



INFINITE MULTISPORT

FURTHERING THE SPORT OF TRIATHLON

It starts with you

**FITNESS
RULE #1
DON'T GET
COMFORTABLE!**

The “Not Actually the President’s Corner” Corner.

Welcome to the off-season - sort of....

As you can see, this is a little bit different from the president’s columns in the past, mainly because the president is not writing this – I was volunteered to contribute – so I wanted to point out some of the things that are a little bit different from when I became a member 8 or 9 years ago, and to recognize those things which are not any different at all, and which should never be any different.

For instance, one thing which is a little bit different is that there are many more of us out there (290+ and counting), which means more of us are racing and training well towards the end of the year, and even year round. As a result, it looks increasingly like there is no off-season.

Which is not necessarily a bad thing, despite what a lot of articles will tell you. The reason for this is based on IMTC’s philosophy, which is not focused so much on the racing, but on the process to get to the start and finish of that race, and to recognize all that went into getting there. And this applies no matter what race it is, and no matter what time it takes to get there.

The process, of course, starts with training, and the benefits that result, which are never limited to simply improving performance.

Because it is not always so easy to get out there to swim, bike and run alone, we try to provide opportunities so that nobody has to do it alone. As an example, there are group rides every Tuesday night (which probably will have ended by the time you read this, but read on ...) There is no reason why I should try to hang on with this group, but it doesn’t matter, because there are ways in which two or more people with vastly different abilities can ride together and still get in their workout without compromise (if you are uncertain as to how this can be done, see me.)

The physical benefit from this ride is noticeable, but the added, intangible benefit is what happens after, namely Taco Tuesdays. While this doesn’t always involve tacos, it does involve getting together, talking mainly about ourselves, but also giving advice and encouragement. How can I learn to ride up a hill? Probably by asking somebody who is better at it than I am. While that is most of the planet, I can still get direction on how to improve, even if I might never get there.

The part where you come into all this is to make these opportunities more available, so this is a call to start something. Do you have a garage, or a basement? Trainer ride. Do you have a regular run course? Group run (and there are ways to have several people of different abilities run the same course and still train together; if you are uncertain as to how this can be done, see me.) Are you headed to a pool somewhere? Group swim. It can happen. Let us know (use the emails at the end of this newsletter.)

And now for the philosophizing:

The reason training is important is because it gets us to something even more important. You should have noticed by now that IMTC recognizes everybody’s achievements, or at least those which are reported to Paul. I strongly believe that everybody deserves to have at least one moment where they get to raise both hands over their head as they cross a finish line somewhere, and look up to see at least one person in the crowd doing the same.

I witnessed first-hand when we (IMTC) gave that moment to several competitors at Chattanooga 70.3 in 2016 (it probably happened this year, too, and at any number of events where a lot of us were there, but I was at this one.) I am certain that the last finishers, who were too many hours from the start of the race, and that poor guy who literally had to drag himself across the line, were shocked, amazed, and maybe a little overwhelmed to see 20 or so strangers cheering wildly, with hands over their heads, as they all finished.

It is as important to similarly recognize the hard work that went into some sterling accomplishments that have taken place recently. For those who have been with IMTC for a number of years, who would have thought there would be athletes in this group regularly qualifying for national and international competitions? Or that there are so many members running the Boston Marathon now it could practically be considered an IMTC Swarm Race? How many members have been to Kona?

The common denominator at both ends of the spectrum is that training produces results. Sometimes those results are tangible, like a qualifying time.. Sometimes, the results are intangible, like finally getting to raise your hands over your head.

The focus, then, is not so much on the race, but on the process to get to the start and finish of that race and to recognize all that went into getting there. This is a rare circumstance, which is not seen too often, but we should make sure it is seen often from us, and this should never change.

So, cheer on the accomplished athlete, and also celebrate the effort and commitment that the middle and back of the pack puts in. And, for crying out loud, thank the volunteers; every one of them.

Welcome to the off-season. John Fleming

9/29/2017

Fall 2017 Edition

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11 Key Beginner Triathlon Tips From Top Coaches

With swimming, cycling, and running combined into a single competition, there's a lot for beginner triathletes to learn. Each discipline within a triathlon is not the same as swimming, cycling, or running as standalone sports. Not only are there some rule differences, but your cycling leg will be affected by the swim before it, and the run is always impacted by the fatigue from the previous two legs. And then there are the transitions, which are often referred to as a sporting discipline all their own. You can gain or lose a ton of time based on your skills and efficiency in transitions between disciplines. To help you shorten the learning curve, several CTS Coaches put together some great beginner triathlon tips that will help you conquer your next triathlon and continue to improve your performance in later races.

1. Keep Your Training Schedule Practical

Don't try to fit your life into a training schedule, build a training schedule that fits your life. Be realistic about instead of setting yourself up for failure by trying to maintain an unsustainable workload. You will see much larger gains in fitness if you maintain a moderate but consistent training plan.

2. Include Social Training Sessions

Find meet-up groups to swim, bike, and run with that are around or just above your fitness level. It is more fun to suffer with others and it can also help keep you accountable and on track with your goals. You will also meet fellow triathletes who can help you out and give you advice based on their own experiences.

3. Focus on Improving Your Performance, Not Equipment

With so much high-end performance gear to buy for three disciplines, it is easy to want the best of everything. As a beginner you should place more value on solid gear that is reliable and durable. As you improve fitness, the benefits of lighter and slicker gear will have more significant impact on your performance. When you're starting out, the improvement you make in fitness – with standard gear – will impact your performance way more than slicker/lighter gear.

4. Prioritize Your Key Workouts First

When you have multiple workouts scheduled for one day, it's best to complete the more difficult or important workout first when you're fresh. If you save your key workout for after you've already done an endurance workout that same day, you are much less likely to be able to maintain the proper intensity to successfully complete your important workout. This is why it's important to understand the purpose behind every workout so you can prioritize accordingly.

5. Cut Workouts Short When Necessary

Hitting the proper intensity for your workout and staying consistent with your training is much more important than perfectly finishing every workout as scheduled. It's critical to recognize when you are too fatigued to complete a workout, or that by struggling to finish your intervals you risk compromising the quality of future key workouts.

6. Include Brick Workouts

It's important to experience how your body will react to transitioning from swimming to cycling to running on race day. To simulate how you'll feel, it's a good idea to incorporate brick workouts in which you complete a swim and bike workout or bike and run workout back-to-back.

7. Practice Organizing Your Transition Area

Spend some time figuring out how you are going to set up your transition area so on race day, in the heat of the race, you are quick and efficient. Make sure you only include the absolute essentials – a cluttered transition area will cause unnecessary stress and slow you down.

8. Practice Your Transitions

Go through the entire process of taking off your wetsuit and getting into cycling gear, then getting into your running gear. You can include transition practice during your brick workouts, when you are a little fatigued, to better simulate race day conditions.

9. Include Open Water Swims in Your Training

Open water pack swims are not always readily available to include in your training plan, but they are essential to increasing your comfort level and triathlon performance. Make sure to take advantage of any opportunities you have to experience open water pack swimming and practice how to properly sight – stroke, breath, then bring your head to face forward and lift it just so your eyes are out of the water.

10. Learn How to Make a U-Turn on Your Triathlon Bike

Make sure you can safely and efficiently make a u-turn at the middle of a course. Try this at the end of your training rides by putting a cone out in your driveway or a safe, traffic-free area and practice entering the turn wide, hitting the apex of the turn by the cone, and exiting the turn wide while maintaining your momentum.

11. Train Your Digestive System for Race Day

Train your digestive system to be able to take in energy on the bike and run. You should aim to replenish 25%-35% of calorie expenditure and 20-40 oz of fluids per hour. You will likely need to dial your fluid and fuel intake during the run, so make sure to experiment to determine how much you are able to handle on the run.





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If You Have 45 Minutes to an Hour:

Workout 1: The Triple Threat

Warm up for 15 minutes. Then bring yourself up to a high intensity until you're working very hard (a 9 on a scale of 1 to 10). Hold that intensity for three minutes. Recover for three minutes. Repeat two more times. Finish your ride at a moderate pace, including a cooldown.

The Benefit: Your max VO₂ is your fitness ceiling. To raise that roof, you need to do lung-searing efforts like these that force your body to find ways to increase oxygen capacity.

Workout 2: Hill Attacks

There are two ways to do this workout. The first way is standard hill repeats: Warm up for 10 to 15 minutes. Then, find a hill that takes about five minutes to climb and ascend it hard, staying at your maximum sustainable pace or threshold (about a 7 effort on a scale of 1 to 10). Descend as you recover for three minutes. Repeat for a total of three to five times and then cool down. Or, take a more organic approach and map a 10- to 15-mile route that includes four to six good climbs. Hit the hills hard and ride moderately between efforts.

The Benefit: You know the mantra: Hills make you stronger. It's true.

Workout 3: Cross the Threshold

Warm up for 10 to 15 minutes. Increase your effort until you hit the point where you're above your comfort zone (about an 8 on your rate of perceived exertion, or RPE), and hold that for five to six minutes. Then back off and ride just below your threshold point (RPE 6) for five minutes. Repeat for a total of three or four times. You should be starting the next above-threshold interval before feeling like you've achieved full recovery. Then cool down.

The Benefit: Your lactate threshold, the point at which your body starts producing more lactate than you can absorb, is your maximum sustainable effort. With a high threshold, you can ride really hard, really long before your legs scream at you to back off. To raise your threshold, you need to get comfortable working above that level.



If You Have More Than an Hour:

Workout 1: Tempo Training

Warm up for about 10 minutes. Increase your effort to a pace where you're working hard but could sustain it for a 40-K race (RPE of about 7 or 8). Hold on for 15 minutes without faltering. Pedal easy to recover for three minutes. Repeat two more times. Cool down. As you become more fit, you can increase the tempo time and decrease the recovery time until you are at tempo for a full hour.

The Benefit: Any rider with two working [crankarms](#) can ride hard—for a while. But successful cyclists not only have the necessary power to climb a hill or bridge a gap, but also can sustain that kind of high-level effort. Tempo intervals train your body to clear lactate at higher intensities so they increase your threshold and boost your sustainable "race pace." An hour or so is all you need.

Workout 2: Adult Recess

Find a few friends who can sneak away (your lunch hour at work is of ideal duration) and practice your [group ride](#) skills, pacelines, and town-sign sprints.

The Benefit: Time spent riding with a small group will hone your balance and riding skills, your drafting ability, and your group race tactics. Plus, it's darn fun.

Workout 2: Steady State

Just as the name implies, steady-state rides maintain a consistent, unwavering effort. Though the overall [intensity](#) is only moderately hard (RPE 6), it is surprisingly difficult for many riders to sustain. Your pace should be such that you're breathing moderately and breaking a sweat, but your legs shouldn't burn. Hold it for the duration of the ride.

The Benefit: Doing steady-state efforts for an hour or more improves your body's ability to tap into stored body fat as a fuel source, which improves endurance by reducing your reliance on stored carbs or glycogen stores, a limited resource. As you get fitter, you'll ride longer and more comfortably without fading or bonking, and your steady-state pace will get faster.





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6 Ironman Rule Changes You Should Know About

Technology is evolving in triathlon, and with it, the rules. In an announcement released by Ironman at the beginning of the season, head referee Jimmy Riccitello outlined new rules for 2017 on disc brakes, cell phones and more. What competitors need to know:

Disc brakes are a go.

Following the lead of the International Triathlon Union ITU, who approved the use of disc brakes for competition in 2016, Ironman will allow road and triathlon bikes equipped with disc bikes at all Ironman and 70.3 events.

Cell phones are allowed on the course—kind of.

Two-way communication devices, such as walkie-talkies and cell phones, have long been banned on the race course. It's been a difficult rule for officials to enforce, especially as more and more athletes use their cell phones for bike/run data or race-day tracking. As a sign of the times, Ironman will now allow cell phones on the course, but that isn't an open invitation to live-tweet your race: athletes using cell phones in a "distractive manner"—in their words, "making and receiving phone calls, sending and receiving text messages, playing music, using social media, taking photographs and mounting the device to a bike for purposes of using the device like a bike computer."—will be disqualified.

Yellow means stop.

If a race official flashes a yellow card at you during the bike, you'll now have to spend a minute in the penalty tent on the bike, or a minute on the spot on the run course. This is different from before, when yellow card penalties required a quick stop-and-go check-in at the tent—a practice that yielded highly variable penalty times based on the number of athletes serving penalties and the volunteers available to record the athlete's information. With the new one-minute rule, Ironman is standardizing the penalty time for all athletes.

Cover up.

Cycling and running with a bare chest is still prohibited. All athletes must wear a shirt, jersey or tri top at all times during the cycling and run portions of the race. This year, Ironman clarifies that rule further by following the ITU standard of "uniforms with a front zipper must not be undone below the point of the end of the breastbone (sternum)." Failure to zip up will result in disqualification.

More options for PC athletes.

For blind and visually impaired athletes competing in the Physically Challenged division, partnering up with a guide will be easier. The unique challenge of locating a guide who is a match both athletically and personally is difficult enough, but the pool historically has been limited further due to a requirement that both guide and athlete must be the same gender. Ironman will lift that requirement in 2017, encouraging visually impaired athletes to find a compatible guide of either gender.

New tools to check cheaters.

In 2016, Ironman CEO Andrew Messick announced officials would begin checking bikes for motors using technologies developed by cycling's governing body, Union Cyclist Internationale (UCI). In 2012, their efforts to combat technological fraud in will be supported by the ITU, according to Riccitello: "We will use the ITU to monitor technological fraud at select Ironman events globally. The ITU has access to the latest technology able to detect the use of motors in bicycle frames or wheels."

The updated 2017 rules for Ironman and 70.3 will take effect March 1, 2017 in Europe, Africa and the Americas. Because race season has already begun in Asia and Oceania, the rules will gradually be rolled out on a race-by-race basis between March and July.

Though the rules are expected to be implemented broadly at all Ironman races, there may still be some subtle rule differences due to local laws or policies at a few Ironman venues. Therefore, athletes should always familiarize themselves with their event's Athlete Information Guide prior to race day and attend the mandatory pre-race meetings.

For more information about Ironman's 2017 rule changes, visit Ironman.com.

Read more at http://www.triathlete.com/2017/02/ironman/6-ironman-rule-changes-know_299072#8BthhwDhIr8Bjxqt.99



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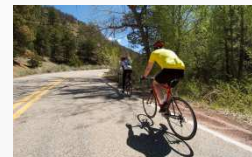
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Your Comprehensive Guide to Faster Climbing

It's one thing to grind your way up a steep climb, body rocking back and forth, bike barely moving forward—or even staying upright. It is another to gracefully ascend into the high mountains, your movements a lesson in fluidity, efficiency, and grace. Indeed, handling truly steep ascents (10 percent gradient or more) requires both fitness and skill. Here are some of the keys to progressing beyond survival mode when climbing.

Spin (More) to Win

Rather than grinding away in a larger gear, shift into an easier gear in order to keep your cadence high. Aim for at least 80 rpm, 90 if you can muster it. For most cyclists, this higher spin rate will lengthen the time before their legs become flushed with momentum-killing lactic acid.



Of course, one's ability to keep the legs churning will be influenced largely by the available gearing on your bike. It used to be that if you wanted to ditch the heavier triple chainring setup, your only alternative was a 53-39 double chainring, which frankly doesn't bode well for going up steep hills. That 39-tooth little ring is too large for most amateur cyclists to spin up really steep hills. But nowadays many, if not most, bikes come stock with 52-36 mid-compact setups, or even 50-34 compact gearing. The smaller little ring allows you to spin that higher cadence. And while you do lose some top-end speed because of the smaller big ring, unless you're a wannabe sprinter this shouldn't be too big a deal.

Practice Standing Up...

When a climb becomes so steep that your cadence drops below 70 rpm, it is time to rise out of the [saddle](#). This allows you to use your upper body to help your legs keep the pedals moving. In order to get comfortable and efficient with this position, use long, gentle hills to practice moving from a seated to standing position. Your seated position should be with hands on the bar tops near the [stem](#). Pull lightly, keeping shoulders and hips square. This keeps your upper body relaxed to reduce energy cost and maximize lung capacity.

Before standing, switch your grip to the [brake](#) lever hoods. Rise and bring your hips forward, straightening and lengthening your lower back and opening your chest. The saddle's nose should just brush the back of your legs. Try not to pull with your arms on easy hills because it taxes your muscles with little return in speed. Let your weight help as you smoothly pull your body over one pedal, then over the other. Pull up on the right hood as you push down with your right foot, alternating right arm/right foot, left arm/left foot. The bike will rock subtly beneath you, establishing a rhythmic powering of the [pedals](#).

...But Sit Down When You Can

Get out of the saddle as much as necessary to [climb hills](#) comfortably, but don't stay standing forever. For most riders, standing is more fatiguing because it uses extra upper-body muscle. Many riders alternate periods of sitting and standing just to mix up the stress on various muscle groups.

Keep Quiet

Your upper body, that is. On steep grades, come up off the saddle and hold your bike as vertical as possible, with minimal sway. It's critical to keep your shoulders squared and facing forward. Don't drop them or create a snaking motion that wastes energy. In order to maintain momentum when [climbing](#) on a steep grade, you need to be rock-solid off the saddle. Many riders don't control their body and bike motion, making climbing a struggle.

Work on being quiet and efficient.

Pull When Necessary

If the grade threatens to rob your momentum completely and you are nearly at a standstill, try pulling back with both hands in unison on each downstroke. This lets you put maximum force into the [pedals](#) to keep the bike moving. Continue until the grade lessens and you can return to a normal climbing technique.

Eat at the Base

Give your body a shot of fuel right before you start your big effort. It's a lot easier to slurp down a gel or take a bite of a bar when you are not completely cross-eyed.

Remember to Pace Yourself

Rather than speeding up, slowing down, and speeding up again, try to find a pace that you can sustain for the entire [climb](#). "It's easier to climb utilizing a constant rhythm than it is to surge and slow, which is more taxing on your body," says Scott Moninger, former pro racer turned coach.

Do Hill Repeats

One of the most common mistakes riders make at hill climb events is going too hard early in the effort and not saving any energy for the finish, says coach Trevor Connor. To avoid this, practice doing hill repeats in the 8- to 10-minute range where your effort is the same every time. "The idea is to teach pacing," says Connor. "The usual pattern is that the person pins it during the first one, then goes progressively slower. I strive to get people to do the efforts within 15 to 20 seconds of each other. This really helps you figure out what your fastest time up a climb would be without blowing up before the finish."

Train for the Effort

If you know that an upcoming event has a five-mile climb that averages eight percent gradient, do your best to replicate that effort in [training](#). Like anything else, practice begets improvement—and doing your best to replicate the climb in training will get your mind and body prepared for how the effort might feel during the event.

And Last but Not Least: Relax!

It's hard to relax when your [heart rate](#) intensifies, your legs are throbbing, and your lungs are burning. But do your best. Keeping your muscles constantly flexed will quickly wear you down. Efficient climbing is a measured effort, where you only want to use the strength and energy necessary to keep your momentum. Gradually, you'll learn to maintain it while staying relaxed and breathing evenly. And don't fret if you can't always keep your proverbial cool. Hauling your bike up truly steep grades is tough no matter what you do.



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Do These 8 Things To Be Faster, Safer, and More Confident in Corners

For a long time petrol heads derided American muscle cars for being great in a straight line and utterly useless when they encountered a corner. European performance cars, they argued, were designed for drivers. They had power for speed but also advanced being skilled and using good judgment. Whether you're a beginner who is timid suspension, steering, and weight distribution for superior handling. Well, cyclists can sometimes be thought of in the same way. Having a huge aerobic engine may enable you to go fast in a straight line, but the ability to get through corners makes you faster in real-world conditions where there are... you know... corners.

Just as being good at descending isn't about bombing downhill at dangerous speeds, being good at cornering isn't about always pushing the limits of traction and physics. It's about in high-speed turns or a veteran who could use a refresher course, use these tips to be fast, safe, and confident in turns:

Focus on the setup

How you enter a turn plays a huge role in the line you're going to take and the exit you're going to have. Ideally, set up wide so you can turn toward the apex of the turn. This isn't always an option, however, based on where you are in a group, so practice cornering from non-ideal approaches as well. Brake before the turn so you enter at a speed you could conceivably maintain through the whole corner. Coming in too hot means exiting wider than you anticipated or scrubbing a lot of valuable speed to stay on the road.

If you're in a pack, back off the wheel ahead

To minimize the impact of the accordion effect on your momentum (the back of the back accordioning into the front as the front brakes for a turn), back off the wheel ahead of you slightly so you have some space to roll into as that rider slows down. It takes practice, but when you get the hang of it you can dramatically reduce your need for hard accelerations out of corners by slowing less going into them. The people around you are braking harder and accelerating harder while you're using the space between riders to maintain momentum. If you're in a competitive field, however, be wary of backing too far off the wheel ahead of you, lest you lose that position to someone looking to move up toward the front!

Corner in the drops

Certainly you can get around turns with your hands on the brake hoods, but if you want to go faster and maximize traction, get in the drops. You're shifting your weight distribution to be more equally split between your wheels, and most important, putting enough weight on your front wheel to avoid sliding out. You're also slightly lowering your center of gravity, which helps with stability.

Focus your weight on your outside foot and inside hand

Your weight on your outside foot, positioned at the 6:00 position, is your traction control. Pressure on the inside hand (the hand toward the inside of the turn) is your steering. A lot of people talk about countersteering and this whole idea of turning left to go right. It works, but I think there's a simpler way to think about it and visualize it. As you're going into the corner with your weight on the outside foot and you start to lean the bike, push your inside hand forward and down into the corner. If you need to adjust your line to be tighter, push harder/further with the inside hand. If you need to adjust your line wider, ease up on the side hand. Your body leans less than the bike to keep your center of mass closer to the tires' contact patches on the ground. You're anchoring your traction with your outside leg and modulating the lean angle of the bike with the pressure applied to the inside arm.

If conditions are wet/slippy, lean less and try to make the arc longer

When roads are wet or you're on sand/gravel, you have less traction. Cornering aggressively (high speed, lots of lean on the bike, tight line) requires a lot of traction, so when things get slippery you have to corner more gingerly. Slow down more before the turn than you would in dry/clean conditions. Keep the bike more upright. Make the arc of the turn longer/wider so you're changing direction over a greater distance. Basically, you're trying to avoid sudden movements like dramatic steering or diving into the apex.

Look through the turn, not at it

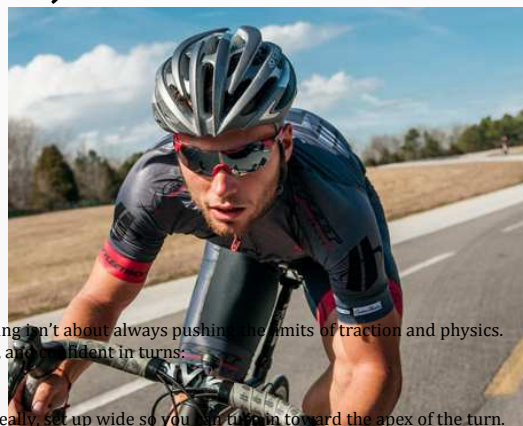
See that hole in the middle of the corner? If you keep your eyes on it that's exactly where you're going. Notice where it is as you come into the turn and then look beyond it to where you want to go. It's the same idea as looking farther ahead in a group or paceline rather than at the wheel ahead of you, or looking at a point far away while trying to walk a straight line.

Relax

Over the years I've noticed that riders who are more stressed out (about riding/racing or about lifestyle stresses) are squirrellier in corners. I've noticed it about myself at times! When I talk with athletes about it, a common thread often relates to vision or where they're looking. When you're stressed your field of vision and focus tends to be close in. When you're relaxed you're able to extend your focus forward, through the turns, down the trail, past the immediate obstacle.

Coast Less, Pedal More

CTS Athlete Rebecca Rusch (winner of multiple World Championships, Leadville 100 titles, and Dirty Kanza 200 titles), who is coached by Dean Golich, once mentioned that a key for her to get faster on a mountain bike was learning to pedal more. The pedaling in mountain biking is often more intermittent compared to road cycling, but by focusing on pedaling more in places she would have previously coasted, she went faster overall. For road cyclists the scenario applies more to cornering. Coasting through a corner is often necessary, but if you can pedal longer before you start coasting as you enter a turn (learn to go in with more speed as you get more comfortable cornering at speed) and start pedaling again sooner on the exit, you'll go faster.





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Why Calorie Counting Doesn't Work For Everyone—And What You Should Do Instead

Even if you literally know nothing about losing weight, you've probably heard that counting calories is a thing people use to do it. While keeping track of your calories to get an estimate of exactly how much you're eating and whether your favorite foods are keeping you from reaching your weight-loss goal (can someone get on making calorie-free wine?!), there are some serious flaws with this method of dieting, says Michelle May, M.D.

Truth: No weight loss method works for everyone. And if you're thinking about taking the calorie tracking approach to drop a few pounds it's definitely worth looking into the downsides before diving in headfirst.

Here's why counting calories might not help you reach your weight loss goals and what to do instead.



You Lose Track Of Your Hunger Cues

When you're counting calories, you're sticking with a pre-prescribed amount of food per day (i.e. a calorie budget). May says this can result in not eating when you're hungry in order to fit that cupcake into your allotted calories per day or eating even though you feel satiated so that you don't 'lose out' on those calories. "This can lead to a preoccupation with food, disordered eating, orthorexia, compulsive exercising, and bingeing," says May.

The fix: A better way to get in touch with your calorie needs is to ask yourself if you're hungry and look for the signs. Physical symptoms of hunger can include obvious hunger pangs, stomach growling, and an empty or hollow feeling, or subtler signs, like loss of energy, difficulty concentrating, and irritability, says May. And when you do eat, make sure you do so slowly and check in with yourself throughout the meal to notice when you're becoming full, says May. Make it your goal to finish eating when you feel good, not stuffed.

It Won't Solve Emotional Eating

Although substituting celery sticks for potato chips as your go-to stress food may decrease calories, trading one food for another doesn't help you break the habit of emotional eating in the first place, May says. "When the diet is over, you will go back to eating potato chips when you're stressed."

The fix: Instead of swapping a [healthy food](#) for your Flamin' Hots when you're stressed, bored, or tired, figure out what you're trying to achieve when you grab your trigger food of choice, says May. Then, find healthier ways of addressing it. For example, if you find that stress is the catalyst, May suggests a hot bath, watching a funny video, or going on a walk with friends. (Speed up your progress towards your weight-loss goals with *Women's Health's* [Look Better Naked](#) DVD.)

It Makes You Miss Pizza And Donuts

Putting pancakes on a pedestal is not good for your weight loss plan. In fact, May says that counting calories makes us perceive high-calorie foods that are off limits as more valuable, making us feel deprived. "When you finally give in, you feel guilty and out of control for eating your favorite foods, leading you to give up the diet and even binge on the foods you've been missing," says May.

The fix: She says it's possible to incorporate your favorite high-calorie foods into your diet and still [lose weight](#). "When you don't deprive yourself of foods you love, you are less likely to overeat them," she says. Obviously, this doesn't mean going balls to the wall when cake shows up at your office or it's pizza night on Friday. The best way to embrace the foods you love most is to eat them mindfully, savoring each bite without distraction (like TV) or guilt. When you hone in on the food you enjoy eating, you become satisfied and stop eating sooner.

It Turns Exercise Into Punishment

One common component to a calorie-counting weight loss plan is the ability to "earn" more calories per day if you work out, depending on the type and duration of the workout. But May says that incorporating exercise that way isn't healthy. "This essentially turns exercise into punishment for eating," she says, "creating a negative association with physical activity." Plus, you might skip out on your favorite hatha yoga class in favor of boot camp because it burns more calories, which can keep you from actually enjoying exercise.

The fix: There's no shortage of studies that show just how important developing a regular [workout routine](#) is for your overall health. So May recommends figuring out what type of physical activities you really enjoy doing (regardless of how many calories they burn) and weaving them into your routine. You're more likely to stick with it if there are positive feelings surrounding it, she says.



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INFINITE MULTISPORT

FURTHERING THE SPORT OF TRIATHLON

It starts with you

How To Turn Injury Setback Into A Step Forward

How to time to pause and reflect. Evaluate your yearly training plan, prioritise, and adjust as necessary. Using an injury to make good decisions for the future is part of growing as an athlete.

Nailing Your Core Diet

Evaluating your core diet during injury can help you optimise your eating habits. A healthy daily diet keeps your body fuelled appropriately for training and helps your body repair. Checking in with your fuelling program to ensure your nutrition program is optimised will help you maintain a healthy weight and optimise your recovery from injury. When you are injured, your body will tell you what it needs to recover. Tuning into your body's needs will result in more optimal fuelling when you return to racing, which is key to triathlon success.

Cultivating Balance

It is not healthy to have a wide void in your life when you are sidelined from sport. Training for triathlon is time consuming, but there should always be other important things in your life while you are pursuing your goals. Having other interests helps keep your perspective, through good and bad races, and can help prevent burnout. Athletes often underestimate how much recovery is really necessary from training for triathlon, especially full-distance Ironman events, which create enormous nervous system fatigue. Finding balance with quiet, non-active pursuits, injured or not, is important. Making room for non-triathlon activities and stillness, in a life full of the rigours of training and racing helps you find that extra edge for great performances.

Logging The Process

Learning as much as you can about your body, and the signals it is giving you through an injury, is crucial for understanding what your body is telling you. Use your training diary or online account to record the details of your recovery, just as you do for training. Log rehabilitation exercises, strength training, mental training, how you feel, and anything else that is relevant to recovery. This information will be useful to inform your decisions in the future and will make you a better athlete.

Employing a positive attitude, working on a single sport focus, evaluating your program, overhauling your diet, balancing your interests, and logging the process are steps to turn an injury into an opportunity. There is no need to look at an injury as a setback if you immediately get to work turning it into a step forward.

9 Embarrassing Bike Buying Questions, Answered

Make sure you're picking the right bike by asking these crucial questions while shopping

If the salesperson you're buying from makes you feel silly for asking questions, consider taking your business elsewhere. "The store should make you feel comfortable," says Steve Beheler, operations manager for [Spokes Etc.](#), a Virginia-based chain of bicycle shops. Look for a retailer where the salespeople encourage you to ask questions. Then lob both your softball and hardball at them.

If you're not sure what to ask, reference this list of nine questions for every buyer—from the cyclist purchasing an [entry-level commuter](#) to the enthusiast picking up a \$6,000 speed machine.

Do I know what I want to use this bike for?

Okay, you need to ask this of yourself, not the salesperson. But Emily Bremer, the women's marketing manager for Trek Bikes, stresses that this is probably the most important thing to sort out before you begin your search. "Think about what you want versus what you need," she says, adding that the two may be pretty different—you definitely don't need [carbon wheels](#) to join in on the local punchy group ride, even if you'd like to have them. Conversely, to join in on that same ride, you'll need a [road bike](#), even though you might not want to pony up the cost of one. Most importantly, think about what you're going to do the most with the bike and what kind of riding you have nearby.

Do I even need to buy a bike at a bike shop?

You can buy anything on the Internet these days: granulated fox urine, tinfoil hats, and gourmet, food-grade crickets, to name a few. Of course, that means you can also purchase your new bike with the click of a button. But just because you can doesn't mean you should (looking at you, guy thinking about stocking up on the fox urine).

When you buy a bike from an authorized retailer, you know that the bike was assembled by a professional mechanic, and you begin to build a rapport with that shop—a great way to find out about new routes or group rides or maintenance clinics and events. You also ensure you're not getting a [counterfeit product](#), which is a continuing problem in the bike industry.

Even if you're not planning on [buying a bike online](#), buying from a shop can still have benefits. Shop bikes generally include some sort of warranty on the frame and components—something you won't get at a big box superstore or when [buying a used bike](#).

RELATED: [How to Buy a Bike for \\$1,000 or Less](#)

Can I ask for a discount?

"You can always ask," says Beheler, but margins on bikes are anemic at best, so be prepared for rejection. However, he says shops are often willing to give discounts on accessories, especially when purchased in tandem with a bike.

Oh, and no, the bike shop probably doesn't want to sponsor your next race season. "Not even a super awesome Cat. 1 rider should just assume a discount is appropriate for them personally," says Adrian Flores, the general manager of Austinbikes Service Station, in Austin, Texas. Flores adds that discounts are often earned not by talent but by loyal patronage.

Can I take a test ride?

"Definitely take a test ride—it will validate a credible salesperson's recommendation," says Beheler. In fact, if a bike shop won't let you take the bike for a quick spin, you should probably shop elsewhere. "Make sure they show you how all the features on the bike work—including the shifting and the brakes," says Beheler.

How do I know if a bike fits me?

This can be hard intel to gather from a 10-minute test ride, so you'll need to go with your gut and what your salesperson is suggesting (see above about finding a salesperson you trust). "Mainly you shouldn't be hyper-extended trying to reach your handlebars," says Bremer. If you're unsure of whether you're reaching too far, ask to test the same bike in the next size up and down. Comparison will make it clearer which one fits best.

You'll likely end up spending hours on your bike, so you want to [feel](#) You'll likely end up spending hours on your bike, so you want to [feel comfortable riding](#). Nothing should feel awkward right off the bat—except for maybe your saddle. "Most saddles are a little uncomfortable at first, especially if you haven't been riding at all," says Bremer. One last question worth asking is whether your bike comes with any sort of fitting, and whether the shop will swap out parts on your bike to ensure you get the perfect fit—some will, but others won't.

Do I have to buy a gender-specific bike? What's the difference?

No, you definitely don't. It's probably worth learning about them, though. "What makes a women's specific bike different varies from brand to brand," says Bremer. Some brands use different carbon thicknesses throughout the frame to make lighter, more compliant bikes, while others tweak features to include things like a shorter reach to the handlebars, narrower handlebars, and [women's-specific saddles](#). "There are benefits to it, but it the geometry of the bikes doesn't apply to all women," says Bremer

Furthermore, sometimes women-specific products actually work better for men. "It's pretty rare but it does happen," says Beheler. So if your salesperson suggests you try a bike that's not marketed towards your gender, don't be offended—they just want to make sure you're getting the [best bike fit](#).

RELATED: [Why Men Should Try Women's Bikes](#)

How many bikes should I test ride?

Beheler says you should ride at least two or three, but avoid the trap of trying every bike within a 100-mile radius. "If someone rides 10 bikes, it gets more confusing than anything else," he says.

Can I ask my bike shop to install a kickstand? What about accessories I bought online?

"If the bike can physically accommodate a kickstand, we'll put it on—or anything else you want—on," says Beheler. While most hybrid and urban bikes can fit a kickstand, road and mountain models are generally a different story—ask your mechanic what the best way to lean them is. As for those accessories you ordered from Amazon, most shops will install them without issue, but you should expect to pay a fee to have them put on.

If you want to have a professional fit or a tune-up done on a bike you bought online, that's okay too. "It's encouraged to find a great fit for your bicycle, whether you buy it online, used from another person, or in the store. Find a fit-person you trust, and expect to pay for the services," says Flores.

Do bikes come with a warranty or included maintenance?

It varies. You should think of your purchase as the beginning of a long (and hopefully happy) relationship with your [local bike shop](#). This means you'll probably bring your bike in a few times a year for servicing and repairs. Some shops include a level of service with the purchase of a bike; you should ask about your shop's policy. You should also find out what the manufacturer's warranty covers. Often frames are covered "under normal use" which doesn't include damage from crashes. Finally, ask about whether the shop will help you navigate the warranty process or whether you'll be on your own.



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IRONMAN LEVEL:



Located at 34501 Ullica Rd, just south of 15 Mile and the two new locations at: 6111 N. Canton Center Road, Canton, MI 48187 and 3162 Packard Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48108.

Fraser Bicycle and Fitness is a premier shop for triathlon related bikes, gear, clothing, etc... Use your membership card to enjoy 10% off retail Parts and Accessories and 5% off retail bikes. (586) 294-4070 or online at



Hanson's Running Shop offers expert advice and a wide selection of running shoes and other gear. Use your membership card to enjoy 10% off all purchases. Four locations throughout metro Detroit: Lake Orion, Royal Oak, Grosse Pointe, and UBCA. www.hansons-running.com

HALF IRONMAN LEVEL:



Tri To Finish was founded by two athletes with a single goal in mind: Bring professionally run race events to the Midwest. Their goal is to set the standard for race management by scrutinizing the details and emphasizing the importance of each racer's experience and they pride themselves in being able to deliver safe, fun and memorable events. Whether you are a veteran athlete or you are looking for your first event, Tri To Finish has a race for you. IMTC members enjoy 10% off race entries with

<http://trifinish.com/>



Rudy Project offers top of the line gear for cycling and triathlon. Bike helmets, aero helmets, sunglasses, gear bags, and apparel. Discounts from 30-50% off everything they offer. www.r-rudy.com



Back to the Beach Races have been a wonderful partner to IMTC. Now in its 5th year, Back to the Beach is continuing its tradition of giving back to the community. In 2014 the race was able to donate over \$25,000 back to local charities and is looking to do that much again in 2015. Club members receive a 15% discount on race entries until March 31st, 2015. www.backtothebeachraces.com

OLYMPIC LEVEL:

Aquaman.

Aquaman is the longest standing manufacturer of Triathlon Wetsuits and has been doing it since 1983, beginning in France. Aquaman makes wetsuits with top resources and the quality and comfort of their wetsuits is one of the best on the market. Club members receive 30% off wetsuits and 85% off Speedsuits and Accessories. Visit www.aquamanusa.com



HUUB's aim is to create better products combining research, science and reality. HUUB has four decades of experience gained in the field of endurance sports. Focusing wholly on the athlete and maintaining performance and comfort, HUUB will explore both the old and the conventional to create the best. Learn more at www.huubdesign.com Club members use this code in your member folder to enjoy 50% off Wetsuits, SwimSkins and accessories at www.endurance.com



X-Terra offers one of the best products in the industry and stands behind it. They offer a 2 year warranty on every suit, 30 day exchange policy and 30 day return policy, and they also have a rental program. Members enjoy 60% off retail on all Vector and Vortex wetsuits and swim skins. The top of the line Vendetta suit is rarely discounted, but when they do, all members will be notified. Visit <http://www.xterrausa.com/pages/club-members-coaches>



Enjoy 85% off everything in the store (except shoes) and 25% off all Moosejaw branded items. Seven stores across Metro Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Lansing. Good in store only. www.moosejaw.com for locations.



Serving Michigan cyclists since 1928, with six stores throughout Metro-Detroit, American Cycle and Fitness offers IMTC Members 10% off retail on bike purchases and 20% off retail on all Accessories purchases. American Cycle has a code in their system which will allow for the discount at all stores at the time of purchase, just show your membership card at checkout. www.americancyclistusa.com



Tweak provides unparalleled technical coaching for all swimmers and triathletes. Located in Birmingham, Michigan, Tweak provides a vast array of multi sport services, specializing in underwater swim stroke analysis. We have proudly coached swimmers and triathletes of all ages and abilities to greatly improved performances, including USA National and Olympic Trial Qualifiers www.tweakathletics.com 10% off all services with your member card.

SPRINT LEVEL:



www.epicraces.com Epic Race is one of the top race companies in the country. With numerous races across the country Epic Race has become a leader in producing high quality triathlon events ranging from Sprint to Full Iron distance races, all with Aquaflex options. Tri Club members enjoy 10% off all races.



www.epicraces.com Epic Race professionally manages safe and eco-friendly multi sport and endurance events that appeal to beginner through elite athletes and showcase the resources and beauty of Michigan. For 2015 Epic Race is offering IMTC members a 10% discount on races, as well as group discount options as well.



Two locations in Birmingham and Rochester Hills, offering bike tune ups, Speedcheck, New, Santa Cruz, and more. Also offering 10% off technology to track your position. 25% off all parts and accessories. 50% off all labor. 20% off all labor and services. www.klmusa.com



Bicycle Mile has partnered with IMTC since 2010. While members do not receive a direct discount at Bicycle Mile, they do provide us with one of the best rates here of rest. For more information regarding "The Mile" check out www.bicylemile.com



www.repsport.com Exclusive distributor of "Swim It". Designed for your peace of mind and safety in open water for beginner and experienced triathletes. Group rates at discount.



www.xceleration.com Xceleration Fitness located in Auburn Hills is committed to helping IMTC members to any way and understands that it is tough for us to commit to another gym, more training, etc... but also knows the size of strength and cardio they offer will benefit any athlete. Run Triathlon to group IMTC members a 20 use punch card for \$100.00, no expiration, no monthly commitment. If you are interested get in touch with Xceleration directly and use your current member card to purchase punch cards.



Honey Stinger makes nutritious and great tasting honey based foods including energy bars, protein bars, energy gels, organic waffles, and organic chews. Fueling more than just the country's top cyclists, runners, triathletes and swimmers, Honey Stinger products may be found at specialty sporting goods retailers, natural food grocers and www.honestinger.com. Club members receive 37% discount toward all products. Discount code can be found in your membership letter.



<http://www.detroittriathlon.com> The inaugural 2008 Detroit Triathlon, is a triathlon like no other in the region. Providing a day long festival of racing opportunities for athletes of all abilities. Age groups will have and opportunity to race like the pros, and talent from the country will descend on Detroit to give a chance to earn their USA Tri Cards. IMTC Members enjoy a 15% Discount.



www.greatracenutrition.com Great Race Nutrition is a triathlon nutrition store. Their selection of all nutrition products at one site. 15% off everything. Extra "access" at checkout and the discount will be applied.



Gra's yellow card at one of the club meetings to enjoy 10% off everything. Durham's will also provide members a weekend in October with 20% off most items in the store. www.durhamsports.com



www.finis.com Founded by Olympic Gold Medalist, Pablo Morales, Finis provides high quality and creative technical products to the swimming world. Finis has worked continuously since the past 15 years with coaches and swimmers to create products that optimize training and competitive performance. Extra "access" in the "swimperformance" code" last during checkout for 20% off everything in the store.



Running Warehouse is a triathlon triathlon specialty store. The store connects with runners like you who care about their sport. If you're looking for the latest products to help you perform at peak levels, chances are very good that we have them. The store's sales staff is ready to help you with the gear of offering only those products that will benefit athletes, triathletes, and people who share a passion for the sport of running. Current Tri Club members use the following code for 15% off. 0000000



www.rockcf.com Rock CF triathlon is an annual Tri Club favorite. Taking place in Mid-Michigan on beautiful Grosse Ile and led by Emily Schaller. The Rock CF Foundation is dedicated to increasing the quality of life for people with Cystic Fibrosis. Club members enjoy discounted race entry.

