

# Training Efficiently

By

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If your goal of working out is to increase body composition, increase athletic performance, increase strength, or just “get in better shape”, then keep reading. If your goal of going to the gym is to kill a couple of hours each day, watch some TV, catch up on some gossip, and perform a set or two on some machines, then this article is probably not for you. For those whom fall into the first scenario, one of the most important factors (besides your nutrition) that may be affecting your results is the efficiency of your training. Are you maximizing your results in minimal time? Do you find yourself spending more than 55 minutes on your actual work sets during your workout? Do you decide what to do when you get to the gym? If you answered yes to any of these, you may want to revisit your training philosophy, and implement some simple techniques to allow you to train more efficiently. Here are 5 effective methods to ensure increased training efficiency.

## 1. **Timed Workouts:**

Get in, and get out. Lingering is for those whom do not mind wasting time. Know what you are going to do ahead of time, and get it done. To accurately determine workout time, you will need to know the following: Reps, sets, exercises, tempo, rest intervals between antagonistic pairs as well as time between completion of one pair prior to moving on to the next pair. The time from 1st work set to completion of final work set should be pre-determined by the strength coach/personal trainer, with 55-60 minutes of actual work being ideal to avoid any negative hormonal responses, including increases in cortisol and decreases in androgen production.



At APECS, each workout we design for our clients includes the exact time their workout should take. If the workout is too short, then they are not adhering to tempo or rest periods, and if the workout is too long, then they may not be working as efficiently as they need be to achieve their goals. Grab a cooking timer or set you IPOD and go. You may notice a big

difference in the effectiveness of your workouts as well as how you feel afterward due to your body's ability to recover properly for shorter workouts.

- 2. Pairing of Antagonistic Muscle Groups:** World renowned strength coach Charles Poliquin has taught and educated others on this concept for decades. In simplest terms, the idea here is if a muscle is working during a set, then it's structural antagonist is resting. So why not train antagonistic pairs for greater efficiency of training, since one is resting while the other is working. This not only allows for a greater amount of work to be done in a shorter period of time (efficiency), but it also has a positive effect on hormonal and nervous system responses to the workout.

One of the best recommendations here is to find a strength coach whom is PICP certified ([www.charlespoliquin.com](http://www.charlespoliquin.com)) to help you create a program utilizing proper methods of antagonistic pairing of exercises.

- 3. Following a properly designed program:** Progress is the key to results. You should know far ahead of time what you are going to be doing on a particular day for your workout. With a properly designed program, you can track progress, whereas if you rely solely on the guessing game that is constant muscle confusion, you may never truly know if you are getting stronger.

All too often the fitness enthusiast walks into the gym and within the first 5 or 10 minutes decides what to do for their workout that day. Perhaps the same thing they did last time as that has worked pretty good for the past year or two (let's not delve into Pattern Overload here, as that can be an article all it's own). Or how about something different, like a muscle confusion circuit starting with a 1 mile jog → 40 med ball slamdowns → 100 reps of BOSU ball Kettlebell single arm snatch (on one leg of course)

→ 50 reps of barbell clean and press → 200 pushups with one hand on the med ball → 180 seconds of mindlessly counting dust particles on the floor while holding an isometric prone plank → 20 lashings from a Singapore police officer for doing this workout in the first place.



If you want to see results, you are going to need a plan in which you will adhere to. As mentioned, a knowledgeable strength coach is a good place to start. Find one whom is PICP certified as they will have a strong grasp of how to properly design a progressive training

program. Through the manipulation of training variables including reps, sets, exercise selection, rest periods, and tempo, you can ensure that your workouts are going to be both efficient and effective.

4. **Utilization of proven training methods:** If it ain't broke, then why fix it. Far too many times fitness enthusiasts get sucked into the realm of "NEW AND EXCITING EXERCISES". You know, the combination exercise seen in the newest health and fitness magazine. The model may be



performing pistol squats on a BOSU ball with a Kettlebell balancing on the top of their head, *juggling small woodland creatures in one hand, and* flipping burgers with the other, extra cheese of course. Hopefully that one makes it into a magazine at some point.

A properly designed workout may consist of more conventional training methods including squat variations, split squat variations, deadlift variations, chin up variations, bench press variations, shoulder exercises, arm exercises, ab and calf exercises, strongman training methods, and metabolic conditioning protocols. The science here is in the piecing together of these puzzle to create a work of art. If the program design is sound, the methods are effective, and the work ethic is there, results should soon follow.

Stick with what works, and remember, the workout that worked for the muscle bound model in the magazine may not be appropriate for the natural/drug free trainee. When multiple exogenous androgenic substances are flowing through one's veins, the ability to recover is magnified dramatically, so two to 3 hour workouts 4-5 times per week are not out of the norm. These athletes can pack on muscle and even remain lean while eating fast food tacos, krispy crème donuts, hostess cupcakes, peanut m and m's, and red bull, all for breakfast.

5. **Goal oriented training:** If your goal is body composition, then relative strength work may not be the quickest way to attain this goal. Likewise, if hypertrophy is your goal, endurance training protocols may not get you there. Knowing what you are training for and understanding how to get there is an often overlooked, but critical element of the training process. Structure your goals so they are both attainable as well as tangible. Without quantitative tangible goals, the measurement of progress can be a guessing game.

**Enjoy, work, and .....Succeed!**

