

Time Saving Tips and Tricks in the Gym

Life is busy. No one can argue this. But, you are never too busy to take care of yourself. Everyone has time to brush their teeth, comb their hair, and have a shower. Taking time for physical fitness is no less important, and should be second nature, like brushing and flossing. Many people have asked me, “how long to do you workout?”. Most are surprised to find out that my workouts are rarely longer than 50 minutes. What I stress is that fitness maintenance can be achieved in even less time than this. What’s really important isn’t the time spent daily; it’s the **intensity and consistency over time** that’s more important. The fact that I’ve worked out with high intensity, for 45 minutes daily for **over 30 years** is more telling than the actual 45 minutes spent each day.

Amazing changes in physique can occur in a relatively short time, doing short duration, high intensity training techniques. You don’t have to put in 30 years of hard training to start to notice significant changes to your body and health. In fact, for many of you, knowing that your body will respond quickly, with a minimum time commitment should act as a catalyst to do something fitness related. Here are some tips to jump start those changes and reduce your time spent training.

The goal is to maximize your work load. Make your workout shorter and more intense in the following ways:

- Schedule your workouts - This seems like a no-brainer, but for many people, unless those 30 minutes is on the day timer, often the day ends without it happening. Consistent training over time will serve you well to reduce muscle soreness and risk of injury as well.
- Focus on your workout. Eliminate all distractions as much as possible. In fact, training can help eliminate those distractions which turn into stressors, and become poison in our lives.
- Don’t socialize - Use your training time, no matter how long you’ve allotted for yourself, to get your workout in. Plan a separate coffee date if you want to chat.
- Shorten your rest periods – Keep your rests between sets to a minimum. You can take 30 seconds to grab a drink of water or change movements, but keep the pace up.
- Do compound movements – Focus on large muscle groups and movements.
- Superset your training. This means moving from one exercise to the next without resting. This is effectively done either training opposing muscle groups, or training an isolated movement to a compound one. A good trainer can develop an effective quick routine, incorporating these ideas if you aren’t sure exactly what to do. You will burn more calories while speeding up your workout and eliciting a more intense training response by using these methods.
- Incorporate your cardiovascular movements within your strength program. Try skipping, jumping jacks, mountain climbers, etc between your sets. Alternating strength and cardio movements for a predetermined time will enable you to kill two birds with one stone; strength gains simultaneously increased with improved cardiovascular output.

The success or failure of your program is determined by the *intensity and quality* of the time you spend on it, not the *quantity* of time invested. You are far better off working up a good sweat for 30 minutes, than dragging yourself around the gym for an hour. Don't let lack of time keep you from getting the physique you've always wanted.

By Shawna Kaminski – [Calgary NW Adventure Boot Camp](#)

Shawna is shaking up the fitness routines of several people in her outdoor boot camps and with personal training. Please contact the editor if you wish to work with her.