

PROBLEMS leaving the house to get fit? Indoor biking is a great cardiovascular activity, and can fit right in with your schedule, allowing you to watch TV, read, or just chill out. Some high-tech bikes even come with Net access!

Why You'll Stay On the Bike

The risk of injury is very low. It's a good choice for first-time exercisers, while it can also be a challenging workout for seasoned exercisers. You'll notice the difference in just four to five sessions. Ideally, biking should be combined with some other weight-bearing activity, like jogging, walking or weight training, to increase bone density.

Get It Right For Maximum Effect

- The seat height should be adjusted so that your knee is only slightly bent on the down-stroke. When (and if) leaning forward and placing the arms on the handlebars, elbows should be slightly bent.

- Try and get in 15 to 60 minutes of cycling a day. For fat or inch loss, you need to stay on ideally for 40 to 60 minutes continuously. If you're exhausted, just slow down. You're probably working too hard to be burning fat anyway. For fat loss, one needs to work within a low to

moderate intensity range. If the intensity is too high, the body doesn't utilise fat for fuel; instead it switches over to other energy systems such as quick energy or glycogen. There are a lot of health benefits here as well, but fat loss is not one of them.

- Start with thrice a week. You can gradually work your way up later.
- If cycling is your main source of exercise, also do some resistance training workouts that include the upper body, abs and back.

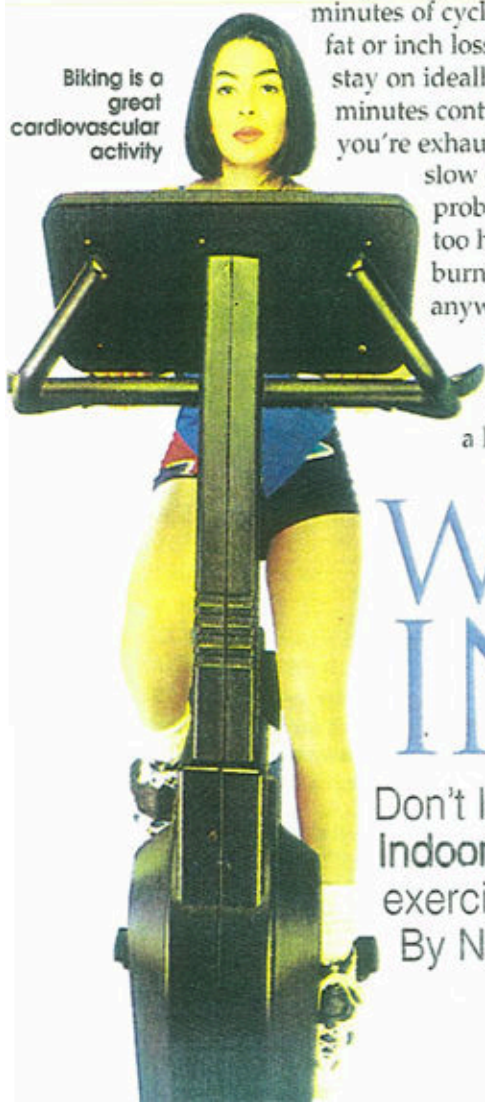
What You Need

- The bike, of course.
- A bottle of water, because you're going to be sweating, and you don't want to dehydrate and overheat; this can lead to heat cramps or heat exhaustion.
- Hard-soled shoes. Aerobic and running shoes have soft soles which may leave your feet numb at the end of the session.
- A towel, for wiping away sweat, and for draping over the handlebars so your hands won't slip out of position.
- Comfortable, non-restrictive clothing, preferably cotton. Avoid synthetics such as nylon, lycra and spandex as they don't allow the body to breathe and you can't let out body heat through sweat. So you get exhausted, and stay exhausted. Also, as the sweat remains on the skin, you may break out into a skin irritation or a sweat rash.

Spinning

Spinning is an intense aerobic activity involving a room full of people on stationary indoor bikes, working to choreography and music. To challenge different muscle groups and intensify the workout, options include cycling while off

Biking is a great cardiovascular activity



WORK OUT INDOORS

Don't let the weather stop you from working out. Indoor biking and spinning are great ways to exercise at home and at your convenience.

By Nawaz Modi Singhania

the seat, with toes pointed or feet flexed, or with the upper body weight tending forward on the handle bar.

Before And After

Warming up and cooling down adequately are very important segments of your workout. The precise function of your warm-up is to prepare the body for the rigours of exercise. The body's internal temperature needs to be raised. Blood and oxygen need to be directed to the working muscles and limbs. This is accomplished by stretching the large muscle groups and limbering exercises. The purpose of the cool-down is to gradually lower the pulse, return the oxygen debt (which is a result of exercise), remove the byproducts of exercise (such as carbon dioxide and lactic acid), and prevent the pooling of blood specially in the lower limbs. The bike itself can be used to both warm up and cool down, to gradually raise and eventually lower the heart rate, and also to stretch out different muscle groups, particularly those of the lower limbs.

Improper warm-ups and cool-downs are one of the main causes of injury. These could be torn muscles or ligaments, muscle stiffness and soreness 24 to 48 hours post-exercise, and various other conditions such as Achilles tendonitis and Plantar fasciitis.

So be safe while you pedal away!