

## (Style on Dime) Enjoying the great outdoors

Written by Marcia Humphrey  
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I used to laugh at the crazy Minnesota folks who would break out in shorts and t-shirts on the first sunny day that brought forty or fifty degree temperatures. I'd also watch in disbelief those folks who, despite temperatures barely above twenty degrees, shed their coat just because the sun was shining.

After living here for two winters, I have to admit that now I finally "*Get it.*" The Minnesota winters can be so long and brutal that any sign of warmth is like an invitation to take it off; that is, strip off the layers and layers of outerwear. I used to wonder if these strippers were cold. What I have concluded is that yes, they are cold, but it's worth it to be free from the bondage of the layers-even if it's just for a day or so. My other confession is that I have now taken to stripping too; I can be found running into the gym at 6 a.m. with only my workout clothes and my hoodie.

I'm feeling really good about this string of warm days that we have been having, and I am feeling good about wearing my lightweight coats again. This means that it's time for our winter hibernation to be over and for spring activities to get into full force. If you are among those who have packed on a few pounds to keep you warm this winter (translation-you ate too much and watched too much television), now is the time to strip off those extra pounds with fun, easy, and low-cost options.

### ***Exercise Resistance Bands***

Starting at about \$10 each, these go-anywhere bands are a perfect way to shape up whether you are indoors or out, at home or out-of-town. Bands are hot right now and you can find them being sold for big bucks on infomercials and being used by many personal trainers. You can get similar results at home if you follow some simple principles. For ideas to get started check out an article in *Prevention* magazine. [www.prevention.com/cda/article/we-found-it-the-fastest-way-to-sculpt](http://www.prevention.com/cda/article/we-found-it-the-fastest-way-to-sculpt)

### ***Hula-Hoops***

Do you remember the fun we used to have with hula hoops? Recapture the fun with your kids, nieces, or grands-and get fit at the same time. A great deal, at only about \$10, you'll be fit in no

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### ***Walking, Jogging, and Biking***

These are always activities that are easy to do. Just get some good gym shoes and you are ready. Whether walking or biking, challenge yourself with hills and burn around 20% more calories!

### ***Jumping Rope***

This is another super simple way to meet your fitness goals! To make it more fun, turn on some music-use a combination of faster and slower songs to mix up your pace. After a few weeks, watch the inches melt away.

Do you want sculpted arms, washboard abs, strong quads, or shapely calves? Maybe you want to relieve stress, sleep better, have more energy, or feel more confident. Exercise and a balanced diet can help with all of the above. As always, consult with your physician before beginning a new fitness program. Once you get the go-ahead, visit the nearest library and get some fitness magazines to get ideas on the latest fitness moves to do at home. If you just stick with it, you will be amazed at how well your body, mind, and spirit will respond to you. The time is now, so get outside and get moving...today! Enjoy!

*Marcia Humphrey is an interior decorator and home stager who specializes in achieving high style at a low cost. A native of Michigan, she and her husband, Lonnie, have three children.*