



# THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO WORKING OUT FOR BEGINNERS

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## I Was a Beginner Once, Too

**I learned a long time ago that frequent exercise is one of the best gifts you can give yourself.**

When I worked out regularly, I felt alive and energized. But when I took time off from the gym for any extended period, I began to feel sluggish and lethargic.

I discovered that this wasn't just an internal perception, but that science backed up what I was experiencing. For instance, according to the Mayo Clinic, regular exercise controls weight; combats a variety of health conditions and diseases, including stroke, Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and depression; improves mood; boosts energy; promotes better sleep; puts the spark back into your sex life; and promotes social interaction.

It doesn't take long to begin seeing and feeling the benefits of physical activity yet beginning a workout routine - and sticking to it - requires determination and discipline.

If you're looking to get started, hopefully this guide will set you out on the right path. And if you need extra motivation and guidance - as well as another layer of accountability - know that the experienced and world-class trainers at Eclipse 1-on-1 are here for you. Our clients include people who had never set foot in a gym before, as well as those who have been gym-hounds for decades.

There's a reason they come to us - and keep coming back. We help them achieve the health and fitness goals they've been seeking. And we can do the same for you.

Exercise is powerful and can change your life. Let's get started.

Alex Carson

#MovedByExcellence





**SECTION 1**

**SETTING YOUR  
FITNESS FOUNDATION**

## Sure, you're probably anxious to get started, which is why you downloaded this guide.

But before we dive into how best to work out, let's set the appropriate foundation by discussing fitness definitions, types of exercise, and things you should do before starting your workout program.

## Fitness Definitions

- **Maximum heart rate.** MHR is the maximum number of beats made by your heart in one minute of effort and is based on the person's age. An estimate of a person's maximum age-related heart rate can be obtained by subtracting the person's age from 220. For example, if you're 45 years old, subtract 45 from 220 to get a maximum heart rate of 175. This is the average maximum number of times your heart should beat per minute during exercise. The American Heart Association recommends exercising with a target heart rate of 50 to 75 percent of your maximum heart rate for beginners. You can work at 70 to 85 percent of your maximum heart rate during vigorous activity.
- **Aerobic/cardiovascular activity.** These are activities - such as walking, running, cycling, swimming, and dancing - that are strenuous enough to temporarily increase your heart rate and speed up your breathing.
- **Strength, weight, or resistance training.** This type of exercise focuses on improving the strength and function of muscles by using resistance to muscular contraction to build the strength, anaerobic endurance, and size of skeletal muscles. When you do resistance training repeatedly and consistently, your muscles become stronger. Types of resistance training include weightlifting, exercising with stretchy resistance bands, and pushups, during which you work against the weight of your own body.
- **Flexibility training or stretching.** This type of workout improves the range of motion of joints. With both age and lack of exercise, muscles, tendons, and ligaments tend to shorten. Stretches for exercise and flexibility, yoga, Tai Chi, and Pilates will help lengthen your muscles and prevent injury. Don't confuse stretching with warming up, though, as they are not synonymous. In fact, stretching cold muscles and joints can make them prone to injury.



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

There are lots of fitness terms being thrown around these days - it's gotten to the point where you just about need a pocket guide to remember them all - but there's a handful of terms you'll frequently encounter. Here are the words and phrases you're likely to encounter most often, along with their definitions.

## Fitness Definitions

- **Warmup.** Every workout should begin with a warmup, which prepares your body for the stress of exercise. Your warmup should consist of a light-intensity aerobic activity - such as a brisk walk, light jog, or jumping jacks - to get your heart pumping and increase blood flow. This, in turn, heats up your muscles and joints. It's always best to conclude your warmup with a bit of light stretching.
- **Set.** This term refers to repeating the same exercise a certain number of times. For instance, a weightlifter may do 10 biceps curls, rest for a few moments, then perform another set of 10 more biceps curls.
- **Repetition or rep.** This refers to the number of times you perform an exercise during a set. For example, the weightlifter who performed 10 bicep curls performed 10 reps of the exercise in each set.
- **Cooldown.** Cooling down is like warming up. You generally continue your workout session for five minutes or so, but at a slower pace and reduced intensity. To cool down after a brisk walk, walk slowly for five to 10 minutes; after a run, walk briskly for five to 10 minutes; after swimming, swim laps leisurely for five to 10 minutes. After strength training or cardio, your cooldown is a great time for some light stretching, as your muscles are warmed up so they're more elastic and pliable.



### THE BENEFIT OF EXERCISE

Exercise is the magic pill. Exercise can reverse diseases, such as some forms of heart disease, help people with arthritis, and even prevent and reverse depression.





## Common Types of Exercise

There are various types of exercise, including:

- **Aerobic.** Aerobic exercise is any type of cardiovascular conditioning. It can include activities like brisk walking, swimming, running, or cycling. You probably know it as “cardio.” Aerobic exercise means “with oxygen.” Your breathing and heart rate will increase during aerobic activities.
- **Strength.** Strength training, also called weight training or resistance training, is an important part of any fitness routine. It helps make you stronger and builds muscle endurance. With strength training, you move your body against some type of resistance, such as your body weight, dumbbells, or barbells. Strength training helps increase muscle power and strength.
- **Calisthenics.** Calisthenics are basic body movements done without gym equipment and at a medium aerobic pace. These exercises don’t rely on anything but a person’s own body weight and are performed with differing levels of intensity and rhythm. Sometimes these exercises are done with light handheld tools like rings and wands. Calisthenics, which are great for the development of strength, endurance, flexibility, and coordination, include pullups, chin-ups, dips, jump squats, pushups, crunches, burpees, jumping rope, and more.



### WORKOUT TIP

If you start too aggressively too early in your workout program, you likely won’t stick with it over the long haul. What you really want to do is to develop some new habits that will stick with you for a lifetime.

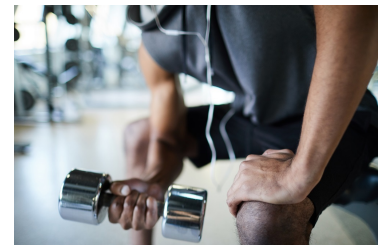
## Common Types of Exercise



- **High-intensity interval training (HIIT).** HIIT workouts alternate hard-charging intervals, during which a person's heart rate reaches at least 80 percent of its maximum capacity usually for one to five minutes, with periods of rest or less intense exercise.
- **Boot camps.** Boot camp workouts can vary. They generally include an intense mix of aerobic, strength training, and speed elements within each class session. One boot camp workout might stress calisthenics while another stresses military-style drills. In most cases, you can expect to do calisthenics - such as pullups, pushups, lunges, and crunches - as well as drills and sprints. A boot camp workout is essentially a type of interval training - bursts of intense activity alternated with intervals of lighter activity.
- **Balance or stability.** Balance training involves doing exercises that strengthen the muscles that help keep you upright, including your legs and core. These kinds of exercises can improve stability and help prevent falls. Doing balance exercises can be intense, like some very challenging yoga poses.
- **Flexibility.** Flexibility training involves low-intensity exercises that increase the total range of motion of a joint or group of joints. Flexibility exercises can decrease the chance for muscle imbalances, which can throw off your body movement and open the door to falls and injuries. Flexibility training also can boost sports performance and make accomplishing everyday tasks easier. There are multiple types of flexibility exercises, including static (no movement, long holds), stretching, and dynamic (constant movement, mimics or mirrors a movement in life or in fitness).


### WHICH TYPE OF EXERCISE IS RIGHT FOR ME?

Your regular weekly exercise routine should include both aerobic exercise (such as walking, jogging, cycling, aerobics, or a sport that involves running) for cardiovascular health, plus gym-type sessions for muscular and bone health.



This combination will ensure that you work on all aspects of your health and fitness.

By doing different exercise sessions, you will also add variety, and by working different muscles on different days, it will help reduce the risk of injury, as well as prevent monotony.

A woman in a gym is using a suspension training system. She is wearing a black sports bra, black leggings, and a white headband. She is holding onto yellow handles of a suspension system. In the background, there are other people in a gym setting, including a man in a grey shirt and a woman in a blue top. The text "SECTION 2" and "GETTING STARTED" is overlaid on the image.

**SECTION 2**  
**GETTING STARTED**

**It's important to consider a few things before you start any workout program.**

## Get a Checkup

Before you begin working out, consult your doctor and get a physical medical examination. This is particularly important if you are 45 or over or not used to strenuous physical activities. The reason for this is two-fold. First, your doctor can determine if you have any health problems or conditions that could put you at risk of an injury during exercise. Second, knowing your current health condition can help you optimize your workout, making it easier for you - and your personal trainer, if you have one - to understand your limitations and create an exercise plan tailored to your needs.



## Set Realistic Goals

If you've never worked out before - or if it has been years since you have done so - than know that attaining your health and fitness goals is a marathon, not a sprint. To keep you on track, you need a plan that includes attainable steps and goals. Start with a plan of easy-to-follow steps, such as the ones included later in this guide. Then you can continue building on it as your fitness level improves.

### GOAL SETTING

if your goal is to finish a 10k run, you can start by building a plan that includes shorter runs. Strive to complete a one-mile run, then two miles, and then a 5k. Setting - and achieving - intermediate goals will help you stay motivated.

Make sure the goals are clear, realistic, and concise. Many beginners make the mistake of starting out too aggressively, only to give up when they end up tired, sore, or injured.

## Make It a Habit

It's easier for people to maintain an exercise routine in the long term if they make it a habit and do it regularly. Over the years of helping people just like you embed their workouts into their daily lives, I've learned a few things about how to make your fitness program a habit. Here they are:

1. Do a workout that you enjoy doing.
2. Put your workout schedule on your calendar.
3. Experiment to find the workout time that's best for you.
4. Remove obstacles with a pre-workout checklist.
5. Have clothes specifically dedicated to working out.
6. Have a plan for your workout.
7. Just get moving, even when you don't feel like it.
8. Aim for consistency in frequency, rather than consistently A+ workouts.
9. Exercise with a goal in mind, such as losing weight, competing in a half-marathon, or reducing your blood glucose levels.
10. Get accountability by involving a friend, personal coach, or trainer. If you want to take your accountability up a notch, then put some stakes on the line. Paying for a coach or trainer is one way to do this.

## Stay Hydrated

Drinking enough water each day is crucial for many reasons. Water regulates body temperature, keeps joints lubricated, prevents infections, delivers nutrients to cells, and keeps organs functioning properly. According to research conducted by Harvard University, being well-hydrated also improves sleep quality, cognition, and mood.

In short, drinking fluids throughout the day is essential for maintaining healthy hydration levels. Even more important, replenishing fluids during exercise is important for maintaining optimal performance, especially when exercising in hot temperatures. What's more, hydrating after your workout can help you recover and get you ready for your next training session.



## 7 HEALTH BENEFITS OF WATER

1. Helps maximize physical performance.
2. Significantly affects energy levels and brain function.
3. May help prevent and treat headaches.
4. May help relieve constipation.
5. May help treat kidney stones.
6. Helps prevent hangovers.
7. Can aid weight loss.

## Optimize Your Nutrition

It's important to support your workout program with a balanced diet. Despite all the fad diets on the market today that promote carbs over protein, protein over carbs, or eliminate fats, all food groups are necessary to sustain healthy energy levels and get the most out of your workout.

- **Carbohydrates:** Carbs are particularly important, as they can fuel your muscles before exercise. Carbs are also important after exercise to replenish glycogen stores and assist the absorption of amino acids into your muscles during recovery.
- **Protein:** Protein improves muscle recovery after exercise, repairs tissue damage, and builds muscle mass.
- **Healthy fats:** Consuming healthy fats has been shown to help burn body fat and preserve muscle fuel during workouts, making your energy last longer. Healthy fats also support cell growth, protect organs, and keep your body warm. Essential fatty acids are necessary for the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K and help with hormone production.

Also, if you're not used to working out every day, be mindful of your limits. If you feel pain or discomfort while exercising, stop and rest. Pushing through the pain is not a good idea, as it can cause injuries. Working out harder and faster is not always better.

## GET PLENTY OF REST

Make sure you rest between workouts. Rest is essential for muscle growth. Exercise creates microscopic tears in your muscle tissue. But during rest, cells called fibroblasts repair it. This helps the tissue heal and grow, resulting in stronger muscles.

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Taking your time to progress through your workout program can help you maintain your routine in the long term and make the most of it.



A muscular man with a beard and short dark hair is shirtless, wearing dark shorts and red sneakers. He is holding a thick black battle rope with both hands, one high and one low, in a ready stance. The background shows a gym with various equipment like kettlebells and racks.

**SECTION 3**

**HOW MUCH EXERCISE  
SHOULD YOU DO?**



**According to the 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, adults need to do two types of physical activity each week to improve their health - aerobic activity and muscle strengthening.**

The Department of Health and Human Services says that to be healthy, adults should get a total of at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise or at least 75 minutes of vigorous activity - plus muscle-strengthening exercises - per week. Moderate intensity would be things such as a leisurely bike ride, doing light yard work, or simply a brisk walk. Vigorous would be more like hiking, running, or swimming laps.

Train your muscles requires lifting something heavy. That could be your body weight, though as you get stronger, you'll eventually need to add resistance by using stretchy bands or actual weights you see in a gym.

I know 150 minutes each week sounds like a lot of time, but it's not. Those 150 minutes could be a 30-minute workout five times a week or a 35- to 40-minute workout every other day. The good news is that you can spread your activity out during the week, so you don't have to do it all at once. You can even break it up into smaller chunks of time during the day.

Regardless of the approach you take, it's important to start slowly and increase the intensity as you build up your fitness level up. And remember, even though a daily amount of physical activity is needed for good health, allowing your body to rest is important, too. Not letting your body recover from the stress of exercise increases the risk of injuries, such as muscle strains and stress fractures, and can result in overtraining syndrome.

**DO SOMETHING**

If you're getting less than 150 minutes of workout a week, you're still going to see benefits. It's not like you shouldn't do anything if you can't get in a 30-minute workout, because you're definitely going to see benefits even with a 10- or 15-minute workout.

**PACK THE WORKOUT PUNCH**

Recent studies have shown that packing the 150-minute minimum requirement into one or two training sessions per week can be as beneficial as spreading the sessions throughout the week.

A woman with dark hair, wearing an orange headband, a white tank top, and blue shorts with orange and white stripes, is leaning forward on a large grey exercise ball. She is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. Her hands are resting on the ball, and she is wearing orange wristbands. The background is a bright, out-of-focus indoor space, likely a gym or studio.

**SECTION 4**

**ONE-WEEK  
EXERCISE PROGRAM**

## Your 1-Week Beginner's Workout Program

Here is your easy-to-follow, one-week exercise program that does not require equipment, will only take you 30 to 45 minutes a day to complete, and will help you hit the 150 minutes of recommended weekly physical activity.

### Sunday

Complete 40 minutes of aerobic exercise, such as a moderately paced jog, brisk walk, or brisk bicycle ride.

### Monday

Rest.

### Tuesday

Walk briskly for 10 minutes. Then complete the following two circuits. Do not rest between exercises within each circuit, but rest for one minute after each set. After you complete your circuits, stretch.

- **Circuit #1:** Complete three sets, with each set consisting of 10 lunges for each leg, 10 pushups, and 10 sit-ups.
- **Circuit #2:** Complete three sets, with each set consisting of 10 chair-dips, 10 jumping jacks, 10 air-squats.

### Wednesday

Rest.

### Thursday

Complete 30 minutes of aerobic exercise, such as a moderately paced jog, brisk walk, or brisk bicycle ride.

### Friday

Rest.

### Saturday

Complete 40 minutes of aerobic exercise, such as a moderately paced jog, brisk walk, or brisk bicycle ride.



### WARMING UP

Always include a warmup routine before beginning any workout. Here is mine:

- **Head rolls.** Slowly roll your head in half-circles, from shoulder to shoulder, completing five half-circles in each direction
- **Shoulder rolls:** Slowly roll your shoulders forward and backward, 10 times each way.
- **Torso twists.** Keeping your legs stationary, twist your torso 10 times to the left and 10 times to the right.
- **Quad stretches.** Stretch each quad three times for five seconds, alternating between quads.
- **Arm stretches.** Stretch each arm over your chest three times for five seconds, alternating between arms.

A man in a grey tank top is assisting a woman in a blue sports bra and black leggings as she uses a cable machine in a gym. The man is standing behind her, holding her arm to provide support and guidance. The woman is seated on the machine, holding the handle with both hands. The background shows various gym equipment and large windows.

**SECTION 5**

# **A BEGINNER'S GYM WORKOUT**

## A Beginner's Gym Workout

### Level 1 Workout

- Warm up for five minutes.
- Spend 15 minutes walking or on the treadmill.
- Cool down for five minutes.

This easy workout helps you develop a "routine." As you get more comfortable, you can increase your walking speed or time. How long you remain at Level 1 is up to you; continue this routine until you feel you are ready to take it up a notch.

### Level 2 Workout

Level 2 introduces bodyweight exercises into your workout. Learning to control your body through bodyweight exercises is more beneficial in the long run than strapping into a machine and moving through a set path. Once you can do bodyweight exercises proficiently, using weight machines becomes easy.

Warm up for five minutes, and then spend 10 minutes walking or on the treadmill. Complete three circuits (remember, a circuit is a group of exercises) of these two exercises (rest for one minute between circuits, but not between exercises):

- 10 bodyweight squats
- 10 push-ups

Cool down for five minutes.

### Level 3 Workout

Whether you are 25 years old or 75 years old, 125 pounds or 350 pounds, have never lifted anything heavy or toss truck tires for fun, free weights should not invoke fear into your heart.

Warm up for five minutes, and then spend 10 minutes walking or on the treadmill. Grab a single, 10-pound (4.5kg) dumbbell and find a flat bench. Complete three circuits of these three exercises (rest for one minute between circuits, but not between exercises):

- 10 bodyweight squats
- 10 push-ups
- 10 one-arm dumbbell rows per arm

Cool down for five minutes.

### PROBLEMS WITH CIRCUITS?

Can't complete all your circuits? No worries; do what you can.

And if you need help learning the proper form for squats, pushups, or one-arm dumbbell rows, call us.

That's what we're here for.

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### HOW TO DO A ONE-ARM DUMBBELL ROW



**Starting position.** Holding the dumbbell in your right hand, bend over to place your left knee and left hand on a bench to support your body weight.

**Upward movement.** Exhale and slowly pull the dumbbell upward, bending your elbow and pulling your upper arm backward.

Need more help? [Watch this video.](#)

## Level 4 Workout

Warm up for five minutes, and then spend 10 minutes walking or on the treadmill. Grab a single, 10-pound (4.5kg) dumbbell and find a flat bench.

Complete three circuits of these three exercises (rest for one minute between circuits, but not between exercises):

- 10 goblet squats OR 10 dumbbell Romanian deadlifts.
- 10 push-ups.
- 10 one-arm dumbbell rows per arm.

Cool down for five minutes.



### The Romanian Deadlift

The Romanian deadlift is a cousin of the bodyweight squat, but the focus is more on the hips than on the knees.

For this exercise, you'll need a pair of dumbbells.

- Stand with feet hip-width apart and knees soft, holding dumbbells in front of hips with palms facing thighs.
- Keeping spine in neutral position and squeezing shoulder blades, start sending the hips back.
- Lower dumbbells in front of shins, keeping them close to the body. Once they pass the knees, do not allow the hips to sink further.
- At the bottom of the movement, maintain a neutral spine and drive through heels to fully extend hips and knees, squeezing glutes at the top.

Need more help? [Watch this video.](#)

### ADDING WEIGHTS TO YOUR SQUATS

If you want to continue adding dumbbells into your workout, then add them to your squats. Using the same 10-pound dumbbell, hold the dumbbell in front of you, grabbing the ends of the dumbbell with both hands. Now complete your "goblet squats," named as such because it looks like you're holding a goblet that you don't want to spill.

In addition, as you progress, you can add weight to your circuits, but make your weight progressions minimal, such as moving from a 10-pound dumbbell to a 12½-pound dumbbell.

Need more help? [Watch this video.](#)

### COOLING DOWN

Cooling down is similar to warming up. You generally continue your workout session for five minutes or so, but at a slower pace and reduced intensity.

Light jogging or walking is one of the easiest ways to cool down. You can also try doing some dynamic stretches, such as walking lunges or yoga poses.



**SECTION 6**

**MOVED BY  
EXCELLENCE**



**One of the easiest parts of starting an exercise program is deciding to do it.**

Usually, there's something inspiring you to make a change: Maybe you tried on a pair of jeans that were too tight or there's an upcoming event - a reunion, wedding, or party - where you're going to see people you haven't seen in a while.

Whatever it is, you're motivated and you're excited; the fantasy of a new you is enough to inspire you. It's the getting started part that can be tricky. The best way to build and maintain momentum is with action. While it's great to ponder your weight-loss goals and general fitness goals, simply focusing on your commitment to exercise and finding success in the workout itself can help motivate you to keep at it. There's something to be said for just doing it - before too much contemplation drains your energy.

Whatever your goals, the trainers at Eclipse 1-on-1 can help you see better results sooner, avoid injuries, lose fat, gain muscle, break through plateaus, set realistic goals, and establish lifelong exercise habits. We'll teach you proper form and technique, keep you accountable, and challenge you to do better.

I look forward to seeing you in the gym.



We are Atlanta's leading personal training center, a distinction we have earned from more than 20 years of helping our clients tone and sculpt their bodies, transform their approach to health and wellness, and achieve levels of fitness and energy they thought were gone years ago.

If you're looking for a higher level of performance with a personal trainer who is as invested in your success as you are, then you've come to the right place.

## About Alex Carson



### So who am I to give you advice on working out?

I'm an Atlanta native and a former D1-AA athlete who played football for The College of the Holy Cross.

It was during my years at Holy Cross that I developed a passion for physical fitness and nutrition.

Upon graduating, I received my personal training certification and began working at several gyms before joining the team at Eclipse 1-on-1.

Under the mentorship and guidance of Jeff Toney, I learned what it means to truly help people achieve the best versions of themselves.

Soon afterward, I competed in my first-ever bodybuilding show (Lee Haney's First Contest, spurred by his eight Mr. Olympia titles) and won Overall Best Bodybuilder.

I have studied under and trained with elite trainers, actively put into practice what I instruct my own clients to do, and am passionate about health and fitness.

It is my pleasure to share my knowledge with you.

Alex



@juicecarson



## BONUS WORKOUT

Alex Carson will get your heart pumping with this online lower body / tabata workout

[CLICK TO START YOUR WORKOUT](#)

ECLIPSE101  
PRIVATE EXERCISE