

Circuit Training

What is circuit training?

Circuit training is a combination of high intensity aerobic training and resistance work, designed to target your fat loss, muscle gain and heart fitness. This type of training was developed in 1953. Studies show circuit training is the most time efficient way to enhance your fitness and endurance. It has also shown to help achieve goals and maintain them for longer compared to other forms of exercise or diet. Advantages of circuit training include

- Easily structured to provide a part or whole body workout
- No expensive equipment required
- Mainly performed in small groups (good for motivation and guidance from experienced participants and instructor)
- Can be adapted to any size workout area
- Can be customized and specified to any sport/s

Disadvantages

- Designed more for aerobic endurance and fat burning, less suitable for building strength and muscle bulk.
- Working on your own it can be hard to look at the clock when exercising, best to use a repetition system
- Times of station can be reduced to 15-20 seconds to allow an increase in weights and work on strength but due to the time constraint technique may falter and become dangerous and also circuits have little time for rest the heavier the weights the more rest that is needed.

How to setup a circuit

Normally a circuit will have a maximum of 12 exercises.

- **Timed Circuit:** This type of circuit involves working to a set time period for both rest and exercise intervals. For example, a typical timed circuit might involve 30 seconds of exercise and 30 seconds of rest in between each exercise.
- **Competition Circuit:** This is similar to a timed circuit but you push yourself to see how many repetitions you can do in the set time period. For example, you may be able to complete 12 push-ups in 30 seconds. The idea is to keep the time period the same, but try to increase the number of repetitions you can do in the set time period.
- **Repetition Circuit:** This type of circuit is great if you're working with large groups of people who have different levels of fitness and ability. The idea is that the fittest group might do, say 20 repetitions of each exercise, the intermediate group might only do 15 repetitions, while the beginners might only do 10 repetitions of each exercise.
- **Sport Specific or Running Circuit:** This type of circuit is best done outside or in a large, open area. Choose exercises that are specific to your particular sport, or emphasize an aspect of your sport you'd like to improve. Then instead of simply resting between exercises, run easy for 200 or 400 metres. You can even use sprints or fast 400 metre runs as part of your choice of exercises.
- **Stage circuit:** Complete one exercise before moving on to the next. For example press ups you complete 20 reps followed by 15 reps followed by 10 reps that equals one set of the same exercise.
- **Endurance circuit:** allows no rest in between exercises. You can work in a pyramid format 5, 10, 15, 10, 5 complete 5 reps of each exercise and move straight onto 10 reps of each exercise etc.

This link is great to find some sports specific circuits as well as basic introductions

<http://www.pponline.co.uk/encyc/circuit-training.htm>

After your circuit go for a run or walk to help relax and return the muscles to normal, reducing tightness.

Try to structure your exercises so you are doing legs/arms/core, this isn't important but may make the circuit a little easier you can design circuits to just cover legs, arms, or core.

<http://www.brianmac.co.uk/circuit.htm> great circuit for stamina and runners

<http://www.brianmac.co.uk/exercise.htm> good for those with a little more experience with weights and already have a good core. Examples of great exercises to put in your circuit

