

# FUN WITH CARDIO

*Tips for Making Cardiovascular Training New and Exciting*



BY SARA SUTHERLAND

*For my Family, Friends and Fitness peeps*

# Introduction

Welcome to Fun with Cardio! Dedicated cardiovascular training does not appear in the Healthy Habits Challenge until just a few weeks from the end. The reason is because you cannot out-exercise poor nutrition and other lifestyle habits. You cannot just go out and run more when you have had a “cheat meal” the night before. Food should not be labeled as “bad” or “cheating” because as Jen Comas of Girls Gone Strong declares, it does not have moral values. “Food is just food.” Additionally, exercise should not be a punishment for enjoying your favorite foods occasionally.

Taking the time to get the previous seven foundational health habits in place is key to long term success. Fun with Cardio for the Healthy Habits Challenge was created because yes, cardio CAN be fun! You just have to think outside the box. The next few weeks are intended to give you several different activities to try so that you find some that you love... and maybe some that you hate! All of which is okay, the key takeaway will be that you have to find something that YOU enjoy in order for you to want to sustain it.

With all of that being said, it is now time to enjoy getting a good sweat on from cardiovascular training! As with any new exercise routine, if you have any pre-existing medical conditions or are currently under the supervision of a medical provider, please consult with your health team to ensure you are ready to beginning this program.

Thank you for downloading my eBook!



## Getting Started

- Be sure you have any medical clearance that you may need before beginning!
- Keep eBook handy for reference.
- Take a photos and share on social media all of the cool and fun new activities you are trying! Be sure to tag #healthyhabitschallenge

**Looking for completely custom workouts and programming? Check out my customized programs at [thehealthyhabitschallenge.com](http://thehealthyhabitschallenge.com) and select “Shop”**

# Cardiovascular Training

Adding in specific training to improve your cardiovascular system helps ensure that you have a well balanced training program. Surprising to some, strength training absolutely has cardio benefits when your heart rate increases during training. Adding in other activities that require a variety of intensity levels and duration helps to dramatically improve your overall health.

## High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)

The buzzword “HIIT” training has become extremely popular over the last few years. It can be applied to all different types of exercise with the key being your intensity varies throughout the workout. You have periods of time where your intensity and heart rate are high, followed by lower intensity periods to let your heart rate fall back down, then repeat. It can have metabolic advantages and you can usually burn a lot of calories in a shorter period of time. The intervals and intensity can vary based on the workout, but the overall idea is that you are varying it to keep your body guessing!

## Low Intensity Steady State (LISS)

Depending on who you ask, some experts are advocates for low intensity steady state cardio, and some believe that LISS does not need to have a place in workout programming and have replaced it with HIIT. Based on my personal experiences, my body reacts to LISS differently than HIIT training, so I am a firm believer that it does have a place in your routine. The general idea for LISS training is to keep the intensity at a lower level so that you can maintain it for an extended period of time to force your body to use your energy systems differently to fuel your movement. It also helps to develop your aerobic fitness level and increase cardiovascular endurance. Ideas for 60-minute training sessions would be considered LISS such as the speed walk and yoga classes.

# Workout Library

The library of workouts listed below are grouped into estimated completion times of 30-minute, 45-minute or 60-minute workouts depending on how much time you have and how much training you still need to get in for the week. Remember, you have a 5-hour overall weekly activity goal between strength training and cardio.

Mix and match these workouts! Have FUN! For video ideas or instruction on exercises, [exercise.com](http://exercise.com) and YouTube are excellent resources!

## 30-minutes

- Bodyweight circuit - 4-6 times through. 1-3 minute rest between each set.
  - Burpee with Broad Jump - 10 reps
  - Inchworm with Pushup - 10 reps
  - Plank Jacks - 30 seconds
  - Squat Jumps - 20 reps
  - Jumping Lunge - 15 reps each leg
- 3-mile jog at 10 minute mile pace
- Stair Running - Either at a Stadium or somewhere around town with A LOT of steps! Sprint up, or even skip steps to mix it up and keep it fun.
- Track Sprints - Sprint the 100m straight sides of the track, walk the 100m curves.
- Swim at your local lap pool! The freestyle stroke can really take a lot of energy if it has been a while since you have tried to swim for speed.
- Tabata Rounds - Download a Tabata timer and choose a variety of exercises. Do only one exercise for each complete round (20 seconds active, 10 seconds rest, 8 times). 2-3 minute rest between each exercise. Example workouts below!

### WORKOUT #1

Squats

Sprint

Walking Lunges

Frog Hops

Sprints

### WORKOUT #2

Box Jumps

Side Shuffles to Left

Jumping Jacks

Side Shuffles to Right

Sprints



### **45-minutes**

- Bike ride on the streets or a local trail - Listen to music and pedal faster for one song, slow up for a song, then speed back up, repeat.
- Treadmill program to “hills” at the gym or equivalent setting where the speed and incline changes automatically.
- Rowing Machine. Sprint for 100M, 1-minute rest, sprint for 200M, rest, 300M, rest, 200M, rest, 100M, rest, then back up again until you hit your total time.
- Play soccer. Just a pick up game with friends or family will keep you moving!
- Sign up for a local 5k. Running events do not mean you have to run! “Race walking” is extremely common!

### **60-minutes**

- Ashtanga, Vinyasa Flow or Power Yoga class.
- Group Cardio class at your local gym.
- Spin class. Or create your own spin session on a stationary bike by listening to your favorite playlist and speed up every time the chorus plays. On slower songs, increase your resistance and stand during chorus.
- Kickboxing class
- 4-mile speed walk at a local park or trail
- Play in a pick-up basketball game. If it’s been a while since you done repeated short sprints this will be a really great and fun workout!

*“I may not be there yet, but I am closer than I was yesterday.”*

# Target Heart Rate

The best way to know that you are gaining cardiovascular benefit is to wear a heart rate monitor. The Polar FT4 is a great one to start, ones with chest straps tend to be more accurate than ones that read from your wrist. There are some that now are on your arm that some really love, so it really just depends on what works best for you and you believe is providing you with the more accurate data!

There is a lot of information out there regarding what is the best for different goals. For cardio, my recommendation is the below equation.\* However, when it comes to each workout, listen to your body on how you are feeling! Some days you will feel like you can give the maximum and some days you may be struggling to get to the minimum of your range. Just do what you can every day and know that it is better than nothing.

$$220 - \text{Age} = \text{MAXIMUM Heart Rate (MHR)}$$

**Target Zone for training aerobic capacity is 65 - 85% of your MHR**

$$\text{MHR} * .65 = \text{Bottom of Target Zone}$$

$$\text{MHR} * .85 = \text{Top of Target Zone}$$

When you are choosing an activity that has intervals (high intensity followed by a rest/lower intensity), your rest should be as long as it takes for your heart rate to fall **half way** between where your heart rate just was in the Target Zone and your Resting Heart Rate (what your beats per minute are when you are just relaxing and not exercising).

\* Aerobic Exercise Intensity and Target Heart Rate. (2015, August 27). Retrieved from <http://www.hanford.gov/health/?page=112>.

# Sample Workouts

## Track Sprints Pyramid

Go to the local high school. Walk 400 meters (1 lap), Sprint 100 meters, Walk 50 meters, Sprint 200 meters, Walk 100 meters, Sprint 300 meters, Walk 200 meters, Sprint 300 meters, Walk 200 meters, Sprint 200 meters, Walk 100 meters, Sprint 100 meters and Walk 400 meters.

## Stadium Stairs

All you need is a really large staircase... the longer the better! Take small breaks at the bottom of the stairs as needed.

- Sprint up hitting every step as fast as possible, jog down.
- Sprint up hitting every other step, jog down.
- Lunge up every 3rd step, jog down.
- Jump up both feet together hitting every step, jog down.
- Sprint up every step, jog down.
- Jump up both feet on every other step, jog down.
- Sprint up every other step, jog down.
- Continue with combination of any of the above to get to your desired total exercise time.

## Uphill Power Walk

Find a park, sidewalk or hillside that has a serious incline!

- Set a stopwatch. Start at the bottom, power walk all the way to the top and notice the time. Slow walk down.
- Trip #2: beat the time from Trip #1. Walk faster. Note time. Slow walk back down.
- Trip #3: beat time from Trip #2. Slow walk back down.
- Rest 1-3 minutes.
- Repeat!

## Block Attack

All you need to do for this one is to step outside your front door! Notice your surroundings and look down the way. What distance markers can you locate? It can be street light poles, power light poles, a full block, etc. Whatever distance you feel comfortable with increasing the intensity for. You can sprint between them, jog or power walk. Once you hit the marker, then slow back down to take a little rest. Notice the next marker and get back to it!



# Playlists

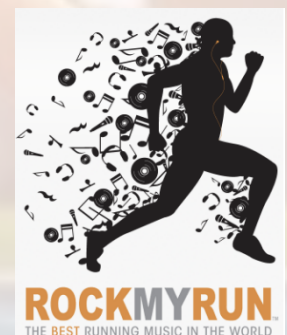
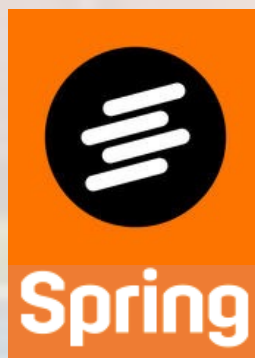
Love to listen to music while you workout to help pass the time? Me too! Studies actually show that music can help distract your brain from any discomfort that your body is experiencing from the exercise. It can also positively impact your intensity allowing you to work harder!<sup>1</sup>

Every song has an average beats per minute (bpm) and the ranges<sup>1</sup> below will help you select songs to fit what you are doing!

Playlist Selection	
Power Walking	approx. 137–139 bpm
Running	approx. 147–169 bpm
Cycling	approx. 135–170 bpm

## App Recommendations

Looking for a simple way to just push play? Check out these apps that you can download!



<sup>1</sup> Foster PhD, Carl, and Pocari PhD, John, with Anders, Mark "Exploring the Effects of Music on Exercise Intensity." *ACE Sponsored Research*. American Council on Exercise. n.d. Web. 3 August 2016.

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