

6 Tips for Training While Traveling

By Erin Stern

Training while traveling always requires a little extra planning. Whether it's a tropical location, a road trip, or to go see family, it can help to have a game plan for staying fit. If you're dedicated to training like I am, extended amounts of time away from your gym can bring a little stress. Realistically, a few days to a week off can be good for recovery and for de-loading. On the other hand, weight gain and other effects stem from the combination of vacation activities and time away from the gym. Fortunately, there are a few fixes we can use to help stay on track.

When traveling, it can help to wake up a little earlier to fit a quick workout in. An early morning sweat can help boost metabolism throughout the day and can help ensure that we don't put it off. Since you may not have access to a gym, aim for constant motion and high reps, as this will help keep your heart rate up. As an additional bonus, you might not be used to circuit training – and this can be a great way to break through plateaus!



Here are just a few ideas:

1. Jump rope. Intervals are a great way to get a quick workout in. Aim for 2-3 Tabata circuits, which is 20 seconds all out, followed by 10 seconds rest. You'll repeat for a total of 4 minutes. You can find Tabata timers for free on YouTube or on SoundCloud. Or, you can choose a ratio for your intervals and rest. If you're going all out, your ratio might be 1:3 or 1:4 interval to rest time. For example, a 1:3 might be 15 seconds all out, followed by 45 seconds rest. The goal for the workout is to get in 15-20 minutes of intervals. Rest is included in this figure! Give yourself a little extra time for a warm up and cool down.

2. Resistance bands. Bands are light and take up extraordinarily little space. This makes them ideal for tossing into a carry on. I purchased bands that have an extra tether for attaching to a door, allowing for a greater range of exercises, like pull downs, pull throughs, and lateral raises. Supersets and circuits work great with bands. Aim for 2-3 exercises in a row, with no rest in between. Increase the tension of the band or slow down the tempo to make the workout more challenging. As with the jump rope workout, aim for around 20 minutes of activity.

3. Stairwells. If you're in a hotel, or have access to stairs, add in some sprints! To reap the benefits of sprints, aim for at least 7 seconds of maximum effort. 4-8 sprints total is enough to boost metabolism for up to 48 hours. Recovery between sprints will vary. Make sure your heart rate is down to 60% of max (220-age), before you start the next sprint. Don't want to sprint? Try alternating steps, adding lunges, and double hops.

4. Outdoor adventures. If you're on vacation, opt to walk or bike. Metabolism is also boosted through NEAT, or non-exercise activity thermogenesis. This means that you'll burn up to 1,000 extra calories just by getting up and moving around!

5. Bodyweight circuits. These are great to do on their own, or you can add them into any workout. Exercises like planks, jumping jacks, pop squats, mountain climbers, burpees, and scissor jumps can be done just about anywhere. Choose 5-10 exercises and do 8-20 reps per exercise, with no rest in between. Rest 2-3 minutes and repeat. 4-5 circuits is all you need!

6. Household items. Don't laugh! I used gallon jugs of water for a workout while on vacation! You can perform dips on a chair, step ups on a sturdy table, and decline pushups on a couch. Try to perform as many compound movements as possible and keep moving for 20-30 minutes. For additional intensity, add some abs exercises in between or jump rope!

Get quick workouts in when you can and get up and move when possible. It is important to push yourself, but it's also important to enjoy the time off and recharge your batteries. Stay safe and Enjoy Your Travels!

Erin is a fitness model and bodybuilder who competes in the IFBB Pro League and has won over 14 titles. To contact Erin Stern for information on her training programs, books, and more, go to Erinstern.com or email her at erin@erinstern.com.



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