



GET FIT FAST TRAINING PLAN

2021 is upon us. Want to Get Fit Fast in 4 weeks? Follow this simple, no BS plan.



THE BEST TIME TO START YOUR SUMMER FITNESS TRAINING IS IN DECEMBER.



It's a common question, especially this time of year: How do I get into good shape as fast as possible?

Or: What's the most effective way to get in great shape in four weeks?

The no-bullshit answer is to cut out all the bullshit. If you have one month before a 5k race you want to do, or a 50-mile ultra, or looking good at the beach, the answer is remarkably simple. It doesn't require that you spend a fortune on a gym membership or a home training center.

In fact, all you need is a pair of running shoes, a bar you can do pull-ups from and a patch of floor or ground. All the other bells and whistles may be the distractions you want to avoid.

Presented here is a bare-bones, brass-tack plan to get you fit and ready for rigorous outdoor summer activities, jumping in a competition or hopping into a swimsuit.

Here are the bones: Running. Burpees. Pull-ups. Stretching. Mix these together with consistency,

good sleep, and a common-sense diet and we bet you're going to surprise yourself.

The most critical part of this program is that you start today. And that's another virtue of the sparse gear list. It's a good bet you have a pair of running shoes you can use. If you don't have a pull-up bar in a doorway or a tree branch in your backyard, we offer some ideas for your below.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Running shoes. What you have in your closet will work. If you want to head to the running shop and buy a fresh pair, that's great. But not necessary. Advice on what model of running shoe? Something that fits well, feels good, and isn't built like a stiletto. In other words, the lower to the ground the better.

Pull-up bar. The machines take up all of the room. When you do find a pull-up bar at a commercial gym, it's not uncommon that it's built into a machine.

Whatever your gym has in the way of a pull-up bar will work. If you

don't belong to a gym, this is an easy problem to solve. You can purchase one for your door frame at a sporting goods store.

Or you can be creative. A nearby playground is usually a good place to find a bar to do pull-ups on. Or, as mentioned, a tree branch in your backyard. when it comes to pull-ups: It doesn't need to be complicated.

A patch of space for your burpees and yoga. For Yoga, if you would rather go to a class, we encourage you. Any style, any level. Just get yourself there.

If a drop-in yoga studio isn't an option, just plan on doing some stretching. There are plenty of great online videos to help you. No need for a yoga mat. Just do your best. See the sidebar for some of our favorite, most valuable yoga poses that—if you perform them on a consistent basis—will definitely get the job done.



WHY RUNNING?

You need to do cardio. Running is accessible and delivers. When it comes to getting a solid cardiovascular workout in a limited amount of time, it's hard to beat. You don't have to drive to a swimming pool or spend half-an-hour getting your bike gear sorted out. Just lace up the shoes and head out the door.

What if running is a problem? Don't be intimidated by this plan if you don't run, or don't think you can run. Or if an injury or testy joint makes running painful. Running in this plan can be used interchangeably with walking or pace walking. You can boost the intensity of your walking with a weighted backpack or vest. Or you can row, bike, canoe, whatever. It's about moving across space under your own power.



WHY PULL-UPS?

"The best—and safest—exercise to build a powerful upper back is the humble pull-up," says author/old-school fitness expert, Paul Wade.

In his bestselling book about old-school training techniques, *Convict Conditioning: How to Bust Free of All Weakness*, Wade argues that pull-ups are the "oldest muscle building exercise in history," the evidence stored in classical warrior texts. He adds that our penchant for pull-ups goes back even further: "For the forerunners of humanity, pulling yourself up into the branches of a tree would have been as natural an event as taking a step is for us today."

The pull-up is another exercise that gives you a lot bang for the buck, says Megan Beck, SGX Coach and contributor to *Spartan Life*. "Your pulling muscles are twice as necessary as your pushing muscles in the body," Beck writes. "These muscles are responsible for basics such as posture, gripping, and climbing."

If you're just starting out and doing a standard pull-up is beyond your current reach, no problem. You can find how to "scale up" your pull-ups on page 5.

WHY BURPEES?

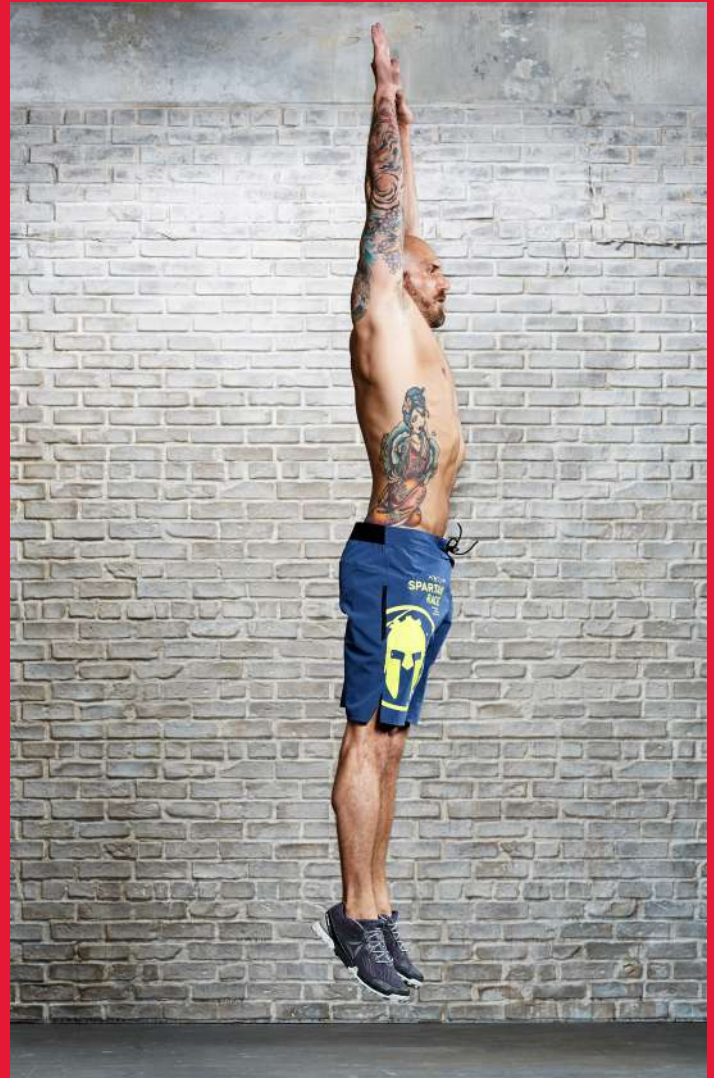
The burpee is not just one movement, it's. It is a squat, squat thruster, a plank, a push-up, and a squat jump, all built into one. The burpee mixes mobility, stability, strength, and agility by fusing together a power push-up with a squat thruster and a vertical jump. It's innovative and an all-around ass kicker.

When in doubt, do burpees. When you only have 10 minutes, do burpees. When you only have five minutes, do burpees. You can find how to do a burpee well on page 6.

BURPEE FORM

The basic burpee looks like this.

- You drop down into a squat and place your hands on the ground in front of you.
- Kick your legs out so that you are in the top of the push-up position.
- Touch your chest to the ground.
- Push yourself off the ground, land in a squat and proceed to stand to the upright position with a fully extended hip.
- Jump off the ground, making sure both feet are in the air.
- Raise your hands above your head.

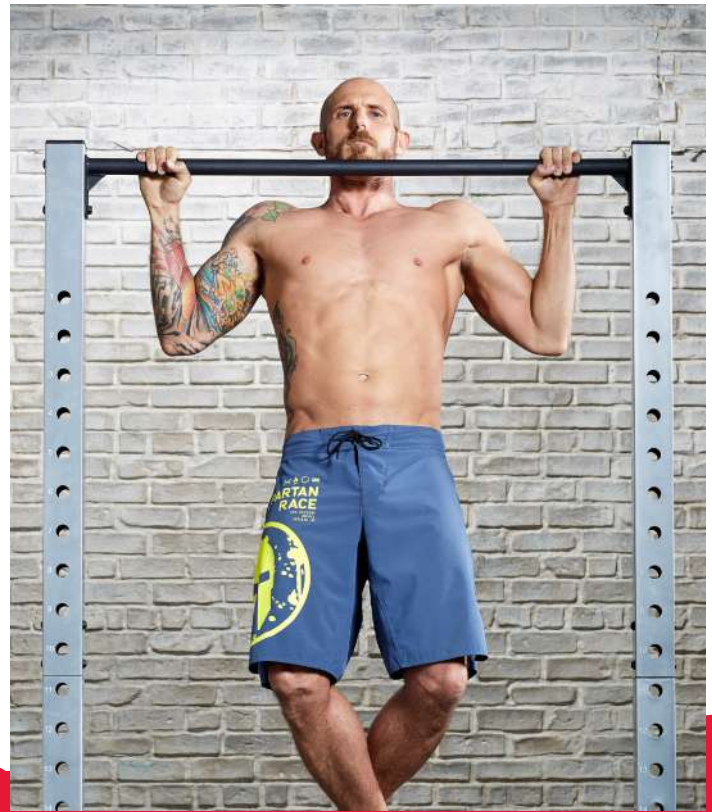
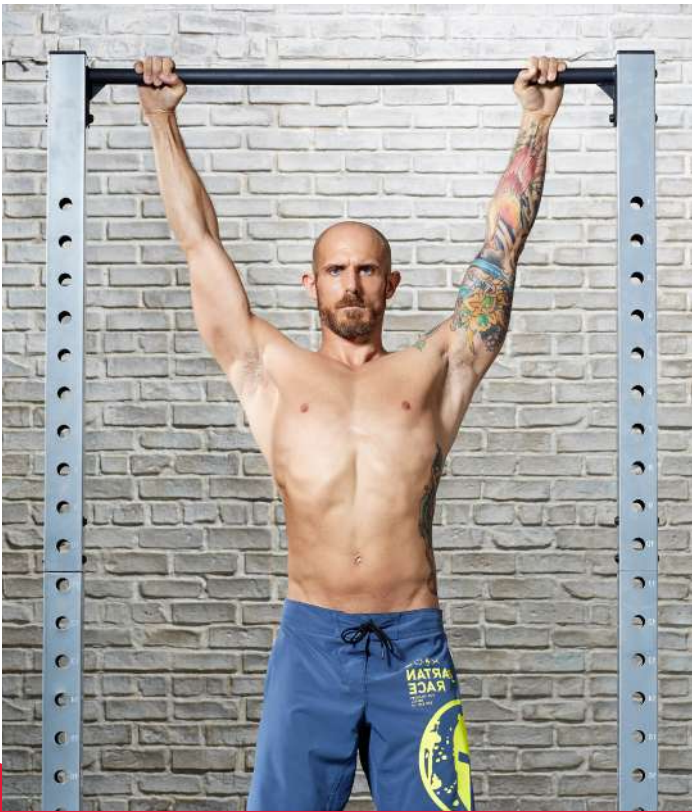


WHY YOGA?

Yoga is good. Try and take a class. Force yourself to do full sessions.

SGX Coach Jeannie Gleason says that yoga goes beyond stretching, the benefits kicking in after a month. “Yoga brought me opportunities for meditative breathing and focus,” she writes. “It addressed my flexibility limitations—as my hip flexors testified the next day. After about a month of hot yoga and a style called yin yoga, I realized the benefits.”

Can't make it to a yoga class? Lots of options. You can find about a billion yoga videos online. You can also find some tips on page 7.



HOW TO SCALE YOUR PULL-UP

Don't be afraid of this program if you don't have pull-ups. Use one of the following scaling options.

Jumping pull-ups. Grab a bar over your head. Jump and pull your chin over the bar.

Single pull-ups. Grab pull up bar. Execute 1 pull up. Let go of bar. Repeat. Unload completely each rep. If you can adjust the height of pull up bar, try and have it right at the height of your up-stretched hands.

Hanging pull-ups. This is when you hang from a bar and execute multiple pull-ups without letting go or touching the ground.

Rows. Standing rows are good for the beginner who needs to build grip strength and fire up the muscles that—once strengthened— will allow you to graduate to above options and move up the ladder. Use a TRX sling or a set of gymnastic rings or just a long rope or strap looped to a bar or beam above you. Standing tall and engaging your stomach and hip muscles so that you're as stiff as a board, hold onto the handles (or rings or ends of rope) and lean back, tipping yourself backwards. The stopping point is when your arms are locked out. Then pull yourself up and in for a single rep.

DON'T BE AFRAID OF THIS PROGRAM IF YOU DON'T HAVE PULL-UPS. USE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING

HOW TO DO A BURPEE WELL

Carl Paoli, former elite gymnast and founder of GymnasticsWOD.com, writes about burpees in his book *Free+Style: Maximize Sport and Life Performance with Four Basic Movements*—addressing their true value in day-to-day life and better sport performance.

“It’s one of the most fundamental movement patterns required to understand in order to get off the ground,” he says. “The burpee is a great way to practice pushing mechanics (push-ups), hip power through flexion and extension (as seen in sit-ups or leg lifts), and squatting/ jumping landing mechanics. All of these movements, if understood at the to all other movements such as walking, running, jumping, landing, throwing, and catching.”

1. Think about your backside

In the upward phase of the burpee, it’s really important to keep both your legs and core in mind. “When you push off the ground, allow your body to naturally arch while engaging your glutes,” suggests Paoli. By doing this, you’ll keep your lower back in a safe position.

2. Keep an upright chest.

Just like when you’re performing heavy Olympic lifts, like a squat or a snatch, it’s important to maintain an upright chest position any time your feet have full contact with the ground in your burpee. “Lift your chest up proud,” he suggests. “By doing this, you’ll be able to gain essential momentum that can carry you into your jump.”

3. End where you started

The last thing you want to do is start the burpee at point A and end it at point Z. If you’re far off your starting mark at that top jump, your form is likely all over the place—and you’re doing extra work. “You want to jump and try to land in the same place and with the same stance as you took off,” he says.

By Emily Abbate, adapted from her article on Spartan Life



8 POWER-PACKED YOGA POSES

“Yoga promotes physical flexibility and strength, and as a side effect, also creates mental flexibility and strength to push through any obstacle,” says Brooke Easton, instructor at Lyons Den Power Yoga in New York City. “It can also help prevent injuries by strengthening lesser used muscles, critical for HIIT workout fans.” You can benefit massively by incorporating a few key moves, says Easton. Below are her favorites, which deliver the biggest payoff in functional mobility.

1. Downward Facing Dog

Start in high-plank position with your shoulders stacked over your wrists. Lift your hips away from ground to make an inverted V shape with your body. Keeping a micro-bend in your knees, sink your heels towards the ground. Hold for 60 seconds.

Body benefit: The perfect way to stretch out tight calves and hamstrings, downward facing dog also boosts circulation.

2. Crescent Lunge

Start in downward facing dog. Ease into the lunge by stepping your right foot forward between your hands and keeping your left leg straight behind you. Your right knee should be stacked over your heel, with a 90-degree bend. Now reach your arms straight overhead with palms facing inward. Hold for 5 seconds; repeat on opposite side. Body benefit: Build stability in the front and back of the torso, as well as boost flexible strength in the legs and hips. Stronger legs equal greater power to ascend even the toughest climbs.

3. Leap Frogs

Start in downward facing dog. Slide your feet together so that your big toes touch, and then step your feet an extra foot toward your hands. Bend your knees wide while looking down straight between hands. Jump up, stacking shoulders over wrists and hips over shoulders—you’re almost doing a handstand with your knees bent, with your big toes still together. Repeat for 10 reps, then rest 30 seconds.

Body benefit: Hello, explosiveness! Work your calves and core with this plyometric move. Adding as little as six weeks of plyometric training, like hops, shuffling, and backpedalling, can dramatically boost agility, according to one Western Michigan University study.

4. Airplane

Start in a standing position with your feet together. Lift your right leg and extend it backward, pivoting forward at the hips so that your chest and right leg are parallel with ground. Bracing your core, look forward and draw your shoulder blades together to open your chest forward. Reach hands toward your back foot with palms facing down toward the floor. Hold for 10 seconds; repeat on opposite side.

Body benefit: This balancing move requires you to work on your stability as well as strengthen your ankles and legs. The stronger your foundation is, the less likely you are to sprain an ankle.





5. Triangle

Start in downward dog. Step your right foot forward, between your hands, and turn your left foot perpendicular to the front of your mat. Stand up and ground down through both feet, keeping both legs straight. Now lift your arms straight out at shoulder height, and hinge forward over your right leg, taking your right hand to the floor or a block on the outside of your leg. Shoulders should be stacked, gaze on top hand. Take 5 to 10 breaths, and then do it again with the left foot forward.

Body benefit: Stretches and strengthens the ankles, knees, thighs, and the groin.

6. Seated Single-Leg Extension

Start in seated position with your right leg extended forward. Press the sole of your left foot onto inner right thigh. Point your chest forward and drop down over your extended leg until you can't reach any further. Hold for one minute; repeat on opposite side.

Body benefit: Stretches your

calves and hamstrings. Stretching your hamstrings can be useful to alleviate lower back pain as well as restore pelvic movement, according to one Federal Institute of Rio de Janeiro study.

7. Half Pigeon

Start in downward dog. Lower your body, and as you do so, bring your right leg forward and rotate your leg so that your shin is parallel to the top of mat. Extend your left leg backward with the top of your foot pressed into the floor. Fold over your right leg, keeping your hips square, and hold for one minute. Repeat on opposite side.

Body benefit: Weak hips can be a cause of a slew of common running issues, like patella tendonitis (runner's knee), piriformis issues, or IT band pain, according to a study published in *Clinical Journal of Sports Medicine*. This pose helps stretch and strengthen the hips to make them better for all that running and climbing that goes hand-in-hand with racing.

8. Half Pigeon

Start in seated position. Lay down, bringing the soles of your feet together. Let your knees fall apart toward ground, creating a diamond shape. Now close your eyes and relax, you earned this.

Body benefit: After hitting all these poses, you deserve a little restoration. Not only does this pose help stretch the inner thigh, groin, and knees, but it also boosts circulation and relieves anxiety.

By Emily Abbate, adapted from her article on Spartan Life

EXECUTING THE 4-WEEK GET FIT FAST PLAN

First of all, find the right plan for you. You'll see four different plans: Off the Couch, Intermediate, Runner, Advanced and the Plan From Hell. You can scale any of these plans to something that works for you.

Reps: You can break the reps up anyway you want throughout the day. For example, on the first day of the program, your job is to do 60 burpees. You can knock them all out in one session. Or you can break them up into three chunks of 20 performed at different times of the day. Whatever works best for you. If you miss a day, try and insert those missed reps into the rest of the week. But don't freak out. If yoga is not for you, just do a stretching session. The primary goal is to counter the hard work you're doing on the exercise days with some static stretching holds.

I. OFF THE COUCH

DAYS	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
MONDAY	60 burpees	66 burpees	73 burpees	30 burpees
TUESDAY	30 pull-ups	33 pull-ups	37 pull-ups	15 pull-ups
WEDNESDAY	2 miles	2 1/4 miles	2.5 miles	1 mile
THURSDAY	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga
FRIDAY	30 burpees / 15 pull-ups	33 burpees / 17 pull-ups	37 burpees / 20 pull-ups	15 burpees / 8 pull-ups
	1 mile	1 1/4 miles	1.5 miles	.5 miles
SATURDAY	2 miles	2 1/4 miles	2.5 miles	1 mile
SUNDAY	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga
TOTALS	90 burpees / 45 pull-ups	99 burpees / 50 pull-ups	110 burpees / 57 pull-ups	45 burpees / 23 pull-ups
	5 miles	5 3/4 miles	6.5 miles	2.5 miles

Don't have pull-ups yet? Don't worry. Check out modifications on page 5 to scale your pull-ups.

II. Intermediate Runner

DAYS	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
MONDAY	60 burpees	66 burpees	73 burpees	30 burpees
	2 miles			
TUESDAY	30 burpees	33 pull-ups	37 pull-ups	15 pull-ups
	2 miles			
WEDNESDAY	60 burpees / 30 pull-ups	66 burpees / 33 pull-ups	73 burpees / 37 pull-ups	30 burpees / 15 pull-ups
	2 miles			
THURSDAY	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga
FRIDAY	60 burpees / 30 pull-ups	66 burpees / 33 pull-ups	37 burpees / 20 pull-ups	3 burpees / 15 pull-ups
	2 miles			
SATURDAY	2+ miles	2+ miles	2+ miles	2+ miles
SUNDAY	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga
TOTALS	300 burpees / 150 pull-ups	333 burpees / 165 pull-ups	365 burpees / 185 pull-ups	150 burpees / 75 pull-ups
	10+ miles			

III. Advanced

DAYS	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
MONDAY	60 burpees / 30 pull-ups	66 burpees / 33 pull-ups	73 burpees / 37 pull-ups	30 burpees / 15 pull-ups
	2 miles			
TUESDAY	60 burpees / 30 pull-ups	66 burpees / 33 pull-ups	73 burpees / 37 pull-ups	30 burpees / 15 pull-ups
	2 miles			
WEDNESDAY	60 burpees / 30 pull-ups	66 burpees / 33 pull-ups	73 burpees / 37 pull-ups	30 burpees / 15 pull-ups
	2 miles			
THURSDAY	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga
FRIDAY	60 burpees / 30 pull-ups	66 burpees / 33 pull-ups	73 burpees / 37 pull-ups	3 burpees / 15 pull-ups
	2 miles			
SATURDAY	60 burpees / 30 pull-ups	66 burpees / 33 pull-ups	73 burpees / 37 pull-ups	30 burpees / 15 pull-ups
	2 miles			
SUNDAY	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga
TOTALS	300 burpees / 150 pull-ups	333 burpees / 165 pull-ups	365 burpees / 185 pull-ups	150 burpees / 75 pull-ups
	10+ miles			

IV. Plan From Hell

DAYS	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
MONDAY	300 burpees / 150 pull-ups	333 burpees / 165 pull-ups	365 burpees / 185 pull-ups	365 burpees / 185 pull-ups
	10+ miles	10+ miles	10+ miles	10+ miles
TUESDAY	300 burpees / 150 pull-ups	333 burpees / 165 pull-ups	365 burpees / 185 pull-ups	365 burpees / 185 pull-ups
	10+ miles	10+ miles	10+ miles	10+ miles
WEDNESDAY	300 burpees / 150 pull-ups	333 burpees / 165 pull-ups	365 burpees / 185 pull-ups	365 burpees / 185 pull-ups
	10+ miles	10+ miles	10+ miles	10+ miles
THURSDAY	300 burpees / 150 pull-ups	333 burpees / 165 pull-ups	365 burpees / 185 pull-ups	Off
	10+ miles	10+ miles	10+ miles	
FRIDAY	300 burpees / 150 pull-ups	333 burpees / 165 pull-ups	365 burpees / 185 pull-ups	Off
	10+ miles	10+ miles	10+ miles	
SATURDAY	300 burpees / 150 pull-ups	333 burpees / 165 pull-ups	365 burpees / 185 pull-ups	Off
	10+ miles	10+ miles	10+ miles	
SUNDAY	300 burpees / 150 pull-ups	333 burpees / 165 pull-ups	365 burpees / 185 pull-ups	Race
	10+ miles	10+ miles	10+ miles	
TOTALS	2100 burpees / 1050 pull-ups	2100 burpees / 1050 pull-ups	2100 burpees / 1050 pull-ups	900 burpees / 450 pull-ups
	70+ miles	70+ miles	70+ miles	30+ miles





SPARTAN[®]

