

## 2024 FITNESS TRENDS IN AUSTRALIA

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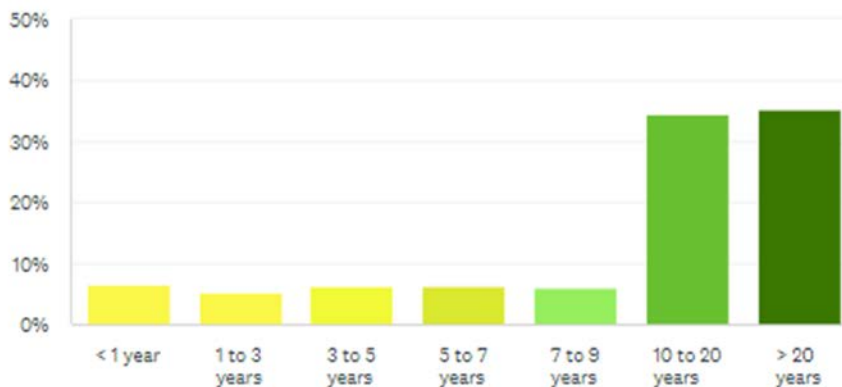
The Australian survey of fitness trends was largely based on the American College of Sports Medicine's Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends. There were some minor alterations for the purpose of contextualizing the survey for the Australian fitness industry.

The survey participants included 313 respondents (69% female and 29% male) from Australia with a broad spectrum of backgrounds and experience within the active health and fitness industry. The demographics data indicates that various age groups completed the survey, 49 years was the average age of the respondents, with the majority (69%) having more than 10 years of experience in the industry (see Figure). Three-quarters of respondents have a Certificate IV in Fitness and 44% work full-time in the industry. Almost half (48%) of those surveyed own their personal business or work in private practice, 33% operate in a commercial setting and 17% work in a boutique fitness studio.

**Table: 2024 Fitness Trends in Australia.**

Rank	Trend
1	Exercise for Mental Health
2	Fitness Programs for Older Adults
3	Group Training
4	Functional Fitness Training
5	Exercise is Medicine
6	Traditional Strength Training
7	Employing Registered Exercise Professionals
8	Pilates
9	Wearable Technology
10	Inclusive Exercise Services

**Figure: Years of experience in the health and fitness industry**



### **What were the major takeaways from your country's 2024 survey results?**

- The introduction of the new trend, Exercise for Mental Health being at number one in Australia identifies how the sector is connecting with consumers' needs beyond physical health improvements. Recognizing this importance highlights how the industry plays an important role in delivering holistic health and welfare outcomes for Australians. This is reinforced by recent Australian research indicating that physical activity is 1.5 times more effective than leading medication or counseling in managing depression (Singh et al., 2023).
- Fitness Programs for Older Adults (#2) continues to rank highly by the sector. The industry recognizes that the percentage of older adults continues to grow in Australia, and so does the demand for fitness services to support their health.
- Many fitness operators in recent times have focused directly on group exercise training (#3), this has been embraced by Australians, as the cost is lower compared to one-on-one service. Additionally, over past years many have been in isolation for periods due to the pandemic, and the extra peer motivation and socialization, complement the consumer's interests.
- Finally, Exercise is Medicine has moved into the top 5, highlighting the importance of the health care sector to recognize the importance of a physical activity assessment and treatment as a standard of care when designing a treatment plan. Additionally, it stresses the importance of referring to evidence-based exercise programs delivered by qualified exercise professionals to support the Australian community.

### **What are the biggest benefits of reporting the top 20 fitness trends in your country/region, and who benefits the most from your findings?**

Health and fitness business operators, suppliers, and professionals are interested in these trends as they can assist them in their future business planning. Health and fitness journalists also can use articles as a credible point of reference.

### **As the world begins to rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic, what are the primary opportunities for the health and fitness industry in your country both currently and within the next year?**

The sector needs to check in with its promotional material and engagement with customers, highlighted by the number one ranking trend, exercise for mental health. The importance of utilizing the industry's services is no longer just for physical health but also supports the mental health and social well-being of individuals.

Although the sector continues to experience a workforce shortage, operators have seen an approximate 25% increase in patronage in the past year and forecast similar increases in the future year as people clear out their pandemic makeshift gym at home. The popularity of home exercise gyms dropped substantially compared to last year's results.