



START STRONG STAY STRONG

With Your Ultimate Vitality
Cardio Fitness Guide



Depending on your current **Vitality Cardio Fitness Level** or **VO₂ max** reading, use the below workouts and suggestions to reach your fitness goals.

Enjoy yourself and remember to tag us and use **#VitalityStayStrong** when you're making this a **Summer of Movement**



Low - Fair
Vitality Cardio Fitness Level



Fair - Good
Vitality Cardio Fitness Level



Excellent - Superior
Vitality Cardio Fitness Level

WHERE TO START

✓ **Small steps to follow to improve your level of fitness**



Low to Fair

- Increase daily physical activity.
- Do low to moderate intensity exercises if starting from a low fitness base, such as walking/cardio machine at gym to build an aerobic base before engaging in higher intensity exercises.
- Break continuous sedentary time with more frequent active breaks by increasing daily step count.
- Add short walks, gardening, housework more often.
- Gradually increase exercise duration and increase intensity later.
- If your VO₂ max reading is below 35 ml/kg/min start doing your cardio exercises at an intensity of around 70% of your maximum heart rate.

Fair to Good

- Add more intensity to your workouts in the form of high intensity interval training (HIIT) and sprint interval workouts and higher volume exercises by increasing exercise duration.
- Make sure you do a variety of exercises in different heart rate zones (shorter HIIT sessions as well as longer moderate intensity exercise sessions).
- If your VO₂ max reading is below 35 ml/kg/min, start doing your cardio exercises at an intensity of around 70% of your maximum heart rate.
- If your VO₂ max reading is between 35 and 49 ml/kg/min, you could focus on doing cardio exercises at an intensity of around 77% to 95% of your maximum heart rate. The higher your heart rate goes, the shorter the working sets should be.

Excellent to superior

- Having a higher starting fitness base will require a higher volume and quality of workouts to improve your cardio fitness at such a high level.
- Apply frequency, intensity, time and type (FITT) exercise principles for progressive overload, coupled with adequate recovery and recovery to avoid over-training and injury.
- If your VO₂ max reading is between 35 and 49 ml/kg/min, doing exercise intervals at an intensity of around 77% to 95% of your maximum heart rate will be effective to increase VO₂ max.
- If your VO₂ max reading is greater than 49 ml/kg/min, doing exercise intervals at an intensity of around 90%+ of your maximum heart rate will be effective to increase VO₂ max if your base cardio fitness level is high.

MAKE THIS A
**SUMMER OF
MOVEMENT**



ENDURANCE AND AEROBIC EXERCISE GUIDELINES

✓ Your workout plan

Low to Fair

1 - 2 endurance exercise sessions per week

20 - 30 min of continuous, longer duration exercise at 60-70% of heart rate max.

Fair to Good

1 - 2 endurance exercise sessions per week

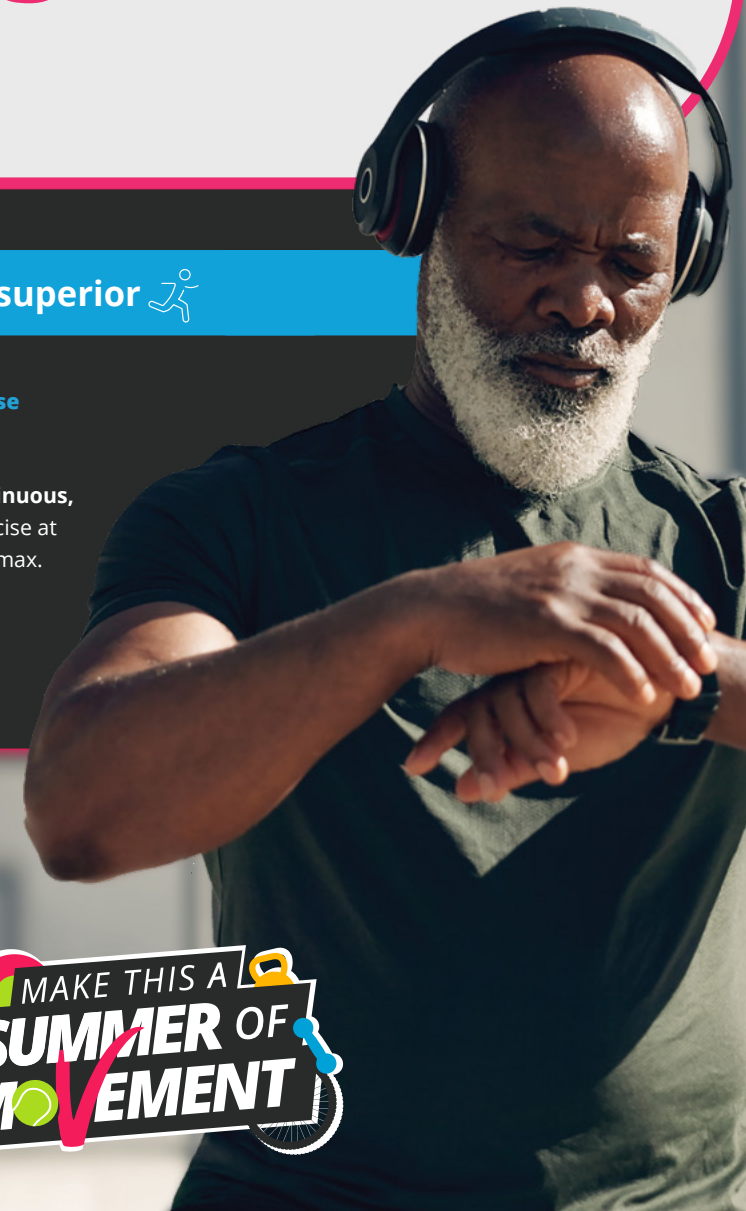
30 - 45 min of continuous, longer duration exercise at 60-70% of heart rate max.

Excellent to superior

2 endurance exercise sessions per week

45 - 60+ min of continuous, longer duration exercise at 60-70% of heart rate max.

A few examples of endurance and aerobic exercises: an easy run, cycle, hike, brisk walk, stepper, elliptical etc





Low to Fair

1 - 2 Interval training sessions per week

Combination of work and recovery sets.

- Easy warm-up of 10 minutes.
- Start with 3 minutes at 70 – 80+% of heart rate max followed by 3 – 4 minutes recovery (allowing your heart rate to drop to below 70% of your heart rate max)
- Repeat 3 – 4 times
- Allow for a 10 minute cool down including stretching.
- Examples:
 - Incline / hill brisk walking followed by flat easy walk or complete rest.
 - Run / cycle sprints / airdyne sprints followed by easy walk / peddle or complete rest.
 - Stepper at fast pace followed by easy slow steps or complete rest.
 - Circuit jumping jacks, body weight squats, box step ups – 1 minute of each followed by complete rest)

Fair to Good

1 - 2 Interval training sessions per week

Combination of work and recovery sets.

- Easy warm-up of 10 minutes.
- Start with 4 minutes at 80+ % of heart rate max followed by 3 – 4 minutes recovery (allowing your heart rate to drop to below 70% of your heart rate max)
- Repeat 4 times
- Allow for a 10 minute cool down including stretching.
- Examples:
 - Incline / hill brisk walking followed by flat easy walk or complete rest.
 - Run / cycle sprints / airdyne sprints followed by easy walk / peddle or complete rest.
 - Stepper at fast pace followed by easy slow steps or complete rest.
 - Circuit jumping jacks, body weight squats, box step ups – 1 minute of each followed by complete rest)

Excellent to superior

2 or more Interval training sessions per week

Combination of work and recovery sets.

- Start with 4 minutes at 80+ % of heart rate max followed by 3 – 4 minutes recovery (allowing your heart rate to drop to below 70% of your heart rate max)
- Repeat 4 – 5 times
- Allow for a 10 minute cool down including stretching.
- Examples:
 - Incline / hill brisk walking followed by flat easy walk or complete rest.
 - Run / cycle sprints / airdyne sprints followed by easy walk / peddle or complete rest.
 - Stepper at fast pace followed by easy slow steps or complete rest.
 - Circuit jumping jacks, body weight squats, box step ups – 1 minute of each followed by complete rest)

2 sessions of HIIT training per week

- Short, intense work sets with longer recovery
- Easy warm-up of 10 minutes.
- 30 secs work at 90 +% of heart rate max followed by 1 – 2 minute rest
- Repeat for 5 – 6 rounds
- End with a 10 minute cool down including stretching.
- Examples:
 - Incline / hill brisk walking followed by flat easy walk or complete rest.
 - Run / cycle sprints / airdyne sprints followed by easy walk / peddle or complete rest.
 - Stepper at fast pace followed by easy slow steps or complete rest.
 - Circuit jumping jacks, body weight squats, box step ups – 1 minute of each followed by complete rest)

INTERVAL TRAINING AND HIIT WORKOUT GUIDELINES

✓ Your workout plan 



Disclaimer: Before starting any exercise, please consult a with a healthcare professional to lower the risk of injuries. The guidance in this article is not a replacement for medical advice. Any activities you undertake based on this advice are entirely your choice and come with inherent risks. Discovery Vitality is not responsible for any injuries, damages, or health issues that may occur due to the information, products, or services obtained from this page, including workouts, training plans or information. Discovery Vitality (Pty) Ltd. TsCs apply