

# *TABATA TURBO TRAINING:*

HOW A FOUR-MINUTE CIRCUIT CAN  
TURBO-CHARGE YOUR WORKOUTS!

BY COACH RICK KARBOVIAK  
ASAPWORKOUTS.COM  
1MILENATION.COM



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## WHAT IS TABATA TURBO TRAINING?

Tabata Turbo Training is applying a brief workout circuit method that is high-intensity in its nature, and named after a scientist who developed it. Dr. Izumi Tabata first popularized the workout circuit of 20 seconds work, 10 seconds rest for 8 cycles (4 minutes) and tested it on collegiate athletes in Japan.

Results of the study showed greater improvements in VO<sub>2</sub> Max, a measurement of aerobic capacity of an athlete, versus a traditional steady-state method of training. The original study showed that VO<sub>2</sub> increased by 14% over eight weeks, versus the steady-state that showed 9.5%. Even better was the results of anaerobic capacity, which showed a 28% improvement in the Tabata protocol group. Both Anaerobic & Aerobic systems need to be worked in multiple sports, with a greater need on the anaerobic side for a majority of sports.

For my 1MileNation.com readers, both systems are called upon during the 1-Mile race. I have no precise data to back this up, but I sense that the key advantage that a runner can have for the mile is having a strong anaerobic system working for them. I have seen largely anaerobic athletes in track, such as 400m & 800m runners, do fairly well at the mile distance as well, and I feel it is because of their strong anaerobic systems.

So, with my past coaching, I have used Tabata interval workouts as a backbone of many a practice for my track runners.

In my training experience I have also applied Tabata interval workouts to fitness clients for their cardio routines on either exercise machines or even with doing kettlebell conditioning exercises.

For the purposes of this guide, I will outline the basic Tabata protocol, and then my adaptations of the protocol for varying workout structures that are dependent on the needs of the athlete or fitness client.

## **THE ORIGINAL TABATA: AS I DISCOVERED IT...**

I first became aware of this new workout before I was even aware of Dr. Tabata's study by its name. It first appeared in a fitness magazine at the time called Muscle Media, which had the article titled "Guerilla Cardio". Here it is in a basic nutshell:

4 minutes of easy activity (approx. 50-60% effort)  
4 minutes of Tabata Intervals:  
    20 seconds all-out effort, 10 seconds rest x 8 times  
4 minutes of easy activity and/or recovery time

All in all, a Tabata workout applied in a continual fashion, such as running, biking, or on an exercise cardio machine, is 12 minutes length in total.

Personally, I have done a 12 minute routine, 3-4 times a week, as the staple of my training workouts for running, back when I was preparing for a cross-country season of coaching. Since I ran with my athletes in practice, I had to be in quality shape with them. It was this practice of the Tabata intervals that proved to me how effective this workout style is. I was 24 years old, starting out the cross-country season with a pack of boy runners who as a team were in the top 5 teams in the state: and I was kicking their tails in some repeat runs in the early part of the season's practices. Even the head coach pointed out to them that "The team's #1 runner can't be the assistant coach, boys!" Keep in mind that I did no competitive running in high school or college, and I was running at a high level of competition with one of the most competitive teams in the ranks of HS cross-country in the state of ND. The staple of my daily workouts was doing Tabata intervals! Basically this raised my fitness level to a whole new peak for me as an athlete. Now, I don't want to sound like I'm bragging with that story, but I just wanted to use it to help show how it helped me turn around my fitness levels in just under 3 months time.

## **OTHER ADAPTATIONS OF THE TABATA PROTOCOL:**

Throughout the time since that experience, I have tried the following Tabata workout styles, trying to keep with that structure of high intensity interval training.

### 10 Minute Workout:

Chop down the 4 minutes of easy work & the 4 minutes of rest work at the end to just 3 minutes each.

3 Minutes Easy Activity  
4 Minutes of Tabata  
3 Minutes Recovery

### 16 Minute Workout:

Add a 2<sup>nd</sup> 4 minute period after the 12 minutes are up:

4 Minutes Easy  
4 Minutes Tabata  
4 Minutes Easy/Walk Recovery  
4 Minutes Tabata

### 20 Minute Workout:

Same as the 16 Minute one, but add 4 more minutes of easy activity for recovery: essentially jogging it out.

### Changing Work/rest Periods of the Tabata intervals:

Use a 15 seconds work, 15 seconds rest in place of the 20s work, 10s rest. You will still go 8 cycles of 15s work, 15s rest.

Another way is doing 10 seconds work, 20 seconds rest. To get the most out of this method, you must try to go at an all-out maximum on each 10s period of work.

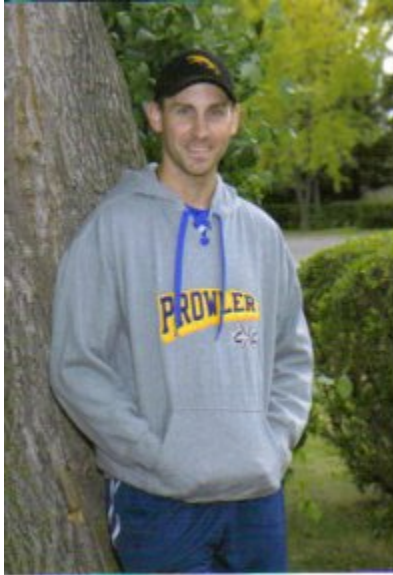
### Changing Four Minute Periods into 2 Minute Periods:

I advise this as a 'break-in' option for getting used to Tabata interval formats of the work/rest periods. You would do a 12 minute workout as follows:

4 Minutes Easy Activity  
2 Minutes Tabata  
4 Minutes Easy Activity  
2 Minutes Tabata

This would be a good starting point for many if you are new to trying out interval training as a main method of training for performance.

All in all, these workout formats can provide you with some basic guidance in getting started in applying this awesome athletic performance conditioning protocol!



Coach Rick Karboviak is a fitness & sports performance coach & consultant out of Finley, ND. He operates a number of sites, from ones he started in his full-time training days, to ones he provides now as a coach & consultant to many online. His main focus is on improving athletic performance for the youth to high school athlete, as well as the recreational competitive runner. The 2 sites that provide the most to this need are:

<http://ASAPWorkouts.com>

<http://1MileNation.com>

ASAPWorkouts.com is a resource for coaches, parents, & young athletes for performance training information & guidance. 2 popular guides, 'The ASAP Way' and 'The Peak Minutes Plan' can give coaches & parents an easy-to-follow system in applying true performance-based programs for athletes. Young athletes can get more informed on why they need to focus on performance over appearance when it comes to overall training for sports.

1MileNation.com is a blog that's committed to helping the athlete & runner get the most out of training for the Mile distance, as their focus on improving aerobic capacity & fitness levels. The 1-Mile distance is commonly used in fitness tests for personal training clients to the needs of law enforcement & military for their fitness testing. 1MileNation.com brings everyone together to focus on the Mile and doing short, brief, effective running workouts to help them get there.

***Disclaimer: You should not begin an exercise program without first consulting with a physician to determine your condition, and finding parameters, in starting an exercise program. The author is not responsible for any injury, stress, or death incurred on individuals from performing the physical activity mentioned in this article. Participants should seek medical clearance before performing any physical activity described.***