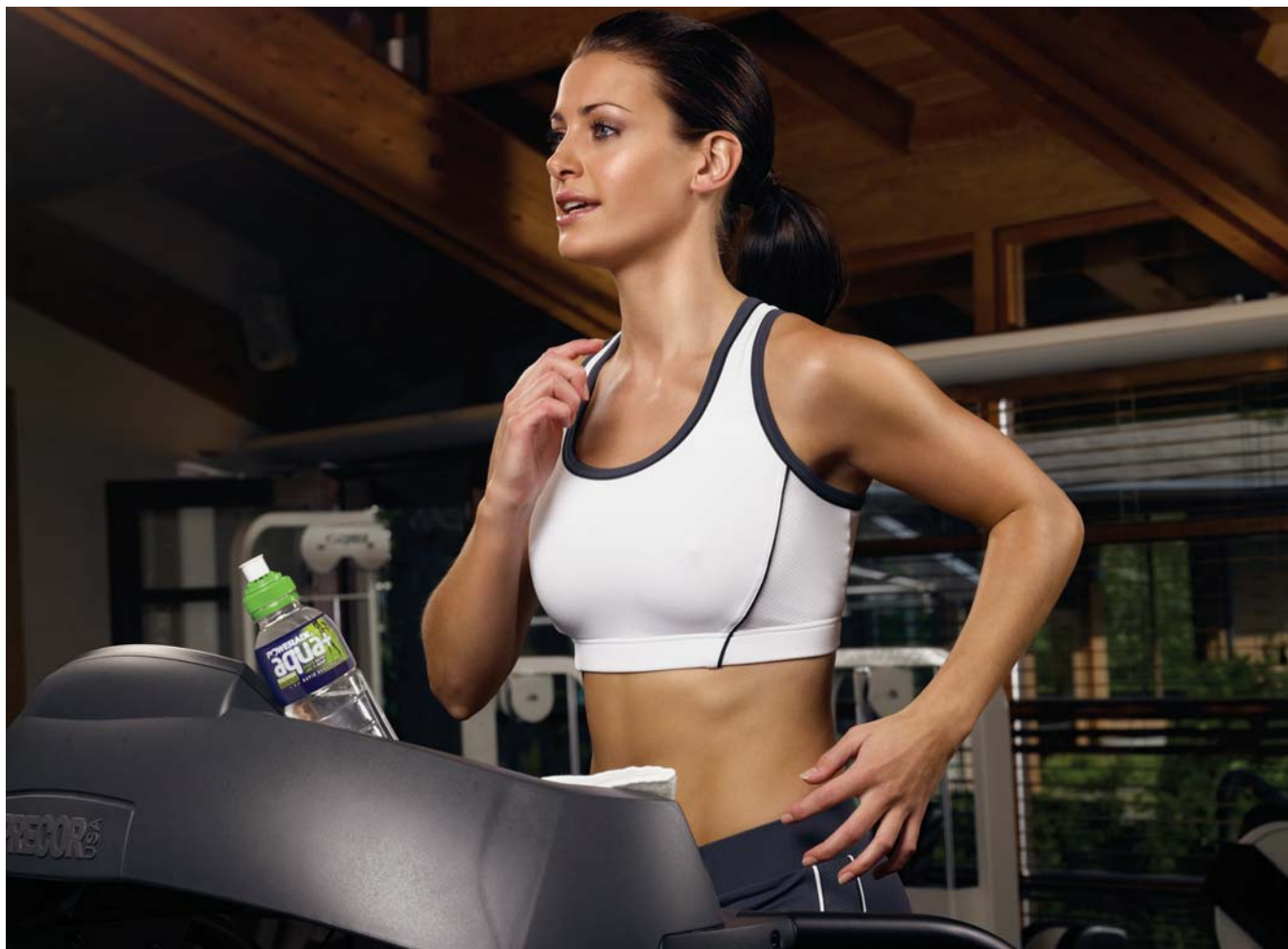


treadmill **masterclass**



Back to Basics has guided you through 40 of the most commonly performed resistance exercises in the gym! In 2006, we continue with the 'basics' theme as we take a look at how to get the best out of the CV equipment in the gym, starting with one of the most popular pieces of kit of the lot – the treadmill...

Why train on a treadmill?

While it can be very enjoyable, outdoor running is not always possible or even desirable; foul weather, traffic pollution, yappy dogs, poorly lit or unlit streets and navigating road junctions can all detract from the running experience. And for lone women, safety and security issues (particularly on dark winter evenings) can also be a concern. Treadmill running however overcomes all of these concerns, and has the

additional bonus of reducing the likelihood of injury because of the greatly increased cushioning that treadmill offers over road running.

Using a treadmill

Although it delivers the same benefits, treadmill training is not quite the same as road running, so if you're new to treadmill training, there are a few things you need to be aware of:

- While you're running on a moving belt, your body is actually stationary relative to the air around you, which means there's no air flowing past your body. The downside of this is that you'll feel hotter and sweat more for the same running pace compared to outdoors running, so you'll need to take more care with your hydration and drink more, especially during longer sessions in warm conditions. The plus side is that because there's no air resistance impeding you, you'll tend to run a little bit faster for the same effort!
- Newcomers to treadmill training can find the experience a bit disconcerting because your legs are telling the brain that you're moving forwards while your eyes are simultaneously telling the brain that you're stationary. This can lead to feelings of 'sea legs' when you first step off the treadmill. But don't worry – these sensations quickly fade within a couple of minutes.
- Because treadmill running lacks the constantly changing scenery and environment of outdoors running, it can easily become boring. The key to overcoming this potential pitfall is to

perform structured workouts. The good news is that the lack of external distractions and constant conditions actually provide the ideal environment to undertake the kind of structured training that will lead to real gains in your running performance.

Treadmill beginner's tips

- Maintain an upright posture at all times – don't keep looking down at what your feet are doing!
- Keep the arms moving naturally - don't grip the handrails in normal use except for mounting and dismounting.
- Get used to walking/running at a steady, comfortable speed before moving on to more advanced programmes.
- Keep a drink and towel (for sweat) handy for longer workouts in warm conditions.
- Always use the safety shut-off strap – this will ensure that the power is automatically disconnected from the treadmill should you happen to slip or fall.

Try these workouts

Structured training will not only make your workouts more enjoyable, they'll also make you fitter and faster. So next time you're at the gym, don't run aimlessly – try one of the following:

Steady state aerobic workout – this is most simple workout that can be performed on a treadmill. Set the gradient flat, and after a warm-up of 5-10 minutes at an easy pace (heart rate at 55-60% of maximum), increase up to steady state pace for 20-30 minutes (beginners should aim for a heart rate of 60-70% MHR; more advanced trainers can aim for 70-80% MHR). Follow with a cool-down of 5-10 minutes easy jogging/walking until your heart rate falls below 55% of maximum.

Pace Intervals

- Warm up as above
- Increase the speed until your heart rate is in the aerobic steady state zone for 10 minutes.
- Increase the speed by about 20% for 1-2 minutes making sure that your heart rate does not exceed 85% MHR.
- Recover at warm up pace until your heart rate has returned to 70% MHR.
- Repeat steps iii and iv 4 – 8 times.
- Warm down as above.
- Add variation by using shorter intervals at higher intensity (e.g. 30% pace increase for 30 seconds) or longer intervals at less intensity (e.g. 10% for 2-3 minutes).

Hill Intervals – as above but instead of throwing surges of pace, increase your work rate by elevating the incline while keeping the speed constant. Start with modest increases in incline – you'll be surprised how much harder an increase of just 2 or 3 % in gradient feels! Don't forget to cool-down thoroughly!

Pyramid workout – a challenging workout that keeps your heart rate within its steady state zone while providing a constantly changing combination of speed and gradient. The workout is divided into 7 sections of equal length (3-5 minutes), is preceded by a thorough warm-up and followed with a cool-down.

- Warm-up as above, then:
 - 3-5 minutes on the flat at steady state speed.
 - 3-5 minutes at 2 % incline; reduce speed by 0.5mph.
 - 3-5 minutes at 4% incline; reduce speed by 0.5mph.
 - 3-5 minutes at 6% incline; reduce speed by 0.5mph.
 - 3-5 minutes at 4% incline; increase speed by 0.5mph.
 - 3-5 minutes at 2% incline; increase speed by 0.5mph.
 - 3-5 minutes on the flat; increase speed by 0.5mph.
- Now cool-down thoroughly.

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