

21-Day Cardio Challenge

The 21-Day Cardio Challenge is a starter program for someone of any fitness level to facilitate an easy transition into a healthy daily cardiovascular habit of activity. The purpose of this challenge is to help you create a habit of cardio exercise as you slowly increase your cardiovascular endurance and conditioning at the same time. You have two options – the “relaxed”, or beginner option, or the “advanced,” or already actively fit option. The program will walk you through seven 3-day sequences, starting with a commitment of just 10 minutes per day and building to a 40-minute workout by day 21. Please keep in mind that this is a program intended not to overwhelm you, so listen to your body as you go and celebrate that you are incorporating a little more movement each day into your life.

The ‘exercise key’ explains each exercise as well as the intensity effort level each exercise should be performed at. If for any reason you experience pain from an exercise, modify the exercise or substitute it with another one that doesn’t cause you pain.

21-Day Cardio Challenge



EXERCISE KEYS

<<< Relaxed Exercise Key >>> <<< Advanced Exercise Key >>>

Exercise	Intensity // Description
Modified Jumping Jacks	65% // Like a jumping jack, but instead of jumping, simply move your legs out one at a side – from side-to-side – so that this stays a low-impact exercise. Move your arms, with your elbows straight, from a relaxed position at your side all the way above your head until your hands clap, and then repeat.
High Knees	65% // Standing in place, lift one knee up at a time, as high as you can and then place it back on the ground, switching legs as you go. This is similar to a high knee marching movement, however you are staying in place.
Modified Burpees	70% // Starting from a standing position, bend down in a squatting position, placing your hands on a stable chair. Once your hands are positioned on the chair, step or jump both feet backwards so that your body is in a diagonal line from the chair. Pause for a moment, then step or jump your feet back towards the chair and then stand up fully. Repeat the exercise and move quickly.
Easy Walking	70% // This is a walking pace at which you might leisurely walk a dog.
Medium Walking	85% // This is the walking pace you would use when walking in a hurry, but are still able to keep up a leisurely conversation with a friend.
Brisk Walking	85% // This is the walking pace you would use if you were in a hurry to get out of the rain.
Very Brisk Walking	90% // This is your best variation of speed walking and is the fastest you can walk.
Light Jog	95% // This is slightly faster than your very brisk walk pace and is a light jog where you will use your arms to guide your body into a movement pattern that mimics running.

Exercise	Intensity // Description
Jumping Jacks	60% // Perform a basic jumping jack, making sure your feet leave the ground and your arms come all the way above your head, with your hands clapping together at the top to complete each repetition.
Mountain Climbers	75% // From a plank, or push up position, keep your arms extended in a 90-degree angle from the ground, tighten your abdominals and bring one knee at a time upwards towards your belly-button, switching your legs quickly as if your legs were running, or doing a lateral high-knee movement from the plank position.
Burpees	70% // Starting from a standing position, squat and then drop your hands to the floor, jumping your feet out to land in a plank, or push up position. From the plank position, perform a push-up and then jump your feet back so that you are in a forward fold, squat position. From that forward fold, squat position jump upwards, with your arms over your head, as high as you can, making sure your feet leave the ground. Land your jump, ending in the standing position and then begin the exercise again.
Easy Jogging	70% // This is a light run or jogging pace at which you are barely exerting yourself and you are able to have extensive conversations with others while you do it. You should feel like you could do this pace for miles.
Medium Jogging	80% // This is your “basic” jogging pace and is a pace at which you feel good but that you wouldn’t want to hold extensive conversations with others while doing it.
Brisk Jogging	85% // This is a “tempo” pace, meaning it is a pace that you push yourself but don’t overexert yourself; it is a pushed pace that is sustainable.
Run	90% // This is above a tempo pace, but not a sprint.
Hard Run	95% // This is equivalent to a sprint, or your fastest running pace.

21-Day Cardio Challenge RELAXED WORKOUT

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DAYS	1	2	3	DAYS	4	5	6	DAYS	7	8	9	DAYS	10	11	12
10-Minute Relaxed Workout	DURATION 1 Minute	EXERCISE High Knees		15-Minute Relaxed Workout	DURATION Repeat 3 rounds of the ff:	EXERCISE Easy Walk		20-Minute Relaxed Workout	DURATION 1 Minute	EXERCISE Standing Bicycles		25-Minute Relaxed Workout	DURATION 5 Minutes	EXERCISE Bicycle / Burpee / Jumping Jack Mix	
	1 Minute	Modified Jumping Jacks			1 Minute	Medium Walk			1 Minute	Modified Jumping Jacks					
	2 Minutes	Medium Walking			1 Minute	Brisk Walk			2 Minutes	Easy Walking					
	2 Minutes	Brisk Walking			2 Minutes	Medium Walk			2 Minutes	Medium Walking					
	2 Minutes	Medium Walking			1 Minute				2 Minutes	Brisk Walking					
	1 Minute	Modified Jumping Jacks							2 Minutes	Very Brisk Walking					
	1 Minute	High Knees							2 Minutes	Brisk Walking					
									2 Minutes	Medium Walking					
									2 Minutes	Easy Walking					
									1 Minute	Modified Burpees					
									1 Minute	Modified Jumping Jacks					
									1 Minute	Standing Bicycles					
DAYS	13	14	15	DAYS	16	17	18	DAYS	19	20	21	21-DAY CARDIO CHALLENGE RELAXED WORKOUT  DONE!			
30-Minute Relaxed Workout	DURATION 5 Minutes	EXERCISE Bicycle / Burpee / Jumping Jack Mix		35-Minute Relaxed Workout	DURATION 5 Minutes	EXERCISE Medium Walk		40-Minute Relaxed Workout	DURATION Repeat 2 rounds of the following:	EXERCISE Medium Walk					
	5 Minutes	Medium Walking				Repeat 6 rounds of the following:			4 Minutes	Light Jog					
	5 Minutes	Brisk Walking				2 Minutes	Light Jog		1 Minute	Medium Walk					
	5 Minutes	Medium Walking				3 Minutes	Medium Walk		3 Minutes	Light Jog					
	5 Minutes	Brisk Walking							1 Minute	Medium Walk					
	5 Minutes	Bicycle / Burpee / Jumping Jack Mix							2 Minutes	Light Jog					
									1 Minute	Medium Walk					
									1 Minute	Light Jog					
									2 Minutes	Medium Walk					

21-Day Cardio Challenge ADVANCED WORKOUT

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DAYS	1	2	3	DAYS	4	5	6	DAYS	7	8	9	DAYS	10	11	12
10-Minute Advanced Workout	DURATION 1 Minute	EXERCISE Jumping Jacks		15-Minute Advanced Workout	DURATION Repeat 3 rounds of the following:	EXERCISE Light Jog / Brisk Walk		20-Minute Advanced Workout	DURATION 1 Minute	EXERCISE Mountain Climbers		25-Minute Advanced Workout	DURATION 5 Minutes	EXERCISE Bicycle / Burpee / Jumping Jack Mix	
	1 Minute	Mountain Climbers			1 Minute	Medium Jog			1 Minute	Jumping Jacks					
	2 Minutes	Light Jog / Brisk Walk			1 Minute	Brisk Jog / Run			1 Minute	Burpees					
	2 Minutes	Medium Jog			2 Minutes	Medium Jog			2 Minutes	Easy Jog					
	2 Minutes	Light Jog / Brisk Walk			1 Minute				2 Minutes	Jog					
	1 Minute	Mountain Climbers							2 Minutes	Brisk Jog					
	1 Minute	Jumping Jacks							2 Minutes	Run					
									2 Minutes	Brisk Jog					
									2 Minutes	Medium Jog					
									2 Minutes	Easy Jog					
									1 Minute	Burpees					
									1 Minute	Jumping Jacks					
									1 Minute	Mountain Climbers					
DAYS	13	14	15	DAYS	16	17	18	DAYS	19	20	21	21-DAY CARDIO CHALLENGE ADVANCED WORKOUT  DONE!			
30-Minute Advanced Workout	DURATION 5 Minutes	EXERCISE Bicycle / Burpee / Jumping Jack Mix		35-Minute Advanced Workout	DURATION 5 Minutes	EXERCISE Medium Jog		40-Minute Advanced Workout	DURATION Repeat 2 rounds of the following:	EXERCISE Medium Jog					
	5 Minutes	Medium Jog				Repeat 6 rounds of the following:			4 Minutes	Run					
	5 Minutes	Brisk Jog				2 Minutes	Light Jog		1 Minute	Medium Jog					
	5 Minutes	Medium Jog				3 Minutes	Brisk Jog		3 Minutes	Run					
	5 Minutes	Brisk Jog							1 Minute	Medium Jog					
	5 Minutes	Bicycle / Burpee/ Jumping Jack Mix							2 Minutes	Run					
									1 Minute	Medium Jog					
									1 Minute	Run					
									2 Minutes	Medium Jog					