

Principles of Training

The F.I.T.T. principle in training can be put into action if you understand six other basic training principles. This assignment will outline two principles:

- The Principle of Overload
- The Principle of Progression



The Principle of Overload

When a human body is placed under stress, it can respond in several ways. One of these ways is adaptation. In weight training, we place stress on our body by damaging the muscles. In response, the muscles rebuild stronger to resist future stress. **The principle of overload** suggests that over time we can improve our muscles by continually placing greater and greater loads on them. This principle is present everyday in our lives, as we adjust to mental, emotional and psychological factors.

In training, this applies to both aerobic and anaerobic exercise. Take for an example a person who runs 3 KM everyday at a moderate pace. Initially, this places stress on the body and the body adapts by strengthening the leg muscles, the heart and the lungs. The runner will find that this 3 KM run becomes easier over time. Unless the runner places additional stress by running faster or running further, body adaptations will stop. The same idea is true with weight training. Lifting greater loads, or varying a workout using different weight training techniques can place greater stresses on the muscles. Many weight lifters record their workouts so they can look back and decide how to place greater stress on their muscles the next time.

The opposite is also true. Decreasing exercise will mean that gains achieved through overload disappear as those changes are no longer required to meet challenges the muscles face. **Use it or lose it.**

The Principle of Progression

We learned from the principle of overload that a person engaged in regular training will continue to progress over time. **The principle of progression** has already been discussed above in the example of the 3 KM runner. If a person continually trains at the same level and never pushes his/her body, then no further gains will be made. A weight lifter who comes in each day and bench presses the same weight the same number of times will see short term strength gains, but not see any long term benefits.

The principle of overload and the principle of progression are so closely linked that often individuals will refer to it as **the principle of progressive overload.**