

GETTING UNSTUCK

By Richard Bell

It's as frustrating as a pimple on prom night, and just as predictable. Did you ever feel like your body was out to get you? You put it through circuit after circuit, you feel starved all the time, and you still look as if you've gained body fat.

Then again, you could be one of those genetic freaks who can hit the Denver club scene, stop off at the Krispy Kreme on the way home, and still manage not to skip a beat on the practice field. If so, you can stop reading this article, because I'm not writing it for you. (Except to mention this: your lifestyle will catch up with you sooner than you think.) I, for one, am not blessed with foolproof genes. Like most normal people, I have to work hard to get and keep the body I want.

Whenever one of my clients appears to be stuck, I start with a body composition test. Pinching the fat away from the muscle is a strange sensation, but well worth the discomfort. I do this to locate the high fat storage sites on clients' bodies, and contrary to what the typical health club flunky likes to think, these skin folds change independently, not uniformly, based on age, fluctuating hormonal states, the abovementioned Krispy Kremes, and a host of other factors. Get a skinfold test done by a qualified practitioner, and you'll have a concrete place to start.

Next, try the following workout. You'll need to keep three things in mind:

1. A competitive attitude. Why? Because your goal is to beat the clock and get the hell out of the gym in about 50 to 60 minutes tops.
2. Careful planning of your time. Why? Because you can't perform this workout when your gym is crowded with socialites. They'll screw up your flow. You may find out who's playing at the Little Bear next Friday, but you won't be able to keep up your intensity.
3. Progressive overloading. If you ever want to piss me off, just let me see you using the same weight I started you with the previous Monday. And people wonder why their bodies aren't improving week to week! Ask more of yourself, or continue to go in circles.

Now, the program:

Start off with 10 minutes of hard, heavy-interval training on the stationary bike—I suggest level 8 to 10 for women, level 12 to 20 for men—but use a level that makes you work hard. For one minute, hold a speed of between 60 and 70 RPMs. Back off for a minute to recover. Repeat for 10 minutes.

Next, the circuit:

Time yourself. You will perform the following exercises, non-stop, for 30 minutes. Your goal is to get through six rounds in that time.

Incline dumbbell bench press	10 reps.
Barbell squats	10 reps.
Seated rope pull to the neck	10 reps.
Hamstring curls	10 reps.
Dumbbell triceps extensions	10 reps.
Standing EZ bar biceps curls	10 reps.

It's pretty simple. Here's how to keep it working for you: increase weight every week. I'll give you an example of how to do it, using the barbell squat as a sample exercise:

- Week 1: Let's say you used 200 pounds and did 10 reps.
- Week 2: Move up to 210 pounds, move down to 8 reps.
- Week 3: Take the weight to 215 pounds, 6 reps.
- Week 4: Go back to week 2's weight (210 pounds), for 10 reps.
- Week 5: Go back to week 3's weight (215 pounds), for 8 reps.

Week 6: Use a heavier weight than you used on week 4, and do 6 reps. Good Luck!

After every workout during this six-week adventure toward a new you, you'll perform another 10 minutes on the stationary bike, but reduce the level down 3 or 4 clicks and finish strong.

You'll be hurting for the first week, but don't let that stop you. After all, you just learned how to kick your own butt in less than an hour. Who needs genetics?