

## Fitness, Fun and the Great Outdoors

The deep freeze is over and people are beginning to emerge from the long winter. The trees are budding, our Cardinals are back in the back yard, the cyclists and in-line skaters are on the road enjoying the warm weather.

Montrealers embrace the spring; we are an active city enjoying our bike paths, big parks and all the outdoor activities we are deprived of during the winter months.

Taking advantage of the outdoors to the full extent, there are many activities you participate in to keep fit, healthy and enjoy the warm weather.

Across North America, **Boot Camp workouts** have been all the rage. They are great for fat burning, increasing strength and endurance. Mostly, they are fun.

Classes are given at most clubs, and my 7:00am Boot Camp class at Monster Gym is gaining momentum as exercisers who like a challenge, experience an intense workout that leaves them exhausted, and wanting more!

In climates where weather permits, Boot Camp workouts are given in parks and those are great fun since they allow you to use hills, park equipment and other objects that Mother Nature provides.

A great idea is to have your own "Boot Camp" challenge with your family or friends. This can be adapted to any age group and is not gender specific!

Below is a sample **Boot Camp Challenge**, you will need a watch with a second hand or a timer. All the drills are done for 30-60 seconds depending on your fitness level. It works really well if you an even number that way you can form teams, but is not necessary

Cycle to your nearest park,

1. Jumping jacks
  2. Push ups (can be done using a bench if you cannot do them on the ground)
  3. Squats, holding your arms out front shoulder height
  4. Men's push up position hold (hold for the designated time, body straight, contract your abs and glutes)
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1. Run up the hill (stay up top)
  2. Overhead shoulder press with squat (reach overhead then bend the knees and touch the ground in front of your feet, keep your weight on your heels not toes)
  3. Standing side bends ( stand straight, reach your fingers down your thighs, you will feel this in your waist, alternate from side to side)
  4. Run down the hill
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1. Frog leaps (yes, that's what I said, bend your knees reach for your toes then leap up in the air)
  2. Bench Dips (sit on a park bench with your hands by your side fingers facing forward, lower your body until your elbows are 90 degrees, come all the way up, repeat)
  3. Walking lunges (take a big step forward, bend both knees 90 degrees, use the front foot to bring you back up, step forward with the other foot etc)
  4. Abdominal crunches on the bench( lie on the bench or grass, bend your knees 90 degrees and curl your shoulders toward your hips, careful not to pull on the neck)

This can be done all together or you can have 1 group doing each exercise and then switch, someone will have to watch the timer or if you have a digital watch that can be set and beeps when the time is up, even better.

This great fun and with imagination you can do many different exercises that are fun and effective. Playground equipment is great for these types of workouts, can you do pull ups on the Monkey bars?

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