

July: GO FOR GOLD! TRAIN LIKE AN OLYMPIAN

Do you have what it takes?



Every couple of years, many of us spend time glued to our television sets to watch one of the most amazing examples of athletic prowess in the world; the Olympics. We will watch in awe as elite athletes perform seemingly impossible feats and we'll wonder, how the heck do they DO that? Maybe it's too late for us to become Olympic skiers or figure skaters, but there's no reason we can't train like them.

No, I'm not saying you should wake up every morning and run 12 miles or swim for three hours in preparation for your day. However, even if you're not training for the Olympics, you can emulate the best athletes in the world to get the most out of your exercise:

Train every day. Many people fall victim to the weekend warrior syndrome: after sitting on a couch all week, you try to make up for it by killing yourself with a hardcore Saturday workout. Instead of setting yourself up for injury, think like Olympic athletes who train every day in order to compete with the best. Exercising regularly will help you achieve endurance and strength that carries over into your every day life. Exercising sporadically can cause injury, soreness and the urge to never exercise again.

Keep your eyes on the prize. Olympic athletes have a specific goal; to compete with the best athletes in the world and win. Us regular exercisers need goals too, something to get us out of bed each day to exercise. When setting a goal, keep it simple, specific and, most importantly, reachable. Remind yourself every single day what your goal is and how you're going to achieve it.

Be specific in your training. An Olympic marathon runner has to have incredible endurance and strength in order to complete a marathon. To compete, he will have to incorporate specific training such as long runs, speed work and strength training. Whatever your goal, make sure your training fits. If you're trying to build muscle, eat more calories and lift heavy weights. If you're goal is to run faster you should practice running fast. See how easy this is?

Fuel your body for peak performance. We all worry about food and whether we're eating too much fat, or too many calories. An Olympian, however, worries about getting

the right nutrients and calories to fuel an incredible race. Instead of looking at food like its the enemy, turn your thinking around and ask yourself, what is the best thing I could eat right now for my workout? What will put my body at it's very best? Its probably not that donut you're holding so put it down and go get some fruit.

Know when to rest. Olympians walk a fine line between peak performance and burnout and they know when to throw in a few extra recovery days. Overtraining for an Olympian can mean the difference between winning and losing; for the rest of us it means the difference between a great day and a crappy one. Know the signs of overtraining and when to take a break.

Have perfect form. Have you ever seen Carl Lewis run? He ran like a thoroughbred with long, loose strides and a tall body. In whatever activity you do, make sure your form is perfect. If you're running, stand tall and relax your upper body. If you're lifting weights, do each exercise slowly to reduce momentum and don't swing your weights. Having perfect forms requires you to focus on what your body is doing, rather than trying to distract yourself from the pain. Note: if you're in pain, you're working too hard!

Whatever you're training for, thinking like an Olympian can help you get the most out of each and every workout. When you find yourself losing momentum or motivation, just remind yourself how much discipline it takes for an athlete to make it to the Olympics. Just a fraction of that discipline can help keep you going every day.

Click this link for information on [strength training](#)

