

[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.]

Kicking Sets for Triathletes



A balanced kicking technique and proper leg strength are two key assets of elite triathletes. There are many specialty fins and kickboards to help you develop each properly.

Generally, most triathletes hardly use their legs in the water. It makes sense because it conserves energy, but ultimately your legs can make a big difference in the open water.

Here are a few instances when a strong kick is beneficial:

- Swimming against an oncoming current or tidal surge

- Helping maintain a streamlined body position through undulating ocean swells or turbulent surface chop
- Catching a wave to bodysurf in towards the beach
- Getting into position before rounding a turn buoy while in a large pack
- Moving ahead of your competition while approaching the T1 transition
- Sprinting ahead of a competitor drafting off you or dropping a pack
- Catching up to a competitor ahead of you
- Generating body heat when the water is cold

It's simple: If you want to pick up the pace, move your legs faster. Fins can help beginner triathletes improve body position, increase leg strength and swim for longer distances and extended periods of time. More experienced triathletes can do fast burst vertical kicking sets with fins rather than just cruising easily up and down the pool with a low heart rate.

Here are some sample kicking sets designed to help with speed, stamina, strength and awareness:

1. Pool Kicking Sets

To develop speed:

- 1 x 25 easy + 1 x 25 fast
- 1 x 25 easy + 1 x 50 fast
- 1 x 25 easy + 1 x 75 fast
- 1 x 25 easy + 1 x 100 fast

To develop stamina:

- 1 x 25 easy + 30 seconds vertical kicking (hands in or out of water)
- 1 x 25 easy + 30 seconds vertical kicking (wrists or elbows out of water)

To develop strength:

- 10 x 25 kicking with KAATSU Aqua Bands (all strokes)
- 3 sets of vertical kicking with KAATSU Aqua Bands
- Aqua-jogging with KAATSU Aqua Bands in shallow water
- 3 x 60 seconds of treading water with KAATSU Aqua Bands

2. Open Water Kicking Sets

To develop stamina:

- 500m kick in open water with a kickboard
- 500m kick in open water with a kickboard and short-blade fins
- 500m kick in open water without a kickboard, hands sculling in front

To develop navigational IQ:

- 500m backstroke kick in open water with arms stretched out in front or with hands sculling at sides

To develop strength and stamina:

- 100m backstroke kick with arms stretched up above the chest in the air + 100m freestyle back to start
- 75m backstroke kick with arms stretched up above the chest in the air + 75m freestyle back to start
- 50m backstroke kick with arms stretched up above the chest in the air + 50m freestyle back to start
- 25m backstroke kick with arms stretched up above the chest in the air + 25m freestyle back to start

To develop speed and kinetic awareness in the ocean:

- 30 minutes of bodysurfing with a regular kickboard
- 30 minutes of bodysurfing with a regular kickboard and fins
- 30 minutes of bodysurfing with fins

3. Just for Fun and Challenge

- Swim with shoes in open water trying to keep a streamlined body position
- Vertical kicking with shoes in the pool
- Vertical kicking holding liter bottles filled with water over your head
- Push off wall underwater and try to go as far as possible underwater while holding a kickboard in outstretched arms