

Basics of Interval Training



What is interval training? Why is it beneficial?

Interval training is a type of training that involves alternating intervals of higher intensity exercise with intervals of lighter intensity exercise/rest. A simple example of this kind of training would be incorporating segments of jogging into your daily walks. Interval training can be used by exercisers of all fitness levels and can be performed during your preferred mode of exercising (walking on the treadmill, biking, swimming, rowing etc.). Regardless of your mode of activity, there is always a way to include interval training into your workout routines!

If you are looking for a workout to help you reach your weight loss goals, interval training is a great tool to use. When you incorporate bursts of higher intensity training into steady-state training, you are able to burn more calories in a shorter amount of time compared to exercising at a consistent level of exertion. This is extremely beneficial if you have a busy schedule and can only squeeze in a small amount of time for a workout, so make the most out of your short workout session! In addition, interval training helps improve your aerobic capacity and leads to greater improvements in your speed, endurance and overall fitness level. By taking your heart rate to higher levels, you will call upon different energy systems that stay mostly dormant during steady-state training, and thus improve your level of fitness.

Guide for creating your own interval training workouts

Two guides for creating your own interval training workouts are using your heart rate and/or your rate of perceived exertion (RPE). During your short bursts of high-intensity exercise, you should be about 70 to 100% of your maximum heart rate and/or have an RPE rating of 7-10, largely dependent on your current health status and level of fitness. These intervals should be followed by lower-intensity recovery periods which you should be at about 50% to 65% of your maximum heart rate and/or have an RPE rating of 3-6 depending on your current health status and level of fitness.

Note: See *Gauging Intensity of Your Workout* article to learn how to find percentages of your max heart rate and how to rate your perceived exertion while working out

There are many different ways you can increase your intensity. You can increase the speed, increase the incline and or increase the resistance for your short burst of high intensity exercise depending on which machine you are working out on. How much you pick up the pace, how often and for how long is up to you!

If you have difficulty trying to figure out how long your intervals should be, you can use different ratios for High Intensity Period: Recovery Period ratio to create your interval training workout. If you're just beginning, opt for shorter periods of high-intensity bouts and longer recovery, gradually working toward longer high-intensity bouts and shorter recovery.

- 1:1 (High intensity period and recovery period are equal)
 - Example: High intensity for 1 min, recovery 1 min
- 1:2 (Recovery period is twice as long as the high intensity period)
 - Example: high intensity for 1 minute, recovery for 2 mins
- 2:1 (High intensity period is twice as long as the recovery period)
 - Example: high intensity for 2 minutes, recovery for 1 min

You can also use an indoor/outdoor track to guide your interval training. You can use the different lines on the track as a landmark of when to start and end your different intervals. For example you can sprint for 100 meters and then jog the next 100 meters and repeat this for an interval workout. Or, if you're on the road try to use the telephone poles as your markers for changing the intensity level.

Be creative and change up your interval workouts every time! There are infinite possible workouts you can create! Don't forget to thoroughly warm up before your interval training and to properly cool down after your workout. Always remember to progress your workouts and don't increase the intensity too much, too fast during the beginning of your training. This can cause injuries. Always listen to your body!

Using LF Connect to create your interval workouts

LF Connect is an online exercise application that works on your smartphone, tablet, computer, or our LifeFitness Discover products! All of our LifeFitness treadmills, stair climber, ellipticals, upright and recumbent bikes come equipped with Discover, giving you a wide array of machines to connect with! Receive workouts from us, create workouts yourself, track all of your results, and connect with others using this exciting software.

To sign up for LF Connect:

We highly recommend signing up for LF Connect on a computer, as using the app does not display all required fields. FitSTART participants are required to register on a computer.

- 1) Visit www.lfconnect.com
- 2) Click on "Sign Up Now"
- 3) Set up as "Exerciser"
- 4) Enter all pertinent information. Check off at least the bottom two boxes.
- 5) Once logged in, click on your user name on the upper right hand corner of the main page.
- 6) Click "Profile"
- 7) Enter all fields and select the "Westport Weston Family YMCA" in the facility field.
- 8) Enter an "XID" and passcode at the bottom. We suggest your phone number for your XID and the last 4 digits for your passcode. The XID allows you to easily and conveniently log in to all LF machines before your workouts. Click "Save" when finished.
- 9) Click on "Workout Information" on the left side. Enter in as many fields as you know. Do not worry about VO2 Max, Flexibility, or Strength.
- 10) Click on "My Shared Information" on the left side. We recommend you check all boxes to benefit from all that LF Connect has to offer. FitSTART participants must check all boxes. Click "Save" when finished.
- 11) Click the "X" to return home.
- 12) Click on "My Community" → "Buddy Invitations"
- 13) Type in "Westport Weston," check the box that verifies you are not a robot, then click the magnifying glass to search.
- 14) Send us a buddy invitation to start receiving workouts and allow us to track your progress!

To sign up for LF Connect on a smartphone:

APPLE:

- 1) Go to App Store
- 2) In the "Search" tab type in "LF Connect."
- 3) Tap "Install"
- 4) Tap "Free"
- 5) Wait for it to download
- 6) Tap "Open"

ANDROID:

- 1) Download "LF Connect" in the Market
- 2) Follow steps as prompted

Logging into LF Connect:

- 1) Choose any LF Elliptical, Power Mill, Bike, or Treadmill.
- 2) Gently tap "Login"
- 3) Type in your XID and passcode

- 4) Select your workout. It will save automatically.

NOTE: If you do not touch the screen for longer than 15 seconds, it may log you out! Be sure that your name is displayed on the login corner at all times.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN INTERVAL WORKOUTS

- Once you have your account set up, you can use LF Connect to custom-build a plan for you and send right to your LifeFitness treadmill, elliptical, bike, or stair climber.
- Click on “My Workouts”
- Select “Custom Interval Workouts.
- Select “Exercise Facility”
- Select piece of equipment.
- Choose the kind of interval you want to select for yourself.
- Build your intervals selecting all your own speeds, inclines, or heart rate values (if applicable)
- Click “Save,” then click the workout itself.
- Click “Send Workout” and send to yourself. Make sure to check that you are NOT a robot!

Reference:

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/in-depth/interval-training/art-20044588>