

Personal Exercise Plan

What is a personal exercise plan?

A personal exercise plan is your own road map to reaching your fitness goals. Your plan should include the following things:

- A list of your fitness goals
- A way for you to track your progress. For example, you will probably need a workout book to write down how far you swam, how long you biked, or when and how much weight you lifted. You may also need a scale, tape measure, or body fat testing device to track fat loss or muscle gain.
- A workout schedule that includes the exercises and activities you plan on doing. As you improve, you will need to change your training schedule as needed.

How do I come up with my fitness goals?

Some common fitness goals are:

- Get healthier
- Lose body fat or weight
- Gain lean muscle
- Improve performance in a specific sport
- Get faster or more flexible
- Race a certain distance, either by biking, running, walking, swimming, or rowing

Write your fitness goals down on paper. Keep them in a place where you can look at them often. Try sticking them on your refrigerator.

How often should I measure my progress?

If your goal is to lose body fat or gain muscle mass, then you should track your progress at least 2 or 3 times each week. You need to check your progress to know if you need to make any changes to your plan. For example, if you have not lost any body fat after 2 weeks of trying, then you know you have to change your fitness plan. The more often you track your progress, the sooner you can adjust your plan.

If your goal is better performance, like improving your 5K time, increasing your one rep max in the bench press, or improving your 40-yard sprint time, then you should track your progress after each workout.

What should I include in my exercise routine?

It is important to include the following in your exercise plan:

- A dynamic warm-up before every workout
- Flexibility exercises

- Core exercises
- Strength exercises
- Aerobic exercises
- A cool down after every workout

How much of each kind of exercise depends on your fitness goals. Always talk with your healthcare provider before starting any new fitness routine. Set a deadline to meet your goals. Setting a deadline helps you focus and have a sense of urgency. Reward yourself when you achieve your goal. Once you have met one set of goals, create a new and different personal fitness plan.

What if I can't come up with an exercise routine on my own?

There are many places to look for help:

- Talk with your healthcare provider.
- Find a qualified personal trainer or strength and conditioning specialist.
- Check the Internet for many on-line training web sites.
- Get a book to help you learn about different kinds of fitness programs.

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