

Cardio Endurance Training Recommendations for Alphas

Cardiopulmonary training, sometimes called endurance training or “cardio”, is a key part of any exercise program. There are many ways to get a “cardio” workout, including:

- Stationary bike
- Treadmill
- Step machine
- Elliptical machine
- Brisk walks

When choosing your “cardio” activity, pick something you like. If you have access to a gym, you’ll have lots of choices. If you don’t, walking is just as effective as using a machine at a gym.

Note: Many malls have designated hours for walking indoors. These programs provide a safe, climate-controlled environment, friendship, and year-round accessibility.

Get the most from your workout

To reap the most cardio benefits from your workout, you have to work out at the right level of effort. When you start, aim for a 3-4 on the [Borg Scale for Rating Perceived Exertion \(RPE\)](#). That’s a medium to strong level of effort. Ramp up your workouts slowly, and assess your feeling of breathlessness using the [Borg Scale for Rating Perceived Dyspnea \(RPD\)](#).

To exercise safely, you must monitor your heart rate and breathing during your exercise session. As an Alpha, you can’t rely on Target Heart Rate to know how hard you’re working. Instead, we strongly advise that you use the Borg Scales.

Specific recommendations for cardio endurance training

- **Frequency (How often):** Once a day, 3 to 5 times per week

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- **Duration (How long):** Warm-up and cool down for three minutes. Exercise for up to 30 minutes.
- **Intensity (How hard):** Work at a level of 3 to 4 on the RPE and adjust based on your tolerance (perceived breathless) using the RPD.
- **Progression:** Work up to 30 minutes. Slowly increase in intensity and duration, using the [RPE and RPD scales](#). If you feel out of breath, ease up.

Round out your fitness program with more exercise recommendations:

[Warm up & stretching](#)
[Strength training](#)

For more in-depth information on this topic, please visit the [Big Fat Reference Guide \(BFRG\)](#). If you are enrolled in AlphaNet's Subscriber Portal, you can access the BFRG [here](#).