

# HEALTH

## Education

### Why Sports Conditioning?

You and Sports Conditioning have the same goals:

1. Improve performance
2. Prevent and reduce injury

Sports conditioning *improves performance* by increasing self-confidence (both in and out of fitness). It also increases strength, technique and power; improves mental strength and resilience; and delays fatigue. Additionally, the accomplishment of all that improves performance in other physical endeavors, is sometimes called cross-training. Those who utilize Sports conditioning in their fitness routine also reap the benefits of quicker, more complete recoveries; improved health and quality of life; and optimized cognitive skills that all result in the *prevention and reduction of injury*.

If any of the above physical and mental goals and benefits are on your list of what you are looking to improve, consider adding Sports Conditioning to your fitness routine.

Like sports, you should have an in-season, and an off-season. If you're not training for a sport, your 'in-' and 'off-' seasons may mean different things. For an athlete, off-season includes rigorous conditioning to improve *strength, speed, and power* for the upcoming season. Conversely, in-season training focuses on *maintaining a fitness level and most importantly preventing injuries*.

For the everyday exerciser—the other 69% of American adults—the seasons are inverse: 'in-season' is a period of *higher intensity interval cardio, heavier strength training, and injury prevention*; and 'off-season' is the time to recover with *moderate intensity cardio, lighter strength training, and more flexibility*. There is no problem with the latter of the two

interpretations! No two Sports Conditioning programs are alike. Each program will differ from person to person based on their strengths, weaknesses, physical goals, age, and skill level. Your challenge is to know them and embrace them!

No matter what season you are in, you may be one of many who hit the gym with the goal of improving physical fitness. In order to accomplish that goal, you engage in some sort of cardio and resistance training. However, Physical fitness is more than how fast you run or how many push-ups you can do. Physical fitness is holistic encompassing several aspects that Sports Conditioning addresses and enhances, including:

- Agility
- Endurance
- Power
- Speed
- Strength
- Coordination
- Dexterity
- Flexibility

A good fitness routine will include exercises that work on each of the above listed areas that your current routine may be leaving out. Working on one more than another can cause imbalances, leading to injuries and decreased performance. Sports Conditioning can fill these training gaps.



Continued >>>

As an adult, physical fitness is the second most important factor to performance. Mentality is the first. Sports conditioning is about enjoyment of the process—enjoying the practices, the training, the team, the coach, the motivation, and the game/event—win or lose.

Sports Conditioning teaches you that anything worth achieving does not come easy, and mistakes are a necessary part of learning. It teaches the importance of being mentally prepared for competition and being there for your teammate (or any group of beating hearts) and for yourself. Sports Conditioning instills respect for your opponent and their skill while also putting pressure on you to be better.

These lessons are tough to apply to everyday life. It can be tough to enjoy the 'daily grind,' the process to always get along with your team, or to like and respect your co-worker who gets the promotion you wanted. Life happens and these are life lessons that get a little easier with each practice and with each Sports Conditioning session.

So ask yourself, is Sports Conditioning for you?



### References:

<https://www.acefitness.org/fitness-certifications/specialty-certifications/sports-conditioning.aspx>  
<https://www.personaltraineredu.org/sports-conditioning/>  
<https://onlinemasters.ohio.edu/the-basics-of-physical-conditioning/>  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/coaching-and-parenting-young-athletes/201510/how-develop-mentally-tough-young-athletes>



From Corporate Fitness Works Team Leader, Natalie Gish