

In order to get a training effect in the body it is necessary to improve the level at which you are able to perform an exercise. You must tax the body enough to force it to make changes in order to handle the workouts you demand of it. If you continually work out at your current level of capability, the body will **not** need to make any changes. Often this is referred to as “hitting a plateau.”

On the other hand, if we force the body to perform at a level too much higher than its capabilities, an injury or chronic fatigue could result. That’s why it’s important to increase intensity and duration gradually. You should measure your performance at least once a week to make sure you are progressing but also to make sure that you aren’t increasing intensity or duration more than about 10% from one week to the next.

Forcing changes in body composition and cardiorespiratory conditioning takes time, and you shouldn’t plan to do this in one month. It takes at least 100 days to raise your metabolism providing you are consistent and effective in your exercise program. Your body also has to produce more lipolytic or fat-burning enzymes and affect changes in the various systems to be capable of dumping stored fat.

Many people have tried exercise and done poorly. They assume that fitter individuals are just more capable than they are. However, adults who have a good aerobic capacity are usually that way because they have methodically trained to get to a higher level. A well-planned incremental aerobic exercise program will help you move up to a higher fitness category. People who maintain a high level of aerobic fitness are better fat burners, have more energy, and age slower.

You may want to work out every other day for the first week or two—especially if you are overweight or elderly. You will need to purchase a watch with a stopwatch function. During your first week measure out a “track” with your car odometer. Your track should be around 1/4 to 1/2 mile long.

You may proceed through the program a little faster if you are younger or a little slower if you are older. If you find that you are very tired or sore, repeat the same instructions again the next week instead of progressing. Make sure you accomplish one step before proceeding to the next. During the first week or two you may want to work out every other day—particularly if you feel very sore.

Experts are telling us that to keep from gaining fat the average person must walk moderately 80 minutes a day or do an intense aerobic workout 30 minutes a day. Most people don’t have time for an 80-minute workout six days a week. This program is designed to take you from walking condition, through jogging condition, and on to running condition. If you can obtain a high fitness level, you will only need to perform 20-30 minutes five to six days a week.

You can also apply these principles of progression to other aerobic activities. For example, if you are doing an aerobic routine, you would begin by simply stepping through the routine keeping one foot on the floor at all times. You may have to alter the movement occasionally in order to avoid hopping or jumping. During the strength-training workout you should only use 3 to 5-pound dumbbells. After a few weeks and when you feel comfortable stepping through the entire routine, you should pick out one aerobic number or song to perform with the regular impact movements demonstrated by the instructor. After one or two weeks you should perform two numbers that are not adjacent with the regular movement. The next step is to do three numbers with regular impact until you can do all aerobic numbers with the prescribed impact.

After several weeks you again pick out one number and do it with enough vigor that you feel quite winded by the end of that number. Eventually you may want to “burst” on two numbers. Never “burst” two days in a row even if you are doing two different aerobic workouts. That doesn’t mean you can’t get winded two days in a row, but that you should avoid a maximal effort two days in a row.

People who are able to work out daily at a level 8 effort on a scale of 1 to 10 become efficient fat metabolizers. A person working out at level 8 can talk but is breathing heavy enough that she prefers not to. There is a definite feeling of fatigue, and you might not be sure you will be able to finish your workout although you do. This level produces rapid results but requires practice at tolerating this kind of effort. Only those who have been working out for at least several months (Advanced level) should even attempt this regularly. Whether or not you are currently able to sustain a level 8 effort, it is always important to work hard.

After two to four weeks, it is a good idea to cross train by adding another aerobic activity on alternate days when you do not run. If you stick with the same aerobic activity everyday, it is advisable to alternate moderate and heavy workouts. Designate one aerobic activity as the one you use to press to higher fitness levels. The alternate activity can be more moderate although still hard work.

Week	Instructions
1	Walk at any pace you are comfortable with for 20-30 minutes.
2	Walk moderately 10 minutes. Then time yourself for one “track” lap walking as fast as you can. Finish your 30-minute walk at any pace you can. Do this three times during this week on alternating days. On the other days you can walk moderately for 30 minutes. Record your time on the fast lap.
<i>Phase One (beginner)</i>	
3	Repeat week two if you aren’t ready to progress yet. Otherwise, after warming up try to do two laps in twice the time of your previously recorded fast lap. Do this only three days on alternating days.
4	If you were able to double your “fast pace” track lap (two laps at fast speed), attempt to do 3 laps at your fast pace (3 days only). If you were unable to do 2 laps at your fast pace last week, repeat that week again.
5	Walk 4 laps at your fast pace before finishing your 30 minutes. Don’t forget to warm up with a 5-minute moderate walk.
6	Walk 5 laps at your fast pace before finishing your 30-minute total workout.
7	Walk moderately for 5 minutes, and then do the remaining 25 minutes at your fast pace. (Remember that it may take you longer than 7 weeks to get to this point depending on the length of your track and your starting physical condition.)
<i>Phase Two (Intermediate)</i> Keep in mind that jogging is not running fast. Perform a moderate jog.	
8	Walk 5 minutes moderately, walk 5 minutes fast, and then jog for 30 seconds only. Walk for 2 minutes and jog for 30 seconds again. Repeat these intervals until you have completed 25 minutes total, and then walk moderately for five minutes to cool down. Do this three days but not two in a row.
9	Warm up 5 minutes, walk fast 5 minutes, jog 30 seconds, walk one minute, jog 30 seconds. Repeat this until you have completed 30 total minutes allowing for a 5-minute walking cooldown.
10	Walk 5 minutes, jog 30 seconds, walk 30 seconds, jog 30 seconds. Repeat these intervals until you have completed your 30-minute workout except that the last 5 minutes should be walking.
11	Walk 5 minutes, jog 1 minute, walk 30 seconds, jog 1 minute. Repeat until you complete your workout with a 5-minute walking cooldown
12	Walk 5 minutes, jog 2 minutes, walk 30 seconds, jog 2 minutes. Repeat until completing workout and cooldown.
13	Walk 5 minutes, jog 3 minutes, walk 30 seconds, jog 3 minutes. Finish workout and cooldown.
14	Walk 5 minutes, jog 5 minutes, walk 30 seconds, jog 5 minutes. (complete 25 minutes) Cooldown: walk 5 mins.
15	Walk fast or Jog slowly 5 minutes, Jog 20 minutes, walk 5 minutes
<i>Phase Three (Advanced)</i> When you sprint don’t jerk into action. Go faster gradually to avoid sore muscles	
16	<p>Jog slowly 5 minutes, jog moderately 5 minutes, Sprint 30-45 seconds (until you are really winded), walk 1 minute, jog five, sprint 30-45 seconds, walk 1 minute, jog until completing 30 minutes total. (Do this 2X during the week)</p> <p>On the other days jog slow 5 minutes, Jog 25 minutes, slowing during the last five unless you are going to walk a few minutes after workout. If cross training, do aerobic routine or some other aerobic exercise on alternate days (Run 3 days and do another aerobic exercise 3 days).</p>
17	<p>Do Four 30-90 second sprints (after 5-minute warmup) one day. (about 22 minutes plus 5-minute cooldown)</p> <p>Jog or run 30 minutes moderately one day</p> <p>20-minute tempo run (pace yourself as fast as you can without having to stop)</p> <p>Cross train (using another aerobic workout) on remaining days or run moderately 30 minutes.</p> <p>Use your stopwatch and compete against yourself to improve your times. Whenever you have a heavy day and push hard, the next day should be lighter—not a day to break your record.</p>

May need to do this 2 or 3 weeks