How Many Hours a Week Should I Exercise?

It depends on things like,

- Your **training goals** - are you looking to lose some fat, build strength and just get healthier overall? Or are you looking to become the next Serena Williams? The number of hours you should exercise for will change according to which one you picked.

- Your **sleep pattern** - are you chronically sleep deprived and regularly picture trading a kidney in for an extra hour of sleep? Or do you get a peaceful 7-8 hours of sleep?

- **Time** - is the gym your favourite place to hang out and do you bum around there for a couple of hours everyday or do you struggle to squeeze your workouts into your schedule?

Notice the pattern here? Basically, there is no one right answer, but there are many right answers. So, rather than look for that one perfect solution, you need to find your particular solution.

Most of us exercise because we want to be healthier, fitter, and fit into clothes that make us look good. We want our workouts to keep us refreshed through the day and help us sleep better at night. We want our exercise program to keep us feeling strong and pain-free. As a general rule,

Too little exercise	Not enough to produce any effect on the body
"Just right" amount of exercise	You get stronger and healthier!
Too much exercise	Your body shuts down because it can't handle the load

So where does that leave us? Since we haven't given you an easy answer to the question (and we

aren't going to either) here's a checklist of points instead.

Can you answer YES to all these?

- My workouts leave me feeling energised and very rarely exhausted

- I do some form of strength training two times a week

  - I.e. performing exercises against an external resistance (weights, bands, etc.).

  - Full body movements like squats, deadlifts, presses and rows

- I spend 45 minutes each week doing a fun activity that makes me feel good

  - I.e. playing a sport, or playing with your pets/kids, walking, cycling, Yoga

- I can see gradual, continuous progress with my exercise program - I've gotten stronger and I feel fitter

Can you answer NO to all these?

- Squats hurt my knees and deadlifts hurt my back. Wait, are you telling me that isn't normal?!

- I push hard at the gym every single day and beat myself up if I miss a workout

- I rarely find time to exercise and this makes me frustrated, so I eat a ton of sugar instead

- I'm told that lifting weights will make me bulky so I only do cardio

And your magic number is...

If you answered YES to the first set of points and NO the second set, you're doing a great job with your exercise program. Don't stress about how many hours a week you spend exercising; keep doing what you're doing and have fun with it!

If you didn't get the right YESes and NOs or are new to training and have no idea where to start, start with 3 days a week. You'll need to strength train 1-2 of those 3 days and work on simple endurance on the other days. From there, train or more or less frequently based on how you feel on a daily basis. If you feel strong and energetic during the day and calm and relaxed during the night, try adding in a 4th day of training and see how you feel. If you feel tired and exhausted during the day and have trouble sleeping at night, drop a day of training and see if you're feeling better.

So, how many hours a week should you exercise for? We hope that we've inspired you to look for *your* perfect answer!