

Unless you happen to have wondered into a job as a professional athlete or won the lottery last week, the chances are you struggle to find time to do all the training you want to do.

Often this is simply because you haven't realized that you do actually have the time and that you're going to have to sacrifice that hour in front of X-Factor, get up an hour earlier to train before work and tape Match of the Day so you can get to bed early on Saturday.

Don't believe me? Write down everything you do with every half an hour of every day for the next week. However, sometimes even with the best intentions, time is short. The desire is there, but there just aren't enough hours in the week. So what can be done to ensure your training is hitting the spot and you're optimizing every minute of your time in the gym?

Follow this checklist and you'll soon be living a laser-focussed lifestyle which generates the results you want.

Make your mind up

If you continue to go around in this cycle of not knowing whether you are trying to build muscle for aesthetic reasons, train for your first triathlon, reach single digit body fat or add 50lbs to your back squat, you are going to achieve little other than frustration at mediocre results.

The constant jumping from program to program because you get hooked by the testimonial shots on the latest sales page or the book cover is going to get you nowhere fast.

Only you can decide what results will really mean the most to you but similarly, only you can take responsibility for staying on track.

Stop following the crowds to every new wonder program and stick to what you said in the first place.

Find something that inspires you rather than trying to generate false motivation which will last about as long as the left-over turkey from Christmas. Willpower is a short-term cover up for fulfilling desires to live life properly.

You'll know when you find this as you'll get excited by the next training challenge and love the journey!

You'll require no effort or great willpower to refuse all the temptations from the blood-suckers who want your time, want to drag you back to their level and who revel in making you live under the cloud they have accepted as their life.

Keep it simple

Unless you are a highly advanced athlete, simplicity is usually the key to fantastic results, whatever the goal.

If you're trying to burn body fat, don't reduce this and cut out a bit of that. Keep it simple and eliminate all processed sugar, caffeine, wheat and alcohol for at least 4 weeks. Forget which magic ergogenic supplement to use in your pre-workout shake and just eat clean food based largely around protein and vegetables, prepared by you.

If it didn't come off a tree, out of the ground or the sea or run around, stay away.

Eat your biggest meals within the 6-12 hours after weight training then keep calories relatively low at all other times.

If you're trying to add muscle for aesthetic reasons, put down your magazine, get out of the twenty forums you read each day which just confuse you.

Find yourself under a bar or with kettlebells or dumbbells in your hand on a regular basis.

Doubt yourself on many occasions. This shows that the training is hard enough to force results, but never give in. Feed on the fear of training.

Let's assume you can only train three times per week.

Keep it simple with density based training. In other words, each week you will add more weight or perform more reps in the time allotted. Twenty to thirty minutes is enough when using exercises like squats, deadlifts and pull ups.

Pick compound exercises and superset them for time efficiency.

The weight used should be about your 10RM and you want to shoot for 7-8 reps on the first 3-4 sets.

Rest as little as possible between exercises and just keep alternating between the two exercises for twenty minutes.

A sample 'PUSH' session could look like this.

Perform the A superset for 15-20 minutes

A1: Front squat

A2: Bench press

Rest 3 minutes

Perform the B superset for 10-15 minutes

B1: Reverse lunge

B2: Military press

A sample 'PULL' session could look like this.

Perform the A superset for 15-20 minutes

A1: Deadlift

A2: Pull ups

Rest 3 minutes

Perform the B superset for 10-15 minutes

B1: Kettlebell swing

B2: Inverted row

Perform the push session twice and the pull session once in the first week, then perform the push session once and the pull session twice in the second week.

If time allows, add a 10-15 minute metabolic circuit as a finisher at the end of each session to increase the oxygen debt and resultant increase in metabolic rate after the sessions. Burn more

fat in less time.

Simply pick 4 compound exercises for this circuit and perform as many rounds of 10-20 reps of each exercise as possible in 10-15 minutes with minimal rest.

An example would be 15 double kettlebell swings, 20 burpees and 250m on the Concept 2 rower or a 400m run.

Keep it simple by beating your time each week or create lots of circuits and re-test yourself every 4-6 weeks for variety.

Make sure you know what session you are doing, what the targets are and how long it will take before you step in the gym. Know what every single action is designed to achieve. If there is no valid reason which takes

you another step closer to that inspiring goal you set, throw it out with the magazine you read it in.

As soon as you're in the gym, nail it.

If you're looking to improve your long-distance running do not rely on three long runs per week. Perform just one long run and two shorter interval sessions to work on speed. Also make sure you include some strength work as it is usually leg strength endurance that lets runners down at the end rather than a lack of aerobic capacity.

If you constantly focus on distance rather than speed, you will have to run further and further every week to keep reaping benefits which given your time constraints is not the way forward! Your body will become more efficient every time you run a set distance so that 5 mile run will become less and less of a challenge and produce less results for you!

Perform power based exercises. Cleans and snatches involve triple extension improving your force production which will delay your time to fatigue in a race. Plyometrics and bounding exercises will improve your deceleration and acceleration abilities, again maintaining your long stride length for as long as possible.

Cut out the distractions

Humans are good at making life complicated and stressful with useless clutter. This doesn't just apply to material goods but also mental clutter.

Improve your time management and free up training and food preparation time with these simple steps.

- Be rude in the gym and talk to no-one. Get the iPod on if necessary and nail your session. If you have a training partner make sure they understand the need for focus. You can comment on the hot girls and last night's football in the showers after.
- Stop reading lots of different forums on the internet. Be honest, you haven't actually got anything out of them so far apart from a few childish arguments.
- Don't read fitness magazines they will only make you feel fat.
- Once you have your program set, read nothing else until a week or two before you need a new one. This new one should build on the old one.
- Train away from family, laptops, mobile phones or anything that could provide a temptation during rest breaks in a session.
- Clear out your food cupboards rather than assuming you'll be able to resist this time. Don't let anything cloud your better judgement in times of weakness.
- If your work schedule doesn't allow regular feeds through the day find a new method. There is more than one way to skin a cat. Try the Warrior Diet which works on one large feed each evening and removes the hassles some people encounter in trying to eat every three hours.

The key to getting maximum results from minimum time is keeping it simple.

If you wrote down what you actually do with your 168 hours each week you would soon realize

that you do have time for an effective training regime and food preparation you just clutter it up with unnecessary complexities.

Do the opposite of mainstream society

- 'They' refers to the average, lazy, non-achieving fat people who clog up the streets outside fast food joints and force you to lean to one side on a plane.
- They spend most of their time performing push movements which target the 'mirror' muscles so spend more time pulling with exercises like inverted rows, deadlifts and pull ups
- They spend most of their exercise time on aerobic exercise so prioritise weights training.
- They do steady state cardio. Do intervals.
- They choose to get involved in every cake round at work. Say no.
- They do long sessions at a moderate intensity. Do short intense ones.
- They search for excuses. Search for solutions.
- They talk about what they used to be able to lift or what time they will run in the future so you must focus on the here and now. Get that weight up for the reps set. Do this on a regular basis and the future will shape as desired.
- They train on machines. Train free.
- They fear heavy weights. Lift them regularly.
- They focus on as quantity of reps. Make quality of technique your priority.
- They eat lots of carbs. Eat fewer carbs.
- They watch TV at night to forget real life. Read books which inspire and excite you about life.
- They stay up late and get up late. Sleep early and wake early.
- They like to sit. Find ways to enjoy movement.
- They go on holiday to recover. Be more alive on holiday than ever.
- They look for things that confirm what they think they already know to comfort themselves about their lack of achievement. Look for things that contradict what you know and give them careful consideration.

Alwyn Cosgrove once said words to the effect of "whatever you see in a gym, do the opposite and you will see results."

Again, it's that simple.

There are few secrets in fitness other than finding what keeps you laser-focused and inspired to

put the hard work and sacrifices in on a daily basis.

There's a saying that goes, "If I had six hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend 3 hours sharpening my axe."

The chances are you never take time to sharpen your axe but spend that time sabotaging your own results with the same blunt instruments.

Keep it simple.

[Jon Le Tocq](#)