

Exercise Choice

Luke Barden, June 2013

When trying to lose weight there are 3 main options available to gym users: classes, cardio and weights.

This article will look at the first two of that list.

Classes are a good way to get a planned, intense workout, especially for those who don't know much about putting their own program together, or maybe aren't totally confident in the gym. I highly recommend boxercise or spin classes as a fantastic and fun way to burn those calories!

Cardio can be further broken down into longer distance or duration, or shorter High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT). You can use any cardio machine in the gym, they all have positives and negatives, although I'd say if you like one because you're particularly good at it, then use it less often! The more efficient you are at an exercise the less calories it will burn. This is not to say your technique should be verging on dangerous, it just means that you will waste energy with imperfect technique, which is energy that all uses calories. So if you find running comfortable, but swimming particularly challenges you, get in the pool more often.

Although you will feel like you have done more with long distance cardio, you may find much faster results sticking with HIIT for the majority of your sessions. HIIT is broken down sprints. An Example would be:

On an exercise bike, cycle for 1 min comfortably for a warmup
15 seconds sprint as fast as you possibly can
45 seconds slow down to a comfortable 'slow jog' pace
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45 seconds slow down to a comfortable 'slow jog' pace
One minute warm down

The first time you try this method of exercise, you will probably find that just doing three sets of the 15 second all out sprint will be enough to leave you breathless. If it doesn't, or as your fitness improves, keep adding sprints in. Constantly push yourself with this method, but make sure you maintain the sprint pace. If on a bike you can hit 220rpm when you push it, make sure all your sprints are over the 200/210 mark. If they aren't, you won't be doing true HIIT.

Give it a go, and let me know what you think.