

The ten biggest myths in fitness

Level 1 • Pre-intermediate / Intermediate

1 Warmer

Put these fitness activities in order from 1 (your favourite) to 6 (your least favourite).

- | | |
|----------|--------------------|
| 1. _____ | a. swimming |
| 2. _____ | b. running |
| 3. _____ | c. weight-training |
| 4. _____ | d. rowing |
| 5. _____ | e. walking |
| 6. _____ | f. zumba |

2 Key words

Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text. The section numbers will help you.

scales

tear

lean

sore

myth

1. A _____ is something that people wrongly believe to be true. (introduction)
2. If your muscles are _____, they are painful and uncomfortable. (section 1)
3. A _____ is a hole in a muscle where it has been torn. (section 1)
4. _____ are a piece of equipment used for weighing people. (section 3)
5. If a person is _____, they are thin and look physically fit and healthy. (section 5)

benefit

novice

stimulus

recovery

pointless

6. In sport, _____ is a period of rest after intensive physical activity. (section 6)
7. If something is _____, it has no purpose or use. (section 7)
8. A _____ is someone who is just beginning to learn a skill or subject. (section 7)
9. A _____ is anything that helps something to happen, develop or improve. (section 7)
10. A _____ is something good you get from a situation. (section 10)

3 Choose the heading

These three headings have been removed from the text. Read the text and match the headings with the correct sections.

1. Shorter is better
2. Exercise is bad for your knees
3. Scales are pointless

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Soreness is good and scales are pointless: the ten biggest myths in fitness

Joel Snape

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It's easy to think that fitness is confusing – but it isn't. The basics stay the same, and we know the science. These are the ten biggest myths in fitness – memorize them, and exercise with confidence.

- 1 Soreness is a sign of a good workout**

Sore muscles don't mean progress. They are probably caused by small tears in muscles and happen when you do movements you're not used to or when you do too many repetitions. So reduce the number of repetitions. You can make progress without pain.
- 2 Lifting heavy weights will make you strong**

There are two ways to get stronger: increasing the size of each muscle and getting more muscles to work together when you need to use them. Getting big requires specific, targeted training and extra calories and protein – and it almost never happens by accident.
- 3 _____**

Modern fitness gurus argue that weight isn't a true measure of progress because the amount of water in the body changes from day to day, and building muscle can make you heavier. But this doesn't mean you should throw away your scales. "Over time, changes in your scale weight show changes in your body fat," says Emma Storey-Gordon, of ESG Fitness. "Even if you are also building muscle, you lose fat much more quickly than you build muscle."
- 4 _____**

Actually, it's the opposite: exercises done correctly will strengthen the muscles around your knee joints, protecting you from injury. As for running, a 20-year study by Stanford University found that regular runners suffered less from arthritis than non-runners as they got older.
- 5 You can target fat and reduce it**

Before the days of the internet, there was a myth that you could reduce the fat around your
- 6 Less rest means you're working harder**

"For most people – especially beginners – periods of recovery between sets mean a lower risk of injury and better results," says coach George Anderson. Or, in other words: if you train too hard for a whole hour, you'll have to lift smaller weights, go slower and generally do less work than you would with some recovery.
- 7 Machines are pointless**

The theory is that machines force your body to make unnatural movements. This stops you from moving naturally. But while there is some truth in this, not every machine is the enemy. "Whether you're a novice or a more advanced lifter, machines can give extra stimulus to different muscle groups," says trainer Dan Osman.
- 8 The cross-trainer is the best full-body cardio machine**

When used correctly, the rowing machine uses 86% of your muscles across nine major muscle groups. The rower also works with the time you have – from short 500-metre sprints to a slower 10k or an Olympic-length 2k.
- 9 _____**

Anything is better than nothing, and it's certainly possible to make some improvements in whatever limited time you have, but longer workouts work better than shorter workouts.
- 10 There is one 'best' way to train**

Is running better than lifting? "Whatever training style you use, someone will say that everything else is useless and stupid," says Dr Michael Banna. "The reality is, any physical activity has health benefits; the right type is the one that doesn't injure you, make you sad or make you want to stop."

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4 Comprehension check

Match the beginnings and endings to make statements about the text.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. If your muscles are sore, it ... | a. ... you will have a lower risk of injury and better results. |
| 2. Different amounts of water in the body mean that ... | b. ... suffered less from arthritis than non-runners. |
| 3. A study found that regular runners ... | c. ... doesn't mean that you are making good progress. |
| 4. If you include periods of recovery in your training, ... | d. ... is the best full-body cardio machine. |
| 5. The rowing machine ... | e. ... produce better results than short workouts. |
| 6. Although anything is better than nothing, long workouts ... | f. ... your weight can change from day to day. |

5 Chunks

Rearrange the words to make phrases from the text.

1. risk a injury of lower
2. progress pain make without
3. progress a measure true of
4. a of workout a good sign
5. the days internet before of the
6. truth some is there this in

6 Prepositions

Complete the phrases from the text using these prepositions.

of from by in to around

1. _____ accident
2. _____ other words
3. the muscles _____ your knee joints
4. periods _____ recovery
5. give extra stimulus _____ different muscle groups
6. _____ day to day

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7 Word-building

Complete the table using words from the text.

	verb	noun
1.	repeat	
2.	injure	
3.	move	
	adjective	noun
4.	fit	
5.	patient	
6.	confident	

8 Discussion

- Is physical exercise important? Why? Why not?