

Review: 'Wii Fit U,' 'Xbox Fitness' feel the burn

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This photo provided by Ubisoft shows a scene from the video game, "Just Dance 2014". The fifth installment in Ubisoft's hyper-colored choreography franchise is more of a dance game than an actual fitness title, though "Just Dance 2014" features the return of the series' "just sweat" mode, which counts calories as players shake their groove thangs. (AP Photo/Ubisoft)

While video game consoles can't help users save money or stop smoking—yet, anyway—there are a few recently released games that can help with the most popular of New Year's resolutions: exercise. Here's a look at four titles that offer an alternative to working out at the gym or with a personal trainer:

— "Wii Fit U" (Nintendo, for Wii U, \$49.99): Nintendo essentially launched the [fitness](#) game genre in 2008 with "Wii Fit," and now there's an updated edition for the Wii U system that works in tandem with the old Wii Balance Board and the new Fit Meter, a round doodad that measures real-world activity like steps taken and changes in elevation.

The portable Wii U GamePad removes the burden of having to look up at the TV screen. However, other than a few games that utilize the controller and a new dance mode, the content is mostly the same as the previous "Wii Fit" edition. Still, the new accessories alone make "Wii Fit U" a fine alternative to other expensive fitness gadgets. Three stars out of four.

— "Xbox Fitness" (Microsoft, for Xbox One, price varies): Despite advancements in motion tracking with the Xbox One's new Kinect sensor, "Xbox Fitness"—more of an app than a game, really—feels like a lunge backward from last year's "Nike+ Kinect Training" that worked as part of the Nike+ system and utilized the Xbox 360's version of Kinect.

"Xbox Fitness" is mostly a series of workout videos hosted by celebrity trainers like Jillian Michaels, Tracy Anderson and Tony Horton that incorporate scoring and Kinect functionality. Some are free with an Xbox Live subscription. Others cost extra. The wonky interface, paywall and interactivity make "Xbox Fitness" feel out of step. One-and-a-half stars.

— "Just Dance 2014" (Ubisoft, for PlayStation 3, PlayStation 4, Wii, Wii U, Xbox 360, Xbox One, \$49.99): The fifth installment in Ubisoft's hyper-colored choreography franchise is more of a dance game than an actual fitness title, though "Just Dance 2014" features the return of the series' "just sweat" mode, which counts calories as players shake their groove thangs.

The new edition ditches past "just sweat" features like transitional routines in favor of unlockable "sweat" versions of songs like Katy Perry's "I Kissed a Girl." Routines can be combined for 10-, 20- and 30-minute pop-flavored workouts. It's certainly not a full-fledged fitness regimen, just a really fun way to do some cardio. Two-and-a-half stars.

— "Zumba Fitness: World Party" (Majesco, for Wii, Wii U, Xbox 360, Xbox One, \$49.99): The latest entry in the hip-shaking empire's interactive catalog goes global with a diverse lineup of Zumba routines led by real-world instructors in colorful renditions of such locales as Puerto Rico, Los Angeles, India and Hawaii—all with accompanying tunes.

The vast array of modes—from the ridiculously fun world-tour campaign to the full-blown simulated workout classes—make "World Party" the most comprehensive Zumba game to date. The game's biggest downfall is a truly cheeseball collectible system. Who wants to be rewarded for smooth moves with a picture of a headdress?! Two-and-a-half stars.

More information: wiifitu.nintendo.com
www.xbox.com/xboxfitness
just-dance-thegame.ubi.com
www.zumbafitnessgame.com

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