



Tracking

your perceived effort

it's good to track



Exercise intensity is important to gauge because it can tell you whether you're doing cardio too hard or not hard enough. It will also tell you when you are gaining strength and getting more fit. Common ways to gauge intensity are by using Rated Perceived Exertion (RPE)*, the Talk Test**, or your target heart rate range.

Personally, I like using perceived effort and a simplified version of it. Since I do several of the same activities, again and again, I can gauge RPE fairly easily. To do this for yourself consider a scale from 1-10. 1 is no effort, you are laying on the couch and someone else is changing channels for you :) 10 is exercising as hard as you can imagine.

What RPE does is allow you to see how doing a similar or the exact same exercise gets easier as your fitness improves.

<https://www.cardiosmart.org/>

*Find a very good handout on using the Talk Test or Heart Rate here:

**If you want a detailed explanation around RPE, the Borg Rating details are here:

Example:

You haven't run in quite a while and decide this is your cardio of choice. The first day out, you are doing walk/run intervals for 30 minutes. It's harder than you remember running being and you think you're perceived effort is probably a 6-7, you wouldn't want to go faster or further. In fact, you secretly think you might throw up if you went harder. Three weeks later you think about your perceived effort again and realize that even though you are still keeping to 30 minutes, you're running more than walking and your perceived effort is more around a 4-5. Your body is adapting and becoming fitter. You may not have lost weight or inches but your body is responding.

Many variables come into play on perceived effort and it's good to track or you might think you are sliding backwards!

Considerations:

Previous night sleep quality?

Too hot/too cold/windy/rainy?

Are you fully hydrated?

Did you eat poorly or well the day before or after?

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/>

Kelly

Being Fit is Freedom – Tracking

Dates:

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Exercise

How long:

time/distance/other:.....

Level of perceived difficulty: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Has your perceived ability increased or decreased

Well-being Factor

Sleep – number of hours:

Food – Has it varied this week/day:

Energy waking up 1-10: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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