



5 Ways to Vary Your Cardio for Maximum Enjoyment and Fat Burning

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Although integral to overall health and especially fat loss, cardio training can be a real bore. It doesn't need to be though, and there are many ways that you can kick start your cardio training and add elements of challenge, intensity and variety to keep your body guessing and prevent the onset of boredom.

Variety really is the key to effective cardio

Run!

This may sound pretty obvious, but when I say run, I mean RUN!!!! Our bodies are designed to move, designed to walk and designed to RUN! Incorporating short sprints into your training allows for many physiological adaptations to occur. Improved circulation, improved anaerobic threshold, increase cardiac output and faster recovery are all added benefits from 'picking it up'.

Interval Training

Rather than plug in a hill or interval program, use a manual or quick start program and take control of your cardio training program. Set yourself a goal for the duration of the training session. If you are limited on time, aim for shorter recovery periods. For example. Aim for a 20 minutes cardio session with an interval ratio of 1:2. That is 1 period of higher intensity training for every 2 parts of recovery. This may be an interval of 15 seconds of higher intensity work followed by 30 seconds of lower intensity 'active recovery'. The longer your training session, the longer your recovery should be.

Research now shows that interval training is THE most effective way to train to burn fat. Forget the fat burning zone, it is a myth! You will burn a slightly higher percentage of fat during your exercise, however with interval training your total caloric expenditure will be higher, and therefore your total fat calories will also be higher.

Get Out of the Riders Seat

When using the upright bike for your cardio, incorporate intervals out of your seat. Rest your elbows on the handles of your bike and crack up the resistance. Leaning on your elbows will support the extra body weight to allow your legs to move freely. Use your body weight to drive the pedals. You will find your rhythm. Again, this high intensity option will surely increase the excess levels of lactic acid and fatigue your legs, so make sure you have a period of 'active' recovery.

Play a Sport

Learn a new sport like tennis or squash. Every worn a hear rate monitor while playing tennis, squash or badminton??? I have, and I guarantee I can burn more calories playing squash than traditional cardio training. One of my female clients burns over 1000 calories in just 60 minutes playing tennis! Even an average game of tennis will probably get you up to 500-800 calories in an hour.

Tabata

I love to surprise my clients with this one. Tabata is a Japanese Physiologist and during his research, he determined the optimal level for maximising aerobic AND anaerobic capacity simultaneously in just 4 minutes! Tabata is a form of interval training with an interval ratio of 2:1. 20 seconds of 'maximal' all out exercise followed by a very short 10 second recovery. Perform 8 sets, and make sure you have a bucket nearby for the one!

Give these a try, I guarantee they will kick start your cardio training and help you break through your boredom and fat loss plateaus.

Daniel Remon is the Founder of Fitcorp Asia, Thailand's leading Health, Fitness and Performance Company. Fitcorp Asia specialises in goal oriented fat loss education, golf fitness, outdoor fitness boot camps and corporate health.

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