

The Tabata Revolution Explained: What, Why, and How to Tabata



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A Tabata is a high-intensity workout protocol that has fitness and weight-loss benefits. It is also a very short workout. Is it like CrossFit? Is it like circuit training? It is a bit of both. Tabata training is attractive because it saves a lot of time for people. It offers the maximum benefit with the least amount of time used to get those results.

The name Tabata comes from the man who invented it - Dr. Izumi Tabata, a Japanese physician and researcher. He **conducted a study** using an interval-based training model. His objective was to see if athletes would benefit from a 20/10 session repeated eight times. 20/10 means 20 seconds of all-out exercise followed by 10 seconds of rest. This adds up to four minutes total.

Dr. Tabata took two groups and put them on an exercise program for six weeks. The control group did one hour of moderate-intensity exercise five times a week. The other group did the high-intensity Tabata-style training. That adds up to 1,800 minutes of training for the control group versus 120 minutes of training for the Tabata group over the six-week period. The results speak for themselves. **The Tabata group improved both its aerobic and anaerobic fitness levels. The anaerobic fitness level increased 28%.**

Interval training is not new, but it has gained popularity in recent years. Intervals were originally **designed for running**. **An example of Tabata training for runners is 20-second sprints and 10 seconds of rest.** This will improve cardiovascular fitness. The Tabata protocol can be used for core strength as well as weight training.

Tabata training raises metabolism and heart rate

Whatever exercise you use, Tabata training will raise your metabolism and heart rate immediately. Since you are performing these exercises at a very high intensity, your body will have to work much harder to keep it up. This will cause your heart to pump fast and your metabolism to jump, which you want if you are planning on losing fat. Your metabolism will stay at that high not only during the workout, but after the workout as well. **This means that your body will be burning fat for hours after.**

Many exercises and types of equipment can be incorporated into the Tabata protocol. You could use push ups, planks, squats, stability ball exercises, resistance bands, weights, or a bench. To start, use four exercises per Tabata.

Tabata Workout Example

1. Push Ups
2. Squats
3. Medicine Ball Slams
4. Jumping Rope

How to do it: Do 20 seconds of push ups, then rest 10 seconds. Do 20 seconds of squats, then rest 10 seconds. 20 seconds of ball slams, and rest. 20 seconds of skipping rope, and rest. And then do that whole cycle again – eight more times.

This would bring you to a total of approximately 16 minutes. Once you get the hang of things, you could create two or three different Tabata routines with up to twelve different exercises and run through two different routines a session. With a five to eight minute warm up and cool down, you've got an effective workout. Those 20 second intervals may not seem very difficult but at your maximum capacity, those 20 seconds will seem like the longest 20 seconds of your life.

Warm up properly with **dynamic exercises** as opposed to static stretches. Be prepared to sweat! It's effective, as **Dr. Tabata's study showed**, and ultimately improves endurance. It teaches your body to tolerate lactic acid. When you train in a high-intensity zone, your threshold becomes higher. It also keeps your metabolism running on high gear. **One of the greatest benefits of anaerobic training is that your body keeps burning fat for 24 hours after your workout.** So the amount of fat that can be burned using Tabata training is what draws many people to using it. As a weight loss tactic, Tabata is a great tool.



Cautions About Tabata Training

- **Tabata training is not for beginners.** Tabata training is best for advanced exercisers who are comfortable with high-intensity exercise. The intensity accumulates, peaking near the end. It's easy for the intensity to become too challenging if you're not used to this type of training.
- **If you go all out during the high intensity intervals, the 4-minute cycle will feel like the longest, most uncomfortable 4 minutes of your life.** It may be too intense for some people.
- **There is always a greater risk of injury when you're doing high-impact, high-intensity exercise.** Minimize that risk by ensuring you're fit enough for this type of training. This would include working your way up to the intensity and duration. Also make sure you completely warm up before you start into your Tabata routine.

- **Four minutes of the same exercise, even with rests in between, can get monotonous and quickly fatigue your muscles.** This can cause your form (and motivation) to suffer if you aren't mentally prepared!

Here is a list of tabata exercises to try

- Mountain climber
- Burpees
- Sit ups
- Pull ups
- Squats
- Crunches
- Bicep curls
- Triceps dips
- Sprints
- Stairs
- Shoulder Press
- Flys
- Leg raises
- Calf raises
- Bench press
- Deadlifts

Whichever exercise you choose, your choices should use a large number of muscles to get maximum benefit. It is normal to feel some soreness during the first week of Tabata training. However, your body will adjust and you will only feel slight to moderate soreness after the beginning.

Make sure to add a sound nutritional program into your Tabata routine for the best and fastest results possible if losing weight is your goal. Nutrition is an important component of stay fit and being active. If you have poor nutrition, then your fitness goals will not be achieved. You will also not have the energy needed to workout at this level and intensity

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