

# Keep Your Hands to Yourself

... and other simple tips for maximizing your treadmill workout. BY J.J. FLIZANES

**S**tudies have shown that we burn more calories on the treadmill than on almost any other machine. I like the treadmill because it puts us in an upright position, and it focuses more on hip flexion and extension than on knee flexion and extension. Why is that a good thing? I believe we sit too much — at a desk, in a car or on a couch. Here are some tips to get you started on a treadmill, or to maximize your use of time with treadmill training.

Always start with your feet off the moving track. Start at a slow pace once you get on, and gradually increase the speed and adjust the incline as your program dictates.

Start in an upright, neutral spine posture. Do not slouch or lean on the machine with your arms. Your work effort is less, and you may fall prey to bad habits that lead to injury. This would include reading: If you can, avoid it. You will have a better workout, and you won't get the back, neck or shoulder pain that may occur from leaning forward.

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Have a plan. Are you there to burn calories, or are you preparing for a 5k race? Are you there for general health? Know what you want to get out of it before you get on.

The E.I.T.T. principle (Frequency, Intensity, Time, Type) is your equation for success. Type is treadmill. To build



Lean or slouch on the treadmill, and you'll go nowhere fast.

your program, decide how many days you'll do it and for how long. That's Frequency and Time. Intensity is driven by: 1) your goal, and 2) your fitness level.

Getting a heart-rate monitor is critical for tracking this accurately. If you are just starting to work out, you want to start slowly. You may want to do a longer duration — say 30–45 minutes — and a lower heart rate that is still in your target zone. That way, you're burning calories efficiently, but there is less impact.

If you have already been in the program but have hit a plateau, it's time to increase the intensity with or without

decreasing the time. Working in a lower heart-rate zone for one hour can be the same caloric expenditure as working half the time but twice as hard.

Interval training is when you "zigzag" in your heart-rate zone by peaking it and then slowing down. For example, do five minutes in the bottom range, then run for two minutes in the top range. This is one interval. Some say that interval training is more effective than steady-state training. See what works for you. ▢

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