

WHAT WE'RE READING...



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Want to Run Faster? Try Cycling

Good news for any runner who's slogged through hours of speed work and barely seen any improvement: Adding a super-brief cycling session to your schedule could be all it takes to pick up your pace.

For the study published in *The Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, British researchers had a small group of long-distance runners log a 3K treadmill run, then took them through various interval-training sessions over the next six weeks. They did six 10-second all-out effort sprints on a stationary bike,

with either 30, 80 or 120 seconds to recover between intervals. After warm-up and cool-down time, it totaled a 15-minute workout, in addition to their regular running routines.

The runners who cycled with only half a minute between sprints improved their 3K times by about three percent. That might not sound like much, but it translates to roughly a 25-second faster finish—which is a pretty huge difference, come race day.

"Cycling improves running performance because it trains the same energy systems," study coauthor John Babraj, PhD, a lecturer in the Division of Sport and Exercise Science at Abertay University tells SELF. Squeezing in a group cycling class could be beneficial, as the cross-training session will lessen the load on your joints and could help prevent overuse injuries.

But to get speedier, an uber-short ride seems to be key. All-out intervals and very brief rest periods are crucial because they challenge your heart, a finding you'll want to note, Babraj says. "They provide greater improvement in mitochondrial function, which increases your muscles' ability to generate energy."

A better bet than a full class might be to opt for a 10-minute interval session on a stationary one at the gym, for a quick 15-minute session. You don't want to cross that finish



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[NOTE: Some sentiments contained within "What We're Reading" articles may not strictly conform with Simple Again's nutritional outlook. We read articles containing opposing information all the time and derive our nutritional philosophies from the latest science, the opinions of experts worldwide and our anecdotal experiences in the field. We keep an open mind and a strong affinity for fact-based evidence to help make the world of nutrition "Simple Again" for you.]

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But to get speedier, an uber-short ride seems to be key. All-out intervals and very brief rest periods are crucial because they challenge your heart, core and legs more, Babraj says. "They provide greater improvement in mitochondrial function, which increases your muscles' ability to generate energy."

A better bet than a full class might be to just take out your bike, or hop on a stationary one at the gym, for a quick 15-minute session. So go ahead, spin your wheels—and see if you don't cross that finish line faster.

