

Lesson 2.2

Principles of Exercise

By Carone Fitness



Principles of Exercise

This lesson reviews some of the general principles of exercise and progression. Understanding and following these principles will help you achieve your desired results.



Principles of Exercise

Overload

Overload: A principle of exercise that states that the only way to improve fitness is to increase over time. This can mean increasing the amount of resistance, increasing the amount of time, or increasing the speed.

When just beginning an exercise, it is generally difficult. Over time as it becomes easier to do, it is important to apply the overload principle by increasing resistance, time, or speed in order to continue progressing.



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Overload



When strength training, you would overload by increasing the amount of weight you lift.

For aerobic activities, such as running, overloading means increasing the speed, distance, or intensity—although only one at a time.

To increase your speed, pick up your pace per mile slightly. To increase your distance, add $\frac{1}{2}$ mile or mile to your usual route. To increase intensity, try running hills.

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Progression



Progression: A principle of exercise that states that a person should start slowly and increase exercise gradually.



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Progression



Progression can refer to both progressing slowly over a large span of time, such as weeks or months, AND progression within a single workout.

For instance, you may start a running program by running one mile and progress one half mile each week until you are running five miles.

Likewise, in a single running session, you may start at a brisk walk, then jog at a 15-minute-mile pace for a few minutes, then increase to a 13-minute-mile pace, and eventually to a 12-minute-mile pace.

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Why?



Why are overload and progression necessary?

If you run two miles going the same route and the same speed four times a week for two months, your body will become bored. Those two miles will be so much easier to run at the end of two months than it was at the beginning. Your body will have adapted to the pace, distance, and intensity and will not have to work as hard to perform. Thus, your fitness level will not be improving or progressing.

Overloading a little bit at a time allows you to improve your performance and increase your fitness level.

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Specificity



Specificity: A principle of exercise that states that specific kinds of exercises must be done to develop specific aspects of the body and specific aspects of fitness. Basically, exercise in a manner that will get you to your goals.

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Specificity



All exercise will help condition your body generally, but different exercises work your muscles in different ways. So, if you are looking for specific results, use specific exercises.



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Specificity



For instance, if your goal is to run a 5k, you should train by running, not by cycling. Cycling will not use your muscles in the same manner as running.

If you want to increase the strength of your biceps, use weights or resistance and do some bicep curls.

If you want to swim a mile, practice swimming.

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Reversibility



Reversibility: This principle states that if you don't maintain a regular exercise program, your state of physical fitness will regress. In other words, use it or lose it!



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Reversibility



Studies have shown that even after one week of inactivity, there is evident loss in performance. Within two to three months of inactivity, one can see a total reversal of all benefits from previous activity.



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Reversibility



Everyone has weeks of vacation, illness, or schedule conflicts that prevent them from exercising. However, it is important to keep in mind that there will some be setbacks and a necessary re-conditioning phase when you start exercising again. You can't expect to come back to your workouts at the same level you were before taking a break. Take things slow and build back up using progression and overload.



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Individuality



Individuality: This principle maintains that no two individuals will benefit from exercise exactly the same way physically or psychologically. Difference in genetics, age, experience, body size, and health status can all affect the outcomes of a workout.

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Individuality



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What works for one person may not work for the next. This is important to keep in mind for two reasons:

1. Don't compare yourself to others. Everyone will have a different genetic make-up and life situation than you, thus even if you are doing the same workouts, you may see different results.
2. Listen to your body. Find what works best for you and stick with it!



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