility for Men, which is cool. You can also choose a workout program based on a goal, like Reduce Stress, Get Stronger, or Run Faster,” says one tester. Searching by workout collection can benefit those with specific goals to find what’s most relevant, like training to run a half marathon. And if you want to cross-train on other days with something different and fun, this app has you covered.

## HelpGuide Handbook Tip #2

According to Alvarado, cross-training benefits people preparing for competition, trying to reach specific health and fitness goals, or those who may have hit a plateau and want some variation in their routine. Cross-training can help people target similar muscles differently, potentially leading to greater results.



*As you complete workouts, you earn awards. One of our testers earned a Bronze award for collecting a few walking workouts and will slowly progress up the ranks with consistency.*

Our testers love how this app caters to all levels of fitness. That said, Aaptiv's coaching feature may not be great for those new to exercise. "Its automated coaching can be good if you have a specific goal, like to run a certain distance, but isn't ideal for beginners who aren't sure where to start," one tester says. "Also, there's just not enough instruction for each exercise for beginners. Some didn't have visual demonstrations, so there can be some confusion. The walking and running programs are the exception—because they don't require visual demos, there's less chance for confusion. I found these types of Aaptiv programs really helpful."

### From our tester

"There's a community feed in the app called Team where people post about their progress and workouts, but I didn't see a lot of communication or engagement there. Most posts only had a couple of likes, and most didn't have comments. Aaptiv encourages in-app accountability, but it's not a popular feature."

## HelpGuide Handbook's healthy living testing methodology

Our Handbook Team members research, download, and personally test fitness apps to find the best ones. To date, our testers have subscribed to seven top fitness apps for testing. For each platform, the testers follow the program and use the features and functions for several weeks. During that time, we do the following:

## Our Fitness App Testing Process

---

Subscribe as a new member.

Download the app.

Use the program to track exercises, activity level, sleep, and calories burned.

Follow exercise guidance included in the program.

Test workouts and interactions with personal coaches (when applicable).

Contact customer support with questions.

Participate in online forums, coaching sessions, and create custom workouts (when applicable).

Explore app and website for articles, exercise tips, and educational content.

Talk to other members about their experience.

By becoming familiar with the websites and apps and using them ourselves, we gain a detailed view of how easy, or difficult, it is to incorporate the fitness program into a

daily routine.

Participating in online member communities and coaching sessions gives us insight into the type of support each platform offers. Our interviews with nutritionists, exercise scientists, physical therapists, and strength and conditioning coaches help us learn more about the connections between fitness, weight loss, physical health, and mental health.

One detail we focus on is the sustainability of each program or app. A successful fitness app teaches you how to establish and maintain healthy exercise habits for the long-term.

Our testing results, experiences of other customers, and professional opinions of health experts all inform the conclusions in this review of the best fitness apps.

Learn more about our [healthy living review methodology](#).

## Compare the best workout apps of 2024

	Visit Site	Visit Site	Visit Site	Visit Site
Price before discounts	Free, \$12, or \$200+ per month	\$199 per month	\$14.99 per month (iFit Train) or \$39.99 per month (iFit Pro)	\$14.99 per month or \$99.99 per year
Free trial period or money-back guarantee?	Yes, seven to 30 days	Yes, 30 days	Yes, 30 days	Yes, seven days with 14-day money-back guarantee on annual plan



	Visit Site	Visit Site	Visit Site	Visit Site
Type of training	Virtual coaching, cardio, strength	Virtual coaching	Cardio, strength, yoga, Pilates, sleep, meditation, strength, barre, mobility, boxing	Cardio, strength, yoga, Pilates, sleep, meditation, strength, barre, mobility, boxing

## Our final verdict

After testing a range of workout apps, we found Caliber to be the best overall choice, thanks to its convenient features, personalized coaching, and flexible pricing options that cater to different budgets and fitness levels. Whether you’re interested in strength training, cardio, or tailored coaching, the apps we reviewed offer something for nearly every fitness goal and preference.

Ultimately, finding the right fitness app comes down to aligning with your lifestyle and goals. The right app can make it easier—and more enjoyable—to stay active and committed to a healthy lifestyle in the long run.

## Frequently asked questions

What workout apps work best?

How much do fitness and workout apps cost?

## Can you do personal training through workout apps?

---

## Do fitness and workout apps really work?

---

## References

---

## Mental Health Helplines

Are you or someone you know in crisis? View our hotlines around the world.

**Get Help**

---

## Join Our Newsletter

Mental health and wellness tips, our latest articles, resources and more.

Email Address

**Subscribe**

---

About Us

Meet Our Team

Our Experts

[Our Story](#)

## Resources

[Harvard Health](#)

[Meditation](#)

[Newsletter](#)

## Get In Touch

[Contact Us](#)

515 S Flower St, Ste 1800  
Los Angeles, CA 90071



©1999-2024 HelpGuide.org.

All rights reserved. HELPGUIDE.ORGORG INTERNATIONAL is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization (ID #45-4510670). Our content does not constitute a medical or psychological consultation. See a certified medical or mental health professional for diagnosis.

[Terms & Conditions](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Cookies Policy](#)