



Simply alternate the pace of your workout now and again to get great results.

Great news! Scientists at the University of NSW have discovered that interval training may burn three times more body fat than when you exercise at a steady pace. So for a chance to lose weight faster try an interval training session with your weekly cardio program.

INTERVAL TRAINING – THE FACTS

What it is

Interval training may sound complicated, but it's quite simple. It involves nothing more than alternating short, intense bursts of exercise with slightly longer periods of easier, more relaxed types of exercise.

For example, let's say you were out for your daily power walk. After a five-minute warm-up walk, you may power walk as speedily as possible for one minute. Then you'd follow this with two to three minutes of easy walking to allow your heart rate to slow down. Then, you may do another one-minute power walk. You would continue to alternate between hard and easy bursts. And, after a cool-down you'd be done.

How to do it

Working out three to five days a week is a good goal, but we don't recommend you try interval training during every workout session. We suggest you push yourself to the limit just once a week. On the day you are interval training there are a few basic rules to follow. Firstly, work at the correct level. During your less intense bursts you should be able to hold a conversation, but not sing. During your 'power' sections you should be able to say a few words, but no more. And keep your interval sessions short – 30 minutes including a five minute warm-up and cool-down.

Why you should try it

The more de-conditioned you are, the more dramatic your weight loss and fitness results may be. If you are a beginner make sure you get the all-clear from your doctor first. Start by keeping the highest-intensity periods short and give yourself plenty of time to recover in between each interval. As you become fitter you can increase your high-intensity bouts.

The University of NSW researchers believe that during the intense bursts the body produces a chemical reaction that burns more fat. The study, which involved 45 women in two groups, had one group riding steadily for 40 minutes. The other exercised for 20 minutes at a time, but alternated sprinting with easy pedalling. After 15 weeks the interval exercisers had lost three times as much body fat as the steady pace group. So, help keep boredom at bay, choose an exercise method and give it a go!

NOW YOU TRY:

If you can help lose weight faster and find a great way to beat boredom during your workout, what are you waiting for? Choose the following interval guide for beginner (block) or more experienced (pyramid) and get going

'BLOCK' INTERVALS

for those new to exercise – 20 minutes

WARM UP – 5 MINUTES

at an easy pace

INTERVAL – 1 MINUTE

at a moderate to hard pace, really pushing it to your maximum towards the end

RECOVERY – 4 MINUTES

at an easy to moderate pace, making sure you recover

INTERVAL – 1 MINUTE

at a moderate to hard pace, really pushing it to your maximum towards the end

RECOVERY – 4 MINUTES

at an easy to moderate pace, making sure you recover

INTERVAL – 1 MINUTE

at a moderate to hard pace, really pushing it to your maximum towards the end

COOL DOWN – 4 MINUTES

at an easy pace

'PYRAMID' INTERVALS

for those more experienced – 27 minutes

WARM UP – 5 MINUTES

at an easy to moderate pace

INTERVAL – 2 MINUTES

at a hard pace, pushing it to your maximum towards the end

RECOVERY – 2 MINUTES

at a moderate pace, making sure you recover

INTERVAL – 1 MINUTE

at a hard pace, pushing it to your maximum towards the end

RECOVERY – 2 MINUTES

at a moderate pace, making sure you recover

INTERVAL – 30 SECONDS

at a hard pace, pushing it to your maximum towards the end

RECOVERY – 2 MINUTES

at a moderate pace, making sure you recover

INTERVAL – 30 SECONDS

at a hard pace, pushing it to your maximum towards the end

RECOVERY – 2 MINUTES

at a moderate pace, making sure you recover

INTERVAL – 1 MINUTE

at a hard pace, pushing it to your maximum towards the end

RECOVERY – 2 MINUTES

at a moderate pace, making sure you recover

INTERVAL – 2 MINUTES

at a hard pace, pushing it to your maximum towards the end

RECOVERY – 2 MINUTES

at a moderate pace, making sure you recover

COOL DOWN – 3 MINUTES

at an easy pace