

Section 11 :

Training Interruptions & Holiday Training

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Training Interruptions

A training programme is a map that guides you from where you are physiologically to where you want to be. Like any journey there is more than one way to get to your destination. Training programmes are written in advance and are designed to elicit an appropriate response, but in all programmes there is an element of guess work. Don't regard the programme as cast in stone. If you depart from it don't be discouraged or tempted to give up as, within reason, lost time can be recovered.

Illness

If you have lost time through illness and it has required you to see a doctor then you should resume training under his/her guidance. If you were just under the weather with a cold, once your resting heart rate (RHR) has returned to normal, complete two days of general low intensity training and, if there are no bad reactions, pick up the programme as if there had been no break.

Injury

If you have lost time because of injury you must resume training under the strict supervision of your doctor or physiotherapist. You should not take it upon yourself to resume training as you may aggravate the injury and lose more time.

Holiday

If you lose up to two weeks training due to holiday or other commitments your training programme can be picked up again at the appropriate point, as you will actually have lost little or no fitness during that time. For example, if you take a two week holiday after week 5 of a 12 week pre-competition programme, pick up on week 7 when you return. If you train just three times a week and miss one session you should make it up. However, you must not try to make up more than one or two missed training sessions as you will not have enough rest and recovery days to allow your body to adapt to the exercise. You should just carry on your programme as though there has been no break.

After three weeks lost training complete two days of general low intensity training then pick up the programme as if there had been no break. After four or more weeks lost training you should consider starting your programme again.

Holiday Training

Many people like to continue their training regime while away on holiday and as a result some hotels have a fitness room available. However, if you would like to continue training but there are no facilities available, here are some tips that you may find useful.

First of all, if you are going on a normal two week holiday, then the loss of fitness will range from none at all to very little indeed. However, there is a psychological element that in some requires them to continue to train. They can suffer a loss of confidence that is as important and will have the same effect as a real loss of physical performance.

The first thing to do is to look at what is available. All hotels have an emergency stairwell and this can be the first piece of training equipment.

Stair climbs can be used in two ways, firstly as an aerobic exercise. Divide the stairs into flights and climb the stairs one step at a time. Run up and down one flight then up and down two flights and so on until you get to the top floor. If you book into a skyscraper, stop after 30 minutes.

As a strength exercise, climb the stairs two or three steps at a time making sure you do not support your legs with your hands.

There are a number of strategies that can be employed to maintain fitness when away from your normal training environment. The first is proper preparation. In the last few days before travelling we would recommend that you increase your training load by a factor of one and a half to three depending on how much you feel you can cope with. The advantage of this is that you are then in a position to take a good break of up to four to five days of complete rest. This serves two purposes. It allows you to settle into your holiday and also allows your body to settle into the new time zone, eating habits and lifestyle without adding the extra stresses of training. This four to five day break should also help prevent catching any illness from the plane. Airplanes are notoriously unhealthy places, as there are hundreds of people in an enclosed space breathing the same recycled air, often for hours at a time, so any infections are easily transferred between people. A few days of complete rest should allow you to stave off these infections and leave you healthy for the rest of your holiday.

After your four to five days of complete rest it is time to start training. The focus of this training is not to improve your strength, CV fitness or anaerobic threshold, rather to simply keep your body ticking over and not losing any fitness. There are three sessions set out below. Choose the one that is most suited to you or rotate between them to give some variety.

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The Three Circuits

Prepare for your training session as usual with a warm up followed by stretching.

Circuit 1

If there are twin beds, or a chair, then they can form the second piece of exercise equipment.

Table 11.1

Circuit 1 - Suggested Bedroom Circuit		
Exercise	Reps	Sets
Triceps Dips	20	3
Dorsal Raise	30	3
Inclined Press Up	20	3
Crunchies	30	3

Tricep Dip



Method: Place your heels on the floor and support yourself with your hands behind you on either a chair or the side of the bed. Lower your body slowly until your upper arms are horizontal, keeping your legs straight. Return to the starting position. To make this more difficult put your feet on another chair or bed.

Dorsal Raise



Method: Lying on your front on the floor or bed raise your feet and chest, hold for three seconds and then lower slowly. To make this less difficult put your hands behind your back. To make it more difficult hold your arms straight in front of you.

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Inclined Press Up



Method: Place your feet on a chair or bed and hands on the floor underneath your shoulders. Lower your chest slowly to the floor keeping your body straight. Straighten your arms to return to the start position.

Crunches



Method: Lay on the floor on your back, holding your calves horizontal and at right angles to your thighs. With your arms crossed on your chest lift your shoulders off the ground, then return slowly to the starting position. To make this easier put your arms by your sides. To make it more difficult hold your fingers to your temples, but do not pull on your head or neck with your arms.

These exercises do not involve any impact and so should not bother other guests.

One set consists of 300 exercises at the end of which you rest until your pulse rate drops to around 140, then repeat.

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Circuit 2

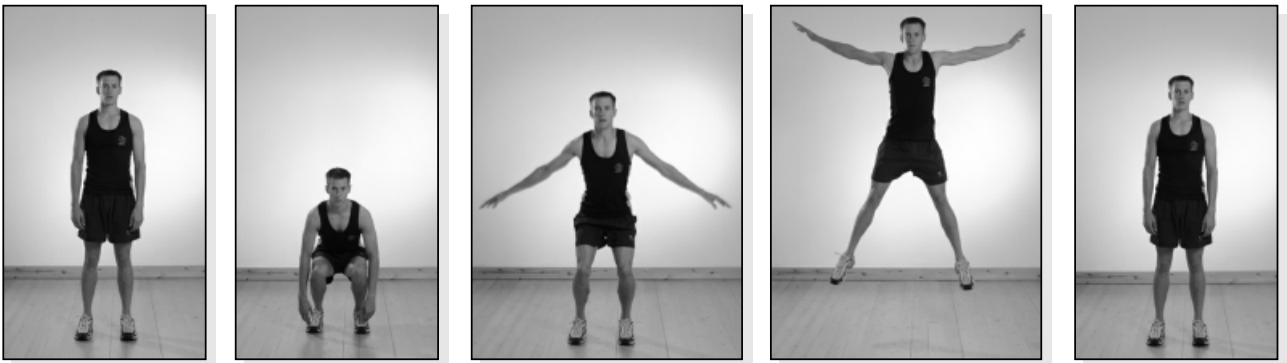
This is another body weight circuit that does not need any equipment and very little room and is good for general fitness as it involves most major muscle groups.

Table 11.2

Circuit 2		
Exercise	Reps	Sets
Star Jumps	20	3
Press Ups	20	3
Sit Ups	30	3
Burpees	30	3

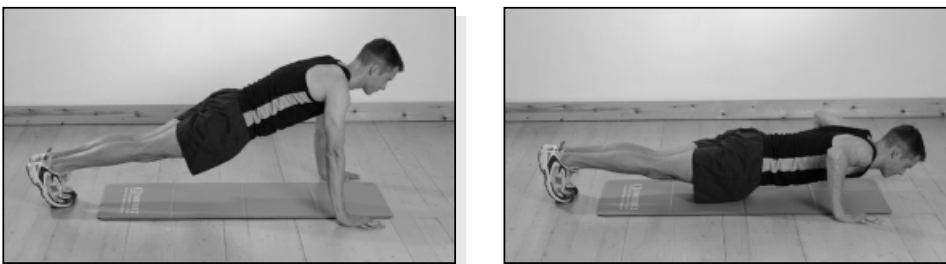
The format is the same as the bedroom circuit.

Star Jumps



Method: Start in a standing position, squat down until you can touch the floor then in one action jump into the air opening your arms and legs into a star. You should land with your feet together and hands by your sides ready to start again.

Press Ups



Method: Start lying on your front with your palms below your shoulders, fingers pointing forwards and on the balls of your feet. Straighten your arms keeping your trunk in a straight line. Return to starting position.

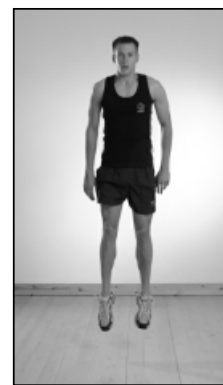
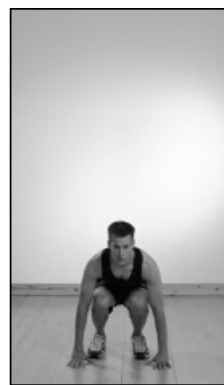
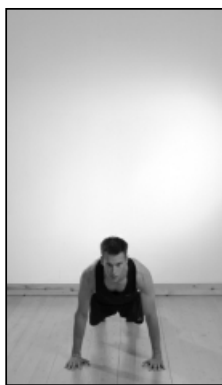
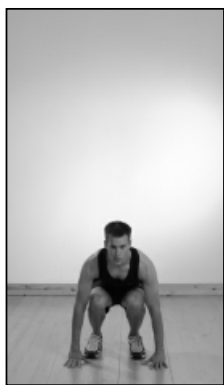
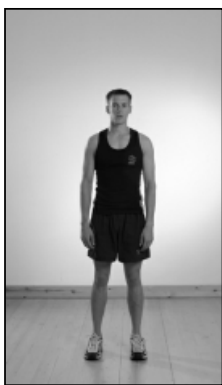
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Sit Ups



Method: Lie on your back with your feet flat on the floor and your arms crossed on your chest. Lift up your shoulders and back until your body is off the floor. Return slowly to the starting position.

Burpees



Method: Start standing, squat down and place your palms on the floor with your fingers pointing forward. Straighten your legs, taking your weight on your hands until you are in a press up position. Bring your legs back so your feet are between your hands, then jump as high as you can into the air.

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Circuit 3

The third circuit is separated into two sections, a lower body section and an upper body section.

Lower Body

If your hotel has stairs then this is ideal for you. Counting the stairs it takes to get from one floor to the next as one flight, climb 20 flights as fast as possible. This may mean going up two flights and then down to repeat. This is very hard work but instead of stopping it is recommended that you simply turn and go downstairs if you feel you cannot carry on.

Note: the speed that you do this session should be determined by your fitness, not your bravado. If you need to take a break do so, but make it active recovery by walking down stairs as you do.

If you do not have access to stairs you can replace the stair climbing with the following circuit.

Table 11.3

Circuit 3 - Lower Body		
Exercise	Reps	Sets
Star Jumps	15	4
Squat Thrusts	15	4
Lunges (each side)	15	4
Burpees	15	4

This rotation should be repeated four times as continuously as possible.

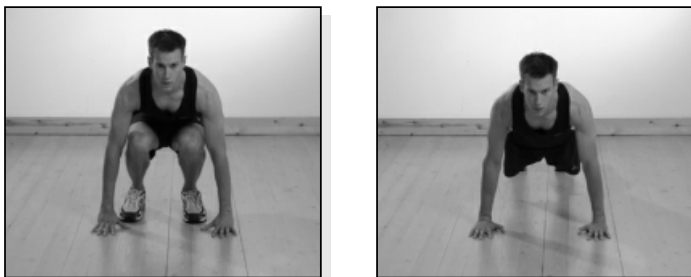
Star Jumps



Method: Start in a standing position, squat down until you can touch the floor then in one action jump into the air opening your arms and legs into a star. You should land with your feet together and hands by your sides ready to start again.

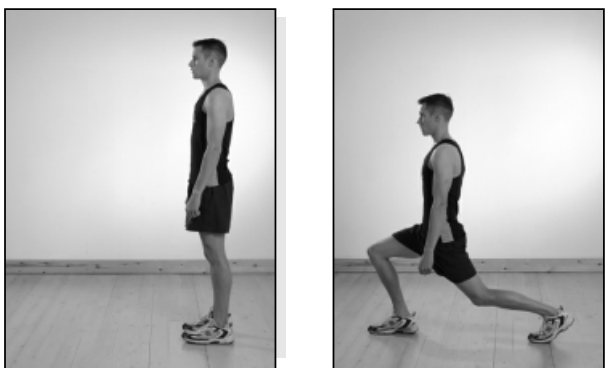
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Squat Thrusts



Method: Start squatting down with your feet between your hands. Take your weight on your hands and straighten your body to the press up position. Bring your feet back between your hands.

Lunges



Method: Start standing with your weight evenly on both feet. Step forward with one leg and bend the front knee, keeping your back vertical. Then straighten the front leg, returning to the standing position.

Note: when starting this exercise begin with small steps until you are familiar with the action.

Burpees



Method: Start standing, squat down and place your palms on the floor with your fingers pointing forward. Straighten your legs, taking your weight on your hands until you are in a press up position. Bring your legs back so your feet are between your hands, then jump as high as you can into the air.

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Upper Body

This is a circuit of body weight exercises.

Table 11.4

Circuit 3 - Upper Body		
Exercise	Reps	Sets
Press Ups, Normal Grip	25	4
Sit Ups	25	4
Triceps Dip	25	4
Dorsal Raise	25	4
Press Ups, Close Grip	25	4
Crunches	25	4
Angels (each side)	25	4

Press Ups, Normal Grip



Method: Start lying on your front with your palms below your shoulders, fingers pointing forwards and on the balls of your feet. Straighten your arms keeping your trunk in a straight line. Return to starting position.

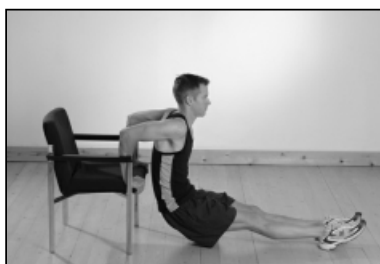
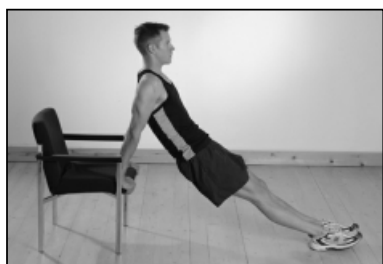
Sit Ups



Method: Lie on your back with your feet flat on the floor and your arms crossed on your chest. Lift up your shoulders and back until your body is off the floor. Return slowly to the starting position.

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Tricep Dip



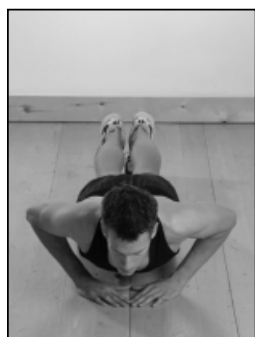
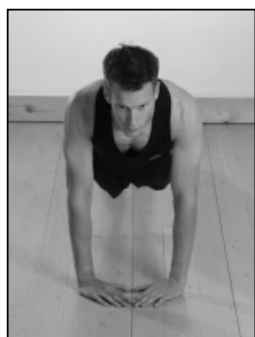
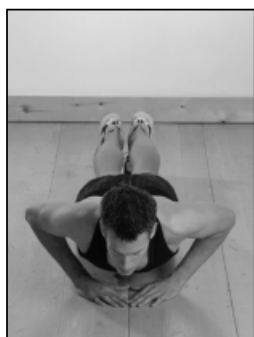
Method: Place your heels on the floor and support yourself with your hands behind you on either a chair or the side of the bed. Lower your body slowly until your upper arms are horizontal, keeping your legs straight. Return to the starting position. To make this more difficult put your feet on another chair or bed.

Dorsal Raise



Method: Lying on your front on the floor or bed raise your feet and chest, hold for three seconds and then lower slowly. To make this less difficult put your hands behind your back. To make it more difficult hold your arms straight in front of you.

Press Up, Close Grip



Method: Start lying on your stomach, resting on the balls of your feet. Your hands should be under your chest, the thumbs and forefinger of each hand making a diamond. Straighten your arms keeping your trunk in a straight line. Return to starting position.

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Crunches



Method: Lay on the floor on your back, holding your calves horizontal and at right angles to your thighs. With your arms crossed on your chest lift your shoulders off the ground, then return slowly to the starting position. To make this easier put your arms by your sides. To make it more difficult hold your fingers to your temples, but do not pull on your head or neck with your arms.

Angels



Method: Start lying on your front and raise the opposite arm and leg, trying to keep hips and lower back as still as possible. Return to lying flat then repeat using the other leg and arm. Alternatively this can be done in the four point kneeling position as shown in Section 7 Core Stability.

This circuit should be repeated four times.

Complete this session with a cool down of light intensity exercise like jogging or a swim followed by stretching.

As your body's ability to complete the circuit improves you can progress from one circuit to one and a half to two and so on until you are doing 40 to 60 minutes of exercise.

It is recommended that you do this session a few times before going on holiday as you will probably feel sore after the first few times you do it.

Frequently Asked Questions on Injuries

answered by Terry O'Neill

I have recently injured my shoulder swimming front crawl. Will using the Indoor Rower aggravate my injury?

Unfortunately, it is impossible to tell whether using the Indoor Rower will aggravate your injury without knowing exactly what it is. If you are being treated you should seek advice from your physiotherapist but you should note that the rowing action is very different from the arm action when swimming front crawl. If you are given the all clear to train from your physiotherapist then you should proceed cautiously, starting with 15 minutes of gentle rowing, stopping immediately if you feel any twinges. If you manage 15 minutes without any problems then you should add five minutes per day until you are up to one hour. You may then begin to increase the intensity of the sessions.

I have trapped a nerve in my back and have had to stop rowing. How and when should I start training again?

When you injure your back in this way the muscles surrounding the area go into a spasm and immobilise the area. This spasm often continues after the problem has been cured and becomes a problem in itself. If you have been seeing a doctor or physiotherapist then you should seek their advice about when to begin training again. When you are able to start again you should follow a recovery programme. This will involve starting with ten minutes a day and building up slowly as long as there is no associated pain.

What sort of exercise regime do you recommend for a 39 year old indoor rower who is not overweight and, for a variety of reasons can only usually exercise once a week? My main aim is to avoid physical atrophy.

A one day a week training programme has many limitations. One of the laws that applies to training is reversibility. This means that any improvement that you acquire as a result of training leaves you when you stop training. Therefore, on day one you train, on day two you recover and then on day three you have adapted to training and are ready to train again. If you don't then train you begin to lose the training benefit over the next four days until you train again, meaning that the overall benefit is small. If at all possible you need to come up with two more sessions a week. Even if they only add up to a further hour of training the effect will be much greater.

I am recuperating after heart surgery and my physiotherapist has recommended the use of the Concept 2 Indoor Rower as it will give the best workout with the least stress. What sort of training would you suggest?

When recovering from an operation it is very important to heed the advice of your physiotherapist and doctor who should be able to recommend a training regime that is designed to suit your individual needs, and will cater for your physical limitations. The main recommendation is that you do not over do it. It is a long process returning to fitness after an operation and it should not be rushed.

With the agreement and supervision of your medical team we would suggest a low intensity programme as laid out in Weight Management in Section 8 : Nutrition and Weight Management.

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