

# Running Stairs For Fast Fat Loss: Why Elite Athletes & Celebrities Turn To This Free Training Tool For Their Dramatic Results!

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So you want to burn loads of body fat and burn it fast for that trip to the Caribbean or to fit into that red dress for your sister's wedding. Well when I was asked what was the best strategy to accomplish this in record time I kept thinking of how I helped myself and my clients lose body fat in record time. The first thing that comes to mind is gravity. You may ask what the hell does gravity have to do with dropping body fat quickly. Here's why it has a lot to do with it:

For years I've have used a stair exercise training program that will guarantee you are in amazing condition by the time you hit the Caribbean, sister's wedding or whatever.

And no, you won't be walking up the stairs either. You better believe you'll be running up them. By far it's one of the most effective ways to get in top condition and drop tons of body fat. Do I also have to eat properly and follow a sound diet? Of course not! If you believe that then please stop reading this article right now.

Just remember if you commit to the torture of Stair case Ana runs as I like to call them you dam well better do your part at the eating table as well. It's common knowledge these days that you are what you eat so stick to a sensible eating plan!

Before I expose this secret training tool I'll go over a number of pro athletes and celebrities that use stairs to stay in top condition. You see for them it's no secret but make no mistake it's no cake walk either. Stair exercises can be brutal. In fact when I was the strength and conditioning coach with the WNBA's New York Liberty a few players would many times skip out on Stair Case Ana Runs because they were too brutal. Some would prefer to use the Step Mill at the local Bally's because they could not handle real stairs. That was fine with me as the players didn't see much playing time because they were outed as lazy and not willing to do what it takes to succeed.

So first on the list that use stair exercises are the New York Liberty women's basketball team. I personally implemented this program back in 2002 because of complaints from Coach Jeff House that the players were not getting sufficient conditioning work on the road. I'm not sure if they still use this program but back then it did help us get to the WNBA Finals as the team was the best conditioned team in the league at the time.

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Second on the list are the New York Knicks. I'm not sure to what extent they use stairs but I caught strength coach Greg Brittenham going through some stair work with his players on the Madison Square TV network.

I'm sure many other teams use them but I like to have some proof to go by. Next are some individuals that use stairs and the list is pretty impressive.

First is Major League Baseball's best player: New York Yankee third baseman Alex Rodriguez. It's no secret what a conditioning fanatic "A-Rod" is as he keeps himself in top condition year round. And guess what is at the top of his list of things to do in his workout. That's right: Stairs! It was reported in the New York Daily News that he gets up at 6AM in the off-season to do his stair work. Here are two good reasons to include stair work in your program first thing in the morning as "ARod" obviously knows and you will soon learn. First is that stairs done first thing in the morning on empty stomach will elevate your metabolism and have you burn loads of body fat the entire day. Not just during your workout but the entire day. The second is stair work can be brutal so it makes sense to get it over with first in your workout. You should not be doing it with a little left in the tank!

Second is Future Hall of Fame NFL running back Curtis Martin of the New York Jets: Curtis Martin is such a believer in stair work that he actually travels to Santa Monica California to do his stair work in the off-season. That says a lot of a man that plays in New Jersey and lives in Florida. He runs the famous 200 step climb in Santa Monica California. For those that don't know 200 steps is equal to 13 flights of stairs. And yes he runs up the stairs for sets. Walking is tough enough; imagine running sets of 13 flights straight up.

Third is Super Bowl MVP quarterback Tom Brady of the New England Patriots. It's no secret why Tom is successful as he is a master of preparation and works to keep himself in top condition during both the on and off-season. Tom trains at the College at San Mateo and uses stair sprints as part of his work-out regimen. All I can say if it's good enough for Tom it should be good enough for anyone.

Next is Latina superstar actress, singer and entrepreneur Jennifer Lopez. Yes "JLo" has to work to keep Hollywood's best body in top shape and she turns to stairs for this. She trains with celebrity trainer Gunnar Peterson in Los Angeles and runs up stairs with an extra 20 pounds. Wow! Running alone is tough. Imagine running with extra weight.

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Fifth is NBC New Anchorman Tom Brokaw: I found this interesting because I envision Tom working out at a ritzy healthy club but he simply steps into the stair cases for his workouts. He uses short 12-15 minute stair workouts to stay in shape. The thing is that stairs are very efficient and even 12 minute workouts can yield amazing results.

Last on this list is Madonna: I read that she climbs 50 stairs at a clip. That's pretty amazing but not for Madonna as she is still one of the fittest entertainers around. It's no secret that she uses other types of exercises but 50 stairs at a clip. Now that's impressive!

I could go on and on about who uses stairs but I think you get the point as to how valuable they can be.

So, why are stairs so effective?

The first reason that stairs are so effective is that going uphill (against gravity) will always force your body to work much harder and will increase your strength without even lifting weight. It's no coincidence that many sports legends have used going up hill to take their conditioning to elite levels. Football legend Walter Peyton used hill sprints in his playing days and many followed suit. Don Bebe of the Buffalo Bills also used hill sprints as a way of maximizing his speed and conditioning. And look no further than 7 times Tour De France Cycling Champion Lance Armstrong when it comes to hill training. Once he reached the hill stages in these races it was virtually over for the rest of the field. Credit this to his persistent training against gravity. The even greater thing about hill training is that the results are achieved in far less time than traditional training. A tough stair workout can take less than 15 minutes and yield the same results as an hour long workout. Which would you rather do? In fact I even use a 7 minute workout that has wiped out elite athletes.

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The second reason is because running up stairs is anaerobic and this has been shown anecdotally and scientifically to produce greater fat loss results in less time than traditional aerobic work. Aerobic (with oxygen) work simply means that your body utilizes oxygen to convert fat to energy. The problem is that the aerobic process is very slow and cannot generate energy quickly enough for higher intensity work like running fast or sprinting up stairs. That is why the anaerobic (without oxygen) energy system is used because this system can be called upon for quick energy and doesn't require oxygen. The truth is that there is a spectrum at which both systems work together but that is beyond this article. The bottom line is anaerobic work will yield far greater results than aerobic work and you can just take a quick look at aerobic and anaerobic activities to convince yourself. Who would you rather look like?

First we have marathoners who often look weak and stringy. And I'm even talking about elite marathoners. Shouldn't elite athletes have the best physiques? On the other hand you have sprinters which have amazing physiques and low body fat levels. You'll never see an elite sprinter or even a high school sprinter with a weak and stringy body. The more ironic thing is that marathoners spend much more time training than sprinters. Which would you rather do? Work less and look better or work more and look worse.

The only reason I've found for not including stair work or hill work into workouts are either you can't find a good hill or stairs or they are just too brutal. Make no mistake these workouts are tough. But no one ever said getting in top condition was easy. You have to work but why not work smarter and work less. Stairs will allow you to do this.

With all this in mind let's take a look at some stair workouts that will have you on your way to getting in top shape and achieving your weight loss goals.

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## **Ultimate Stair Workouts: Jargon, Definitions**

***Real Stair Climbing:*** Real stair climbing is the actual use of stairs and stair cases. I do this to differentiate it from modifications like the Stairmaster™ and Stepmill™. Although equipment like the Stairmaster™ and Stepmill™ can have great value they cannot compare to what Real Stair Climbing™ has to offer.

***Climbs or Climbing:*** The actual act of walking or running up staircases.

***Round or sets:*** From the first floor to the top floor and back down is considered a round of stair climbing. This is not written in stone. Call it what you like. I also sometimes call it a set. Also in my own workouts, I rarely walk downstairs. I usually take the elevator down for safety reasons, but also keep in mind in the high school I work in we have to use the stairs to get back down, but we make it a point not to run downstairs and just walk down and take our time. It is not going to improve our conditioning, but in this case safety takes the precedent over improvement.

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## Ultimate Stair Exercises for Anaerobic Conditioning:

My favorite use of stair climbing is anaerobic conditioning. As with any workout start off with a warm-up and stretching. I suggest you use one round of walking up the stairs and then proceed to the anaerobic work. In my own workouts I prefer to run up the stairs for anaerobic work but you could also walk very fast. I also prefer to climb every 2 steps but you could use every step. Experimentation will help you decide what works best for you. In my own anaerobic workouts I usually climb 6 to 12 flights at full speed and then rest for 2 to 3 minutes. During my rest period I usually continue to walk up a few flights. I find this allows me to recover faster. Experiment to find what works best for you. I usually perform anywhere from 4 to 10 sets.

### Anaerobic Exercise Ideas:

**1. Change how many steps you use:** You can use 1 step, 2 steps or even 3 steps. Why not 4 steps? In my experience 4 steps were just too much and wasn't worth the safety risk. But if you can run up stairs using 4 steps go for it. The toughest climbs in anaerobic climbs (runs) are using 3 steps. This is very advanced as it requires adequate strength and power just to do them. Many athletes I train can do 3 step anaerobic runs for 10-12 flights in around 30-40 seconds.

**2. Use larger steps:** Besides using 2 or 3 steps you can also make use of larger steps (if you have access of course). At the high school I work at we have access to double size concrete steps that we use to do some anaerobic work, strength work and power development work. Each step is about the size of 2 steps.

**3. Add rounds:** As your conditioning improves you can add more rounds for further improvements.

**4. Add flights:** Again, as your conditioning improves you can add more flights to challenge you further.

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**5. Reduce rest intervals:** Another way to change your workouts is to change how long you rest between your anaerobic runs. Just changing your rest intervals by 30 seconds can make a huge difference.

**6. Use a weighted vest:** Another change is with the use of a weighted vest. As with any training this will increase your workout intensity by forcing you to carry more weight. It's like trying to exercise with a heavy coat on. If you don't have a weighted vest you can use a coat.

**7. All out sprint to the 20<sup>th</sup> floor:** Another great anaerobic conditioning tool is an all out sprint to the 20<sup>th</sup> floor (that's if you have 20 flights of course). By the 18th floor your legs can barely move. You'll be forced to walk but your body will still be in an anaerobic zone. When I'm pressed for time I use this as a workout. Just do 1 or 2 warm-up rounds of 20 flights and then use the third round as the sprint to the 20<sup>th</sup> floor.

**8. Anaerobic Training with Groups:** Another fun way to do anaerobic training with groups (especially athletes) is to race up flights of stairs. One person uses one stairwell and the other the opposite. An all out race to the top will challenge even the best conditioned athletes. With the high school student/athletes I've worked with we had access to 12 flights and racing up those stairs proved to be one of the best ways to condition athletes. They didn't see it as a workout but just a race. So just calling it a race really motivated them. Remember to try and pair people of equal ability.

**9. Mix in Rope Jumping:** A jump rope you can increase the intensity of your workout simply by skipping before or after your anaerobic runs.

**10. Make use of dumbbells, calisthenics or bodyweight exercises:**

These have proved to be a great addition to anaerobic work. You can use these exercises before of after your runs. Combining traditional exercises with anaerobic runs provides a different training stimulus and can help you save time and give you a brutal workout.

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There are many ways to do anaerobic conditioning in stair cases. Just remember to be safe and what you're trying to address. Anaerobic work should have you breathless. To get an idea of how you should feel, try running a ¼ mile track at full speed and you'll see what I mean.

I think the main reason I like anaerobic conditioning so much is because it gives you more bang for your buck. I find that conditioning is a limiting for many people (especially athletes). Many complain that they just don't have the strength late in games. I think they have the strength it's just their lack of conditioning doesn't allow them to use it. I find myself outlasting many high school students in basketball games and I think one big reason is my conditioning. The only thing I usually have over the student/athletes is strength. They are usually quicker, more powerful, and more skilled. But my teams usually prevail in games because I don't tire easily. It also helps that I've been playing for over 20 years but I certainly notice the difference of how I feel (great) and how they look late in games (gasping for air and bent over) ☺.

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## **Anaerobic Conditioning Workouts:**

### **Workout 1: Running up stairs (1, 2 or 3 steps)**

**Round 1:** warm-up: walk up 20 flights at slow pace (4 to 5 minutes)

*Take elevator or walk down*

**Round 2:** warm-up: Run up 10 flights (go half speed), (1 minute)

**Rest 2 minutes**

**Round 3:** Run up 8-10 flights (full speed), (30 to 45 seconds)

**Rest 2 to 3 minutes**

**Round 4:** Repeat Round 3

**Round 5:** Repeat Round 4

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**Workout 2: Running up stairs with a weighted vest (1, 2, or 3 steps)**

*\*Same as workout 2 except use a weighted vest.*

**Workout 3: All out sprint to the 20<sup>th</sup> Floor (1, 2 or 3 steps)**

**Round 1:** warm-up: walk up 10 flights at a slow pace (4-5 minutes)

*Take elevator down or walk down*

**Round 2:** warm-up: run up 8-10 flights at half speed (1 minute)

*Take elevator down or walk down*

**Round 3:** run up to the 20<sup>th</sup> floor at full speed. (2 minutes) Keep in mind that most people will not be able to run up to the 20<sup>th</sup> floor at full speed. I myself usually tank at around 15 or 16 flights. After that I continue to walk until I reach the 20<sup>th</sup> floor. Don't let this fool you as it's still tough to reach the top because my legs feel like jelly.

*After you recover from this round you can stretch.*

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**Workout 4: All out sprint to the 20<sup>th</sup> Floor with a weighted vest. (1, 2 or 3 steps)**

*\*Same as workout 3 except use a weighted vest.*

**Workout 5: Running up stairs (1, 2 or 3 steps at a time) combined with jump rope**

**Round 1:** warm-up: Walk up 10-20 flights at a slow pace (2-5 minutes)

*Stretch at top and then take elevator or walk down*

**Round 2:** Jump rope for 30 seconds to 1 minute  
Run up 8-10 flights (go half speed), (1 minute)

*Rest 2-3 minutes*

**Round 3:** Jump rope for 30 seconds to 1 minute  
Run up 8-10 flights (full speed), (30-45 seconds)

*Rest 2-3 minutes*

**Round 4:** Repeat round 3

**Round 5:** Repeat round 4

# Happy Stair Climbing!

Well my friend I think I've said enough on stair exercises. All that's left is for you to take action.

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P.S. There is much so more to stair exercises than just running up them to improve your anaerobic conditioning and burn tons on body fat. The Ultimate Stair Exercises videos and eBook reveals all that can be done with them. Here's a sneak peak at what you will discover:

- How to use stair exercises if you are a beginner.
- How to use stair exercises if you simply want to improve your fitness and health
- How to improve your flexibility with stair exercises
- How to reduce back, neck or joint pain using stair exercises.
- How to make use of stair exercises if you only have a few flights of stairs
- How to make use of stairs if you only have one flight
- How make use of only one step
- How to train your abdominals using stairs
- How to train your upper body using stairs
- How get those elusive buns of steel using stair exercises

**You name it and stair exercises will deliver the results you desire!**

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Virgil is a certified personal trainer and physical education teacher in New York City. For over 11 years he has helped hundreds of people from all walks of life reach their fitness, strength and health related goals. He has successfully trained and designed programs for young athletes, high school and college athletes, WNBA & MLB professional athletes, company CEO's, Law Enforcement Officials, Seniors and many more. He is also author and creator of the Ultimate Stair Exercises program. Visit his web site [www.VirgilAponte.com](http://www.VirgilAponte.com) for more information or to sign up for his popular fitness journal.

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