

## 4: Training Principles for Triathlon:

### Factors that will affect your performance in SWIM, BIKE & RUN

**CURRENT TRAINING BASE:** This will determine where you should START and how you should PROGRESS. You have to evaluate SWIM, BIKE & RUN independently. Starting at too high a volume and/or progressing too quickly is the leading cause of overuse injuries.

**FREQUENCY of training:** It is recommended for beginners to start training 2x/week/discipline (swim 2x; bike 2x; run 2x). Technique is acquired at a higher frequency (ie. 3-5x/week), so choose your weakest discipline and train 3x/week. After 2-3 months of training it may be safe to increase your frequency if you have the time/energy & motivation.

**Training INTENSITY:** Are you hyperventilating??? Do you feel sick to your stomach and hate running because it hurts? On the other hand, have you been cycling socially for a number of years and have never really pushed yourself? Your training intensity will determine:

1. For beginners your training comfort & your predisposition to continue training! Keep it comfortable - It isn't meant to be torture! You will continue making a lot of aerobic fitness gains by training at this pace for 4- 6 months from when you start.
2. Your racing performance! If you have a good base (4- 6 months with no injuries), no medical restrictions, and want to improve your racing time then it is time to try some higher intensity training (run & bike intervals)! Ideas: 1 km run repeats, 1:1 Work:Rest ratio (eg. If it takes 4 ½ mins to complete a km, then EZ jog for 4 ½ mins then repeat the 1 km.)

**Session DURATION:** This must be matched to the event you are training for, and progressed gradually from your current training time. For example, If you currently run 1 hr and want to do a ½ Marathon well you need to gradually build up the duration of your long runs (1x/week or 1x/every 2nd week). A general rule of thumb is to keep progression to 10% in time for running (ie. 60 mins week 1: 66 mins week 2 etc.). You can get away with a slightly higher progression with cycling time, although the 10% rule is a conservative recommendation.

**GENETICS:** Don't worry about this one! Either you are genetically gifted for triathlon or your aren't!! Genetics determine how fast you respond and what level you attain. Concentrate your efforts in doing the best with the ability you have been given – progress is exciting at all levels!

These principles “scratch the surface” of triathlon training. There are many considerations to acknowledge in program design. It helps to have a qualified coach (who KNOWS triathlon) to help with your program!

## F.I.T. Guidelines for Designing Your Triathlon Program

DEFINITION OF F.I.T.	TRAINING GUIDELINES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
<p><b>FREQUENCY</b> (# of sessions per week)</p>	<p><b>Beginners:</b> 2x/week per discipline. Pick your weakest discipline and train that one 3x/week.</p> <p><b>Intermediate-Advanced:</b> 3-5x/week/ discipline</p> <p>At least 1 rest day/week is necessary</p>	<p>1-2x/week maintains fitness base 3-4x/wk for "skill acquisition."</p> <p>Recovery is essential - ie. Day off between same disciplines (ie. Run)</p> <p><i>*Individualization based on: medical &amp; training history; work &amp; family commitments; stress level</i></p>
<p><b>INTENSITY</b> (of the training)</p> <p>Depends on:</p> <p>-Race distance (ie. Higher intensity work for Sprint &amp; Olympic distances- ½ Iron + Ironman training involves more long slow training.</p>	<p><b>Beginners:</b> low-moderate (keep it comfortable!)</p> <p><b>Intermediate-Advanced:</b> May add in hills, tempo, threshold &amp; VO2 max work strategically based around performance goals.</p> <p><b>General recommendation:</b> Up to 10% the total time of the discipline. IE. Running 180 mins/week? Try 18 minutes of run speedwork. Eg. 6 x 3 min pick-ups: 3 min EZ jog</p>	<p><b>May be referred to in terms of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % maximal heart rate</li> <li>-60-80% max HR for base training</li> <li>-80-95% max HR for intervals</li> <li>• Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE)</li> <li>-1-4 / 10 for base training</li> <li>-5-10/10 for intervals</li> <li>• "talk test"</li> <li>-Conversational for base training</li> <li>-Heavy breathing for intervals</li> </ul> <p>Overly simplified – more explanation required</p>
<p><b>TIME or DURATION</b> (of the run)</p> <p>Referred to as either continuous or discontinuous (intervals)</p>	<p><b>Beginners-Advanced:</b> Min 15-30 min to maximum of 3-4 hr continuous.</p> <p><b>Starting time depends on longest training time in past 4 weeks, injury status, history, body type etc.</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> Generally you will program a long swim: bike or run 1x/week or 1x/every second week and have moderate length training with mixed intensities for the other training per week.</p>	