

Interval Training for Beginners

The following workouts below are basic interval workouts for beginners, alternating high intensity exercise with low intensity recovery periods. Choose one of the three workouts using the cardio machine of your choice or do the workout outside, if you prefer. The sample workouts are shown on a treadmill. Detailed instructions for doing the workouts and monitoring intensity are at the end of the page.

Interval Beginner Workout 1 - 22 Minutes

Warm up 5 Minutes: RPE 3-4: Warm Up at an easy pace
Rest Set 5 Minutes: RPE 5: Increase speed and set incline to 1%. Keep a moderate pace.
Work Set 1 Minute: RPE 7 - Increase incline to raise the intensity level. You should be working hard!
Rest Set 5 Minutes: RPE 5 - Decrease speed/incline to lower your heart rate to a comfortable level.
Work Set 1 Minute: RPE 8 - Increase speed to raise the intensity level. You should be working hard!
Cool down 5 Minutes: RPE 3-5 - Decrease speed/incline to lower heart rate to for the cool down.

Beginner Workout 2 - 25 Minutes

Warm up 5 Minutes: RPE 3-4: Warm Up
Rest Set 5 Minutes: RPE 5: Increase speed and set incline to at least 1%. Keep a moderate pace.
Work Set 5 Minutes: RPE 6-7 - Increase speed and raise incline. You should be working harder here, but still feel good.
Rest Set 5 Minutes: RPE 5: Decrease speed and incline to a moderate pace.
Cool down 5 Minutes: RPE 3-4: Cool down at a slow, easy pace

Beginner Workout 3 - 29 Minutes

Warm up 5 Minutes: RPE 3-4: Warm Up
Rest Set 5 minutes: RPE 5: Increase speed and/or incline from warm-up to slightly higher than comfortable pace.
Work Set 2 minutes: RPE 6: Increase the incline to increase intensity.
Rest Set 5 minutes: RPE 5: Decrease incline back to 0% and walk at a moderate pace.
Work Set 2 minute: RPE: 7 Increase speed AND incline to bring heart rate up.
Rest Set 5 minutes: RPE: 5 Decrease speed/incline to recover back to a medium intensity.
Cool down 5 minutes: RPE 3: Cool down by walking at a comfortable pace.

Instructions:

- For each 'work set', use the settings on your machine (incline, speed, resistance, ramps, etc.) to increase intensity. You should be working out of your comfort zone, but not so hard that you feel dizzy or lightheaded.
- For each 'rest set', lower those same settings until you're back to a moderate pace. You should be completely recovered before the next work set.
- Modify according to your fitness level. If you want to go longer or faster, go for it. If you can't do the entire workout, do as much as you can and add a little time each week
- The RPE's (Rate of Perceived Exertion) are to help you keep track of your intensity on a scale of 1 - 10. During rest sets, stay around 5-6 RPE. During work sets, you should be working around 7-8 RPE.
- If you don't feel completely recovered at the end of the recovery periods, extend them as long as you need to.
- See your doctor before you begin any workout program.
- You can also use your Heart Rate Monitor to monitor your exercise intensity.

