



Exercise Tips: Maximizing Your Potential

Here are some tips to help you achieve optimal performance while you exercise.

Keep Your Workout Routine Interesting

- Gradually increase the duration (for example from 20-minute to 30-minute runs)
- Gradually increase the intensity (for example increase from five-pound to eight-pound dumbbells)
- Take up a team sport, learn a martial art or try a dance class not only to enhance your strength and cardiovascular fitness but also to improve your balance, coordination and flexibility.

Safety Tips for Resistance Exercise

- Keep the movement slow and controlled and do not jerk the weights.
- Don't lock your joints as you extend your arms or legs; extending all the way won't help develop your muscles and puts you at risk for injuries to your elbows and knees.
- Be conscientious about working opposing muscle groups. If you work your chest, be certain you work your back muscles just as aggressively. Neglecting the opposing muscle group can cause muscular imbalances, which can lead to problems with your posture and balance

The Top Ten Mistakes People Make in the Gym

According to the American College of Exercise (ACE), the following mistakes are commonly made in the gym. Below are tips to help individuals stay safe during their workout.

1. **Not stretching enough:** Stretch immediately following an aerobic activity while your muscles are warm and pliable to prevent injuries.
2. **Lifting too much weight:** Never lift more than your muscles can handle. Gradual, progressive resistance is a far more effective and safe way to increase muscle strength.
3. **Not warming up prior to activity:** Muscles need time to adjust to the new demands aerobic activity places on them. Start slowly and gradually increase intensity.
4. **Not cooling down after any type of workout:** Take a few minutes to lower your heart rate and stretch your muscles. This improves flexibility and helps prepare the body for your next workout.
5. **Exercising too intensely:** It's more effective to sustain a moderate workout for longer periods of time than to exercise intensely for only a few minutes.
6. **Not drinking enough water:** Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink water - you're already on your way to dehydration. Keep a water bottle close at hand during exercise and throughout the day after your workout.
7. **Leaning heavily on a Stairmaster:** Leaning forward on the stair machine is hard on both the wrists and the back. Lower the intensity to the point at which you can maintain good posture while lightly resting your hands on the rails for balance.
8. **Not exercising intensely enough:** Exercise intensely enough to work up a light sweat and get your heart beating in your target heart rate training zone.
9. **Jerking while lifting weights:** When you have to jerk the weight, it's likely you're jerking other muscles as well. This can lead to strain and injury, with the muscles of the back being particularly vulnerable.
10. **Consuming energy bars and sports drinks during moderate workouts:** Unless you're working out for longer than two hours per day, you don't need to supplement with high-energy bars and drinks. A basic healthy snack is your best bet.

Healthy Pre- or Post- Exercise Snack Ideas:

Plain Nuts (unroasted, unsalted) Ex: Almonds, walnuts, peanuts, cashews	Dried Cereal Ex: Corn Flakes, Wheat Chex
Peanut butter and Jelly Sandwich Or any nut-butter (ex: almond butter) on whole wheat bread	Fruit with Yogurt or Cottage Cheese or Smoothie Ex: Blueberries with vanilla yogurt
Dried Fruit Ex: Raisins, prunes, pineapple, mango, apricot	Cereal Bars and Granola Bars Ex: NutraGrain, Special K, All Bran, Kashi, Fiber One
Crackers, Pita Bread, Mini Bagels with low fat cheese or hummus Ex: Wasa, Rye Krisp, Kavli, Melba Toasts with 1 oz. Reduced Fat Cheddar Cheese	Pretzels, Baked Tortilla or Pita Chips Portion into snack-sized bags to avoid eating more than necessary
Trail Mix Store bought (may have more calories) or home-made (see sample recipe) ¼ cup portion	Energy Bars Ex: Clif Bars, Luna Bars, Pria Bars. Read label to look for lower fat and higher fiber content

Homemade Sports Drink Recipe

¼ cup sugar
½ tsp salt
¼ cup hot water
½ cup orange juice plus 2 tbsp lemon juice
3 ½ cups cold water

Trail Mix

2 cups prepared low fat granola
1 ¼ cup unsalted peanuts (or other plain unroasted unsalted nuts of your choice)
1 ¼ cup raw unsalted cashews (or other plain unroasted unsalted nuts of your choice)
½ cup sunflower seeds (meat only)
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 cup crackers, pretzels, or dried cereal (optional)
½ cup golden raisins
½ cup dried cherries or cranberries
½ cup dried apricots, diced

· In a large bowl toss together well. Place ¼ cup serving in small plastic snack bags. ·

Helpful resources and websites:

American College of Exercise:

<http://www.acefitness.org/getfit/default.aspx>

Check out their entire list of fitness tips:

<http://www.acefitness.org/healthandfitnesstips/default.aspx>

American College of Sports Medicine:

<http://www.acsm.org>

American Heart Association Fitness Tips:

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=801>

Mayo Clinic – Calories burned in 1 hour of exercise

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/exercise/SM00109>

This chart shows the estimated number of calories burned while performing a variety of exercises for one hour. Calorie expenditure varies widely depending on the exercise, intensity level and individual

Clark, Nancy. *Nancy Clark's Sports Nutrition Guidebook: The #1 Nutrition Resource for Active People*. Human Kinetics, 2003