

Build-Your-Own F3 Workout

These are some basic F3 workout set pieces that, when mixed and matched and strung together are a basic “F3 starter kit.”

The Warmup CoP (Circle of Pain)

Start the workout with a short run – up to a quarter-mile – then put your pax into the initial CoP. This will hit some basics and get folks warmed up.

Side-Straddle Hop (Jumping Jack); Merkins (traditional pushups); Mountain Climbers; Little Baby Crunches.

Other possibilities: Imperial Walkers (standing straight up, hands behind head, right elbow to left knee, left elbow to right knee); squat thrusts (squat down, thrust legs out behind you into plank position, bring legs back to squat position, stand up); can substitute Flutter Kicks or Hello Dollies for the LBCs. The idea is to hit several areas of the body without targeting one in particular, but giving people an overall introduction to the workout. How many reps of each exercise? It’s up to you as the leader to decide that.

Push-o-Rama

This is another CoP set piece. With a beginning group in particular, you’ll want to give the pax short breaks to shake out their arms between each exercise. Have one of your pax count backward from 10 – when he gets to zero, introduce the next exercise.

Merkins; Wide-Arm Pushups; Diamond Pushups (hands together underneath your chest, thumbs and forefingers form a diamond shape); Stagger Pushups (Right and Left – the “stagger” hand is planted 18 inches forward of the other hand, which goes in the normal Merkin position, producing an out-of-balance, more challenging pushup position); Peter Parker Pushups (as you lower yourself for a Merkin, bend one knee and bring your foot forward in a Spiderman-climbing movement; alternate which knee you bring forward with each Merkin); CrossFit Pushups (lower your chest all the way to the ground and bring your hands up slightly off the ground – discourages cheating); Fingertip Pushups; etc.

Leg-o-Rama

Another CoP, this one focusing on the legs.

Squats (make ‘em hold at the bottom for 30 seconds or more at the end of the set for extra pain); Jumping Lunges; Mountain Climbers; Partner Squats (against a wall, with another guy on your back, one-legged squats); Partner Calf Raises (same as Partner Squats, except standing up on your tiptoes); People’s Chair (sit with your

back against a wall and your legs bent at the knee at a 90-degree angle; hold for 1:00 or more).

Six Minutes of Mary

This is another CoP set piece that focuses on the abs and core. As you get stronger at these, leaders can transition from one exercise to another without dropping their legs, improving the challenge for the pax.

Flutter Kicks (feet inches off the ground, kick up and down in a fluttering movement); Hello Dollies/Low-litas (6 inches off the ground, feet move apart and back together laterally, instead of up and down, so you're spreading your legs, then closing them); the High, Slow Flutter (legs at a 60-degree angle to the ground, slooowly doing flutter kicks); the Rosalita (legs at a 60-degree angle, same motion as the Hello Dolly); Little Baby Crunches (knees pulled up in the crunch position, using your abs to raise your elbows to your knees); Slow Bicycles (from the crunch position, making a pedaling motion with your legs and alternating your elbows from side to side); Knee-Ups/Rowing Situps (only thing touching the ground is your butt, draw your knees up to your crunched torso, then extend your legs out and relax your torso); the Luge (get in the starting position for the Knee-Up and hold it indefinitely); Supermans (on your stomach, feet and hands in the air; position is held for as long as it takes the pax to deliver a good, loud, clear rendition of the first verse of the "Greatest American Hero" theme song). Can also do various swimming motions from the Superman position (the Michael Phelps).

The Plank

Just holding a plank is a great core exercise. If you get bored of just doing that, you can move through various alternate versions in a Plank-o-Rama: Right and Left Plank (right or left hand high in the air, only things touching the ground are your other hand and the side of your foot on that same side of your body); Elbow Plank (hold the plank from your elbows instead of your hands); Low Plank (lower yourself to near the ground as if you're doing a pushup, then hold).

For an end of workout competition, hold a Plank To Failure (PTF) competition to see who can hold a plank for the longest without cheating or collapsing.

Noah's Ark

Done either across the length or width of a football or soccer field. Mix and match these in varying combinations.

Regular Sprint; Backward Sprint; Karaoke; Side-Shuffles; Wojos (side-shuffles with a Duke basketball-style slap of the ground every three or four shuffles); Bear Crawl; Crab Walk; Forward Crab Walk (even harder); Leapfrogs (standing broad jump); Walking Lunges.

11s

Pick any two exercises (dips and jumpups are a good combo for this if you have benches or a low wall you can use, but you can do it with anything – burpees and squats would be another pairing, or Merkins and Little Baby Crunches).

All the sets add up to 11 exercises. So Set 1 would be 10 reps of Exercise A and 1 rep of Exercise B; Set 2 is 9 reps of A, 2 reps of B; Set 3 is 8 reps of A, 3 reps of B ... and so on; the last set (Set 10) is 1 rep of A, 10 reps of B.

The Al Carmichael

Pick six exercises. Start at one end line of a soccer or football field. For Set 1, the pax sprint to the other endline, do 10 reps of the exercise, then sprint back to the starting point and do 10 more. Do six sets of this, changing the exercise each time.

The Beast

Put cones at the 25-yard, 50-yard, and 25-yard lines of a football field (or the relative positions on a soccer field). Pick six exercises. For Set 1, the pax sprint to the first cone, do six reps of the exercise, sprint to the second cone, do six more reps, sprint to the third cone, do six more reps, sprint to the end line, turn around, sprint to the third cone (six reps), the second cone (six reps), the first cone (six reps), back to the starting point. So for each exercise, your doing a down and back sprint divided up by six stops to do six reps of the exercise at each stops. Do this for six different exercises (6, 6, 6 ... the Beast).

Fun With Burpees

Definitions of the burpee differ, but F3 defines the burpee as a squat thrust with a pushup in the middle. The movements, starting from a standing position:

- 1) Drop down into a squat
- 2) Thrust your feet out behind you so you end up in the plank position
- 3) Lower your chest to the ground, as in a Merkin
- 4) Push yourself back up into the plank position
- 5) Jump your legs back into the squat position
- 6) Jump up and land back in the starting position

Handing out a set of 10 burpees at any point in a workout is just a general good policy. We do a couple of set pieces involving burpees that can eat up a lot of time in the workout and really challenge the pax:

Jacob's Ladder

Find a good, challenging hill. From the bottom of the hill, the pax sprint to the top and do one burpee. Back to the bottom and sprint up a second time, 2 burpees at the top. Back to the bottom and sprint up a third time, 3 burpees at the top. Jacob's Ladder is traditionally done to 7 hill sprints and 7 burpees, but can be modified to 5 for a beginner group, or cranked up to 8, 9, 10 or beyond for an advanced group. (If you're in an urban setting and have access to a parking deck stairwell, you can do Jacob's Ladder to the top of the deck.)

Burpee Sprints

If you don't have a hill, this is a good challenge on a soccer or football field. Each set involves 10 burpees, followed by a sprint the length of the field. A full set piece of this is 10 sets (so 100 burpees and 10 field sprints).

To make a workout, string a few of these set pieces together with running segments in between. If the pax get strung out during the run, when you stop for the next set piece have the leaders plank or do squats while you wait for the stragglers to arrive.

More Background

There are instructional videos on a number of these set pieces on the F3 TV page, which [can be found here](#).

It's worth adding a couple of notes on "How To Count" which addresses how to count cadence as the workout leader):

_ We count cadence in a modified military style because it sets a rhythm for the pax and because it keeps people from budgeting their effort to reach the goal when you tell them beforehand that they have to do, say, 20 Merkins. Because the pax never know how long the leader is going to go for, they are forced to push their bodies to go for as long as they have to. This has a wonderful mental and physiological benefit; over time it teaches that pax that they can do far more than they ever would have allowed themselves to.

_ Each four-count by the leader should encompass two full repetitions of the exercise. For example, in Merkins:

One is lowering your chest to the ground

Two is pushing back up to the starting position

Three is lowering your chest to the ground

Four (not spoken, actually, since this is the point at which the pax would say, "ONE!") is pushing back up to the starting position

Side-Straddle Hops:

One is bringing your arms together over your head and jumping your legs wide

Two is coming back down into the starting position

Three is bringing your arms together over your head and jumping your legs wide
Four (again, not spoken) is coming back down into the starting position

Find A Better Way

As with everything in F3, these are guidelines and suggestions. One of the great things about our model is that guys are always taking things in new direction and dreaming up new set pieces that then become part of the canon. That's why it's always crucial as a leader to encourage new guys to lead the workouts. They'll always have new ideas and want to try different combinations and ideas – and that's how F3 grows and gets better.