**Sample Training Programme**

As a personal trainer I often get asked "what are the best exercises that I should be doing to get fit and lose weight". My response to this is often "how long is a piece of string". There are almost infinite exercises and combinations of exercises that you can do to improve your fitness and to burn calories. The key however is to focus on exercises (and combinations of exercises) that work the whole body and elevate your heart rate.

From my experience training clients and researching training techniques, I have developed a system that helps clients to improve their fitness, lose body fat (if that is your goal) and gain lean muscle (alongside an appropriate nutritional programme). I base my programmes on alternating between upper and lower body exercises in a well-designed circuit. The benefit of alternating between upper body and lower body exercises is that while the upper body muscles (arms, shoulders, core, chest) are working the lower body muscles (legs and glutes) are resting and vice versa. This therefore allows you to continue exercising the upper body whilst the lower body is fatigued and resting and vice versa. The crucial part however is that regardless of which body part is working (upper or lower) the heart is still having to work to pump blood and oxygen around the body, thus giving you a fantastic Cardiovascular workout, burning calories and increasing your metabolic rate.

So for instance, you may do 40 seconds of lunging, which works your lower body muscles (and core) and your heart as it has to pump blood and oxygen around your body in particular to your lower body. Then without resting you may do 30 seconds of shoulder presses, so whilst your leg muscles are resting your upper body muscles (and core) are now working. Crucially, your heart still has to pump blood and oxygen around your body in particular to your upper body. Then without rest you may do 40 seconds of squats, so whilst your upper body muscles are resting your lower body muscles (and core) are now working. Crucially, you guessed it, your heart has to continue pumping blood and oxygen around your body in particular to your lower body. You then go back to an upper body exercise and so on.

This type of training is also great because it is very time efficient as it will give you a fantastic whole body workout in a relatively short space of time, which is vital as we all live busy lives, and it also helps to prevent boredom setting in.

Below is a sample training programme that uses the principle I have discussed above of alternating between upper and lower body exercises and to keep your heart rate elevated. As you will notice, the duration that you perform each exercise increases each week by 5 seconds and the rest period at the end of each circuit reduces by 5 seconds. This is to ensure that you continue to progress and challenge yourself. You will notice that for the final exercise of each circuit I have included a whole body cardiovascular exercise of Burpees, Jumping Jacks and Skipping to ensure you get a fantastic Cardiovascular workout. In addition, the lower body exercises work for 10 seconds longer than the upper body exercises due to being larger muscle groups. Ensure that you warm up correctly at the start before doing the circuit and cool down correctly at the end.

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| **Exercise** | **Week 1** | **Week 2** | **Week 3** | **Week 4** | **Week5** |
| Lunges | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds | 45 seconds | 50 seconds |
| Push ups | 20 seconds | 25 seconds | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds |
| Planks | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds | 45 seconds | 50 seconds |
| Squats | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds | 45 seconds | 50 seconds |
| Tricep dips | 20 seconds | 25 seconds | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds |
| Burpees | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds | 45 seconds | 50 seconds |
|  | Rest 60 seconds | Rest 55 seconds | Rest 50 seconds | Rest 45 seconds | Rest 40 seconds |
| Lunges | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds | 45 seconds | 50 seconds |
| Push ups | 20 seconds | 25 seconds | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds |
| Planks | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds | 45 seconds | 50 seconds |
| Squats | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds | 45 seconds | 50 seconds |
| Tricep dips | 20 seconds | 25 seconds | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds |
| Jumping Jacks | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds | 45 seconds | 50 seconds |
|  | Rest 60 seconds | Rest 55 seconds | Rest 50 seconds | Rest 45 seconds | Rest 40 seconds |
| Lunges | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds | 45 seconds | 50 seconds |
| Push ups | 20 seconds | 25 seconds | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds |
| Planks | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds | 45 seconds | 50 seconds |
| Squats | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds | 45 seconds | 50 seconds |
| Tricep dips | 20 seconds | 25 seconds | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds |
| Skipping | 30 seconds | 35 seconds | 40 seconds | 45 seconds | 50 seconds |

If you do the circuit 2-4 times per week you will soon start to notice a difference. You can progress the programme further if you need to by increasing the time of each exercise and/or decreasing the rest period at the end of the circuit. Likewise, should the circuit be too challenging to begin with, then you can decrease the time of each exercise and/or increase the rest period.

It is crucial to follow an appropriate nutritional strategy alongside your training if you want to achieve your goals. Alongside the above training programme, utilise the following nutrition strategies to help you achieve your goals and objectives:

1.) Eat four to six meals every day to increase your metabolic rate. Aim to eat every 2-3 hours.

2.) Eat a source of lean protein at every meal e.g. chicken, fish, whey protein.

3.) Eat vegetables as much as possible as they are not calorie dense and contain a lot of vital vitamins/minerals.

4.) Eat Healthy essential fats with each meal e.g. fish, almonds, peanut butter.

5.) Drink lots of water to keep hydrated and boost your metabolism.

Aim to get into good nutritional habits by experimenting on your food choices and combinations and be prepared. For instance, get into the habit of making your days meals and snack for the day ahead every evening and put them into tupperware boxes for ease of access. Being prepared is crucial because it will minimize your chances of getting hungry and then snacking on the wrong foods and you know exactly what you are fueling yourself with.

Should you require any help, advice or information please do not hesitate to contact me. I would be delighted to discuss with you the tried and tested methods and lifestyle changes that I have developed. Please remember that the above is only a sample programme and the exercises you can use are almost infinite.

Matt

“Together, we’ll achieve your goals”

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