

SPEND LESS TIME EXERCISING

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I'm one of the colourful sprinting blurs

There are many ways to exercise. And somehow running for hours and hours has caught the fancy of a lot of people in today's day. The hype around the Mumbai marathon so does not help! It's fine to run if you enjoy it. I mean if you wake up early in the morning and say - Hey, I can hardly get my shoes on straight because I need to be out that door and run and run and run; if you cross your heart and tell me that's how you feel in the morning or evening or whenever it is that you're going for a run, then do it. Don't let any blog post or article in the world hold you back if you feel like that. If you feel like I feel - me being a fairly active person - read super active person who does 8-9 workouts a week on average (yes yes mental I know) - I feel like shooting myself when we're doing the 1 k test once a month in bootcamp.

I hate it. I hate the monotony of running. I feel upset. Every workout I do makes me feel uplifted and happy. Except for running.

So you may not be like me. But you not be like little miss sunshine in the first para either. If you are somewhere in between (more tilting towards me something tells me), if you put your alarm on snooze 3 times before getting out of bed and wondering why you're putting yourself through the ordeal then listen up..

I was a lazy chubby girl till 2 years ago. I could not wake up without an alarm till 10 am or sometimes 11. up until the age of 28, I was not some 18 year old lethargic teen mind you. So I'm not a natural to working out, nor was I ever athletic.

The same me wakes up before the alarm at 6 am because I really want to. I haven't missed a single session NOT A SINGLE BOOTCAMP SESSION in the past year and a half. Why? Because I enjoy it and I enjoy my reflection in the mirror. There is no other explanation why a hater of early mornings and all things sunrise would put herself through the ordeal.

I think the key to fitness is to really enjoy exercise and in order to enjoy it, you need to find things that take up less time and are therefore less monotonous.

Here are some ideas...

1) **Stop running if you hate it : Sprint instead.** Do one or two all out sprints a week. What's that you ask? Why, only the best thing you can do to activate your metabolism into over drive and build that lean muscle and burn that fat quickly.

How do I do it? Get up (a whole 40 minutes later than normal) Get those shoes on (slowly) wear yellow (since you're no longer in bleak dawn but happy sunshine now), and run. A small warm up is good but after that just run with complete (gay) abandon with your heart and your mind. (forget about your legs) Stop when you feel tired, jog or walk for a few moments and fly (umm run) again. Do this 6 times. It will take you 15 minutes (unless you're super unfit) and will make you feel better

and show results quicker than anything you have ever done. Also look up [tabata sprints](#).

2) **HIIT - High interval intensity training is the way to go.** Forget all the things you were told by wannabe (mini) Arnolds at the gym. HIIT means short bursts of all out activity, whether it is sprints, body weights or light weights. The key here is metabolic conditioning - a steady barrage of multi-joint, compound exercises performed rapidly and with little rest to build muscular and anaerobic endurance.



So a HIIT session could look like this. As many body weight squats you can do in 40 seconds, 10 seconds break. As many pushups that you can do in 40 seconds, 10 seconds break. As many [burpees](#) that you can do in 40 seconds, 10 seconds break. And so on. Or 10 sets of 5 pull ups , 10 pushups and 15 squats. There are a whole list of body weight workouts you can play with but I'll save that for a subsequent post. Of course weights, light and heavy, can also be done in a HIIT session so there is no need to give up your weight training. This will help you put on lean muscle mass and get a strong core.

3) **Lift sensibly** - I don't enjoy going to the gym and spending an hour and a half doing monotonous repetitive exercises. So I barely go. The only thing that keeps me going back is that I know its going to be a short half an hour or 40 minutes. How? I don't workout small muscles in isolation. I do the big stuff. Heavy weighted squats, lunges, step ups, over head press, chest press, bent over dumbbell rows and deadlifts, are the only workouts I ever do and from this list I pick 3 for the day, do them and walk out. These are functional work outs or compound movements that employ more than one muscle group and are also real life movements that will help me when I want to pick up my heavy suitcase from the conveyer belt at the airport (during my many travels) and put it on the trolley.

4) **Don't look down on walking - Moving goes a long way.** Sometimes in pursuit of that perfect workout or run where you supposedly burn some magical number of calories, alot of people miss

out on the simple easy thing, like walking for example. Just walking to places where you take a car or using the stairs instead of a lift should never be ignored. Moving at your workplace or getting up to take your own printout instead of exercising your vocal chords to the guy who is hovering near the printer is important as well. On days that you just don't feel like a run, just walk.

From sheer experience I can tell you that taking baby steps, cutting out stuff I hated, spending less time working out but making every moment count, slowly made me start enjoying the process.

Now I must confess that I do spend a reasonable amount (try embarrassing) of time working out but only because its no longer a drag.

