

Top 12 Fitness Tips

1. Set Clearly Defined Goals Research shows that people who don't have specific strength, fitness or weight loss goals don't have as much drive to succeed. Sit down and work out your goals. Some people may just want to increase their level of health and fitness and that's okay, just set yourself some simple objectives, for example, run for 30 mins without stopping or lose 5kg in 4 months. If you have trouble determining your goals, your personal trainer will be able to assist you in creating smart, measurable, realistic and achievable goals so that you are sure to reach them.

2. Follow a Plan You really must sit down and write out a plan that you are going to stick to or else you will end up trying your best for two weeks and then giving up. Your plan must detail what your main goal is, when it is you are going to train e.g. days, times, what exercises you will do, how long you will train for each time and when you will reach your goal. Your personal trainer can assist you in creating a plan to reach your individual goals, ensuring that you incorporate the right exercises and types of training, at the right intensity levels and times, following the right nutritional plan for you, and ensuring that it is achievable and fits in with your lifestyle.

3. Consistency Remember that getting fit, strong, losing weight or toning up all have one common trait to success. That is *consistency*. You can write out the best plan in the world but if you fail to take daily action towards achieving your goals then your plan is useless. That is why you must have achievable goals to work towards, and the daily discipline to actually achieve them. It's the little things that you do every day that will bring you closer to achieving your goals.

4. Nutrition Your daily diet will make up around 70-80% of your results. Eating a poor diet will not be made up for by hours of exercise or the latest, greatest supplement. The best diet is what we call the "Mother Nature" diet, simply meaning that the foods you

eat are unprocessed, whole foods coming from nature. They are not packed with refined oils, additives and preservatives. When foods are processed they are often stripped of their nutrients and filled with additives and preservatives that are bad for your body. You want to eat things that are as close to their natural state as possible. Once you establish your goals, your personal trainer will be able to sit down and work out a tailored meal plan to suit your needs.

5. Eat Frequently Consuming 5-6 meals every day is one of the biggest obstacles people hit. Aiming to eat more healthy, natural foods in smaller portions, regularly every 2-3 hours each day is a major key to losing body fat. Our bodies were designed and created to survive. When your body doesn't get any food within a three to four hour period, it may automatically revert into survival mode by storing fat. It's similar to how a camel stores water, it instinctively knows that in the desert it might be a long time before it gets to drink at the next water hole, so it stores as much water as possible. The bad news is that when the body goes into starvation mode it really slows down your metabolism. Ensure that you eat small, healthy and frequent meals every day to keep your body nourished and your metabolism running high.

6. Cardio Training Our bodies were designed to move! In our society today we do not generally give our bodies the exercise they need and crave. Regular cardio exercise is not only a great stress release and helps to achieve emotional balance, but will also strengthen your heart, lungs, joints, bone mineral density, and help reduce your risk of heart disease. You will also enjoy better sleep, more energy and vitality and feel better about yourself and your body. Cardio exercise is anything that gets your body moving and your heart rate up, so it is best to do something that you enjoy so that you will stick to it and integrate it as a regular part of your life. Your personal trainer will be able to help you by incorporating fun and challenging cardio workouts into your training that will ensure that you are training at the right intensity for your level of fitness in order to achieve results.

7. Strength Training Many people are completely unaware of the benefits of strength training and why it is a key component to ultimate health. As we age, we lose approximately a pound ($\frac{1}{2}$ a kilogram) of muscle every year after the age of twenty. As muscle is metabolically active tissue, this means we are more susceptible to weight gain as we get older. While cardio exercise improves our cardiovascular fitness, it does not prevent the loss of muscle tissue. Strength training is the only way to maintain or add muscle mass as we age, keeping our metabolism running high. Strength training not only builds muscle, but also improves your bone mineral density, which helps prevent osteoporosis. It also decreases your blood pressure, decreases your risk of heart disease, speeds up your digestion, decreases your risk of developing diabetes, improves your joint strength and stability and decreases your risk of arthritis. Strength training at least once per week is an absolute must, not only to help you look and feel your best, but as an investment for a healthy body in your future. It is important when strength training that you maintain correct technique to avoid injury, while training at the right intensity to achieve results. Your personal trainer will design your strength training program specific to your goals and individual abilities, while teaching you exercises and techniques that you will be able to utilise for the rest of your life.

8. Sleep Sleep is a natural part of everybody's life, but not many people know very much about the importance of sleep. Some people try and get by with small amounts of sleep. Sleep is something our bodies need to do and it is not an option. One of the main points for you to understand is that during sleep many of the body's major organ and regulatory systems continue to actively work. Some parts of the brain actually increase their activity dramatically, and the body produces more of certain hormones. This is why it is important when training hard that you take some of your supplements (like L-Glutamine) before you go to sleep so your body can use the supplements to repair itself and keep your body in an anabolic state. The recommendations are that children and even adolescents need at least 9 hours of sleep each night to function at

their best, and most adults need at least 8 hours of sleep each night. When you increase your strength training and fitness regime it is even more important to ensure that you are having adequate amounts of sleep, to help your body repair and grow stronger.

9. Eat Protein If your going to train in any area fitness and strength you will need to make sure you are eating enough protein. Protein is a combination of amino acids, which can be found independently or together in many protein rich foods. When you're constantly eating good nutritious meals comprising of whole foods, lean meats, salads and vegetables, your body can repair and build muscle quicker than before because it now has the fuel to do so. This is probably one of the most neglected and crucial parts of training not done by most beginners. That's why it takes them years to understand what's going on and to then understand that nutrition is 70-80% of your results. Proteins are the building blocks of your muscle by repairing your muscles after your workout when you're resting. The steadier the stream of good, nutritious meals you consume determines how good your results will be.

10. Stretching Constantly Stretching for your body is like putting oil in your car; if you don't do it sooner or later it will start ceasing up. When you stretch you are allowing your body to flourish by loosening up all of your muscles, tendons and ligaments, thereby helping your body repair itself and release a lot of the lactic acid caught up in the muscles from hard training. Stretching is one of the most crucial parts of training and yet most people neglect it. Here is a paragraph from Arnold Schwarzenegger's book *The Encyclopedia Of Modern Bodybuilding*, "If you watch a Lion as he wakes from a nap and gets to his feet, you will see he immediately stretches his whole body to its full length, readying every muscle, tendon and ligament for instant and brutal action. The Lion knows instinctively that stretching primes his strength." By adopting stretching into your training, you are readying your body for action. When combined with proper strength training and cardio workouts such as running and kickboxing, stretching

provides the final piece to the puzzle for total balance and recovery. Integrated as part of your personal training sessions is a full body stretch, which ensures that as you become stronger, fitter and healthier, you become suppler and increase your flexibility.

11. Use Supplements as Intended *“He who takes medicine and neglects to diet wastes the skill of his doctors” [Chinese Proverb].* Food supplements are just as the title suggests, they are a supplement and shouldn't be consumed instead of whole foods. Once you decide you're ready to supplement, it's not enough to buy any supplements the guy in the supplement shop sells you hoping they'll do some good, you must do your research. For the best results supplement your diet with the things you're lacking. E.g. you may not eat meat so you could benefit from a creatine supplement. You might not eat any fish so a good fish oil tablet will help fill that gap, and so on. First decide what it is you want to accomplish as far as physical or performance goals. Then direct your eating and supplement program towards that aim. Your body can always take in more nutrients from real food than it can from supplements. Talk to your personal trainer about what supplements will benefit your body the most in achieving your goals.

12. Visualisation and Fitness Mindset You must visualise yourself as you have achieved your goals in order to succeed. If you are changing a lifetime of unhealthy habits you are going to need the desire to make a change, the motivation to get started, discipline to keep going, and the will power to stick to achieving your goals. Most of all you need to change your mindset, which will be your key to achieving and then maintaining your healthier lifestyle. Do you think of yourself as someone who 'hates' exercise? Are you a 'chocoholic'? Do you label your self as an 'un-fit' person who will always be 'overweight'? In order to change your habits you will need to change your mindset to truly change your life. If you see yourself as an overweight lazy person who will never be elite, then you will subconsciously self-sabotage your own success. Begin changing your mindset to focusing on the enjoyable parts of your healthier regime, to

seeing yourself as a fit, healthy, radiant person. See yourself as you have already achieved your goals, and as the type of person who you must become in order to achieve them. This will take some discipline in the beginning, but once you have the right mindset you are well on your way to achieving your goals. We understand that a crucial element to you achieving results is your mindset, which is why Fresh Fitness trainers are also qualified life coaches. Your trainer can assist you to identify limiting beliefs, provide you with strategies to help you change your mindset, and empower you from any stumbling blocks that may be preventing you from achieving your goals. ■

We hope that you have gained some valuable knowledge, information and insights from these Top 12 Fitness Tips. Feel free to pass this on to your friends, family and work colleagues who are interested in health and fitness. If you are committed to reaching your health and fitness goals, please go to www.freshfitness.com.au and sign up to become a free member where you will have instant access to a huge variety of home programs, nutrition plans, goal setting sheets, and lots of other free resources to further help you on your journey towards greater health and fitness.

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