

Getting the basics right

Simple truths that you won't hear from the newly qualified PT at the gym or from the women's magazines.....easy changes you can make straight away that will get you the results that you want in less time.

Intensity

You can be doing all the right things, but if you're not working hard enough, then you're not going to get the results that you want.

Think of the effort you are putting into your workout on a scale from 1-10. If 1 is feeling like sitting on the sofa, eating ice cream and watching Strictly, and 10 is feeling like you are about to collapse with exhaustion that very moment, then you want to be at a 7 or 8 out of ten for at least 20 minutes when you train.

But what does a 7 or 8 feel like?

- **It should feel a bit uncomfortable.**
- **You can carry on, but you're looking forward to it finishing.**
- **You're not entirely sure if you can keep this level up.**
- **You can talk, but its an effort, and you'd rather not.**
- **You speak in short sentences.**

Remember that it's relative! Your level 7 is completely different from anyone else's! And your level 7 will be different on different days, and times. What you have eaten, how you have slept, how stressful your day has been, all of these things will make a difference to how you are feeling, and how your body responds to the demands you are putting it under.

It doesn't matter if you are going out for a walk, doing a fitness DVD, going for a swim or training at the gym. You've got to hit that uncomfortable sweaty feeling. Remember, you need to make it difficult in order for your body to react to that difficulty by getting stronger and fitter. If there is no reason to change, then your body won't!



Details

Don't get too bogged down in the detail

There's so much advice out there, so many magazine articles, so many myths and half-truths, that sometimes the sheer amount of information can actually stop you from achieving your results. The latest scientific research may well get you an extra 0.01% improvement. But unless you're an Olympic athlete (and let's face it, most of us are not!) then the benefits of just getting started far outweigh over-thinking these tiny incremental details.

What time should I eat my dinner?

The time that you eat your dinner is nowhere near as important as what's in your dinner! The myth of no dinner/carbs after 6pm is still out there. Eating the right foods at 6.03 will not make you fat, and eating the wrong food at 5.57 will not help you lose weight!

What time should I work out?

Whatever time works best for you! Some of us are morning people. Some of us are night owls. We may only get the chance to exercise in our lunch hour, or whilst the kids are having a nap. Better to train at a convenient time that fits in with your life style. Train when you want!

What form of exercise is best?

Any exercise that you enjoy, and will keep doing is best! We all know the whole routine of joining a gym, going for a few weeks, and then because we don't know what we're doing, we don't see any results and we hate every minute of it we just give up. An expensive mistake!

Food

The truth is, you can't out-train a bad diet.

If you are eating the wrong foods, and the wrong quantities, then your exercise regime will not get you results in terms of weight loss, toning up and looking great. Sure you'll feel fitter, heck, you'll be fitter, and that's most definitely a good thing! But if you want to fit into the snazzy evening dress, those skinny jeans or look good naked, then you can't ignore the food element.

Weights

You won't get too muscly by using weights (unless you want to!).

We've all seen pictures of Arnold Schwarzenegger, and of female bodybuilders. Now whether or not you aspire to look like that – or think they look terrible, one thing is certain. No-one wakes up one morning and is surprised that they look like that! It doesn't happen quickly, and more importantly, it doesn't happen by accident.

If you see a man (or a woman) who is extremely muscly, they have worked their butts off to look that way! They have dieted, eaten the right foods, trained incredibly hard and sacrificed a great deal to get that look.

It's even harder for women than men to gain muscle, as we lack the hormone levels (of testosterone) to do so. If you use the 5 kilo dumbbells twice a week, you will absolutely not morph into a muscle bound freak!