



PART 1:

STRENGTH TRAINING

- isn't a "one size fits all" affair

TEXT BY **KRISS HENDY** |
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We all have our preferences when it comes to our triathlon training - indoors vs. outdoors, treadmill vs. trails, and group sessions vs. going solo. But whose place is it to judge what is right or wrong? The same goes for strength training - one size does not fit all! In this two-part series, we will look into a few of the different options you have for incorporating strength training into your weekly routine.

We are all motivated differently. We need to remember that, yes, sometimes we need to do the sessions that we don't enjoy so much, but generally speaking we need to make sure training is effective and completed with quality - what works for a friend may not work for you. The majority of us do this sport to enrich our lives, to challenge ourselves and enjoy the journey along the way. As notoriously 'time poor' athletes, we need

to be as efficient and as realistic as we can be, this way, training will fit in with life and family, rather than ruling it.

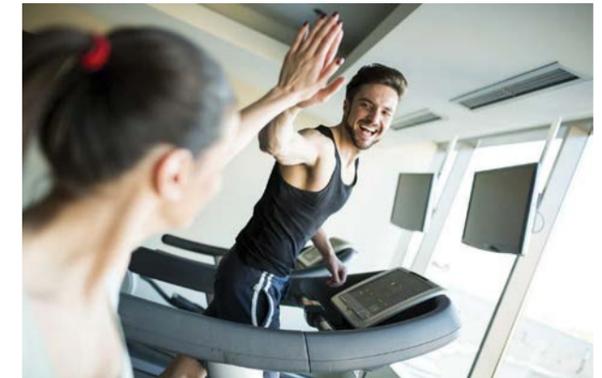
What we must remember is that when choosing a strength training approach, however different the method, we should all be aiming for a similar goal - to develop stronger and healthier bodies for everyday health, as well as performance.



KEY POINTS TO ENSURE A QUALITY STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING PROGRAM:

- Initially, establish and confirm a range of basic health and fitness standards through a range of exercises and tests. For instance, ensure a full range of motion and motor control with a number of simple household movements, such as squatting, bending over, crouching low, reaching up overhead and maintaining an upright posture.
- The programming should look to consistently challenge both your strength and fitness components - this includes all the variables that are associated with fitness, such as balance, coordination, flexibility, etc.
- The work should look to test your motor control and skill level under a wide variety of intensities, and differing situations that will transfer to the unpredictable environments and situations that we find ourselves in.

It's sometimes hard to understand whether your program encompasses these key points. If you're unsure, discuss them with your strength trainer/coach to make sure you are getting the most out of your sessions.



STRENGTH TRAINING: Incorporate strength into your training to develop strong and healthy bodies.

“ *Whether your strength work finds you in the gym, at home or outdoors, all have their benefits.* ”
— Kriss Hendy

GYM

Do you need to be training in a gym to adhere to a strength program? This question is similar to asking whether having a home office is the most productive workspace. For some, we simply need a separate place of work to get business done.

The benefit of training in a purpose built facility is that of structure and purpose, as well as a wide provision of equipment. However, for gym training to be effective, you need to stay on track. The gym can provide a great social environment and the opportunity to train with others, but focus is essential if you want to gain anything from the workouts. Intensity, rest intervals, technique and structure, need to be prioritised over sending Snapchats or checking Facebook. Ideally, when you head to the gym, you need to walk in, get the work done and get out so you can recover properly through rest and nutrition.



HOME

Training at home can often risk being pushed aside for other more pressing matters like housework, napping or, commonly, watching TV. But for those with enough self-discipline training at home can be the best way to implement strength work into an already hectic lifestyle. For triathletes who are short of time, work long hours and have little mouths to feed, the 'home gym' has become a realistic and convenient option. The work can be done effectively and efficiently with a surprisingly small amount of equipment as experienced Physio and triathlon coach Alex Price explains:

"Setting up something at home is great because strength work needs to be done regularly and consistently, and for most, the travel to and from a gym just isn't possible. So, the ability to do it at home, after dinner, half an hour here or there, without having to travel away from their family, is ideal."

"When a 'time poor' triathlete normally wouldn't be able to fit it in, from a consistency standpoint it can be of real benefit. For some having it at home doesn't always work as they like to have training separate but that's just the mental side of things. From a practical perspective, in my opinion, you really don't need many fancy tools to get a strength and conditioning workout done. This way is affordable. Even if it's not the best equipment money can buy, doing something is better than nothing."

OUTDOORS

Training outdoors provides an opportunity to be physically active in a constantly changing environment. The more challenging the environment, the harder the body is going to have to work to sustain an efficient work rate. And in a country that is blessed with good weather for the majority of the year, who doesn't want to be outside making the most of it!

Changing temperatures, altering surfaces and surrounding stimuli can

place both physical and mental demands on the athlete, which can help them enormously come race day. Getting out in the fresh air eliminates the common restrictions indoor training can have, i.e. space, other gym users and a costly monthly membership.

Strength Coach, Jarryd Bates of Pro Movement is a strong advocate of training outdoors. "I believe you should train in the same environment you race in, to be accustomed to it."

"I think you gain more from being outside - there are no limitations at all, all exercises and areas of the body can be worked, if you know how to use your body. Training outside helps, as you are going to be competing outside - so it gives you the



opportunity to get your nutrition on point and to hydrate. Athletes who train inside and then compete outside (especially in this country) get a shock when they get out in the heat."

But Bates, who is accustomed to working with the likes of Jan Frodeno, agrees that extreme conditions need to be considered with the individual in mind. "Depending on whether you are doing the sport for health and fitness, or for your next contract, will determine how far you push your body - it needs to be done in a safe way. It's so competitive out there - if you are willing to spend as much money as people do on new wheels for their bike, why wouldn't you try to push yourself in your training environment."

SUMMARY

Whether your strength work finds you in the gym, at home or outdoors, all have their benefits. This is a choice that you need to make, so discuss it with your coach and decide which option fits in with your lifestyle, and individual needs as an athlete. Money, equipment and time should not be an excuse for poor health -

there are a variety of ways you can strength train to enhance movement, make you more resilient and prevent injury. So, act now before it's too late.

Stay tuned for Part 2 where we will look further into some different training methods and the equipment that you could use in your training. **AT**

Thanks to our Strength for Endurance Trainers for their contribution to this article:



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Seeing the need for better athlete education and understanding with regards to Strength & Conditioning for the Endurance Athlete, Kriss works with a variety of athletes from Age Groupers to Professionals, developing programs that support and heighten their endurance performance. Kriss is based in Byron Bay with his wife (Professional Triathlete) Polly Hendy. He has both a local & International client base that use his Online Strength Training Packages.

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