

Intermediate 12-week training program

Step it up with the Intermediate training program

The Intermediate training program is designed for people with a base level of fitness, wanting to improve their fitness by increasing the amount of physical activity they do.

As a guide this program is suited to people already performing 150 minutes of exercise per week and provides a 12-week plan to extend your activity.

This training program is built around running (or jogging) however you can exchange running with other modes of exercise, such as cycling, swimming or other forms of activity, to suit your own preferences. If you do modify the program it is important that you keep the number, intensity and duration of sessions the same.

The program includes exercise at a “vigorous intensity” level and we recommend that you seek guidance from your general practitioner if you are beginning to exercise at a higher intensity than you previously have. There is an additional warm up, cool down and stretching guide. Make sure to complete this before and after each workout.

Intensity guide:

Moderate intensity: An aerobic activity that is able to be conducted whilst maintaining a conversation uninterrupted. You will notice a slight increase in breathing and heart rate. Your heart rate will be about 55-70% of your maximum heart rate (maximum heart rate = 220-age). For example, a 45 year old will have a predicted maximum heart rate of 175 (220-45=175), and 55% of this is 96 beats per minute (55% of 175= 96 beats per minute).

Vigorous intensity: An aerobic activity in which a conversation generally cannot be maintained uninterrupted. You will notice a large increase in breathing and heart rate. Your heart rate will be about 70-85% of your maximum heart rate (as discussed above; if you are unsure, there are a number of calculators on the internet which will be able to calculate this for you).

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Week 1						
45 min walk at moderate intensity The walk should be enjoyable. Schedule the walks with a friend along a nice trail or path. But remember to walk at a fast pace.	30 min Interval training. Interval training involves alternating between low and high intensity exercise and is one of the best ways to improve your fitness and get used to running. Walk for 3-5 min then run for the same amount of time. Repeat this combination for the 30 minutes	Strength and balance Follow the exercises in the Intermediate Strength and balance program.	Rest day. Although you are not participating in sport or exercise today, try to minimise the amount of time you are sitting.	45 min walk at moderate intensity. This training day will start with a walk and will progress over the next 12 weeks to be able to run continuously for 45 minutes. The first run is scheduled in week 5.	30 min Interval training. Walk: 3 min Run: 3 min Repeat: 5 times The interval training sessions on this day will consist of shorter intervals. The focus is on the run. The run intervals will not exceed 5 minutes. The purpose here, is to complete the run portion at a faster speed than the other sessions in the week.	Strength and balance.
Week 2						
45 min walk at moderate intensity	30 min Interval training. Walk: 3-5 min Run: 3-5 min Repeat: 3-5 times The 3-5 min run will feel hard. It doesn't matter how fit you are, running for a short period of time is difficult. The reason for this is that it takes your body a few minutes to adjust to the running. Remember, your body starts breathing faster and deeper, your heart starts beating faster and your legs and arms are moving quicker. After about 3-5 minutes, the body has adjusted. So don't panic if this feels harder than expected, it is normal!	Strength and balance	Rest day.	45 min walk at moderate intensity.	30 min Interval training. Walk: 3 min Run: 3 min Repeat: 5 times It is particularly important to follow the cool down and stretching guide on the days where interval training is being performed.	Strength and balance. Remember, you can modify the exercises by doing the progressions or adding some of your own exercises to the Intermediate Strength and balance program.

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Week 3						
45 min walk at moderate intensity	30 min Interval training. Walk: 5 min Run: 5 min Repeat: 3 times The focus of these intervals is the run portion. If you are finding that you are out of breath, keep the walk at a very slow pace. All the “work” should happen during the running portion.	Strength and balance	Rest day.	45 min walk at moderate intensity.	30 min Interval training. Walk: 2 min Run: 3 min Repeat: 6 times	Strength and balance.
Week 4						
45 min walk at moderate intensity You should be walking further this week, than you were in week one.	40 min Interval training Walk: 5 min Run: 5 min Repeat: 4 times If you are having a hard time completing the last interval, try modifying how fast you run in the earlier intervals.	Strength and balance	Rest day	45 min walk at moderate intensity	30 min Interval training Walk: 2 min Run: 3 min Repeat: 6 times	Strength and balance
Week 5						
45 min walk at moderate intensity	45 min Interval training Walk: 5 min Run: 10 min Repeat: 3 times	Strength and balance	Rest day	30 min run/jog This session includes a continuous jogging session. It doesn't matter how fast you run, the aim here is to run continuously for the whole session.	30 min Interval training Walk: 2 min Run: 3 min Repeat: 6 times	Strength and balance
Week 6						
45-60 min walk at moderate intensity Consider extending the walk beyond 45 minutes this week. The purpose of this is to get your body and mind used to exercising for longer than 45 minutes.	45 min Interval training. Walk: 5 min Run: 10 min Repeat: 3 times	Strength and balance	Rest day.	30 min run/jog. For these runs, try finding a single loop which takes about 30 minutes. You do not want to be running around your block five times since this will make it too easy to stop early. We often use the term “out-and-back” course which means running in one direction for 15 minutes, turning and running home. This can be a good way of achieving the 30 minutes.	30 min Interval training. Walk: 2 min Run: 4 min Repeat: 5 times	Strength and balance.
Week 7						
45-60 min walk at moderate intensity	45 min Interval training. Walk: 5 min Run: 10 min Repeat: 3 times	Strength and balance	Rest day.	30 min run/jog. This run should become easier, don't despair. Consider bringing a radio or iPod along the run if you require the distraction.	30 min Interval training. Walk: 2 min Run: 4 min Repeat: 5 times	Strength and balance.
Week 8						
45-60 min walk at moderate intensity	45 min Interval training Walk: 5 min Run: 10 min Repeat: 3 times	Strength and balance	Rest day.	40 min run/jog.	30 min Interval training. Walk: 3 min Run: 3 min Repeat: 5 times	Strength and balance.
Week 9						
45-60 min walk at moderate intensity	40 min Interval training Walk: 5 min Run: 15 min Repeat: 2 times	Strength and balance	Rest day.	40 min run/jog.	30 min Interval training. Walk: 2 min Run: 4 min Repeat: 5 times	Strength and balance.

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Week 10						
60 min walk at moderate intensity These last three weeks should include a 60 min walk.	40 min Interval training. Walk: 5 min Run: 15 min Repeat: 2 times	Strength and balance	Rest day.	40 min run/jog.	Rest day.	Strength and balance.
Week 11						
60 min walk at moderate intensity	40 min Interval training. Walk: 5 min Run: 15 min Repeat: 2 times	Strength and balance	Rest day.	40 min run/jog.	30 min Interval training. Walk: 2 min Run: 4 min Repeat: 5 times	Strength and balance.
Week 12						
60 min walk at moderate intensity	40 min Interval training. Walk: 5 min Run: 15 min Repeat: 2 times	Strength and balance	Rest day.	45 min run/jog.	30 min Interval training. Walk: 2 min Run: 4 min Repeat: 5 times	Strength and balance.

Notes:

- The exercise can be performed any time of the day
- You can rearrange the training days to fit your schedule. If you have more time on Sunday and you would prefer to put your longest walk on Sunday, then feel free to do this.
- This program progresses the duration (time require for each session), the frequency (number of training days per week) and the intensity (how hard each session feels). If you are unable to increase at the rate which we have suggested in the program, then re-adjust your training in accordance with what you feel you are capable of doing. Likewise, if you feel the progression is too slow, you can jump ahead 1 or 2 weeks.
- To increase your likelihood of success, recruit an ‘exercise buddy’.

