

Fitness Circuits with Results

Are your students engaged in your fitness circuits and seeing gains in fitness levels? Examine the 5 parameters that will dictate the outcomes:

1. Exercise Time (Interval & Total Activity Time),
2. Recovery Time (Time Between Stations),
3. Number of Exercises and/or Stations,
4. Sequence/Progression of the Stations (Exercises Build Upon One Another)
5. Differentiation (Providing Three Levels of Challenge)

Experience the process of:

1. Developing movement,
2. Getting the physiological effects that you want, and
3. Create a progression that will allow your students to continue developing his/her fitness levels.

When developing a circuit, there are many questions that you may ask yourself: What principles of training am I going to cover? How can I achieve the results (physiological effects) that I want? How do I challenge all the different abilities of my students? How many stations do I set up? and... What are they going to accomplish in 1-2 minutes at a station—off task behavior?

Basic Guidelines for Management Purposes

- Create a smaller circuit and then double or triple each station so that students will rotate through the same station 2-3 times. This will allow for smaller groupings.
- Place the station signs in the center of the activity space. This allows you to move around the perimeter and provide feedback while monitoring all the other stations.
- Do not provide the students extended time at the stations. To support on task behavior be sure to only allow the necessary amount of time for the exercise and 10-15 seconds to transition.
- Provide 3 different levels of challenge at each station to differentiate—challenge by choice.

When developing a circuit you need to decide what your outcomes are going to be. Are you going to use a circuit to teach a particular concept related to fitness, support motor and patterning by teaching movement patterns that will transfer to a sport or activity that you are teaching, or are you going to strive for specific health or skill-related fitness outcomes such as, muscular fitness, cardiorespiratory fitness, speed, agility, etc?

We often think that novelty is the key to keeping kids excited and interested in what we are doing, but if you are continuously changing the circuits with no particular plan in mind (other than student engagement), you and the students will be unable to see

improvement in learning (cognitively), movement (motor learning) and/or fitness (health and skill-related fitness- physiological effects).

When developing your circuit, think of how you would go about developing the skill of swimming and developing cardiorespiratory fitness through swimming. First you must teach the skill and focus on developing efficiency of movement and once you have developed this foundation of movement you can then build cardiorespiratory fitness. The number one limiting factor in developing fitness is not being able to move. The inability to move limits an individual's development of strength. Inefficient movers fatigue very quickly when engaging in movement patterns or activities that are too advanced for their individual abilities. Developing a solid foundation of movement among all students will ultimately lead to the ability to develop fitness in all students.

The initial circuits should focus on the development of movement proficiency or fundamental movement patterns. Once the movement patterns have been developed, you can now begin to develop fitness on a solid foundation of movement. Students will become stronger through efficient movement patterns and will begin to overload their movement patterns in a variety of ways. The more force application that is needed the more important it becomes to have efficient firing patterns. Efficient firing patterns allow one to create more force application (force is dependent upon being able to move correctly—otherwise you will have compensation (other muscles try to help)). The neuromuscular system has to be able to recruit the correct muscles, the correct number of muscle fibers and in the correct firing sequence or pattern. We accomplish this through overload. We often just have all kids do the same exercises at the different circuit stations, leading students who are strengthening poor patterns and developing compensatory firing patterns.



Circuit #1 Outcome:

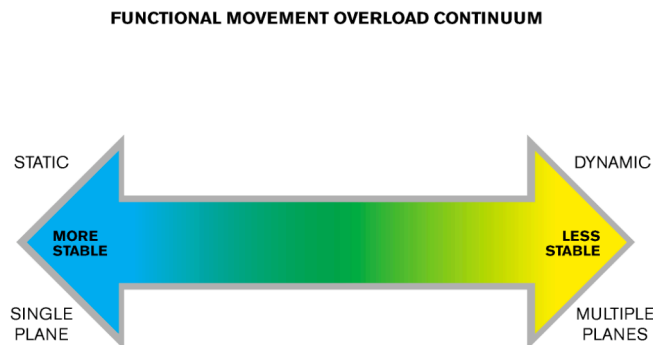
Teaching the concept/standard of Overload: Frequency, **Intensity**, Time & Type. Note: be sure to create progressions (ability to work within individual level) within each of the stations to allow for the different levels of ability among the students (differentiation)

1. Squat- (Basic Squat, 2 Foot to One Foot, Plane of Motion--resistance)
2. Lunge- (Stationary, Rotation, Star Lunge)
3. Iso Ab (knees, Base of Support, Rotation, Single Arm or Single Leg and Oppositional Lift, Lateral Iso Ab)
4. Push-up (Regular Push-up, Plyo-push-up, Push-up with Rotation)
5. Hip Hinge (Stationary w/ Stick, Band/Kettle Bell, Straight Leg Flamingo/T Balance)

Questions to ask as you develop your circuit:

Is there Overload? You can create overload through changing the following:

- Base of Support
- Planes of motion
- Resistance
- Lever Length



Other Possible Outcomes: Specificity (Related to the specifics of what you hope to accomplish- muscular fitness, agility, speed, power, reaction time, etc.), Rest/Recovery (time between the stations), Reversibility (use it or lose it).

How would you adjust these movements to support the development of the movements within your instructional units (Specificity)?

1. Squat- Basketball- Jump Stop- Step Into a squat, add a med ball, Jump Squat (jumping or rebounding)
2. Lunge- Ultimate- Pivot- Multi Directional Star Lunge, Lateral Lunge, Cross Over Step Lunge, Grapevine Lunge
3. Skip- Overhand Throw- Crow Hop- Side Slide

Circuit #2 Outcome:

Developing Movement Through an Agility Circuit

Be sure that your classes already know how to do the basic movements. Be sure to create a progression of a pattern or a skill to provide overload to allow the students to increase the intensity of the current exercise or movement.

Agility- Progression

1. Ladders- In In Out, In In Out w/ Stabilization, In In Out with Touch
2. Agility Rings- Single Leg Bound/Leap, Two foot jump, Single leg bound with stabilization. (Spread out the rings)
3. Agility Poles- Stutter step with open step, Stutter Step Cross Step, Stutter Step Drop Step
4. Dot Drill- Feet Apart-Together-Apart, Feet Apart-One Leg-Feet Apart
5. Figure 8 Cones- Running forward with back pedal, Side Shuffle, Sprint—Shuffle--Back Pedal Clockwise and Counter Clockwise.

