



The best kind of workout? One that trains both your body and brain

We already know exercise is good for our bodies, but it's also an essential tool for managing mental health. Yet many people still separate physical fitness from mental wellness, viewing them as two different goals rather than parts of the same whole. Too often, workout routines are designed with only the body in mind, focusing on burning calories, building strength or improving flexibility. What's often missing is intentionality — movement designed not just to make you sweat but also to help you feel better mentally and emotionally.

Research shows that consistent physical activity can ease symptoms of anxiety and depression, sharpen executive functioning and improve sleep quality, a key factor in emotional regulation and overall mental health. But not all movement is created equal when it comes to mental health. The type of movement — and how you approach it — matters.

As a mind-body coach in professional sports for more than two decades, I have helped elite athletes build durable, mobile bodies while also supporting their mental resilience — using movement and breath to regulate the nervous system, stay grounded under pressure and maintain sharp focus. These same tools and principles can help anyone strengthen body and mind, improving how they move and feel every day.

Mindful movement vs. just exercising

Pushing yourself through a high-intensity workout while mentally checked out or disconnected from your body doesn't offer the same mental health benefits as moving with awareness. True mind-body fitness involves being present during movement, using intentional breathing and training in ways that support your nervous system. The brain and body are deeply interconnected through the nervous system. One of the key players in this connection is the vagus nerve, which runs from your brain stem to your gut and influences functions as varied as heart rate, digestion, mood and emotional regulation.

When you exercise with focused, deep breathing — you stimulate the vagus nerve, which activates your parasympathetic nervous system (your “rest and recover” state). Doing so can calm your mind, lower stress and improve focus by shifting your body out of “fight-or-flight” mode, helping you achieve restful states more easily.

On the other hand, when exercise is overly intense or performed with poor breathing patterns and no recovery, it can spike stress hormones and leave you feeling more depleted than energized. That's why it's important to choose exercises and formats that align with your needs and goals — not just physically, but mentally and emotionally, too.

How to build a mind-body fitness routine

You don't need to overhaul your workout regimen to make it more mind-body focused. Start by layering in these five simple strategies. Before beginning any new exercise program, consult your doctor. Stop immediately if you experience pain.

1. Anchor your workouts with breath

Breath is the most efficient and effective way to influence your nervous system. Use slow, intentional breathing before, during and after your workouts.



- In warm-ups: Use diaphragmatic breathing to downshift from your day and connect to your body.
- During mobility work: Use your breathing to move your rib cage in ways that support better posture, positioning and rotation. For example, when twisting your upper body to the right, use inhalations to expand your ribs on the right side and exhale to contract your ribs on the left side, to facilitate the rotation.
- During strength training: Exhale through the effort phase — as you would when pushing up in a push-up or standing up from a squat — to activate core control and regulate tension.
- In cooldowns: Practice extended exhales, which further stimulate the vagus nerve, to promote relaxation and recovery. I recommend doubling the length of your exhales during recovery sessions by practicing a four-count inhale with an eight-count exhale.

2. Incorporate mobility with intention

Mobility training improves flexibility and joint health, but its benefits go beyond the physical. Practicing breath-driven mobility drills, such as the three-way hip flexor release and windmill twist to also sharpen body awareness and support nervous system regulation. Add exercises such as these to your warm-ups or active recovery days, focusing on coordinating breath and movement to build physical control and mental clarity.

3. Balance intensity to build resilience

High-intensity workouts have benefits, but overdoing them can chronically elevate stress levels and impair recovery. To support your nervous system, balance your weekly training with lower-intensity sessions. Activities such as walking, yoga, breath-focused mobility and body-weight strength work help keep you active while promoting resilience, emotional regulation and injury prevention.

4. Train with presence and precision

No matter what type of training you're doing — strength, mobility, cardio or recovery — your mental presence affects how your body performs and adapts. Rushing through reps or zoning out increases the risk of poor form, injury and missed benefits. Focus on the quality of your movement: Pay attention to alignment, control your pace and stay aware of how your body feels. When your mind starts to wander, use your breath to ground yourself in the present and reconnect with your body. Presence turns every exercise into an opportunity to build both physical skill and mental clarity.

5. Build in mental check-ins

Before, during and after your workouts, take 30 seconds at a time to assess how you feel. Ask yourself: Where am I holding tension? How's my breathing? What do I need right now — intensity or grounding? These moments of self-awareness turn your fitness practice into a tool for emotional regulation, not just physical conditioning.

How to structure a mind-body-focused week

Here's a sample weekly structure to balance strength, mobility and nervous system support:



- Two days: Strength training with breath-focused movement prep and mobility cooldown.
- Two days: Breath-driven mobility or Pilates and low-intensity cardio (walking, light cycling, etc.).
- One day: A recovery day with breathwork and gentle stretching or yoga.
- Two days: Mixed training (circuit or flow-style) that blends mobility, strength and cardio.

Although having a plan is important, mind-body fitness is about listening to how you feel and adjusting accordingly. Movement can shift your mental and emotional state, but it works best when you begin with awareness and choose what best meets your needs, whether that means calming down or boosting energy. The goal is to support — not override — your system.

Remember, a mind-body fitness routine isn't about doing less, it's about doing what serves you more completely. By training with awareness, incorporating breath and mobility, and respecting the needs of your nervous system, you'll not only feel stronger — you'll feel more focused, resilient and grounded in everyday life.

Source: [The best kind of workout? One that trains both your body and brain](#)



Fill The Words With Appropriate Meaning!

1. Wellness :
2. Intentionality :
3. Regulation :
4. Resilience :
5. Grounded :
6. Interconnected:
7. Vague :
8. Parasympathetic:
9. Depleted :
10. Regimen :
11. Diaphragmatic :
12. Facilitate :
13. Incorporate :
14. Clarity :
15. Chronically :
16. Impair :
17. Precision ;
18. Alignment :
19. Conditioning :
20. Override :



Former racing driver Martin Donnelly had a 'reality check' seeing his near-fatal crash recreated in F1 the Movie

Almost everything in the summer blockbuster "F1 the Movie" is fictional, but the protagonist's spine-chilling origin story really happened exactly as depicted on screen. Brad Pitt's character Sonny Hayes is haunted by a high-speed crash which initially cost him his Formula One dream, but for the man who survived that crash in real life, there would be no Hollywood ending.

In 1990, Martin Donnelly was a promising British racing driver with the Lotus Formula One team, but a suspension failure in a practice session for the Spanish Grand Prix sent him hurtling into the Armco barrier at around 160 miles per hour. The aftermath is one of the most horrifying scenes ever witnessed in motorsport.

Donnelly says he has no memory of the crash, but he told CNN Sports that his car effectively became a bobsled without any steering or braking control. On impact, "the carbon fiber tub shattered like a car bomb, and I went with the energy," he said. "I got thrown out by about 60 meters (almost 200 feet) and traveled through the air and along the ground like a rag doll."

Donnelly remained strapped to his seat, coming to rest awkwardly in the middle of the track. As cars navigated their way past him and through the field of debris, the marshals in Jerez waited for the arrival of doctor Sid Watkins, but the assumption was that Donnelly was already dead.

When Watkins flipped open the visor of his helmet, Donnelly's face had turned blue. He was unconscious having swallowed his tongue, had broken many of his bones – including both of his legs – and his internal organs had been so traumatized that he would be clinging to life on a respirator and kidney dialysis for weeks. After being helicoptered to hospital in Seville, a priest was summoned to read him his last rites.

Donnelly was lucky to escape with his life and both of his legs, and although he was subsequently able to resume his motor racing career, he never returned to Formula One as a driver. At least, not in real life.

Over three decades later, seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton and the other producers of the movie perused F1 archives to find the crash upon which to base Hayes' narrative arc, a decision that was quickly made once they viewed Donnelly's dramatic incident in Jerez. Hamilton made the call to seek permission, blindsiding Donnelly one Saturday night at home.

"I thought it was going to be one of those cold calls for central heating or double-glazed windows," he recalled. "I was quite aggressive ... It's not every day you receive a call from a seven-time world champion!" When asked what had made him so good as a young racing driver, Donnelly joked with CNN Sports: "Well it wasn't my good looks, that's for sure." So, he could scarcely have imagined that one of Hollywood's biggest heartthrobs would end up playing a character based on his life experience in a movie.



Donnelly said it was surreal to find himself filming in a garage at Brands Hatch, with Pitt asking for advice on where to stand and how to enter the car. “Hey Brad, if I were you,” he recalled saying, “just stand at the back of the car, walk around it, touch it, just ask the car to be good to you today, pray that you’re going to be both quick and safe.”

Donnelly said that he never dwelled upon the inherent dangers of high-speed racing. “If you have something in the back of your mind about having an accident, you’re not driving that car at 100%, you’re at 99%,” he explained. “In my mind, (accidents) happened to other drivers, not me.” Nevertheless, as he described telling Pitt to climb from the left-hand side of the car, he accepted that he has always been a superstitious driver.

“My daughter once did a feature on me at school and said, ‘Dad, can you write down all the superstitions you have,’ and there were two A4 pages of it. She says, ‘Oh my god, dad, you need some help!’” In assisting with the production of the movie, Donnelly was forced to relive the most traumatic experience of his life, experiencing it for the first time in the third person. The director recreated the crash and filmed it repeatedly, prompting him to wonder: “Is this what I’m known for?”

“I watched them get a mannequin in yellow overalls and a helmet fly out of this car 15 times and all these cameras are taking pictures,” Donnelly said. “And then it would drop and be dragged along the ground. For me, that was a reality check because I’ve never seen it happen.” Donnelly said that footage was never used in the final edit, perhaps because nothing could match the intensity of the original television recording, which he said he didn’t know would be used until he saw the movie in the cinema.

While he said that he feels “honored and privileged that Brad Pitt chose my accident and my life to document,” the 61-year-old admitted that the whole thing is bittersweet; his crash came at a cost. “This is what I’ve been reenacted for,” he lamented, “and my friends at the time – Damon Hill, Jonny Herbert, Eddie Irvine, David Coulthard have all gone on to be very successful and very rich. Why wasn’t I given a chance to have that? Because when they were my teammates, I kicked their asses!”

But then he stops himself, recalling the fate of one of F1’s greatest ever drivers, Ayrton Senna. The Brazilian famously walked to the site of Donnelly’s accident at Jerez and watched as the rescue teams fought to revive him on the track. They were close, and Senna offered anything he could do to help with his recovery. Four years later, Senna himself was involved in a devastating crash at the San Marino Grand Prix, and he was not so lucky.

“I do believe that I could easily have become a world champion,” he said, “but then I come back to reality. I’m still talking to you. My friend Senna is dead. He had all the millions in his back pocket, three-time world champion, but who’s he going to share it with? “His death on May 1st, 1994, was the final nail in the coffin for me to say, ‘Hey Martin, look around you, you’re in the paddock, you’re still involved with the sport that you love. You’ve got no right to complain.”

Source: [Former racing driver Martin Donnelly had a ‘reality check’ seeing his near-fatal crash recreated in F1 the Movie](#)



Fill The Words With Appropriate Meaning!

1. Protagonist :
2. Spine :
3. Chilling :
4. Suspension :
5. Hurling :
6. Aftermath :
7. Motorsport :
8. Debris :
9. Respirator :
10. Dialysis :
11. Subsequently :
12. Perused :
13. Narrative :
14. Blindsiding :
15. Surreal :
16. Inherent :
17. Superstitious :
18. Traumatic :
19. Bittersweet :
20. Lamented :



Russia and Ukraine agree prisoner swap, but little other progress in Istanbul talks

Russia and Ukraine agreed a prisoner swap during their third set of direct talks in Istanbul on Wednesday, but appeared to make little progress on ceasefire terms or a possible summit between their presidents – with their meeting ending after less than an hour. The meeting came days after US President Donald Trump gave Moscow a 50-day deadline to make peace or face “very severe tariffs.”

Russian President Vladimir Putin has not publicly acknowledged Trump’s ultimatum, and Moscow has continued to pummel Ukrainian cities with drones and missiles while its ground troops grind forward in the east. Speaking after Wednesday’s meeting, Ukraine’s former defense minister Rustem Umerov – who led Kyiv’s delegation – said he had proposed a summit by the end of August between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Putin and suggested the “participation of (US) President Trump and (Turkish President Recep Tayyip) Erdoğan will be most valuable.”

However, Russia’s delegate Vladimir Medinsky, a former culture minister and now a senior Putin aide, said such a meeting would be appropriate only to sign an agreement, Reuters reported. The two sides also remained at odds over the terms of any possible ceasefire, with Umerov saying Ukraine was seeking a “full and unconditional ceasefire as a necessary basis for effective diplomacy,” while Russia called for a series of short ceasefires of between 24 and 48 hours, on the front line, to allow medical teams to pick up dead and wounded soldiers.

The two sides did appear to find some common ground on prisoner exchanges, with Medinsky telling a press conference after the meeting that an exchange of around 250 Russian and 250 Ukrainian prisoners of war was being completed along the Ukrainian-Belarusian border. Medinsky said the two sides had also agreed “that in the near future an exchange of at least 1,200 more prisoners of war from each side will be carried out.”

The two previous rounds of talks in Istanbul, in May and June, helped facilitate the exchange of thousands of prisoners of war and the remains of dead soldiers, but also made little progress toward peace. In a message on Telegram on Wednesday, Zelensky said more than 1,000 Ukrainians had now been returned through “all the stages of the recent Istanbul agreements.”

“Bringing all our people back is a priority for the state,” he said, “And we will continue all efforts to ensure that all our people return from captivity.” Expectations were low before Wednesday’s talks, with Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov stressing that the two sides’ negotiating positions remain “diametrically opposed” and telling reports not to expect “any miraculous breakthroughs.”

Mounting casualties

Last month, Russian casualties hit a grim milestone, with the UK’s Ministry of Defence estimating that Putin’s war has likely cost Russia more than 1 million casualties since the start of its full-scale invasion in February 2022.



That number tracked with an assessment the same month from the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a think tank in Washington, DC, which put the number of casualties at 950,000 and predicted that “Russia will likely hit the 1 million casualty mark in the summer of 2025.”

Despite those losses, the Russian president has shown little sign of compromising on his maximalist war aim of dismantling Ukraine’s sovereignty. In a long essay published months before the full-scale invasion, Putin falsely argued that Russia and Ukraine are one country; his comments suggesting to many that the war has been waged to make that a reality.

In addition to Trump’s fresh threat of new sanctions on Russia and other countries that purchase Russian oil if peace isn’t reached in 50 days, the US also secured a deal to funnel new weapons to Kyiv through European allies. The moves were in stark contrast with previous approaches the US leader has taken with the conflict.

Trump’s reversal came after the European Union unveiled a new package of sanctions proposing to lower the price cap on Russian oil exports and introducing a full transaction ban on Russian banks and financial institutions in third countries that help Russia dodge existing sanctions.

It is unclear whether Trump’s latest decisions will sway Moscow’s approach, but his about-face could provide a much-needed boost to Ukraine’s military coffers, and signals his growing frustration with Putin. “My conversations with him are very pleasant, and then the missiles go off at night,” Trump explained last week.

Before the talks, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky reiterated his call for a direct meeting with Putin, saying only a meeting of the two leaders can end the war.

Source: [Russia and Ukraine agree prisoner swap, but little other progress in Istanbul talks](#)



Fill The Words With Appropriate Meaning!

1. Ceasefire :
2. Summit :
3. Tariffs :
4. Ultimatum :
5. Pummel :
6. Delegation :
7. Unconditional :
8. Facilitate :
9. Captivity :
10. Diametrically :
11. Breakthroughs :
12. Casualties :
13. Maximalist :
14. Dismantling :
15. Sovereignty :
16. Funnel :
17. Reversal :
18. Transaction :
19. Coffers :
20. Reiterated :



US and Mexico agree to long-term wastewater treatment plan in the San Diego-Tijuana region

The governments of Mexico and the United States signed a memorandum of understanding on Thursday to fund and expedite several wastewater treatment projects in the Tijuana River basin. Untreated wastewater continually affects residents living along the river, which flows across the border from Tijuana and through several of San Diego's southern neighborhoods. Residents living along the river have long battled severe health issues which researchers say stem from the river's contamination.

One research team based at the University of California San Diego found that trace amounts of waterborne chemicals from tires, personal care products, and even illicit drugs present in the Tijuana River are being introduced into the air — exacerbating health concerns for tens of thousands of residents living on its banks.

In Thursday's event celebrated in Mexico City, US Environmental Protection Agency Secretary Lee Zeldin and Mexico's Secretary of the Environment and National Resources of Mexico Alicia Bárcena agreed to a series of actions to be taken by both governments by 2027 to address the deteriorating wastewater treatment crisis.

The agreement stipulates that both Mexico and the US will re-commit to funding the construction and renovation of water treatment infrastructure on both sides of the border. The document also accelerates several projects to be completed over the next two years. "What we are doing, in reality, is trying to resolve once and for all the problem of wastewater from the Tijuana River," Bárcena said during her speech on Thursday.

Zeldin concurred, saying the agreement represented "a huge win for millions of Americans and Mexicans." He attributed the success to President Trump's distinct interest in the issue and noted that addressing the water contamination crisis will ensure a safer environment for residents and Navy SEALs training on nearby beaches. Former Commissioner of the International Water and Boundary Commission (IBWC) Maria-Elena Giner called the agreement "excellent news" toward reaffirming commitments made by the US and Mexican officials in Minute 328, which outlines how Mexico and the US will share the costs of operating and maintaining water treatment infrastructure on the border.

Funding wastewater treatment facilities and their continued operation has posed a constant challenge; this agreement sets expectations for construction and rehabilitation projects that haven't yet been financed. But given that Bárcena's and Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum's Morena party currently controls the country's legislature, it is likely the funds could be allocated in the 2026 and 2027 budgets.

At the Mexican President's daily press briefing on Friday, Bárcena noted that she is working to secure an agreement where the US and Mexico each cover half the costs of upgrading the critical San Antonio de los Buenos treatment plant, located southwest of Tijuana. She estimates the improvements for this project alone will cost \$67 million or 1.2 billion pesos.

Source: [US and Mexico agree to long-term wastewater treatment plan in the San Diego-Tijuana region](#)



Fill The Words With Appropriate Meaning!

1. Memorandum :
2. Expedite :
3. Wastewater :
4. Contamination :
5. Waterborne :
6. Illicit :
7. Exacerbating :
8. Deteriorating :
9. Stipulates :
10. Renovation :
11. Infrastructure :
12. Accelerates :
13. Concurred :
14. Reaffirming :
15. Maintaining :
16. Rehabilitation :
17. Legislature :
18. Allocated :
19. Upgrading :
20. Critical :



Children queuing at Gaza health center killed in Israeli strike, medics say

An Israeli strike killed 15 people, including women and children, gathered outside a health center in the central Gazan city of Deir Al Balah on Thursday, according to medical staff and officials in the enclave. The Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Gaza said eight of those killed in the strike were children, with the youngest under two years old, according to his mother, and the oldest aged 14. The hospital said three women and four men were also killed.

In footage obtained by CNN, several children were seen lying motionless and others appeared injured amid the sound of screams. Another video showed several children, bloodied and lying motionless, being transported on a cart. The Israeli military said it was targeting a Hamas militant who took part in the group's October 7, 2023 attacks on Israel.

"The (Israel Defense Forces) is aware of reports regarding a number of injured individuals in the area. The incident is under review. The IDF regrets any harm to uninvolved individuals and operates to minimize harm as much as possible," the Israeli military said in a statement to CNN.

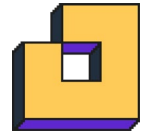
The youngest victim of the strike was 17-month-old Mohammad, whose mother Donia Halhoul told CNN she had been waiting to receive food aid for her children from the health center when the deadly strikes landed. "I'm in so much pain all over my body, but what hurt me more is that Mohammad died hungry while I was waiting to get him and his siblings nutritional supplements," she told CNN by phone from the hospital.

"He was so young that he had only started to say a few words before he was killed. I was so happy to hear his first words." Her nine-year-old remains in critical condition, she also said. The director general of Gaza's health ministry said the strike hit near a medical center dispensing children's formula to women. Project HOPE, an American aid organization, said the strike occurred "directly in front" of one of its health clinics, where people were waiting to receive treatment for "malnutrition, infections, chronic illnesses, and more."

The organization's CEO Rabih Torbay told CNN the location of the clinic had been shared with the Israeli military. "It was a deconflicted site," Torbay said. "Project HOPE's health clinics are a place of refuge in Gaza where people bring their small children, women access pregnancy and postpartum care, people receive treatment for malnutrition, and more," he said in a statement.

"Yet, this morning, innocent families were mercilessly attacked as they stood in line waiting for the doors to open," he continued. "Horried and heartbroken cannot properly communicate how we feel anymore."

Dr. Mohammed Abu Mughaisib, MSF's deputy medical coordinator for Palestine, said this is not the first time health facilities have been targeted directly or indirectly. Speaking to CNN from Al Mawasi in southern Gaza, Mughaisib stressed that there has been no improvement in access to aid and medicine despite Israel's partial lifting of the blockade on Gaza.



“Every day there is hundreds of people killed and injured when they are going (to the aid distribution points) to pick their food kits or parcels,” he said adding, “In the market you don’t find food. I mean, the bakeries are closed.”

Mughaisib told CNN Gaza’s population is “totally exhausted, broken, tired,” saying “hope is really a fragile word in Gaza.” Israel has intensified its strikes and expanded a ground operation on parts of Gaza as negotiators in Doha continue talks to release hostages, establish a temporary truce and allow the entry of more humanitarian aid to the devastated strip. Almost 3,000 Palestinians were killed over the past month in Gaza, according to the enclave’s health ministry.

Meanwhile, Hamas have continued conducting guerilla-style attacks against the Israeli military, killing more than 20 soldiers in different parts of the strip over the same period, including five soldiers killed this week in the northern city of Beit Hanoun. On Thursday, a 20-year-old Israeli man was killed in an attack at the Gush Etzion junction south of Jerusalem, according to the Israeli military and medical services.

The IDF said two Palestinian “terrorists” had “conducted a combined shooting and stabbing attack” before being “eliminated.” Gush Etzion is a settlement cluster in the occupied West Bank.

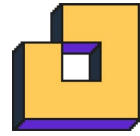
A security source later told CNN that the two attackers were Palestinian Authority policemen with no prior records in Israel or prior arrests. CNN has reached out to the Palestinian Authority for comment.

Source: [Children queuing at Gaza health center killed in Israeli strike, medics say](#)



Fill The Words With Appropriate Meaning!

1. Enclave :
2. Motionless :
3. Militant :
4. Uninvolved :
5. Nutritional :
6. Dispensing :
7. Malnutrition :
8. Deconflicted :
9. Postpartum :
10. Mercilessly :
11. Blockade :
12. Exhausted :
13. Fragile :
14. Intensified :
15. Negotiators :
16. Truce :
17. Humanitarian :
18. Guerilla :
19. Stabbing :
20. Eliminated :



Western nations slam Israel's 'drip feeding of aid' to Gaza as health ministry says 1,000 killed seeking supplies

The foreign ministers of 25 Western nations have slammed Israel for “drip feeding” aid into the Gaza Strip, as the health ministry in the territory said that more than 1,000 people have been killed seeking humanitarian relief there since late May. The Palestinian health ministry did not specify the location of the deaths, but according to the United Nations, most casualties occurred while people were making their way to aid distribution sites operated by the controversial Israeli- and US-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), which began operating on May 27.

Palestinian officials and witnesses have said the Israeli military is responsible for most of those deaths. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) has acknowledged firing warning shots toward crowds in some instances, and denied responsibility for other incidents. In late June, the military said it had “reorganized” the approach routes to aid sites to minimize “friction with the population,” but the killings have continued.

In their Monday statement, the Western foreign ministers said that “the suffering of civilians in Gaza has reached new depths.” “The Israeli government’s aid delivery model is dangerous, fuels instability and deprives Gazans of human dignity. We condemn the drip feeding of aid and the inhumane killing of civilians, including children, seeking to meet their most basic needs of water and food,” they said.

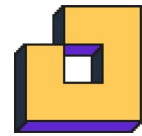
The foreign ministers of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom signed the statement, alongside the European Union’s commissioner for Equality, Preparedness and Crisis Management.

According to the health ministry in Gaza, 99 people were killed and at least 650 were injured while attempting to get aid in the last 24 hours. A total of 1,021 people have been killed and 6,511 wounded seeking supplies since late May, the ministry said, adding that the total death toll since the war began is now at 59,029.

Between March 2 and May 21, Israel imposed an 11-week blockade on aid to the Gaza Strip, and UN agencies have since sounded the alarm about growing levels of starvation and malnutrition in the territory. Aid organizations are still mostly restricted from entering the enclave, with Israel claiming that it is doing this to prevent Hamas from stealing supplies. The foreign ministers said it was “horrifying” that so many Palestinians have been killed while seeking aid.

“The Israeli government’s denial of essential humanitarian assistance to the civilian population is unacceptable. Israel must comply with its obligations under international humanitarian law,” they said.

They urged the Israeli government to immediately lift its restrictions on aid into Gaza and allow humanitarian organizations, including the UN, to carry out work there “safely and effectively.”



In a post on X, Israel's foreign ministry said that it "rejects" the statement published by the 25 nations, calling it "disconnected from reality" and adding that it "sends the wrong message to Hamas." "The statement fails to focus the pressure on Hamas and fails to recognize Hamas' role and responsibility for the situation. Hamas is the sole party responsible for the continuation of the war and the suffering on both sides," the Israeli statement said.

Hamas yet to respond to ceasefire proposal

The Western criticisms of Israel come amid a tense wait for Hamas' leaders in Gaza to respond to the latest ceasefire and hostage release proposal. After successfully pressuring Israel last week to drop its objections to withdrawing its troops from a southern corridor in Gaza, the US has now communicated to Hamas that it is running out of patience and that the group must soon provide an answer to the latest framework for a ceasefire and hostage release deal, two sources familiar with the negotiations told CNN. Mediators submitted the proposal to Hamas nearly a week ago.

Hamas' Qatar-based leader, Khalil al-Hayya, has indicated privately that he supports the latest framework, the sources said, but has said he is waiting for the approval of Hamas' leadership inside Gaza, which will be responsible for implementing any deal.

Hamas spokesman Basem Naim denied that Hayya has said he supports the latest proposal and said Hamas was conducting "internal consultations" before responding. The US has provided assurances that Israel will negotiate an end to the war during the proposed 60-day ceasefire. One of the sources said the US could withdraw those assurances if Hamas doesn't quickly agree to a deal. Both sources said the US, Qatar and Egypt are now bringing heavy pressure on Hamas to reach a deal.

"We don't have time," one of the sources said, pointing to the high daily death toll in Gaza and deteriorating humanitarian conditions. While the pressure and frustrations are now focused on Hamas, people involved in the talks said it was Israeli intransigence – in particular over withdrawal maps – that had previously held up progress toward a deal.

Multiple officials involved in the talks said a deal could be reached this week if Hamas' leaders in Gaza agree to the latest framework. One official with knowledge of the negotiations said the mediators are increasingly optimistic that a deal can be reached after several major sticking points to an agreement were resolved last week.

The progress on the remaining gaps came after US President Donald Trump met the Qatari prime minister in Washington last week, which the official credited with hastening the process of resolving those remaining sticking points: namely, a map delineating Israeli troop withdrawals and assurances about negotiating a permanent end of the war during the 60-day ceasefire.

Source: [Western nations slam Israel's 'drip feeding of aid' to Gaza as health ministry says 1,000 killed seeking supplies](#)



Fill The Words With Appropriate Meaning!

1. Slammed :
2. Humanitarian :
3. Controversial :
4. Friction :
5. Deprives :
6. Inhumane :
7. Blockade :
8. Malnutrition :
9. Obligations :
10. Effectively :
11. Tense :
12. Proposal :
13. Withdrawing :
14. Mediators :
15. Consultations :
16. Assurances :
17. Deteriorating :
18. Intransigence :
19. Optimistic :
20. Delineating :



US recalls negotiating team as prospects for a Gaza ceasefire dim and humanitarian situation gets worse

The United States is recalling its negotiating team from Doha, where talks on a ceasefire to end the war in Gaza have been taking place, with US Special Envoy Steve Witkoff saying the latest response from Hamas “clearly shows a lack of desire to reach a ceasefire.” Instead, the US “will now consider alternative options to bring the hostages home and try to create a more stable environment for the people of Gaza,” Witkoff said in a post on X, without providing details on the alternative options.

The public response from the key US negotiator puts the future of the diplomatic efforts in doubt. It stands in stark contrast to hints of optimism about the prospect of a deal being reached that were voiced by sources even after Hamas’ latest proposal. A lack of ceasefire also threatens to prolong the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza, where scores of people are starving to death as Israel continues sharp restrictions on aid.

Witkoff, who had traveled to Italy for consultations about the possible temporary truce, said that “while the mediators have made a great effort, Hamas does not appear to be coordinated or acting in good faith.” “It is a shame that Hamas has acted in this selfish way,” he said Thursday. “We are resolute in seeking an end to this conflict and a permanent peace in Gaza.”

Israel also recalled its negotiating team from the Qatari capital following the Hamas response, though an Israeli source said that was not an indication of a crisis in the talks. Instead, the team was called back because decisions need to be made regarding the state of negotiations that cannot be made remotely, the source told CNN.

A separate official with knowledge of the talks had characterized Hamas’s response as “positive.” While there were still gaps between the sides, the official said there is “growing optimism that the gaps are narrowing and a deal can be reached.” However, the prospects for a deal now appear murkier. It is unclear if the US will fully abandon its negotiating role or if the recall of the team is meant as a pressure tactic.

The people of Gaza, meanwhile, cannot afford to wait for an agreement to be reached in order to allow more aid into the besieged enclave. Despite the death toll from man-made starvation rising daily and increasingly dire warnings from international organizations, there are still Israeli government-imposed restrictions on the flow of humanitarian aid.

The US government had a dedicated official during the Biden administration working on issues of humanitarian aid access in Gaza, but no such official was appointed under the Trump administration. As US allies abroad increasingly call on Israel to allow more aid into Gaza, US officials have continued to exclusively blame Hamas for the crisis.

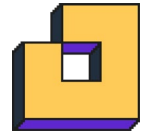
Rather than push for increased access to flood Gaza with aid, the Trump administration has hailed the role of the controversial Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), suggesting it is the only effective means for distributing aid and stopping alleged widespread theft by Hamas.



There have been numerous instances of deadly violence around the GHF's aid sites. The United Nations said more than 1,000 people have been killed seeking aid. More than a dozen people have starved to death in Gaza just this week, according to local authorities. Asked if the US will work to find additional ways to increase the flow of aid in the absence of a ceasefire, State Department deputy spokesperson Tommy Pigott acknowledged the "humanitarian catastrophe," but suggested they would still only support the GHF.

"We want to see end the devastation that has taken place in Gaza, that's why we have seen this commitment to get aid to the people who need it in a way where it is not weaponized by Hamas," he said at a State Department press briefing. "That commitment remains. It is a commitment from President Trump and Secretary Rubio, that is why we have supported the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation. That is why we continue supporting the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation."

Source: [US recalls negotiating team as prospects for a Gaza ceasefire dim and humanitarian situation gets worse](#)



Fill The Words With Appropriate Meaning!

1. Recalling :
2. Negotiating :
3. Ceasefire :
4. Alternative :
5. Diplomatic :
6. Prolong :
7. Catastrophic :
8. Consultations :
9. Resolute :
10. Indication :
11. Characterized :
12. Murkier :
13. Besieged :
14. Man-made :
15. Dedicated :
16. Exclusively :
17. Hailed :
18. Controversial :
19. Catastrophe :
20. Weaponized :



TikTok made cottage cheese so popular, producers are struggling to keep up

When clients used to ask John Crawford if he thought cottage cheese could make a comeback, his answer was an emphatic: “No.” “Part of it was texture, part of it was – it was a diet food, it was your grandparents’ food,” said Crawford, SVP of client insights for dairy at the market research firm Circana. “But TikTok changed all that.”

For years, cottage cheese was overlooked, relegated to the diet section of old-fashioned diner menus and health food recipes from the 1950s. But recently, young, protein-hungry consumers have whipped up new recipes and posted them online, turning the lumpy cheese into an internet sensation. Now, popular brands and manufacturers are struggling to keep up with skyrocketing demand.

Cottage cheese sales jumped 20% in US retail in the 52 weeks through June 15 compared to a year ago, according to data from Circana. That followed a roughly 17% annual bump in both 2024 and 2023 and an 11% increase in 2022. The surge marked a turnaround from 2021, when cottage cheese sales fell from the year prior. Cottage cheese is so popular, it made grocery chain Albertons’ CEO Susan Morris do a double take.

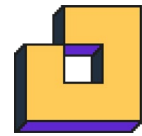
“I had to double check the numbers, but cottage cheese is actually a strong growth category,” Morris said during a July analyst call discussing quarterly financial results. Some brands have seen even higher spikes, creating spot shortages. Sales of Organic Valley’s cottage cheese grew over 30% in the first half of 2025 compared to the same period last year, according to the co-op. “Organic Valley Cottage Cheese is selling faster than we can make it,” said Andrew Westrich, marketing manager at Organic Valley.

Good Culture, a decade-old cottage cheese brand that is featured prominently in many TikTok videos, has seen its sales explode to the point where it can’t keep product on shelves. On July 2nd, the company acknowledged the situation on its Instagram page. “We know it’s been hard to find us lately,” read the caption on the meme-filled post. “We see the DMs, know demand has been WILD and are working around the clock to get us back in stock.”

Customers “call, email, and post about us when they can’t find us,” said Jesse Merrill, CEO and founder of Good Culture. “The insane demand for our products and our struggle to keep up with it prompted us to acknowledge the shortage.” Merrill saw the potential for cottage cheese back in 2014, he said. It took about ten years for health food influencers to catch up.

How cottage cheese got cool again

Cottage cheese, a popular diet food in the middle of the 20th century, was well past its heyday when Good Culture officially launched in 2015. But since then, Americans have been increasingly looking for foods that are high in protein, low in sugar and appropriate for a GLP-1 diet. At the same time, dairy has gotten more popular, with per capita consumption rising in the US. Cottage cheese fits the bill on all fronts. And creative home chefs have figured out how to mask its texture.



By spring of 2023, recipes for cottage cheese ice cream were going viral on TikTok. Scores of videos showed food influencers marveling over strawberry cheesecake ice cream, banana cream pie ice cream, berry banana ice cream and more — all made with cottage cheese. Now, in addition to ice cream, interested parties can find recipes for everything from buffalo chicken dip to bagels and biscuits. One account for a self-described health coach has a series of videos simply titled “how to make cottage cheese taste good.”

Coming up with more ways to use a product at home “can drive an entire category,” Circana’s Crawford said. And sellers of the until-recently not-very-cool cheese are leaning in. Cabot Creamery, which makes a Vermont-style cottage cheese (a mix of large and small curds), has posted recipes for cheesecake dip, pizza toast and queso on its website. Good Culture took advantage of its own viral moment with an ad campaign embracing the various ways of preparing and consuming its product.

The sustained interest has Crawford convinced that demand for cottage cheese isn’t just a passing craze. “It is not a fad when you are seeing double-digit growth in both dollars and in volume, quarter over quarter over quarter, for two years,” he said. Now manufacturers just have to catch up.

Maxed out facilities

To increase supply, Good Culture has started working with more manufacturing partners. But it can’t do much more at the moment. “Most existing production facilities are maxed out,” Merrill said. Good Culture plans to have “significantly more capacity available” early next year, he added.

Organic Valley also works with contract manufacturers, “many of whom are actively expanding capacity or adding production shifts to meet rising demand,” said Westrich, adding that “the environment is highly competitive.”

Dairy processors have started to build out more production, but it will take time to get new plants or equipment up and running. Daisy Brand, a major producer of cottage cheese and sour cream, recently broke ground on a new facility in Iowa. And Westby Cooperative Creamery, a farmer-owned dairy co-op that sells cottage cheese under its own brand and also makes it for private label and foodservice providers, is investing in new cottage cheese vats.

Currently, Westby can make about 14.5 million pounds of cottage cheese per year, said Emily Bialkowski, the co-op’s sales and marketing manager. But “our orders are exceeding that by no less than 30%, and that does not include new inquiries,” she said. The new vats should be operational in the fall of next year, she said, noting that “word is getting out ... and many of our current customers have lined up to pre-commit to additional volume.” For now, Westby is partially filling customer orders. So cottage cheese fans will have to be patient. Or wait until TikTok moves on to the next big thing.

Source: [TikTok made cottage cheese so popular, producers are struggling to keep up](#)



Fill The Words With Appropriate Meaning!

1. Emphatic :
2. Relegated :
3. Skyrocketing :
4. Turnaround :
5. Shortages :
6. Prominently :
7. Heyday :
8. Consumption :
9. Marveling :
10. Replicate :
11. Sustained :
12. Craze :
13. Maxed out :
14. Capacity :
15. Competitive :
16. Processors :
17. Cooperative :
18. Vats :
19. Inquiries :
20. Operational :



A secret tunnel city hidden under Rome's ancient heart is being revealed

There's a reason archaeologist Ersilia D'Ambrosio can scarcely contain her excitement as she leads the way through dimly lit passageways deep below the Capitoline Hill that was once at the heart of ancient Rome: In a city where almost every historic treasure has been laid bare, this vast subterranean labyrinth is an undiscovered world.

"No one has seen these caves and tunnels for more than a century," D'Ambrosio tells CNN, plunging further into the gloom. These chambers, which cover around 42,000 square feet, or 3,900 square meters — roughly three-quarters the area of an American football field — lie in an area beneath the Ancient Roman Forum and the 2,000-year-old Marcello Theater. At its deepest point, one of the caves extends about 985 feet below the surface.

Known as the Grottino del Campidoglio, or Capitoline Grotto, these tunnels have been part of the fabric of Rome even since before the days of Julius Caesar, despite being forgotten in recent generations. Comprehensively developed in the Middle Ages, they were in continuous use until the 1920s, at various times housing entire communities, shops, taverns, restaurants and, in World War II, people sheltering from falling Allied bombs.

Above ground, on the steamy morning in July when CNN was granted exclusive access to the cavern network, tourists sweated in temperatures of 95 degrees Fahrenheit (35 Celsius) as they explored the Capitoline Square, designed by Michelangelo in the 16th century, and the Capitoline Museums complex. Seventy-five feet below, in the grotto, it's decidedly cooler at around 55F, with the damp air causing condensation to glitter on some of the tunnel surfaces.

Sealed for a century

Some of the passages are neatly constructed and lined with bricks, a sign of their development and use in the 19th century. Others are more roughly hewn from tuff, a soft volcanic rock from which the famous Seven Hills of Rome are formed. Walking through the tunnels is a trip back in time, with Rome's complex layers of history laid bare.

Today, nearly a century after they were mostly sealed off under orders from Italy's fascist dictator Benito Mussolini, the tunnels have been strung with illuminations, while scaffolding and other construction paraphernalia point to the fact that they are no longer abandoned. In fact, work is now underway to prepare the network for visitors. In late 2026 or early 2027, the tunnels will open as one of Rome's newest historical tourist attractions.

For now, even for the experts working to get them ready, entering the Grottino del Campidoglio is still a journey of discovery. Despite much of the area, including the Imperial and Roman forums and the Colosseum nearby, undergoing extensive renovations in recent years, the tunnels have remained untouched.

D'Ambrosio says the grotto visitor experience is designed to combine archaeology and speleology, and will attract a different type of visitor from those who focus on the more well-known sites above ground.



“This is an esoteric experience in many ways,” she adds. Although she’s built a long career on sites like these, D’Ambrosio manages the administration aspects of this particular project, but says her real love is getting her hands dirty.

There is still plenty for visitors to marvel at. Gazing up at a void reaching high above one block-lined tunnel, it’s possible to see the white marble foundation of the Temple of Jupiter, another Capitoline Hill treasure completed in the 6th century BCE.

Love underground

The subterranean complex served many purposes over the centuries, first as stone quarries and later as water cisterns before eventually housing commercial structures and warehouses. In the 19th century, the caverns were once the economic epicenter of a working-class community that lived in modest public housing built along the flanks of the hill. German literary giant Johann Wolfgang von Goethe is said to have fallen in love with a woman who worked in one of the taverns, writing about the experience in his travelogue “Italian Journey.”

Little detail is known about exactly what each of the underground caverns held or when, but etchings by 18th-century Italian classical archaeologist and artist Giovanni Battista Piranesi show it as a lively part of the city center.

Mussolini tore down the housing and filled some of the tunnels with dirt to stabilize the hill above as part of his grand revitalization plan to modernize the Italian capital. During World War II, a small section was used as air raid shelters, complete with heavy fortified doors. Visible in the tunnels, as well as street numbers, are signs pointing to various “gabinetto” or bathrooms, likely used during the area’s phase as a sanctuary from falling bombs.

Work to open up this subterranean world to visitors is being completed in phases. Prior to clearing out the caves and tunnels, archaeologists used laser scanning to map the spaces and record marks left during previous excavation work. Photographic and video exhibitions of the work done will be part of a permanent display throughout the tunnel complex.

“The proposed interventions are aimed, on the one hand, at safeguarding the monument, through the restoration and safety of the structures, and, on the other, at enhancing its accessibility and usability, which is currently extremely limited,” according to the Insula architecture group, which is leading the project. “The Campidoglio Grottoes project envisions conservative restoration and enhancement of the underground passageways and cavities that wind through the hill, crossing it in various directions and on multiple levels.”

Major attraction?

The work to make it safe for tourists also includes managing radon gas, which is naturally released from the volcanic rock that is being disturbed in the restoration process. Workers are constantly tested for levels of exposure, and the time they spend in the caves is limited. Specialized filters will be installed to scrub the air before the site opens to the public, says Antonio Collazzo, an archaeologist involved in the project. “This will be managed with a forced ventilation system.”



Once the \$2.8-million undertaking is complete, there will be a museum space on an upper level, while entrance to the tunnels will be tightly controlled, with visitors led by guides to ensure their safety and the integrity of the delicate structure. Disabled access will also be added. There will be displays of ancient stone artifacts and a variety of pots and vases found buried in the dirt that were likely used by merchants for everything from olive oil to wine. Also visible will be metal rings attached to the walls, thought to have been used to tether animals brought down into the cave complex.

Artifacts and materials that were recovered during previous excavations of the area and stored in the Capitoline museum warehouses above have been brought down to the tunnels to be studied in their original context, D'Ambrosia says. "To an archaeologist everything is interesting," she says. But only pieces likely to interest visitors are likely to remain in situ.

Even with all the current work going on, from above, there is little evidence on Capitoline Hill that there's an extensive network of caves and tunnels below it. But Ambrosio is confident they will soon be a major attraction in a city with no shortage of them.

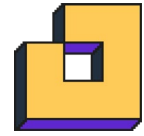
"The area has never before been opened to the public as it will be," Ambrosio says. "It was utilized by the population, used as warehouses, shops, taverns, but never as a site to visit as it will be."

Source: [A secret tunnel city hidden under Rome's ancient heart is being revealed](#)



Fill The Words With Appropriate Meaning!

1. Archaeologist :
2. Subterranean :
3. Labyrinth :
4. Comprehensively :
5. Taverns :
6. Cavern :
7. Condensation :
8. Hewn :
9. Illuminations :
10. Paraphernalia :
11. Renovations :
12. Speleology :
13. Esoteric :
14. Quarries :
15. Cisterns :
16. Etchings :
17. Revitalization :
18. Safeguarding :
19. Ventilation :
20. Artifacts :



Slim sneakers are the shoe of the summer

They were once worn by athletes to win Olympic track races in the 1970s. Now, slim, low-profile sneakers are more often seen on the style set than in the context of 5,000-meter sprints.

Harry Styles has several pairs of the oft-sold out Dries Van Noten's panelled leather and suede sneakers (\$495), while Hailey Bieber, Kaia Gerber and Addison Rae are regularly seen out and about in their vividly-colored Onitsuka Tiger styles (ranging from \$155 to \$215). Dua Lipa, a global brand ambassador for Puma, has the more wallet-friendly compact Speed Cat silhouette in red, black, pink and even a silver ballerina version (\$100).

In June, Prada put forward its own offering with the new Montecarlo sneaker (\$1,100) — a re-edition of a design from Spring-Summer 2005. Bottega Veneta describes its Orbit Flash shoe (\$990) as “a low-top lace-up ballet sneaker” with “supple suede with lightweight nylon”, while Miu Miu boasts that its Plume (\$950) style is “sleek and extremely light” — though they do offer a version where this aerodynamic design is weighed down with shoelace charms and miniature keyrings.

“It’s more simple, it’s less flashy,” said David Fischer, founder and CEO of youth culture platform Highsnobiety, in a phone interview, observing the current footwear aesthetic. Global retail analytics company Edited’s analyst and footwear expert Katharine Carter agreed, telling CNN that slimline running-inspired trainers have emerged as 2025’s biggest sneaker trend.

Even mass-market brands such as H&M and Zara are now getting in on the action: Carter noted an uptick of 367% more slim-soled styles flooding the shelves for the Spring-Summer 2025 season compared to 2024. By contrast, Edited estimates new designs of chunky and platform sneakers have decreased 37% year-on-year. The current preference for slim-fit, low-profile footwear marks a shift away from the chunky “ugly” shoe trend that has dominated the runways — and individual closets — for almost a decade.

The Balenciaga Triple S, created by the mononymic designer Demna during his tenure at the brand, disrupted the sneaker landscape in the mid-to-late 2010s. Its vertiginous, stacked sole was instantly recognizable, and a new era of chunky sneakers with mainstream appeal, such as Zara’s Multi-Piece sneaker, the New Balance 09060 and the Adidas Yeezy 500 “Blush”, soon followed. However, around 2023, their popularity began to wane (that year, the Triple S was booted off the top spot of GQ’s annual Best Sneakers list and replaced by the re-issued Adidas Samba from 1972 — a football training shoe, with its earliest iteration dating back to 1949).

“I always like to say that fashion is like physics; for every action there’s an equal and opposite reaction,” said Emma McClendon, assistant professor of fashion studies at St John’s University in New York, in a phone call. Noting the pendulum swing of trends, she explained: “Fashion is predicated on a desire for newness.” But there has been a collective shrinking of silhouettes and styles of clothes more generally, too. From the controversial return of skinny jeans to the uptick in hotpants and boob tubes, “stuff is getting slimmer,” said McClendon. “Fashion doesn’t happen in a vacuum,” she added. “It’s possibly one of the most visceral ways that we bodily engage with culture.”



Many have been quick to draw a connective throughline between the revival of trends like skinny jeans and bandage dress with the increasing accessibility of Ozempic and other GLP-1 injectables. “We have to address the fact that what we’re seeing is a return to the thin ideal in a really scary way,” said McClendon. “In general, it’s that you want to be smaller, you want to be demure, you want to be all of these things associated with being ladylike,” McClendon added.

Could that shift be making its way to our footwear choices? In addition to the rise of slimline shoes, there has also been growing interest in “Sneakerinas,” a hybrid shoe that combines a traditional sneaker with the more girlish ballet flat. Often, they are little more than wispy slippers of satin or suede. Sometimes they have ribbons in lieu of laces — much like the version sold by Chinese footwear brand Vivaia, which has become a veritable off-duty model staple thanks to endorsements from Bella Hadid and Amelia Gray. EDITED reported a 112% increase in the number of sneakers described as “ballerina” or “Mary Jane” in the past year.

Today, shoes are not only getting slimmer, some are barely there at all. The mesh Alaïa ballet flats — fashion search engine Lyst’s hottest product at the end of 2024 — are almost see-through, much to some fashionistas’ delight and others’ chagrin. Even Balenciaga is taking note: its most head-turning sneaker release since the Triple S is the Zero shoe. Available in beige and black, the barely-there footwear is molded from a footprint, with the wearer’s feet secured only at the toe and heel. If we are in the era of the naked dress, maybe next is the naked shoe.

Source: [Slim sneakers are the shoe of the summer](#)



Fill The Words With Appropriate Meaning!

1. Compact :
2. Silhouette :
3. Aerodynamic :
4. Aesthetic :
5. Analytics :
6. Uptick :
7. Mononymic :
8. Vertiginous :
9. Pendulum :
10. Predicated :
11. Visceral :
12. Throughline :
13. Revival :
14. Accessibility :
15. Injectables :
16. Demure :
17. Hybrid :
18. Veritabl :
19. Chagrin :
20. Molded :



Answer Questions Below After Reading The Texts

1. According to the article on mind-body fitness, exercising with focused, deep breathing stimulates which specific nerve to activate the body's "rest and recover" state?
 - A. The optic nerve
 - B. The sciatic nerve
 - C. The vagus nerve
 - D. The ulnar nerve
 - E. The femoral nerve
2. The story of Brad Pitt's character, Sonny Hayes, in "F1 the Movie" is based on the real-life, near-fatal crash of which former Formula One driver?
 - A. Lewis Hamilton
 - B. Ayrton Senna
 - C. Damon Hill
 - D. Martin Donnelly
 - E. David Coulthard
3. While talks in Istanbul between Russia and Ukraine made little progress on a ceasefire, what was one significant agreement they did manage to reach?
 - A. A summit between their presidents
 - B. The removal of all tariffs
 - C. A prisoner swap
 - D. The creation of a demilitarized zone
 - E. A 50-day peace plan
4. The governments of the United States and Mexico recently signed an agreement to fund and expedite wastewater treatment projects for which cross-border river basin?
 - A. The Rio Grande basin
 - B. The Colorado River basin
 - C. The Tijuana River basin
 - D. The Santa Cruz River basin
 - E. The New River basin
5. According to medics and officials in Gaza, where were the 15 people, including children, located when they were killed by an Israeli strike in Deir Al Balah?
 - A. Inside a designated safe zone
 - B. At a busy marketplace
 - C. Hiding in a school building
 - D. Queuing for aid at a UN distribution point
 - E. Gathered outside a health center



6. In a joint statement, the foreign ministers of 25 Western nations criticized Israel's aid delivery model to Gaza using what specific phrase?
 - A. "Insufficient and slow"
 - B. "A logistical failure"
 - C. "Drip feeding of aid"
 - D. "A temporary solution"
 - E. "Blocked and restricted"
7. What action did the United States take that put the future of diplomatic efforts for a Gaza ceasefire in doubt?
 - A. It sent a new proposal directly to Hamas.
 - B. It recalled its negotiating team from Doha.
 - C. It publicly blamed Israel for the stalled talks.
 - D. It appointed a new special envoy to the region.
 - E. It organized a new round of talks in a different country.
8. The recent skyrocketing demand for cottage cheese, which has led to shortages, is primarily attributed to its popularity on which social media platform?
 - A. Instagram
 - B. Facebook
 - C. X (formerly Twitter)
 - D. YouTube
 - E. TikTok
9. What is the name of the vast, secret subterranean network of tunnels and caves beneath Rome's Capitoline Hill that is being prepared to open as a tourist attraction?
 - A. The Capitoline Catacombs
 - B. The Forum Underground
 - C. The Nero Tunnels
 - D. The Grottino del Campidoglio
 - E. The Caesar Caverns
10. According to fashion experts, the current trend for slim, low-profile sneakers is a reaction against what previous footwear trend that was popular for almost a decade?
 - A. The high-heeled sneaker trend
 - B. The chunky "ugly" shoe trend
 - C. The minimalist sandal trend
 - D. The heavy platform boot trend
 - E. The slip-on loafer trend