

Be strong+fit

discover what you can achieve

BODY SHOP

POWER *up*

Stair workouts blow away just about everything for calorie burn and boosting cardio fitness. Step one: Use the science on these pages to get next-level results. *By Lauren Mazzo*

THE VERTICAL DEMAND of stair climbing means you can skyrocket your heart rate (the key to scoring HIIT's cardio benefits) and reach an off-the-charts calorie burn: Running stairs burns 484 calories in a half hour, compared with 393 calories if you run a speedy seven-minute mile. "Moving your body vertically takes more power than going across a flat surface," says Martin Gibala, Ph.D., a kinesiology professor at McMaster University in Ontario. Can't last a half hour? Even one minute on the stairs will raise your game. In Gibala's recent study, by doing just three 20-second bouts of vigorous stair climbing—with a few minutes' rest in between—three days a week for six weeks, participants saw a 12 percent increase in their cardio fitness and an 8 percent increase in leg muscle power. He suggests varying your interval workouts: Start with three 20-second efforts; next time, try six 10-second climbs; another time, do four 30-second climbs. For extra muscle, finish with the stair-strength moves on the next page by Hannah Davis, the creator of Body by Hannah online fitness programs. You'll also find other tips to optimize your stair climbs, plus a bonus online workout. *(Continued on page 60)*



photograph by
**ARTHUR
BELEBEAU**



▲ Bulgarian lunge

Facing away from steps, place top of right foot on first step. Bend both knees (shown) until back knee almost touches the ground. Return to start. That's 1 rep. Do 10 reps. Switch sides; repeat.

QUICK TIP

4 Flights

That's how many sets of (14 to 16) stairs you should be able to walk up in about 40 seconds without stopping if you're in shape, says Jesús Peteiro-Vázquez, M.D., a cardiologist at University Hospital A Coruña in Spain. It's the equivalent cardio fitness benchmark he found by treadmill testing over 12,000 people in his new study.

Traveling plank

Start on ground in plank on palms with steps in front of you. Walk 1 hand at a time up to the first step, then the second, maintaining plank position (shown). Reverse the movement back down to ground, 1 hand and 1 step at a time. That's 1 rep. Do 10 reps.



◀ Dip & reach

Sit on the bottom step with knees bent and feet flat on the ground. Place hands on edge of step with fingers pointed forward, then lift butt so it hovers just above and in front of step (shown). Bend elbows to lower butt toward ground. Push back up. Straighten left leg as you reach right hand to tap left foot. Return to start. Repeat left. That's 1 rep. Do 10 reps.



Hover your phone's camera over this smart code to access the full stair workout.

Make It a Double, Sometimes

For a bigger body payoff, should you hustle up the stairs one at a time or skip every other step? In terms of total calorie burn, the former is slightly better, according to a study from the University of Roehampton in London. "But the difference between the two is not substantial," says lead researcher Lewis Halsey, Ph.D. "Try varying one- and two-step climbing, either during one stair climb or from one stair climb to the next, because these two strategies are likely to activate leg muscles in different ways." His caveat: Always descend one step at a time.



NIKE FLYKNIT INDY SPORTS BRA

This bra offers medium support using just one layer of fabric, so you can layer it under work clothes and bank some stair climbs. (\$70, nike.com)

UPGRADE YOUR

Sports Bra

Running stairs is less high-impact than running on ground, but you'll still want motion control like this.



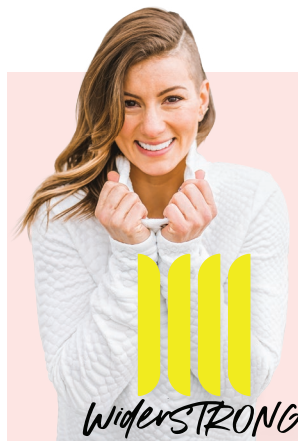
REEBOK PUREMOVE BRA

This bra is excellent for low- and high-impact workouts alike: The space-age fabric stiffens when you need more support and releases when you rest. (\$60, reebok.com)



LULULEMON ENLITE BRA ZIP FRONT

The techie fabric is powerfully supportive, and its front zipper means you won't pull a muscle trying to yank it off. (\$108, lululemon.com)



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Is it more beneficial to walk backward, forward, sideways, or all of the above on a stair-climber? —@boutdatbass14 via Instagram

I love that you're training stairs—any kind of vertical challenge has benefits that a flat surface would not. But no need to get fancy with your footwork.

Lateral movement will recruit different muscle groups and logging steps backward will hit more of your back-side, yet it's not worth the fuss in terms of results. Plus, unless you have A-plus coordination, it's not that safe to get all Cirque du Soleil on the stair-climber.

I'd prefer you do intervals forward with small spurts at a time: logging a faster pace for 15 seconds and slowing it way down, then climbing every other step for 45 seconds. Repeat for 15 minutes and you're done.