

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO USING THE ULTIMATE FITNESS MACHINE



If you read my article on “The Ultimate Fitness Machine” you know how and why that I chose the Octane Fitness xt 3700/4700 “elliptical” as the winner. Though this machine is more a running simulator than an elliptical. Now I’m going to show you the best way to use this machine to dramatically improve your cardiorespiratory system.

I recommend 3 days a week on alternate days. You will systematically and methodically increase your cardio fitness by following the below techniques. **Always take a photo of your summary results at the end of each session and add a notation on the photo of the resistance setting you used**, as this will not be on the summary results. Also, much of what follows can be applied to other ellipticals as well, only rpm speed and some resistance references are specific to the Octane Fitness. The use of the moving arms is optional, while they made add somewhat to your calorie burn, many don’t feel like it is a natural motion. Your legs can provide all the calorie burn you need.

1. Beginners

Begin with resistance 1 and continue until you can comfortably go for 30 minutes with at least an average rpm speed of 60. Once you have attained this level proceed to the Intermediate step below.

2. Intermediate

A. Increase the resistance by one, once a week and continue exercising for 30 minutes. Notice the **watts** on the summary after each session. The watts should go up each week that you increased the resistance. The resistance should feel challenging but not laborious. If you cannot make the full 30 minutes in a session or your average watts don’t increase, then decrease the resistance and workout at the decreased level for another week or 2 for the full 30 minutes x 3. Then try to increase the resistance again.

B. Do not worry about your speed after resistance level 1, just always try attain 30 minutes with an increase in watts. You will find that as you increase the resistance your body will still try to attain the same rpm

pace you established on level 1. Although it will decrease some, especially as your resistance gets to 6 or 7. **As long as your average watts has increased in the workout summary and you worked out for the full 30 minutes you will have increased your cardiorespiratory system and your vo2 max.**

2. Advanced

After you have attained a certain level of resistance, probably 6 to 8 for most people, you will find increased resistance levels don't come nearly as fast. If you desire to further increase cardio strength you will need to employ some new strategies.

A. Increase time. Instead of just doing 30 minutes each session increase your time by 1 minute each session until you get to 40 minutes. After you're able to do three 40 minutes sessions in a week increase the resistance one level and decrease the time back to 30 minutes. Once again look at your average watts and be sure that it has increased from the 40 minute sessions. Then repeat the cycle. Continue to do this until your average watts no longer increase when you increase the resistance.

B. Heart Rate Strategy #1. If you haven't had a Vo2 Max test to accurately determine your max heart rate than follow this strategy. Wear a chest heart rate monitor and record how you feel after each session and the rest of the day. You should feel energized the rest of the day and the day after. If you feel exhausted after a session and don't feel nearly as energized as usual over the next 48 hours (or couldn't exercise the full 30 minutes), then this is a sign that you were training at too high of a heart rate for your present fitness level. Look at your heart rate app and note your average heart rate and max heart rate for that session. Then lower the resistance one level and once again note how you feel the rest of the day and the day after. Then note your average heart rate, max heart rate and average watts. If you have a lower heart rate and now feel energized than you probably have found your ideal training heart rate for your present fitness level. Continuing training at this resistance level for at least 2 more weeks before increasing the resistance. Once again note how you feel after the workout and you average heart rate. If you now feel energized and have increased your average watts then that means you have increased your fitness level and the heart rate zones your able to workout in. You

may also incorporate the above strategy of increasing the time with this strategy.

Do not rely on the machine reading for your heart rate data even if it's connecting via bluetooth to your heart rate monitor. Too often the connection drops which will affect your summary readings.

Note that this strategy doesn't depend on knowing your max heart rate. That's because an individual's max heart rate could be very different from what the formulas predict.

Also note that these strategies are for general health and well being and may not be the best for competitive runners or athletes or who have to push themselves to their limits.

C. Heart Rate Strategy #2: If you have had a Vo2 Max test to accurately determine your max heart rate than you can follow the strategy below:

As above wear a chest heart rate monitor with a phone app. The generally accepted percentage of your max heart rate for vigorous exercise you should work out at is 70%-85%. At the beginning of the advanced program limit yourself to 80% and slowly progress to a max heart rate of 85% or whatever your V02 max test said is your lactate threshold. Note this is what your max heart rate should be, not your average heart rate for the session. Your first goal is to average 75% of your max heart for a 30 minute workout and to slowly increase up to 80%. This will keep you from over training and going beyond your aerobic zone into your anaerobic zone. Check your app after each workout to be sure your not exceeding 85% (or your lactate acid threshold). If you are and you don't feel energized the rest of the day (as noted above), then decrease the resistance by 1 and use the time increase strategy above.

ADDING VR TO YOUR ELLIPTICAL TRAINING.

The one drawback to training on this machine is the same as any other indoor cardio machine. It gets boring. When training outdoors your senses are more stimulated because your actually moving and the scenery changes. Also, being outdoors on a nice day just feels better. You can eliminate most of the boredom by training with a VR headset. This **DOES NOT MEAN** you should actually use virtually reality, but rather use it as a giant screen tv. Using actual VR can make you become

disoriented and you could easily fall off the machine and become injured. Instead, just use the big screen feature and you will be transported into the world of your choice. I personally like watching my favorite music videos which I preload on my phone. Music is known to be a performance enhancer and adding videos to it while exercising engages your 2 primary senses to virtually eliminate the boredom. Just be sure to always keep at least 1 hand on the machine handle to keep your balance. I've been using a VR headset for a few years now and have never fallen even come close to falling off, and I'm 65 years old! Be sure to be on the machine before lowering the headset over your eyes and be completely familiar with the controls of the headset before using it on the machine.