



Try A Hobby

Committing to a hobby can feel daunting. **But research shows that engaging in hobbies can provide significant health benefits, making them important to prioritize.**

Depending on the type of activity, a hobby may provide social, physical, and mental health benefits¹. Hobbies which require your time, attention, and focus can help pull you away from other life stressors. The ability to be fully consumed in a task can help to distract your mind and even generate states of flow, a highly focused mental state that can provide increased performance².

In parts of the world where researchers find populations with exceptional longevity, referred to as “Blue Zones”, hobbies are considered part of a healthy routine³. Research of those who live in Blue Zones has shown there to be nine lifestyle habits that help contribute towards long, healthy lives, such as moving your body, reducing stress, and connecting with friends and family⁴. Many of these healthy habits can be achieved through prioritizing a hobby. See examples below.

Addressing some common misconceptions:

- » **You do not have to achieve a certain skill level.** Even if you are not “good” at something, if you enjoy doing it, that is the goal.
- » **You can start and stop hobbies.** You do not have to achieve a certain amount of participation or dedicate a certain amount of time to explore a hobby. Our hobbies can continue to grow, shift, and change along with us.
- » **You do not have to try something new.** They can be activities you already do regularly, such as cooking or reading. The point is to make time for things we enjoy doing each week.
- » **It does not have to be “productive”.** (Although some could argue hobbies are productive in their own way!) It is not frivolous or unimportant to spend time doing things that are fulfilling.
- » **It is not too late to try something new.** Everyone can benefit from trying something new, you might just find you have a hidden talent. Start small, follow your curiosity, and find what works for you.

This material is to be used for informational purposes only and is not intended to be exhaustive, nor should any of the materials be construed as professional or medical advice.

MOVEMENT

- Walking
- Playing Sports
- Dancing
- Fitness Classes

SOCIAL

- Volunteering
- Attending community events
- Spiritual practices

NATURE

- Gardening
- Hiking
- Fishing

CREATIVE

- Cooking
- Crafting
- Painting or Drawing
- Wood or Metal Working

1. Cleary, M., Le Lagadec, D., Thapa, D. K., & Kornhaber, R. (2025). Exploring the Impact of Hobbies on Mental Health and Well-Being: A Scoping Review. *Issues in mental health nursing*, 46(8), 804–814. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01612840.2025.2512006>

2. Biscontini, T. (2024). Flow (psychology). EBSCO Research Starters. <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/psychology/flow-psychology>

3. Blue Zones. (n.d.). Blue Zones criteria. <https://www.bluezones.com/blue-zones-criteria/>

4. Buettner, D. (n.d.). Power 9@: Reverse engineering longevity. Blue Zones. <https://www.bluezones.com/2016/11/power-9/>