

New Year's resolutions

Many people start the New Year by making resolutions. But how long do they last?

1 Did you make any New Year's resolutions? If so, what were they? Have you kept them? Compare your answers with a partner.

2 Can you guess the correct figure in these statistics? Check your answer by scanning the article below.

New Year's resolution: a decision that you make on the first day of the year about the things you intend to do or stop doing during that year (From: *Macmillan English Dictionary. Text © Bloomsbury Publishing Plc 2002*)

Report: Health statistics

- (a) 5 / 6 / 7 out of 10 adults in the UK do not do enough exercise to protect their heart.
 (b) About 3 million / 9 million / 15 million people smoke in Spain.

A healthy lifestyle

Did you make any New Year's resolutions? To take up jogging? Stop smoking? It's the beginning of February – the traditional time for people to give up their new lifestyle and return to their old one! Seven out of ten adults in the UK do not do enough exercise to protect their heart, according to statistics from the British Heart Foundation. So why not try jogging? Experts say that jogging helps you keep fit, but should be balanced by another form of exercise – such as pilates, yoga or swimming. This means all muscles can be developed, and not just some. They recommend warm-up stretching exercises first. Many sports shoes are actually not designed for running. Leading brands such as Nike and Adidas do engineer special trainers for serious joggers – at a price!

While Britain still continues to debate a ban on smoking in public places, Spain introduced such a ban in the workplace at the start of the year. Restaurants and bars over a certain

size must provide special 'non-smoking areas' within the next few months. It is estimated that between 8 and 10 million people out of the population of 44 million smoke. While smoking is popular, it seems over 75% of Spaniards are in favour of the ban. Approximately 55,000 lives were lost to smoking last year in Spain. But will the culture of Spain's famously smoky bars and restaurants change forever?

Nowadays, the health industry is worth millions of pounds a year. Can companies do more to help their employees keep fit? One Dutch company keeps workers active with a 350 metre 'internal street', which links the office building's ten towers. 'Healthy homes' are becoming a growing trend – executives, of course, can install a home gym, swimming pool, or even a squash court. While it costs a lot to join a fitness club, it is quite easy to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Surely everyone can take the stairs, or choose a healthy option in the staff canteen!

3 Now read the whole article. Did anything surprise you?

4 Match the words in each column to form collocations. Create sentences with some of the expressions.

Verb – Noun	
(a) to take up	smoking
(b) to adopt	a club
(c) to ban	a gym
(d) to install	jogging
(e) to join	a lifestyle

Noun – Noun	
(f) home	court
(g) fitness	industry
(h) staff	gym
(i) squash	canteen
(j) health	club

5 Discuss the following questions in small groups. Be ready to report your ideas to the class.

- (a) Should smoking be allowed in the workplace?
- (b) Do you eat a healthy lunch at work? If not, why not?
- (c) Do you think that the health industry (e.g. sports clubs, health food) charges too much?
- (d) Are there any ways in which a company can encourage employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle?