



Cardio

How much cardio should you do? Are you doing too little or too much? Here are some answers to some of your frequently asked questions.

Types of Cardio

- **Intervals** – Although they are intense and can seem difficult to complete, intervals are the best way to drop body fat when it comes to cardio. Intervals can be anything from treadmill or bike sprints or burpees and mountain climbers. Intervals have three benefits:
 - They are more time efficient (workouts <20-25min).
 - They raise your metabolism 24-48 hrs. post exercise; much like weight training. This means more calories are burned throughout the day.
 - Many people feel intervals are less boring than running long distance.
- **Long distance running** – Long distance running will not have the lasting effect of a raised metabolism like interval based training. However, long distance running has two benefits:
 - It is good for those training for and competing in races.
 - It burns a good amount of calories during exercise.
- **Intense walking** – Intense walking is best when done on a treadmill with an incline. Intense walking has two benefits:
 - It is good for those who can't run because of injuries.
 - It has less of an impact and is easier on the joints.

Cardio Equipment Options

It is a good idea to cycle in and out of using different equipment

- **Bike** – Bike offers less impact than running on a treadmill. It is best for those who cannot run. The bike works great for intervals and long distance riding. If you are looking to save the joints then this is the way to go.
- **Treadmill** – The treadmill is ideal for sprints and long distance running. This is also good for intense walking with an incline. The treadmill can take its toll on the joints and knees.
- **Rowing Machine** – The rowing machine is great to work both the upper and lower body while avoiding any pounding on the joints. This works great for intervals and distance.
- **Stairmaster/Stepmill/Stairwell** – Stairs can work for intervals but are not ideal. This is a great way to change-up your cardio routine. If using a stairwell, be sure to *not* take the stairs down as this can be very hard on your knees.
- **Body Weight** - Using your body weight is a great option because you don't need any equipment and it can be done anywhere. Examples of body weight cardio include: mountain climbers, burpees, speed skaters, lateral shuffle, running in place, high knees, boxing, and swimming.
- **Elliptical** – The elliptical is not as good of an option as any of the five above, but can work if need be. The elliptical tends to be easier. Although most people think it is easier on your joints, the constant deceleration is not the best on your knees.

Cardio Game Plan

Strength training should always take first priority. Once you are getting in 2-3x a week of strength workouts then focus on adding the cardio. Meaning if you only have 4 days to workout a week then at least two of those should be strength workouts.

Ideally we are looking for you to do your cardio workouts on days you are not at H4. Since we do full body strength training in the gym you want you to focus on core and cardio on the days outside H4. As always listen to your body. If you need to take a break then do so.

Fitness Level	Type of Cardio	days/wk	Type of Cardio	days/wk
Beginner	Intervals (Includes bodyweight cardio workouts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maybe none depending on injuries or starting fitness level. No more than 1x a week. 	Walking, long distance run	1x a week, 2x if no intervals completed
Intermediate & Advanced	Intervals (Includes bodyweight cardio workouts)	Generally 2x a week. Could be less if you do more long distance cardio.	Walking, long distance run	1-2x a week depending on if you do intervals and how many.

Interval Cardio Ideas

A) H4 Interval Program –You should have this once you started at H4. If not please ask!

B) Tri-set Bodyweight Circuit

- a. Pick 3 cardio based exercises. Do 20 seconds of each exercise without stopping and then rest 20 seconds. Repeat 6-12 rounds depending on your fitness level.
- b. Here are two example bodyweight circuit routines:
 - i. Burpees for 20 sec, Mountain Climbers for 20 sec, Skaters for 20 sec
 - ii. Seal Jacks for 20 sec, Predator Jacks for 20 sec, Traditional Jumping Jacks for 20 sec

C) 20/10 cardio routine

- a. You will have 4 separate cardio circuits, each consisting of 2 exercises. Ideally pick one cardio and one core based movement for each circuit. For circuit 1 you do 20 seconds of each of the two exercises taking a 10 second rest between each exercise. Do 5 minutes of work, which will end up being 5 rounds. Once you are done you can rest and move on to your second circuit.

Once you have done all 4 circuits you should have worked for a total of 20 minutes (5 minutes each circuit, 4 circuits).

- b. Here are 4 example circuits for one 20/10 cardio routine:
- i. Run in Place/Mountain Climbers
 - ii. Skaters/Bicycle Crunch
 - iii. Bodyweight Squat to Press/Plank Punches
 - iv. Air Boxing with Lateral Shuffle/Scissor Kicks

D) Giant Bodyweight Cardio Routine

- March in place for 3 minutes OR run in place for 1 min
- Jumping Jacks-50
- March 1 minute OR run in place for 30 sec
- Jumping Jacks-40
- March 1 minute OR run in place for 30 sec
- Speed squats-30
- March 1 minute OR run in place for 30 sec
- Speed squats-20
- March 1 minute OR run in place for 30 sec
- Burpees-15
- March 1 minute OR run in place for 30 sec
- Burpees-10
- March 1 minute OR run in place for 30 sec
- Jumping Jacks-50
- March 1 minute OR run in place for 30 sec
- Jumping Jacks-40

March in place 2 minutes to cool down

** You can also take a rest between 2-3 minutes and then repeat the whole giant set 2-3 times to make it more intense depending on your fitness level.

E) Metabolic Cardio Mix-Up:

Workout Instructions:

The metabolic cardio mix-up incorporates sprints with body weight exercises for 10-minutes of fun. Perform the circuit below as many times in a row in 10-minutes. Take rest at any time if you need it. Perform twice a week with the aim of getting more work done in the 10-minute time frame. Set up a treadmill at a level 5.0 incline and at a speed you can maintain for 15-seconds. Leave the treadmill on during the entire finisher (use the handrails to jump on and off).

1. 15-second treadmill hill sprint (incline level 5.0)
2. 20 mountain climbers per leg
3. 20 Speed squats
4. 15 bicycle crunches per leg

5. 15-second treadmill hill sprint
6. 50 hops jumping rope (or air jump rope)
7. 10 burpees
8. 15 side planks per side (letting the hips drop up and down)
9. 20 jumping jacks
10. 15 speed skaters side to side

F) The Sprint Finisher

Ideally you would perform this finisher on a track, field or a self-propelled treadmill, but a regular treadmill will work as well. Perform each sprint as quickly as possible. Rest periods should be 2:1, meaning that you should rest twice as long as the preceding sprint took to finish (for example, if the 100 yard sprint took 18 seconds, rest for 36 seconds before moving on to the 75 yard sprint).

> 200 yard sprint

> 150 yard sprint

> 100 yard sprint

> 75 yard sprint

> 50 yard sprint

G) The Row Finisher (ROWING MACHINE SPECIFIC)

Too often the rowing machine sits in the corner of the gym collecting dust. That's unfortunate because it can be one of the most powerful conditioning tools on the cardio floor. To make this harder as you do it more often simply decrease rest periods by 10-15 seconds or add distance to the row.

> 500 meter row

Rest 3 minutes

> 300 meter row

Rest 2 minutes

> 200 meter row

Rest 1 minute

> 100 meter row

H) 1,000 Meter Meltdown (ROWING MACHINE SPECIFIC)

Warm up for 5 to 10 minutes. Then set the level to medium and begin your workout. You'll do 3 total sets of 1,000-meter rows. Aim to maintain 28 spm during the first set, 24 spm during the second set, and 26 spm during the final set. Recover with 4 minutes of easy rowing between each set.

- SPM stands for strokes per minute

I) 5 x 300-meter with diminishing rest intervals (ROWING MACHINE SPECIFIC)

The 300-meter distance is awesome because it invariably works out to about 60 seconds for most people of reasonably good fitness, but not elite rowing status. If you get lazy, though, your times will slip. It's also a good set-up for people who are just starting out to see quick progress. Try this:

Week 1: 5 x 300 meters with 120 seconds rest between sets

Week 2: 5 x 300 meters with 90 seconds rest between sets

Week 3: 5 x 300 meters with 75 seconds rest between sets

Week 4: 5 x 300 meters with 60 seconds rest between sets

J) 20 Minute Treadmill Challenge #1

Minutes: 0:00-3:00	Miles Per Hour: 3.0	Incline: 1
Minutes: 3:00-3:30	MPH: 3.5	Incline: 2
Minutes: 3:30-4:00	MPH: 3.5	Incline: 4
Minutes: 4:00-4:30	MPH: 3.5	Incline: 6
Minutes: 4:30-5:00	MPH: 3.5	Incline: 7
Minutes: 5:00-6:00	MPH: 4.0	Incline: 1
Minutes: 7:00-7:30	MPH: 4.5	Incline: 2
Minutes: 7:30-8:00	MPH: 4.5	Incline: 4
Minutes: 8:00-8:30	MPH: 4.5	Incline: 6
Minutes: 8:30-9:00	MPH: 4.5	Incline: 7
Minutes: 9:00-10:00	MPH: 3.5	Incline: 1
Minutes: 10:00-11:00	MPH: 6.0	Incline: 1

Minutes: 11:00-12:00	MPH: 3.5	Incline: 1
Minutes: 12:00-12:30	MPH: 5.0	Incline: 2
Minutes: 12:30-13:00	MPH: 5.0	Incline: 4
Minutes: 13:00-13:30	MPH: 5.0	Incline: 6
Minutes: 13:30-14:00	MPH: 5.0	Incline: 7
Minutes: 14:00-16:00	MPH: 3.5	Incline: 1
Minutes: 16:00-17:00	MPH: 6.0	Incline: 1
Minutes: 17:00-20:00	MPH: 3.0	Incline: 1

K) 20 Minute Treadmill Challenge #2

Minutes	Speed (MPH)	Incline (%)
0:00-5:00	4	3-3.5
5:00-7:00	4	8-10
7:00-8:00	4	4-6
8:00-10:00	4	10
10:00-11:00	4	5-7
11:00-13:00	4	12
13:00-14:00	4	10
14:00-15:00	4	12
15:00-20:00	4	2-4

Tip: Beginners should start with a speed of 3.5 MPH; advanced exercisers can go up to 5.

L) 20 Minute Treadmill Challenge #3

Minutes	Pace
0:00-10:00	Warm-up jog; 5.0 MPH.

10:00-10:20	Sprint at 7.5 MPH.
10:20-11:20	Jog at 5.0 MPH.
11:20-14:00	Repeat minutes 10:00-11:20 twice.
14:00-17:00	Jog at 5.0 MPH.
17:00-27:00	Run at 6.5 MPH.
27:00-31:00	Jog at 5.0 MPH.
31:00-35:00	Run at 6.5 MPH.
35:00-39:00	Jog at 5.0 MPH.
39:00-55:00	Repeat minutes 31:00-39:00 twice.
55:00-60:00	Gradually slow pace to cool down at jog/walk

M) Climb/Descend Workout

	Minutes	Speed	Incline	
Warm up	2	4.0 MPH	0	
Speed up	5	4.5-6.0	0	Increase speed by 0.5 each MPH minute until you reach 6.0 MPH; maintain for 2 minutes.
Climb	7	4.0-4.5	2.0	Increase incline by 2.0 each minute until you reach 10.0 MPH; stay there for 3 minutes.
Descend	1	6.0	2.0	
Sprint	4	Varied	2.0	Sprint (your best effort) for 1 minute, then jog (4.5 MPH); repeat combo, trying to sprint faster the second time.
Climb	1	5.0-6.0	4.0	
Climb	4	6.0-7.0	4.0	
Recover	1	4.0-4.5	0	
Jog	1	5.0-6.0	0	
Sprint	2	Best effort	0	
Cool down	2	2.0-3.0	0	

N) Quick Bike Calorie Blaster

- Use a stationary bike or bike outside

Minutes	Level
5	Warm up at an easy level (10 to 12 MPH)
2	Moderate effort (12 to 14 MPH)
2	Easy
2	Moderately hard (14 to 16 MPH)
2	Easy
2	Hard (16 to 19 MPH)
2	Easy
1	Hard, then reverse the order back to start

Long Distance Workout Ideas

A) Long Distance Melt down

Level 1

0:00-5:00: Warm up, 3.5 MPH, 0%.

5:00-7:00: Speed-walk, 4.0 MPH, 0%.

7:00-9:00: Run, jog (5.2-6.0 MPH, 0%) or speed-walk (3.8 MPH, 6%).

9:00-33:00: Repeat minutes 5:00-9:00 six more times, alternating 2 minutes of walking with 2 minutes of running or walking on an incline.

33:00-38:00: Cool down, 3.5 MPH, 0%.

Level 2

0-5:00: Warm up, 3.5 MPH, 0%.

5:00-7:00: Speed-walk, 4.0 MPH, 0%.

7:00-22:00: Run, jog (5.2-6.0 MPH, 0%) or speed-walk (3.8 MPH, 6%).

9:00-39:00: Repeat minutes 5:00-22:00, alternating 2 minutes of walking with 15 minutes of running or walking on an incline.

39:00-45:00: Cool down, 3.5 MPH, 0%.

Level 3

0-5:00: Warm up, 3.5 MPH, 0%.

5:00-10:00: Run, jog (5.2-6.0 MPH, 0%) or speed-walk (3.8 MPH, 6%).

10:00-12:00: Sprint (6.0-7.0 MPH, 0%) or speed-walk (3.8 MPH, 10%).

12:00-47:00: Repeat minutes, 5:00-12:00 5 more times, alternating 5 minutes of running or walking on an incline

47:00-52:00: Cool down, 3.5 MPH, 0%.

B) Cardio/Core Combo

Do your favorite cardio machine or exercise for 10 minutes. Follow it by doing 3-4 core exercises each done for 2 sets. Go back to your cardio for 10 minutes. Keep repeating this sequence until you have done 40 minutes of cardio and 8 sets of core.