

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Do I just turn up? How do I start?

Starting is really easy ... you do not need to be fit or know anything about CrossFit. **Step 1** is to give me a call or send me an email to let us know that you are interested, **Step 2** arrange a time to do an Intro Session during one of the group times, **Step 3** is fill out a Direct Debit form for your monthly payment. It is that simple, and you will be well on your way to much improved health & fitness. There are no excuses, get started today!

Q. What is the "WOD"?

A. WOD stands for "**W**orkout **O**f the **D**ay". Every day we post a workout on the website which is the main work component of the sessions that will be coached that day at CrossFit Toowoomba. The WOD is programmed based on the crossfit.com template and is designed to provide a constantly varied stimulus using functional movements executed at high intensity. Everyone at CrossFit Toowoomba is expected to complete the same WOD every day. This is what makes us a community and ensures that everyone is exposed to the complete CrossFit programming. Make it part of your daily routine!

Q. I have never done any weightlifting, is that a problem?

A. Weightlifting (think about what you see at the Olympics rather than the bodybuilding that you see at commercial gyms) is a core component of CrossFit and has no peer in it's ability to produce strong and powerful people. However, we fully expect that people will start CrossFit with little or no weightlifting skills. Our program is specifically designed to teach people the weightlifting techniques and over time develop a high level of skill using these movement patterns. So don't worry. Starting at the beginning is a great place to start, and means that you don't have to unlearn any bad habits.

Q. What happens in a typical training session?

A. A typical training session lasts for an hour. Some people turn up before the scheduled start time to perform extra warmup or skills practice, however there is no requirement to turn up early, with most people arriving punctually at the start time. The first 5-10 minutes is allocated to self-paced warmup. At about 10mins past the start time we muster around the whiteboard and the lead trainer explains the workout. Following the muster there is typically a period of skills instruction as a group and then specific warmup using the movements and weights specified for the workout. During this time, people are usually organised into groups and the gym is setup for the workout. Once everyone is set, the trainer calls "3-2-1-go" and the workout is underway. The actual workout usually starts at about 20-25mins past the session start time. After everyone is finished the workout, there is a short debrief and after the gear is put away, the session finishes with a 10-15 minute group stretch down.

Q. But what if I am not very fit?

A. Then you have come to the right place because getting people fit is what we do. It doesn't matter how fit you are (or aren't) when you first walk in the door. The workouts

will be scaled down to your current fitness level, no matter how low that may be. We don't care how fit you are when you start, we only care how fit you are when you finish. A lot of people think they need to "train so they can go to training". It is a very common thought pattern when you are out of shape. All you need to do is turn up with a positive attitude. The rest takes care of itself over time.

Q. How often should I train?

A. Most CrossFitters train 3 days in a row and then rest for 1 day, or 5 days in a row and rest for 2 days, and then repeat the cycle. In the beginning though the amount that you train will be governed by how you feel while your body is adapting to the new stimulus. Once you get through the start period you will find that CrossFit is very addictive and you will want to train all of the time. At CrossFit Toowoomba, we have sessions 6 days a week and we encourage our CrossFitters to turn up every day that we are open, if possible. We train on a cycle of 5 work days and 2 rest days every week. Sunday is always a rest day. During the week we randomly program a second rest day, and we use this day for skills instruction and technique workshops. So initially, you might only be training 3 times a week while your body gets use to the training, but over time it is likely that you will be turning up 6 days a week. Of course not everyone can get to the gym 6 days a week so we also publish the WOD every day on the website so that you can train at home on the days that you cannot make it in.

Q. Is the WOD all that you do? It seems very short, how is such a short workout going to get me fit? Should I do extra training?

A. The WOD is the main work component for the day. However, we also do skills work, warmup, warmdown and other conditioning drills during the session. In general though, our fit CrossFitters eat well and do the WOD as prescribed ("rx'd") each day, and it is plenty of work. CrossFit works primarily due to the intensity at which we train. Intensity in our definition is the amount of work that can be done within a specific time frame. The higher the work, the higher the intensity. If we increase the amount of time dramatically (ie much longer workouts) we see a corresponding drop in intensity and training stops being effective. High intensity causes a positive hormonal response from your central nervous system and results in an adaptation that produces serious fitness, well beyond that possible with longer bodybuilding style workouts or endurance based long slow distance. The key is developing enough capacity to be able to do the WOD as prescribed, ie the weights, reps and exercises as specified, and then attempt to complete it with as much intensity as possible (ie most rounds, quickest time etc). Once you are completing the WOD with maximum intensity you will find that one short WOD a day is plenty, and typically you will spend the rest of the day trying to recover. If you feel that the WOD is not enough, then to be frank, you are scaling back the weight too much. Try increasing the weight to that specified in the WOD and see what happens to the intensity.

It is also worth noting that the trainers at CF Toowoomba follow the same training protocol as the clients. We do not do extra or different training than what is specified on the website. We are more than willing to walk the walk. CrossFit training is effective and enjoyable **because** of the short intense workouts.

Q. Do I need to turn up early to warmup?

A. No. Turn up on time at the advertised start time. There will be time allocated to warmup. Of course if you want to turn up early to practice or do extra warmup, you are more than welcome.

Q. Should I do a separate strength program? I am not strong enough to do CrossFit?

A. CrossFit incorporates strength training within the daily WOD. Some days are metabolic conditioning based (make you puff) and some days are strength based (make you strain), and some days are both! Initially it will feel like you are not strong enough to do the workout. But rest assured, you will get strong enough just by following the program. You do not need any special training. In fact, if you do extra strength training you will find that other areas of your CrossFit development will suffer as a result. So even though you might get some initial quick strength gains on a specific strength program, the gains will be at the expense of genuine CrossFit progress. Turn up, do the WOD, give it everything, constantly challenge the weights that you use and before you know it you will be stronger than you ever thought possible. Once again, if we look to our strongest performers, they do not do special training, they just do the WOD. It is not that they are strong and therefore they can attack the WOD but rather they attack the WOD consistently and that makes them strong.

Q. What should I bring?

A. Wear comfortable clothes that you can train in and shoes that are suitable for cross training. A lot of people wear a flat-soled shoe for the strength based sessions (running shoes are not much fun to squat in) and a cross-trainer or running shoe for the other sessions. Bring a water bottle and towel. It is also a good idea to have strapping tape in your kit bag. It is really useful for preventing blisters and shin scrapes.

Q. Should I wear gloves?

A. This is a hot topic and one that comes up a lot. If you have a job that requires you to have manicured hands (eg massage therapist, hand model etc) then gloves may be necessary to prevent calluses and rough skin from forming. However, for most of us, we are aiming to develop our hand strength/conditioning so that the physical capability that we develop in the gym will translate to the real world. This means that having hands that are able to do work without blistering is important. Over time, we want our hands to adapt to the demands of holding things so that they are naturally protected when we do work. We don't want our hands to be soft and delicate, but likewise we don't want blisters. We are looking for that spot in the middle where we have protective calluses. This takes time to develop. Initially you will find it difficult to hold things (your hands will hurt, you will blister etc) and hanging on the bar for any length of time will be a real challenge. There is a temptation to wear gloves so that your hands are protected and do make the initial stages easier. The problem with this is that when we protect ourselves using something artificial we prevent our body from developing natural defenses which defeats the purpose of our training. Generally when we make something easier we are reducing our potential in the long run.

We usually discourage the wearing of gloves for the following reasons:-

- they prevent your hands from getting tougher over time
- they can make some exercises dangerous because of the loss of sensitivity/tactile control
- they become a psychological crutch
- they mask the underlying problem (eg incorrect grip, too many reps etc)

There are times that gloves are appropriate:-

- When you have a bad case of blisters that are healing
- specific exercises that are known to break the skin (eg long distance rowing)
- when you have a skin condition
- you use them on the job and want to train specifically (eg some tactical officers)
- you have a specific requirement/desire to keep your hands soft

We do not want you rip your hands up or get blisters. The best strategy to avoid this (without wearing gloves) is:-

- learn which workouts/exercises put you at risk (120 kipping pullups will do it)
- look after your hands (file/pumice calluses, use moisturiser)
- use strategic taping when there are high volume/risk exercises (taping provides higher sensitivity than gloves)
- develop your gripping techniques to ensure the bar is in the right position
- do a little bit of hand conditioning all of the time (ie get used to holding stuff)

Q. Do many women train at CrossFit Toowoomba?

A. Yes, I am very lucky to have a lot of women training at CrossFit Toowoomba. In fact my first group of members were women. CrossFit is a fantastic strength and conditioning program for women and the CrossFit community has some exceptional female role models. CrossFit produces strong and healthy women.

Q. What if I can't get into the gym to do a WOD?

A. The workouts are posted on the website daily to allow people to do them on their own if they cannot get to the gym. It is never as much fun as being in the group, but is better than missing a session. We want you to train consistently to get great results, so the expectation is that if you can't get into CFT that you will still do the WOD and post your results back on the website in the comments section. One of the reasons that CrossFit is so effective is that it can be done anywhere with minimal equipment.