

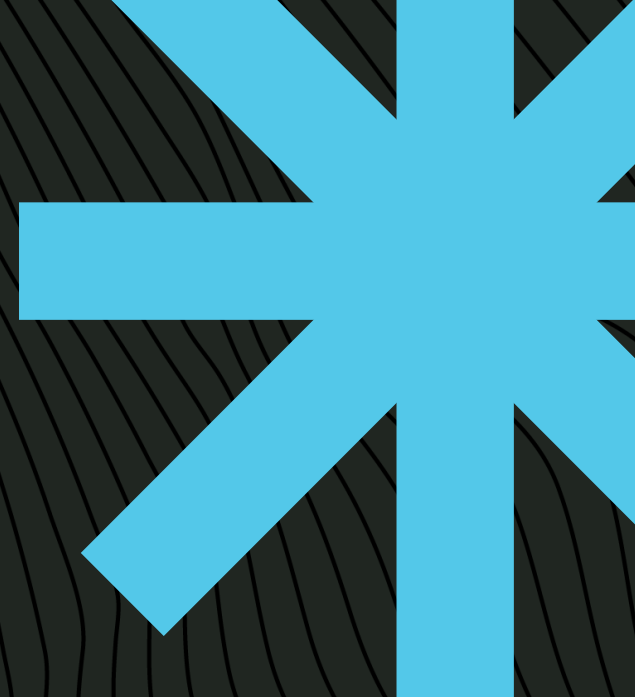


2027 ACSM

Worldwide

Fitness Trends:

Future Directions of the Health and Fitness Industry



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OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Methods
3. Results
4. Summary
5. Resources



INTRODUCTION

ACSM's Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends gathers input from exercise professionals worldwide to identify **trends** for the year ahead

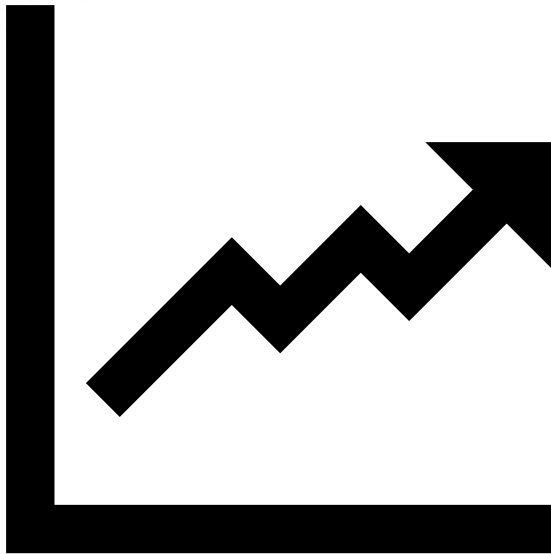
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This article provides practical context for interpreting and applying the survey findings to inform programming, services, research initiatives, and strategic decision-making.

McAvoy et al., 2027

Background:

What is a trend?



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A fitness trend is a widely adopted and/or sustained pattern in health and fitness participation, professional practice, or industry offerings. Unlike fads, trends persist beyond temporary enthusiasm and demonstrate measurable engagement, market presence, or long-term impact.

- 2027 ACSM Worldwide Trends Article

Previous Year's Trends Summary (2026)

- Increased attention to weight management
- Sustained interest in social connection, mental well-being, healthy aging, and digital technologies



Fitness Evolution: Trends Shaping 2026

Discover how exercise is transforming to meet our changing needs in health, technology, and lifestyle.



Learn more at acsm.org/trends



METHODS: 2027 Trends Survey

Survey Development

- Cross-disciplinary workgroup reviews and refines survey items (*i.e.*, individual trends) annually
 - added, revised, or retired
- The 2027 survey included 50 potential fitness trends across nine categories

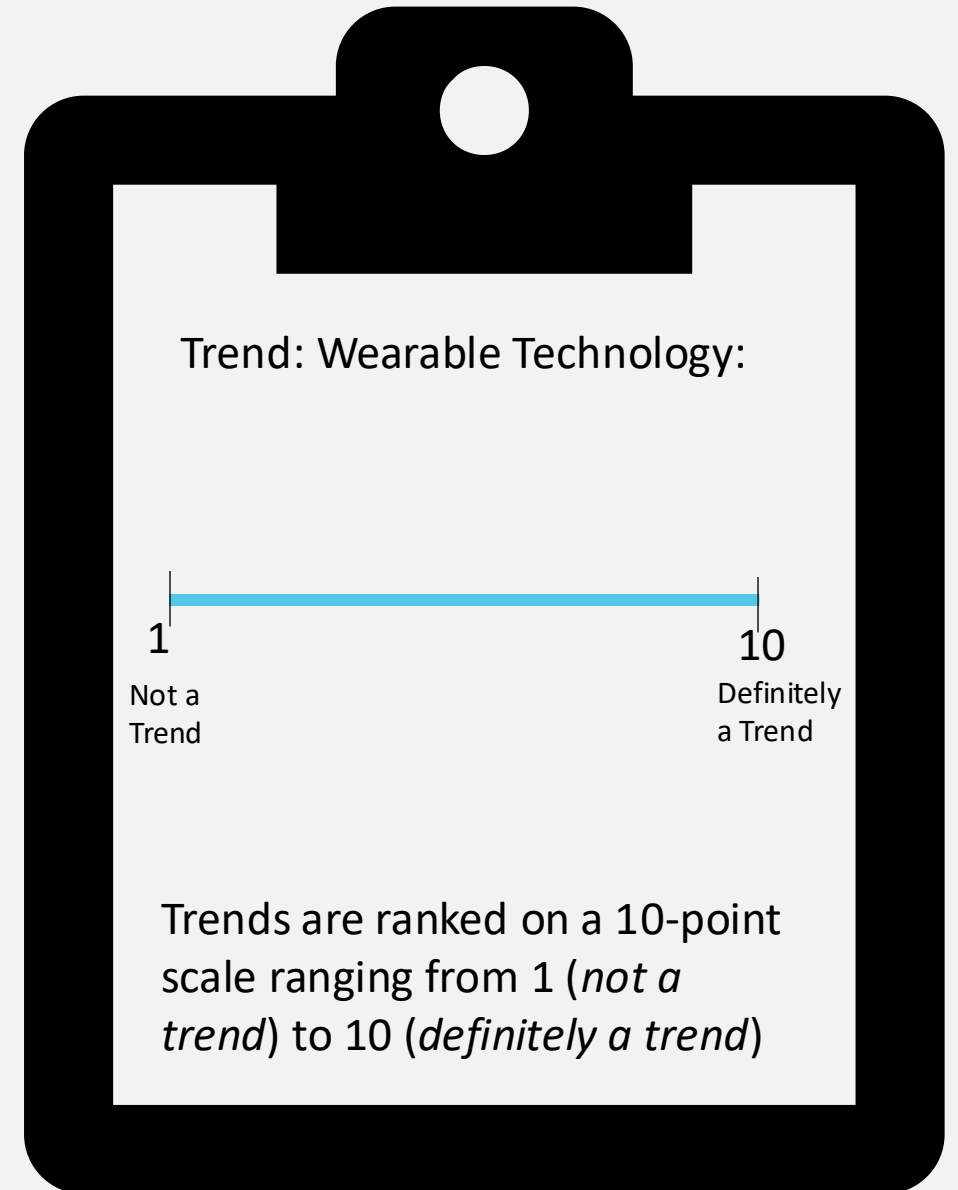


Survey Categories
Exercise Setting
Structured Exercise
Fitness Business Model
Exercise Prescription for Clinical Populations
Exercise Prescription for Healthy Populations with Special Considerations
Training Modalities
Digital Technologies
Exercise Programming
Recovery Based Therapies

METHODS: 2027 Trends Survey

Survey Distribution

- Emailed via Qualtrics April-May 2026
- ACSM's member/stakeholder communication channels
 - Email communications
 - Conferences
 - Social media platforms



RESULTS: TABLE 1

2027 Survey Respondent Demographics



Category	Response	n	Percent
Age (years; mean 46.2; range = 19–83)	<25	68	4.7
	25–34	195	13.6
	35–44	235	16.4
	45–54	191	13.3
	55–64	197	13.7
	65+	140	9.8
Gender	Female	679	47.4
	Male	333	23.2
	Nonbinary/Other	17	1.2
Education	High school diploma	66	4.6
	Bachelor's degree	320	22.3
	Master's/Specialist degree	385	26.9
	Doctoral/Terminal degree	253	17.7
Certification status	Certified by ACSM	717	50
	Certified by another organization	392	27.4
	Not currently certified	164	11.4

Percentages were calculated using the full analytic sample as the denominator (N = 1,433); therefore, category percentages may not sum to 100% when responses were missing. Certification categories were not mutually exclusive.

RESULTS:

TABLE 2

Respondents' Professional Roles, Work Settings, and Experience

Category	Response	Percent
Professional role	Exercise physiologist/Clinical exercise physiologist	30.1
	Personal trainer	24.6
	Group exercise instructor	17.4
	Educator/lecturer	16.9
	Research faculty/professor	16.9
	Health/wellness coach	10.7
	Program manager/facility operator	9.3
	Student (undergraduate or graduate)	7.4
	Strength/sport performance coach	5.7
	Medical professional	5.6
	Owner	5.4
	Athletic trainer	3.3
	Registered dietitian	1.1
Work status	Full-time	45.8
	Part-time	18.4
	Certified but not currently working as an exercise professional	7.3

RESULTS:

TABLE 2

(continued)

Respondents' Professional Roles, Work Settings, and Experience (continued)

Category	Response	Percent
Work setting	College/University (faculty)	19.6
	Hospital/Medical fitness center	17.9
	Private practice/own business	14.6
	Community-based facility	8.2
	Boutique studio	6.9
	Online fitness/coaching	6.6
	Commercial fitness center	6.4
	Campus recreation/wellness center	4.8
	Corporate/employee wellness	4.7
	Rehabilitation/outpatient clinic	4.6
	Athletics/sports performance	4.5
	Military/government/public safety	2.2
Years of experience	Less than 1 year	3.5
	1–3 years	6.1
	4–6 years	7.5
	7–9 years	5.7
	10–20 years	20.5
	21 or more years	28.1

Percentages were calculated using the full analytic sample as the denominator (N = 1,433); therefore, category percentages may not sum to 100% when responses were missing. Professional role and work setting categories were not mutually exclusive.

RESULTS: TABLE 3

Fitness Professionals' Top 20 Ranked Fitness Trends for 2027

2027 Rank	Trend	5-Year Trend History
1	Wearable technology	✓
2	Mobile exercise apps	✓
3	Balance, flow, and core strength	
4	Fitness programs for older adults	✓
5	Traditional strength training	✓
6	Exercise for weight management	✓
7	Group fitness classes	
8	Data-driven training technology	
9	Exercise for mental health and well-being	
10	Influencer/ambassador-led fitness programs	
11	Hot and cold therapies (thermal therapies)	
12	High-intensity interval training (HIIT)	✓
13	Functional fitness training	✓
14	Personal training	
15	Competitive fitness events	★
16	Massage, vibration, and compression	★
17	Adult recreation and sport clubs	
18	Outdoor fitness activities	✓
19	Youth athletic development	
20	Fitness at home	

✓ = Stable trend, appeared on the top 20 list every year from 2023–2027.

★ = New survey item for 2027.

FIGURE 1

2027 Trends by Category

Survey Category	Trends Included in Category	Top-Ranked Trend
Exercise Setting	Budget-Friendly Gyms; Commercial/Multi-Purpose Gyms; Fitness at Home; Medical Fitness Centers; Outdoor Fitness Activities; Specialized Fitness Studios (Boutiques)	Outdoor Fitness Activities
Structured Exercise	Adult Recreation and Sport Clubs; Competitive Fitness Events; Group Fitness Classes; Personal Training (Face-to-Face, Online, or Hybrid); Small Group Training	Group Fitness Classes
Fitness Business Model	Employer-Sponsored Fitness Programs; Employing Certified Exercise Professionals; Fitness Reimbursement Programs; Flexible Memberships and Pricing Models; Influencer/Ambassador-led Fitness Programs	Influencer/Ambassador-led Fitness Programs
Exercise Prescription for Clinical Populations	Exercise Oncology; Exercise for Chronic Disease Management; Exercise for Neurodegenerative Diseases; Adaptive Fitness and Inclusive Training	Exercise for Chronic Disease Management
Exercise Prescription for Healthy Populations with Special Considerations	Body-Inclusive Fitness; Fitness Programs for Neurodivergent Individuals; Fitness Programs for Older Adults; Health and Wellness Coaching; Prenatal and Postnatal Fitness; Youth Athletic Development; Youth Physical Activity Promotion	Fitness Programs for Older Adults

Training Modalities	Balance, Flow, and Core Strength; Body Weight Training; Circuit Training; Functional Fitness Training (FFT); High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT); Low-Impact/Joint-Friendly Training; Mobility Training; Olympic-Style Weightlifting; Traditional Strength Training	Balance, Flow, and Core Strength
Digital Technologies	Artificial Intelligence in Fitness; Data-driven Training Technology; Mobile Exercise Apps; Wearable Technology	Wearable Technology
Exercise Programming	Exercise Is Medicine®; Exercise for Mental Health and Well-Being; Exercise for Weight Management; Hormonal Health and Fitness; Lifestyle Medicine	Exercise for Weight Management
Recovery-Based Therapies	Blood Flow Restriction Training; Hot and Cold Therapies (Thermal Therapies); Light Therapy; Massage, Vibration, and Compression; Neuroregulation and Recovery	Hot and Cold Therapies (Thermal Therapies)

RESULTS: FIGURE 5

2027 #1 Fitness Trends Worldwide

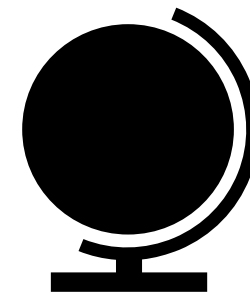


Cyprus Personal Training	Brazil Personal training
United Arab Emirates Personal training	Lebanon Personal training
Greece Wearable technology	Finland Wearable technology
Lithuania Traditional strength training	USA Wearable technology
Australia Pilates	Mexico Traditional strength training
China Exercise is Medicine®	Algeria Data-driven training technologies
Portugal Employing certified exercise professionals	Poland Group fitness classes
Taiwan (Province of China) Fitness programs for older adults	Spain Small-group training
	Turkey Functional Fitness Training



RESULTS: TABLE 4

Top Three Fitness Trends Across 16 Countries



Country	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
Algeria	Data-driven training technologies	Wearable technology	Adaptive fitness and inclusive training
Australia	Pilates	Wearable technology	Exercise for mental health and well-being
Brazil	Personal training	Traditional strength training	AI-driven fitness
China	Exercise Is Medicine®	Exercise for weight management	Lifestyle medicine
Cyprus	Personal Training	Functional Fitness Training	Small Group Training
Finland	Wearable technology	Outdoor fitness activities	Mobile exercise apps
Greece	Wearable technology	Small-group training	Traditional strength training
Lebanon	Personal training	Group fitness classes	Traditional strength training
Lithuania	Traditional strength training	Group fitness classes	Personal training

Country	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
Mexico	Traditional strength training	Exercise for weight management	Functional fitness training
Poland	Group fitness classes	Traditional strength training	Wearable technology
Portugal	Employing certified exercise professionals	Personal training	Hybrid training
Spain	Small-group training	Functional fitness training	Fitness programs for older adults
Taiwan (Province of China)	Fitness programs for older adults	Exercise Is Medicine®	Personal training
Turkey	Functional Fitness Training	Exercise for Weight Management	Personal Training
UAE	Personal training	Group fitness classes	Traditional strength training

RESULTS: 2027 Patterns and Themes



Social Connection

- Group Fitness (#7)
- Competitive Fitness Events (#15)
- Adult Recreation and Sports Clubs (#17)

Flexible Delivery

- Mobile Health apps (#2)
- Outdoor Fitness (#18)
- Fitness at Home (#20)

Across Age & Health Status

- Fitness Programs for Older Adults (#4)
- Exercise for Weight Management (#6)
- Exercise for Mental Health (#9)
- Youth Athletic Development (#19)

Digital Tools

- Wearable Technology (#1)
- Mobile Exercise Apps (#2)
- Data-Driven Technology (#8)

Holistic Outcomes

- Balance, Flow, and Core Strength (#3)
- Functional Fitness Training (#13)
- Hot and Cold Therapies (#11)
- Massage, Vibration and Compression (#16)

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

- Wearable Technology remained the top-ranked trend for the **10th time overall**
- **New to the top 20**
 - Competitive Fitness Events
 - Massage, Vibration, and Compression

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ACSM's Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends reflect an industry landscape shaped by digital tools, recovery, flexible delivery, and programming that supports participation across the lifespan.

More Data Available!*

Figures

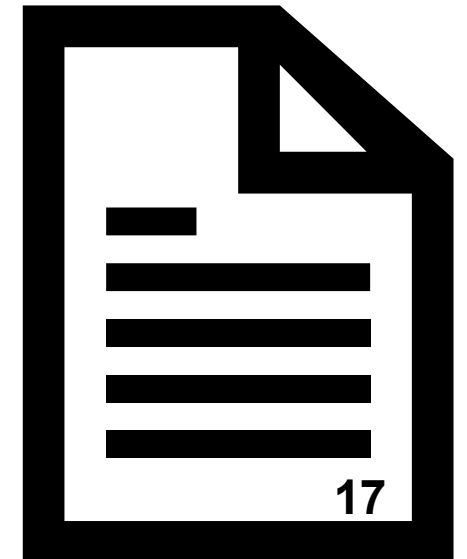
- Figure 1: 2027 Trends by Category
- Figure 2: Top Three Fitness Trends Across Professional Roles for 2027
- Figure 3: Top Three Fitness Trends Across Work Setting for 2027
- Figure 4: Top Three Fitness Trends Across Years of Experience for 2027
- Figure 5: Top Trends per Country/Region listed from highest to lowest frequency

Supplemental Digital Content

- SDC 1: Supplemental Table 1: Top Ten Yearly Comparisons 2007-2027.
- Global Data Available for:
 - Australia
 - Brazil
 - China
 - Lithuania
 - Mexico
 - Portugal
 - Spain
 - Taiwan (Province of China)
 - Turkey



* additional resources can be found within the feature article, “2027 ACSM Worldwide Fitness Trends: Future Directions of the Health and Fitness Industry”



Resources & More Information

ACSM's Health & Fitness Journal®

1. **The Employer Perspective:** Insights and Practical Applications of the 2027 Fitness Trends (Nov/Dec 2026)
2. Exercise-based **Fitness Competitions:** The Allure for Participants and Guidance from Certified Exercise Professionals (Nov/Dec 2026)
3. Fit to Follow? A Practical Guide to Evaluating **Health and Fitness Influencers** (Nov/Dec 2026)
4. Beyond the Numbers: Navigating **Fitness Technology** in the Age of AI (Nov/Dec 2026)
5. From Assessment to Action: Integrating **Functional Fitness Testing** Across ACSM (Nov/Dec 2026)
6. Ten Things Exercise Professionals Should Know About Youth **Athletic Development** (Nov/Dec 2026)
7. **Student Corner:** Leveraging the 2027 ACSM Fitness Trends for Career Success (Jan/Feb 2027)



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**See You
Next Year!**

