

Fitness for Busy Professionals

Volume 1

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Ten Best Ways to Maximize Your Workout Time

When you've got a busy schedule crammed full of meetings and work, you don't have time to mess around with your workout. You want to get the best results possible for the time you invest – the good news is that you can get extra benefits with just a few simple changes to your workout!

- 1. Keep proper form.** - One of the most common mistakes in exercise is not maintaining the right form during the workout. Bad form can lead to muscle pain and stiffness but, more importantly, bad form prevents you from burning as many calories as you normally would. Maintain good posture during exercise and you'll build more muscle faster!
- 2. Take giant steps.** - During your cardio workout, take deep, wide steps to shape up your thighs and buttocks. By taking a larger step than normal, you require more effort from your muscles; more effort equals more strength and shapeliness. Short, shallow steps don't place enough stress on the muscle to produce fast results, but when you change to bigger movements, you start to see serious muscle taking shape. The same concept is true for running as well: runners who take long, deep strides burn more calories and cover more distance than short-striders.
- 3. Listen to your breath.** - During a cardio workout, check your breathing to see how hard you're truly working. If you can carry on a conversation with ease, it's time to increase intensity. How to know when you're at the right level? The general rule of thumb is that when you can sing the national anthem but need a breath after every phrase, you're most likely at the appropriate level for your needs. You should *never* work out so hard that you can't talk or begin to feel faint.
- 4. Double up your workouts.** - Add weights to your cardio routine (or vice versa) and you can start to see results within three weeks! You really see the best of both worlds by using *interval training*. Interval training is highly effective because you introduce your body to a new challenge every five minutes or so. Traditional cardiovascular exercises focus on building aerobic capacity while weightlifting concentrates on increasing muscle strength. Combining the two into one interval training workout means you get benefits from both!
- 5. Add variety.** - The fastest way to become disillusioned with your workout is to do the same thing over and over again, plus your body can become conditioned to the movements and fail to burn as many calories as you would like. Avoid all this by surprising your body with new and different challenges at least once a week. If you typically run several times during the week, try hiking at a nearby park. If you're a Spinning devotee, take a Pilates class instead. The ultimate switch-up

for most exercisers is swimming: an exercise that requires much more aerobic and muscle strength than imagined. Do a few laps in the pool and you'll see what I mean.

6. **Challenge yourself.** - Set a goal for yourself every week that is beyond your normal effort. Try lifting weights that are five pounds heavier than you normally use, or walking three miles daily rather than two. Small goals like this are easily attainable and can make big changes in the results you see from your workout.
7. **Introduce yourself to stretching.** - Stretching is sometimes the crazy uncle of the exercise family – nobody really wants to talk about it, but the fact is stretching is key to getting more out of your workout. Stretching assists in muscle recovery from strenuous workouts and can prevent soreness that might stop you from working out. Your entire body feels more comfortable when you have strong, flexible muscles. Spending a few minutes when you wake up and again before and after your workout really add up in terms of flexibility.
8. **Don't exercise on an empty stomach.** - Sure, it may seem efficient to work out when you haven't eaten in hours but in reality it's a bad decision. When your body's fuel supply is low, you start feeling sluggish and slow – definitely *not* the ideal mood for a productive workout. An empty stomach does not equal more calories burned.
9. **Snacks, not meals, provide the best fuel.** - After dining at the all-you-can-eat buffet, you feel like you *should* work out just to compensate for overeating, but don't do it. Exercising on a full stomach can lead to cramps, upset stomach, and/or diarrhea because your body is trying to digest the meal and also provide you with energy at the same time. The best way to fuel your body without nasty side effects is to have a small snack 15 to 30 minutes before you exercise. Ideal snacks include foods with adequate carbohydrates: bread, cereals, and rice.
10. **Drink plenty of water.** - You've heard it over and over, but it really is true: water will help you lose weight. Water helps fill your stomach to stop hunger pangs and keeps you alert throughout the day. When you become dehydrated, your entire body slows down and works much less efficiently. Working out causes you to lose hydration through sweat, so it's important to replace lost water after a workout.

We all run short on time these days but by incorporating one or more of these simple strategies you can maximize your workout time and see fantastic results fast!

Top 5 Fitness Myths

You've heard the stories: weight training makes women look like Arnold Schwarzenegger, exercising on an empty stomach burns more calories, and more. While some fitness myths make sense on the surface, deeper examination proves these stories are simply made up and have little or no basis in reality. Let's tackle five of the most common myths and check out the real story behind them.

1. **No pain, no gain** – Perhaps the most common myth out there is this one that says if you don't feel pain when you exercise, you're not doing it right. The truth is absolutely opposite: exercise done right should *never* be painful and professional trainers recommend that you stop your workout at the first sign of pain. The logic behind "no pain, no gain" says that you can't expect good results without sacrificing something – twisted at best, downright sadistic at worst. Exercise should be something you enjoy or else you very quickly become disillusioned and drop it entirely. While an intense workout may create slight discomfort, it should never get to the point where you are in actual pain.
2. **Training with weights bulks women up** – Few women want to look like professional bodybuilders, so this myth scares thousands of female exercisers away from weights every day despite scientific evidence to the contrary. The physiological differences between male and female bodies decree that men have a higher percentage of muscle throughout the body; thus men tend to increase bulk with weight lifting. On the other hand, female bodies have a higher percentage of fat to assist with childbearing and have less muscle to build and bulk up. Weight training for women is aimed at producing stronger muscles that can take more stress and bounce back better than ever.
3. **Exercising on an empty stomach burns more calories** – This one seems like it should make sense since exercise burns calories and an empty stomach has no calories to burn. It seems like you would be ahead of the game! Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way. Your body needs energy to run, so when you exercise on an empty stomach the body has to find fuel somewhere else. The body tries to provide energy while looking for it at the same time and can get overwhelmed, resulting in the risk of dizziness or even fainting in extreme situations. The smartest choice is to have a small snack about ten to fifteen minutes before working out. Carbohydrates are the best source of energy, so have a small slice of toast or a banana.
4. **Crunches are the best way of firming up the stomach** – Too many videos and articles send the message that hundreds of crunches are the

best way to correct a jelly belly but fail to take into account that most saggy abs are because of excess fat, not weak muscles. Simply doing crunches alone strengthens the abdominal muscles but doesn't address the layer of fat over the muscles. You may see your stomach appear to grow larger since the muscles are gaining strength underneath the fat layer. The best strategy for getting firm abs is simple: burn fat and strengthen abdominal muscles at the same time. By using a two-pronged approach, fat that covers muscles is burned and the muscles are firmed at the same time, accomplishing your goal and giving you strong, sleek abdominal muscles.

5. **Protein will help build muscles** – Protein can do great things for your health but it won't help you increase your muscle strength. Too much protein in your diet can lead to unintended health risks such as kidney strain or dehydration. Extra protein also packs extra calories into your diet that can result in extra pounds – definitely *not* what you want. The best source of fuel for weight lifting is carbohydrates – easily digestible by the body, carbs provide fast, consistent energy for the body and allow you to continue lifting weights longer. That alone is what builds strength, not the specific kind of food you eat. Provide your body with the right kind of energy to use and you'll be able to build muscle better.

There are many more myths about health and fitness, but the best defense against false information is education. When you are confident that you know the right plan for your body, spotting myths become easy.

Eight Secrets of Top Trainers

Don't you wish sometimes that you had your own personal trainer to guide you through your workout and give you hints about getting more out of your exercise? You may not be able to afford a trainer of your own but by incorporating these trainer hints and tips into your day, you'll be on your way to making your workout even more effective!

- 1. Buddy up** – One of the best benefits of having a personal trainer is having someone to hold you accountable for your exercise. A trainer is paid to do this for you but the easy (and free!) solution is within your own circle of friends. Ask a reliable friend to be your workout partner and just the knowledge that she's depending on you to work out with her will increase your odds of staying on track with your exercise. A unique way of ensuring success is to allow each partner a certain number of "cuts" per month – at a price. Failing to show up for a session with your trainer still costs you money and so should skipping your workout with your friend. Pony up \$10 for each cut and let it accumulate for six months or longer. At the end of a predetermined time frame, count the money and use it to treat you and your workout partner to a luxurious splurge.
- 2. Shorter workouts can be as effective as longer ones** – Sure, everyone would like to be able to work out for forty-five minutes of uninterrupted time, but let's be serious! With today's busy schedules and demanding jobs, finding time to exercise can be a struggle, but the good news is that you don't need a huge block of time to see results. Studies have shown that workouts as short as ten to fifteen minutes can strengthen the body and improve your health. Fit several brief workouts in your day and you not only increase your metabolism throughout the day but you also reach the ideal activity level of 45 minutes to one hour. Don't let yourself be discouraged by a lack of time; do the best with what you've got.
- 3. Add variety to see results** – Undoubtedly the fastest way to see changes in your body is to keep surprising it! Changing up your routine every few days prevents your body from becoming conditioned to the same exercise day after day and requires it to call on different muscles for different activities. This means more muscles are worked over the course of just a few days, so you see the effects on your body in much less time than usual. An excellent method of adding variety is to incorporate weight lifting into your cardio routine. This requires the body to respond to challenges to balance, strength, and more, and speeds up your results.
- 4. Intensify for more strength** – Most trainers recommend increasing the intensity of your workout to see improvement in your strength and aerobic capability. Too often people become comfortable with their level of exertion and aren't working as hard. Boosting the intensity

keeps the body challenged and working harder. Taking deep, wide steps during aerobics and squeezing the buttock and thigh muscles challenge the body to a higher level of exertion and produce some amazing changes in just a few workouts. Weight-lifters should try adding 3-5 pounds to their current weight and see the difference in toning and strength after a few sessions.

5. **Know your excuses and head them off** – Personal trainers often deal with clients who make all kinds of excuses to get out of a session or to avoid a certain exercise, and must keep the client on track without offending. When you are your own personal trainer, though, it can be difficult to discipline yourself to your exercise schedule unless you give yourself an advantage. Sit down and write down all the excuses you would use to avoid exercising. Once you've done that, go back and counter all your excuses. If you wrote down lack of time as an excuse, oppose it with suggestions for short, frequent workouts rather than one long session. If you can anticipate your own excuses and know how to respond to them, you've won half the battle against apathy.
6. **Make it fun!** – Perhaps the most common complaint about exercise is that it becomes boring too quickly. Personal trainers help you get through boredom by changing your routine or offering you new choices for activities. Help yourself break out of the boredom rut by choosing activities that appeal to you. Instead of spending thirty minutes inside on the treadmill, go for a hike on a local nature path. Rather than doing your aerobics video for the millionth time, go outside with your kids and jump on the trampoline for a while. The goal is to choose an activity that you enjoy and that requires physical activity, so break out your tennis racquets and bicycles!
7. **Schedule & commit.** - Signing up for a personal trainer is a commitment of your time, money and energy, and perhaps because of that commitment people with personal trainers tend to stick with the program. Apply that same sense of obligation to your personal at-home exercise program and you'll increase your chances of having a consistent workout plan. Schedule your workouts just like any other appointment and write it in on your calendar or Palm. Knowing that you have set aside time for exercise can help you follow through and stick to a successful program.
8. **Reward yourself.** - Set checkpoints throughout your exercise program to assess your progress. Whether your goal is to lose weight, build muscle, or simply improve your health, take the time to check up on your improvement and then reward yourself for all the hard work!

Six Easy Changes with Big Impact

Too often people think that to see results with an exercise program, drastic changes are required. The truth is that you don't have to radically alter your lifestyle to see a change in your weight or health, and most of the time just a simple modification can have a big impact without the stress of a major change. Here are some simple tips that can make a big difference in your own health!

- 1. Stop drinking soda.** - This can be difficult for many people but the simple act of cutting out soda can make an enormous difference in your waistline in just a week! Sodas are full of sugar and calories, and are practically worthless nutritionally. Drinking more than one a day adds some serious calories to your daily intake, and can result in multiple pounds on your body. Cutting out your daily soda saves you more than 87,000 calories over a year's time – that's equal to over twenty-five pounds! Try a simple experiment: do not drink soda for one week (7 days) and weigh yourself at the beginning and end of the week. You'll be surprised at the change you can see and feel.
- 2. Add more fiber to your diet.** - You hear this frequently on television and read it in the newspapers, but fiber isn't just about keeping you regular. Fiber in your diet fills you up faster and actually expands in your stomach to literally fill the space far better than other kinds of food. Eating plenty of fiber will keep your appetite under control as well as maintaining a healthy GI tract at the same time. Fiber can be found in a variety of vegetables and breads, so there are many options to choose.
- 3. Get an additional hour of sleep per night.** - Despite eight hours remaining the gold standard for sleeping hours, few adults actually sleep that much during the night and most average around five or six hours. The lack of sleep doesn't just make you drowsy during the day; it can also make you prone to cravings, irritable, and even gain weight. Studies have shown that failure to get adequate sleep suppresses the production of leptin, a peptide that tells the body to burn calories. Getting just another hour of sleep helps correct sleep debt and can make you feel better almost instantly.
- 4. Drink your water...** - Water is one of the most powerful allies in the battle against excess weight. When you are dehydrated, your body sends signals to the brain that get misinterpreted as hunger pangs. Drinking enough water throughout the day keeps you satisfied and can ward off unpleasant issues like decreased energy, constipation and slowed mental reactions. A good general guideline is to drink eight 8-

oz. glasses of water throughout the day, but pay attention to your body's needs. Drink more water if you feel your body needs it.

5. **...Eat your calories.** - Don't allow yourself to be fooled into drinking your daily calories through soda, beer and wine. These beverages rack up the calories fast and furious, and full of sugars that make you crave more. Satisfy your hunger and the emotional need to eat by choosing nutrient-rich food with a minimum of preservatives and you save yourself from empty calories.
6. **Take 10,000 steps every day.** - Recent studies show that while most people believe they take ten thousands steps per day or more, in reality that number is closer to 3,000 – 4,000. Challenge yourself by buying a pedometer and wearing during an average day. Check the total number of steps at the end of the day – anything less than 5,000 needs improvement! Ten thousand steps are roughly equal to four miles of walking. Make it your goal to take ten thousand steps every day and keep working until you get there. This simple change can help you burn calories and fat as you take care of everyday chores, so keep stepping and watch your pedometer count up those steps!

These are very basic changes that won't cost you a lot of time, effort or money, but they *will* give you serious results in just a few weeks. Incorporate these changes with your daily exercise program and give yourself a pat on the back for all the great work!

Six Weight Loss Tricks

The most basic approach to weight loss is to burn more calories than you take in, but sometimes no matter what you do it just doesn't seem to be working. When you need an ace up your sleeve for a critical moment, try one of these tricks to jump-start your weight loss.

- 1. Add weights to your routine.** - Adding weight-lifting to your routine is one of the fastest ways to see results. Your body will respond almost immediately, shaping and toning muscle, and remember, the more muscle you have, the more fats you burn! To determine the weight you should start with, grab a 5-lb. dumbbell and do as many bicep curls as possible. If you can do more than ten reps comfortably, use a higher weight. On the other hand, if you can't do more than eight repetitions without strain, try using a 3-lb. weight instead. For those of you already training with weights, go up to the next highest weight to see results. If you don't have weights at your home, it is highly recommended that you invest in a set that ranges from three to ten pounds. These usually cost less than \$30 and are well worth the investment.
- 2. Increase the intensity.** - During your cardio workout routine, assess the intensity level to determine how hard you're working. If you can carry on a conversation with ease while exercising, it's time to boost the intensity. You can do that by taking deeper strides as you move and placing a greater demand on the muscles of the thighs and buttocks, which in turns burns more calories. The best way to gauge the intensity of a workout is to pretend to carry on a conversation. You should be able to speak in short sentences with a breath after each one. Never exercise to the point where you cannot talk.
- 3. Shake up your routine.** - Despite being called a routine, your exercise program should keep you interested. Add different activities for variety and you not only maintain your concentration but also constantly challenge your body to meet new obstacles and developing more than just a few muscles. More muscles equal a greater calorie burn – what's not to love? Try new activities that keep your mind engaged and experience an extra boost for your brain!
- 4. Give your diet a makeover.** - The daily diet is most frequently the worst problem area when you're trying to lose weight. Between home and work and the responsibilities that come with each, it can be almost impossible to find healthy choices at the last minute. Spare yourself the daily scrounging and stock up on healthy foods that can be ready at a moment's notice. Make a point to stash some of your good-for-you

snacks at work so that when the mid-afternoon cravings hit, you have something satisfying and diet-friendly.

- 5. Challenge yourself.** - Set personal goals for yourself and don't forget to reward your accomplishment! If your goal is to be more active at work, buy a pedometer and challenge yourself to take 6,000 steps during your workday. Be creative about it: walk to a colleague's desk rather than email, take the stairs instead of the elevator, and go to the bathroom three floors down instead of the one on your floor. Challenging yourself can be very fulfilling on a personal level when you achieve your goals, and can encourage you on to greater achievement.

- 6. Keep a food journal.** - One of the most common characteristics of successful dieters is keeping a daily journal of food intake. There's no real mystery about this: when you must write down everything that goes in your mouth, it forces you to realize exactly how many calories you consume. Keeping a journal is also beneficial because you can pick up patterns in your eating – for instance, if you become ravenous at a certain time everyday or if your meals and snacks are too far apart. It can also be helpful to note your frame of mind when you eat or mention the circumstances. Binging as soon as you get home from work could indicate a stressful job or it could mean it's just been too long since lunch. A basic food journal requires you to enter the food you ate, number of calories, amount of fat, and how much you consumed. This can be expanded as much as necessary to meet individual needs. Just make sure you review it every few days to spot any habits that need to be brought under control.

Seven Workout Ideas That Won't Drain Your Budget

It's important to find new activities to incorporate into your exercise regimen to keep your mind and body challenged, but some fitness trends can be expensive. To ease the strain on your wallet, here's a list of seven free and inexpensive workout ideas that won't empty your savings account!

- 1. Indoor Rock Climbing** - Rock climbing may seem like an odd Iron-man type of activity but the demands it places on the body end up providing a fantastic workout. You'll need strength, flexibility, and a sense of humor as you scale specially built walls with total heights of thirty feet or more. Safety is vital and all climbers are required to wear helmets, climbing shoes, and safety lines to prevent dangerous falls. Indoor rock climbing can range from \$15-\$30 but it's cheaper if you have your own shoes. Call ahead and ask if there are discounts available.
- 2. Rollerblading in the Local Park** - This is an absolutely fantastic workout for the hips, thighs and buttocks, especially if your park has inclines to challenge you. The best part is that it's totally free! The majority of public parks welcome rollerbladers but checking before skating is a good idea. Remember that you do skate at your own risk, so exercise caution, especially around large groups or playgrounds with small children.
- 3. Take a Trial Class** - Nearly all studios and gyms will allow you to try out their facilities and classes if you are interested in possibly joining. Find a gym that offers a class that interests you and explain you'd like to try it out. Nine times out of ten you will be allowed to take the class for free and get a stellar workout at the same time.
- 4. Rent a Bike** - Bicycle riding is an excellent way to shape up the legs but if the bike you owned was in the sixth grade, you can still get in on the benefits by renting a bike from a local shop and tooling around town. In larger cities bike shops frequently offer tours or suggestions for routes, so check out the local place and rent a bike for a couple of hours. This usually costs between \$8-\$20 and there may be a small fee involved to release you from any responsibility for accidents or damage.
- 5. Use Your Tax Dollars** - You get sucked dry of tax dollars on almost every paycheck, so it's time to make those taxes work for you. Check with your local Department of Recreation and find out about county facilities that are available for public use. Many local governments set

aside money to fund public tennis courts, swimming centers, softball fields, and more. As a citizen you have the right to use any of these resources during business hours, though some may require calling ahead to make a reservation. Find nearby public tennis courts, grab a buddy, and go play a couple of sets. It cost you absolutely nothing – except those precious tax dollars.

- 6. Get a One Day Pass** - All gyms offer some kind of program where you can check out the facilities and services, and frequently this program is in the form of a one-day pass. Call a gym that you're interested in and let them know of your interest. Ask if they offer temporary passes for guests to evaluate the gym. The answer is yes almost every time. Take your one-day pass and make the most of it – take a class, try out new machines, and definitely use the sauna. You get to check out the gym and add some variety to your routine at the same time!

- 7. Do Some Good and Exercise At the Same Time** - Call your local animal shelter and check to see if they use volunteer walkers to help with the animals. Many times these shelters are understaffed and need the help of volunteers to give proper care to each animal. By donating your time to walk dogs, you give animals the chance to enjoy life outside the shelter and fit in a workout at the same time. Doing good for others and exercising at the same time? Getting fit has never felt this rewarding!

Shaping Up Five Problem Areas

Everyone has a particular problem area that frustrates. For some people, it may be the hips, for others it's saggy arms. For millions it's the dreaded jelly belly! The truth is that you cannot spot-tone specific areas but there are moves you can do in conjunction with regular cardio exercise that will help make your problem spot disappear! Here are five of the most common complaints and ideas for shaping them up!

- 1. Droopy Buttocks** - The saggy butt is one of the top complaints of both men and women, but it's also one of the easiest muscles to tone and shape! The buttocks are controlled by the gluteal muscles, which are among the largest muscles of the body and provide support for sitting, standing and squatting. Because these muscles are so large and are used every day, they respond very quickly to toning.

Exercises: Squats are the number one move to shape up the butt. Begin by standing with your feet about shoulder-width apart and your hands by your sides. You may want to place a chair behind you for support. Gradually sit back until your buttocks almost touch the chair and then straighten up. Do three sets of 20 squats daily.

- 2. “Batwings” or Saggy Arms** - The bane of older women everywhere (and many younger women, too!) is the saggy muscle that runs along the back of the upper arm opposite the bicep muscle. This is known as the tricep and can be challenging to tone, but it can be done.

Exercises: Begin by holding a 3-5-lb. weight in your right hand. Raise the weight straight above your head and then slowly lower the weight back and down until your elbow forms a right angle, then raise it back up. Do three sets of 20 repetitions daily.

- 3. Saddlebags** - Many people tend to store fat along the hips and outer thighs, charmingly known as “saddlebags.” Getting rid of saddlebags can be difficult but the best results come from a combination of consistent cardio exercise and isometric movements that help tone the muscle.

Exercises: Begin by standing straight with one hand on a chair for support. Lift your right leg a few inches off the ground and then raise your leg out to the side and lower it. Repeat this movement for three sets of 25 repetitions daily.

- 4. Jelly Belly** - Having a saggy stomach is common and it's important to realize that crunches alone will not banish the jiggle. The fat that lies over the muscle is what creates the saggy, loose appearance. Muscle-

building moves should be paired with cardiovascular exercise for the best results and be prepared to invest time and effort. Shaping and defining the stomach can take months, but it's worth every minute.

Exercises: Begin by lying facedown on a yoga mat. Place your hands on the mat near your shoulders, take a deep breath, and then push your body up until the hands and feet support it. Hold this position for 20 seconds. Lower yourself down to the floor, rest for a few seconds, and then repeat. Do three sets of 10 repetitions daily. This is known as the "plank" poses in yoga and is wonderful for toning the abdominal muscles.

- 5. Chubby Back or "Bra Overhang"** - Excess fat in the back area can make it look like you're hiding several lumpy bundles back there, but with a little persistence you can tone it up and make your back an object of envy. This should be paired with a consistent cardiovascular exercise for the best results.

Exercise: Hold a 3-5-lb. weight in your right hand. Step forward about twelve inches with your left foot. Use your left hand for support as you lean forward and let your right arm hang straight with the weight. Keep your spine straight. Begin lifting the weight slowly, as though you were starting a lawnmower, until the elbow is at a right angle and then lower. Repeat for three sets of 20 repetitions.

Everyone has problem areas but when you couple the appropriate exercise with a regular aerobic regimen, you are on the way to controlling them. A few months down the road, you won't even remember what you looked like before!

This concludes volume 1 of Fitness for Busy Professionals.

To see if further volumes have been published (there are plans for 7 volumes), please visit <http://www.nutritionlessons.com> to learn more.