

How to Build the Ultimate Circuit Training Workout for Rapid Fat Loss

BJ Gaddour, CSCS,

In the past, the cornerstone of most resistance training workouts has been performing exercises in a straight set format. Essentially, this means you perform a certain number of reps for a given exercise or you perform as many reps as possible for a given exercise and then you rest anywhere from 30 seconds to five minutes based on your training goals before repeating this set a certain number of times based on your goals. For more of a fat loss and lean muscle gain emphasis shorter rest periods are ideal. For more of a strength or power emphasis, longer rest periods are prescribed.

So, what's the problem with this format? Well, though straight sets are extremely easy to comprehend for people new to fitness, they are also an extremely inefficient way to order your exercises. In most commercial gyms you'll typically see someone perform three sets of 10 reps for let's say the bench press. They pump out 10 reps, go to the water fountain, talk with some buddies, watch a couple of highlights on ESPN, and then gingerly walk back to the bench area to hit up their second set. In general, most people, guys in particular, tend to take about 3-5 minutes between sets. In the case of three sets of 10 on the bench that means it would take up to 15 minutes to complete only one movement pattern (a horizontal push). That means you'd need at least an hour to perform four different exercises!

A much more effective and time-efficient approach to ordering your exercises is utilizing the alternating set format. Here you'll perform one exercise, rest for a short period of time, then perform another non-competing exercise, rest for a short period of time, and so forth. Alternating sets allow you to work different areas of your body when you would otherwise be resting with the straight set format. Plus, by working another area of your body with a non-competing exercise you allow your body to recover from the previous exercise(s). The result is improved training economy and density: more work accomplished in less time, the cornerstone of any sound fat loss program. There are several ways to perform alternating sets outlined below:

- 1.) Supersets: Alternate between two different non-competing exercises (e.g. upper body

and lower body such as push-ups and lunges)

2.) Trisets: Alternate between three different exercises (e.g. push, pull, and lower body such as push-ups, rows, and lunges)

3.) Circuits: Alternate between four or more different exercises

Though supersets and trisets are excellent alternating set options, I believe circuit training is by the far the best option time and time again. To demonstrate why, let's examine my favorite circuit training template using timed set intervals:

The 50-10 Five Exercise Circuit: You will alternate between 50 seconds of work and 10 seconds of rest for all five exercises in the following 5-minute circuit:

Exercise#1- Squats

Exercise#2- Dips

Exercise#3- Single-Leg Hip Extensions

Exercise#4- Pull-ups

Exercise#5- Leg Raises

Perform this circuit up to four times for a 20-minute total body fat burning workout.

Basically, in the same 15 minutes that it took to get in three sets on the bench you could have gotten in three sets of five different exercise for a staggering total of 15 work sets! Plus, the intensity on each exercise will be just as high as in the straight set format because in this five exercise circuit you will have full recovery with over four minutes before you return to any given exercise (just as you did with the straight set format described earlier).

To recap, the key to creating the optimal hormonal environment for fat loss is to perform each exercise with maximal intensity while separated by brief rest periods in order to accumulate a high volume of total body work in the shortest amount of time possible. Circuit training provides for the best of both worlds and is thus simply unmatched for simultaneously maximizing fat loss and lean muscle gain. Use the following template I use with my many boot camp clients for some killer, yet simple fat loss circuits:

Exercise#1- Double-Leg

Exercise#2- Push

Exercise#3- Single-Leg

Exercise#4- Pull

Exercise#5- Core

If you are a trainer looking to run these same automated interval circuits set to music, then you need to check out <http://georgettepann.com/womuse> TODAY!