

General Fitness and Toning Plan - Level 1

Plan is based around developing a better aerobic fitness base and developing some muscle.

Cardio vascular work – 70 minutes steady state and 30 minutes high intensity - kept high intensity vague as will vary from person to person rather than specific timed intervals.

Core work – strengthening and stabilising exercises with plank and wood chop. Traditional “ab training” movements with crunch and leg raise.

Based upon resistance machines and bodyweight work.

Opposing muscle groups of the legs are on a 1:1 ratio. Push and pull movements are also a 1:1 ratio.

Compound movements Squats and leg press appear more than other leg exercises to increase overall muscle activation.

3x weekly – lower body, upper body, full body

General Fitness and Toning Plan

3 sessions per week following either an upper body, lower body workout or full body plan

Look to progress either the weight lifted for the set repetitions, the amount of repetitions done with the same weight or add in an extra set. This is called progressive overload and is ultimately what you need to achieve over time to strengthen muscles and continue to make progress.

When working towards a rep range (e.g. 12-15) if you can complete all sets at the higher number then you are ready to progress up a weight. If you cannot achieve all sets at the lower range then it is too heavy.

Rest time in between sets should be between 60-90 seconds. This will give the body enough time to recover from the previous sets work and have enough energy for the next set. Another way to make the exercises easier or harder is to increase or decrease the amount of rest time between sets. The less time you have to recover then the harder the next set will be.

If at any time you are unsure of an exercise or need help with something such as the correct form for an exercise or an alternative option please ask the gym instructor on shift, that is what they are here for and they will be happy to help.

Programme includes;

- Cardio machines – these will help to improve cardiovascular fitness levels as well as burn calories which is needed for fat loss.
- Resistance machines – these will strengthen and tone the muscles as well as also burning calories.
- Core work – these will help to build core strength and stability. Toning the stomach over time as you continue to work the muscles and burn calories.
- Bodyweight work – this is good for building strength and stability within the body and learning correct technique for movements before later adding weight to them

Day One - Lower Body

EXERCISE	SETS X REPS	TEACHING POINTS
Stationary bike	20 minutes	Low intensity – (find a level that you should be able to complete the 20 minutes without being overly tired). Set the bike seat to hip height. When cycling the leg should be almost fully extended with just a small bend in the knee.
Leg press	4 sets of 12-15 reps	Feet at a comfortable width apart – ideally just wider than shoulder width as if you were going to jump. Knees and toes should go in the same direction.
Leg curl	3 sets of 15-20 reps	Focus on just bending the knee and pushing the weight down until your leg is fully flexed. Then slowly return the under control.
Leg extension	3 sets of 15-20 reps	Start with the leg bent at 90degrees and then focus on straightening the knee until it is fully extended. Slowly return it to the bent position under control.
Hip abductor machine	2 sets of 20-25 reps	Hold onto the handles to keep your back straight and against the pad. Slow control of the movement as you push the weight away from you. Control the weight on the way back down do not let the weight slam down.
Hip adductor machine	2 sets of 20-25 reps	Same teaching points as the abductor but squeezing the weight together rather than pushing away.
Bodyweight squats	4 sets of 20-25 reps	Head looking forward and keeping your body as upright as you can. Find a depth that you can comfortably get to while keeping feet flat on the floor. Arms outstretched in front of you to help balance. You can make this movement more difficult by adding a small weight, holding it close to your chest.
Plank	5 sets of 30 seconds	Lying on your front supporting your bodyweight with your forearms and toes. Try to brace your core and control the breathing not letting your hips raise up or drop down.
Stair climber	15 minutes	High intensity. (Should be able to complete the time but should be quite difficult by the last couple of minutes). Hold the handles if you need to for balance and stability but try not to use them as a way to support your bodyweight and make it easier.

Day Two - Upper Body

EXERCISE	SETS X REPS	TEACHING POINTS
Incline treadmill walk	20 minutes	Low intensity. Set the incline of the treadmill to one which you can comfortably walk at but not so steep you feel you need to hold onto the treadmill.
Seated chest press	3 sets of 15-20 reps	Set the seat height so that the handles are in line with the bottom part of your chest. Ideally in line with your nipples.
Seated Row machine	3 sets of 15-20 reps	When beginning the movement, imagine trying to bring your shoulder blades down and back. As if trying to put your elbows in to your back pockets. This will engage the muscles you need to use.
Shoulder press machine	3 sets of 15-20 reps	Set the seat so the handles are at ear height or lower. If they are above the ears you are not getting a full range of motion and therefore not getting the full benefit of the movement.
Lat pull down machine	3 sets of 15-20 reps	Imagine pulling your elbows back into your back pockets again. The bar should finish the movement in between your chin and top of your chest.
Leg raises	3 sets of 15 reps	Lying flat on your back and with your legs together bring them straight up in the air as high as you can without your lower back coming off the ground. Slowly lower them back down and repeat. To make this exercise harder you can stop your legs before touching the ground on the way back down and then bring them straight back up. To make it easier you can tuck your hands under your lower back and bum.
Crunches	3 sets of 15 reps	Lying flat on your back lift your knees off the ground to around 90 degrees. Attempt to sit up by lifting your shoulders off the ground until you feel your stomach muscles working. Hold the position for 1 second and then lower your shoulders back to the ground. Repeat.
Cardio equipment of choice	15 minutes	High intensity

Day Three - Full Body

EXERCISE	SETS X REPS	TEACHING POINTS
Cardio equipment of choice	30 minutes	Low intensity.
Leg press	3 sets of 15-20 reps	<i>See Day One</i>
Bodyweight squats	3 sets of 20-25 reps	<i>See Day One</i>
Seated chest press	3 sets of 15-20 reps	<i>See Day Two</i>
Seated Row machine	3 sets of 15-20 reps	<i>See Day Two</i>
Bicep curls	2 sets of 20 reps	Focus on just bending the elbow to allow the weight to come up until your elbow is fully flexed. Then slowly lower the weight back down under control.
Tricep pushdown	2 sets of 20 reps	Opposite of the bicep curl, elbows should start fully flexed and then focus on straightening the arm until it is almost fully extended. Slowly return it to the bent position.
Plank	5 sets of 30 seconds	<i>See Day One</i>
Cable woodchop	3 sets of 15 (per side)	Set a cable to around head height. Grasp the handle with both hands and step away from the cable to take the weight. With straight arms bring the handle down across the body and ending up at the opposite hip. Do this slowly and under control without twisting the torso.