
A PT'S COMPLETE GUIDE TO FITNESS INDUSTRY JARGON



Whether you're straight out of school or changing your career path, working in the fitness industry is full of endless opportunity! But, getting started in any new industry can be a daunting prospect. Let alone one that almost seems like it's got its own language. You might already be familiar with typical 'gym speak' but, during your PT training, you're probably going to come across some terms you're not familiar with. This will be especially true if English isn't your first language.

Don't ignorantly think someone's been drinking a lot of green stuff if you hear they're 'on the juice'. Start prepping for class and the workforce by familiarizing yourself with common terms with this complete guide to fitness industry jargon.

JARGON TO DESCRIBE EXERCISE EQUIPMENT



DB
Dumbbell

KB
Kettlebell

BB
Barbell

Collar or clip
The device used to safely secure the weights on the end of a barbell.

GHD
Glute hamstring developer

Free weights
This includes any type of weight used for resistance training where the movement pattern isn't guided by a machine. It includes dumbbells, barbells and kettlebells and requires greater muscle engagement than using weight machines does.

Cable machine
A weight machine where users pull handles attached to cables to move the resistance.

C2
Concept 2 rower. A brand of rowing machine that's used at most CrossFit and commercial gyms. Often used to refer to the act of rowing.

SPECIFIC EXERCISE JARGON

SQ

Squat

BSQ or BS

Back squat

FSQ or FS

Front squat

DL

Deadlift

BP

Bench press

SP

Shoulder press

MP

Military or strict press

PP

Push press

CU

Chin up

PU

Pull up or a push up

C2B or CTB

Chest to bar pull ups

HRPU

Hand release push up

HSPU

Hand stand push up

CLN

Clean

PC

Power clean

C&J

Clean and jerk

SJ

Split jerk

SN

Snatch

T2B or TTB

Toes to bar. An abdominal exercise where the feet are pulled up to the hands when hanging from a bar.

K2E

Knees to elbows. An easier version of T2B.

DU's

Double unders. A type of skipping where the rope passes under the feet twice per jump.

GHR

Glute hamstring raise

MU

Muscle up

OH

Short for overhead. Often used as an add-on to other movements e.g. OH SQ, OHS or overhead squat or OH lunge where weight is held above the head with straight arms while squatting.

TGU

Turkish get up

HP

High pull. Often used in combination with other movements e.g. SDHP = sumo deadlift high pull or CLNHP = clean high pull.

Kipping

A fluid style of completing movements such as pull ups and muscle ups that involves using a controlled swinging motion to create momentum to propel the body over the bar.

Thruster

An exercise that fluidly links the movements of a front squat and an overhead press.

Wall balls

An exercise that involves throwing a weighted ball at a target on a wall, catching it and repeating.

Pistols

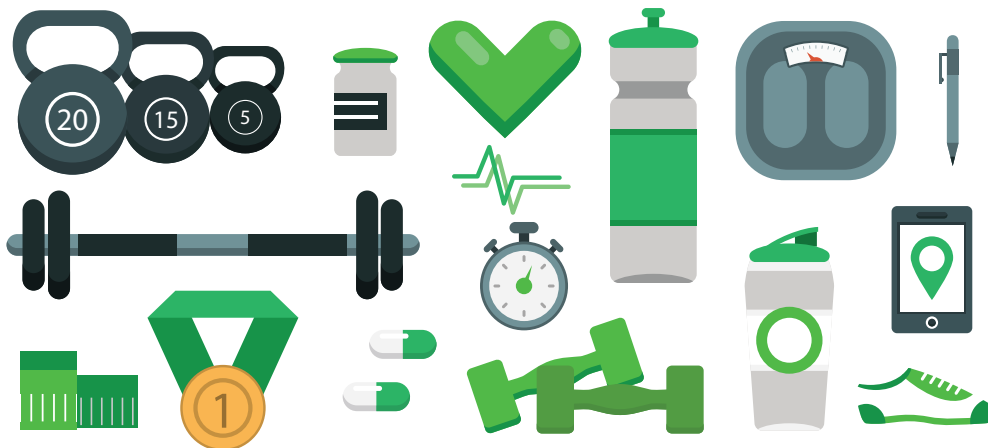
A squat variation that involves only one leg.

Good mornings

An exercise that involves bending at the waist while keeping the back flat. It can be done with or without weights.

Hollow rock

A gymnastics style abdominal exercise that involves holding the abs tight with the arms and legs extended straight while gently rocking back and forth.



JARGON USED TO DESCRIBE WORKOUTS

Rep

Short for repetitions which refers to the number of times a movement is completed.

Set – Refers to a group of reps completed without break e.g. 3 sets of 12 reps.

Super set

Alternately completing two exercises back to back with little to no break. For example, completing a set of shoulder press then lateral raises while your shoulders recover for a total of 3 sets. They're a great way to add volume and intensity to a program without increasing time.

Pyramid sets

Refers to the pattern of increasing and/or decreasing the number of reps in each set e.g. a set of 12 then 10, 8, 6 and 4 reps designed to fatigue muscles.

Drop sets

A muscle building technique where a set of an exercise is completed and then the weight is reduced to allow you to continue completing reps until failure.

Resistance

Refers to the weight your muscles are moving e.g. your bodyweight or a heavy dumbbell you're lifting.

BW

Short for body weight. It's used to proportion the weight lifted to the size of the person lifting it e.g. 1xBW squat means 1 squat holding your bodyweight in resistance.

Tempo

Used to describe the speed at which a movement should be performed. It's usually stated in seconds. 1:3 means 1 second down and 3 seconds up.

Volume

The total amount of resistance exercise completed. This is usually calculated by multiplying the weight moved by the number of reps and sets completed. It's most commonly used to ensure that the amount of exercise being done is conducive to strength or muscle building.

TnG

Touch and go. An instruction to complete all reps without any pause.

UB

Unbroken. An instruction to complete all reps without a break. There's often a penalty for if the reps are broken e.g. starting from the beginning.



JARGON USED TO DESCRIBE EXERCISE INTENSITY

RPE

Stands for rate of perceived exertion which ranks intensity between 1 and 10. It's an easy way to tell a client how hard you expect them to work and enables them to give feedback on what they're finding easy or challenging.

Heart rate zones

These zones set a personalised target based on a percentage of your maximum heart rate. They can be used to indicate how hard to work based on your goals but they're also a reliable measure of how hard your clients are working.

1RM or One rep max

The maximum amount of weight that can be lifted for a single repetition. It's used as a benchmark indicator of strength. 3RM and 5RM's are also common although the term can be used to describe any number of repetitions.

RM

Repetition maximum. The maximum number of reps you can lift a set amount of weight.

ME

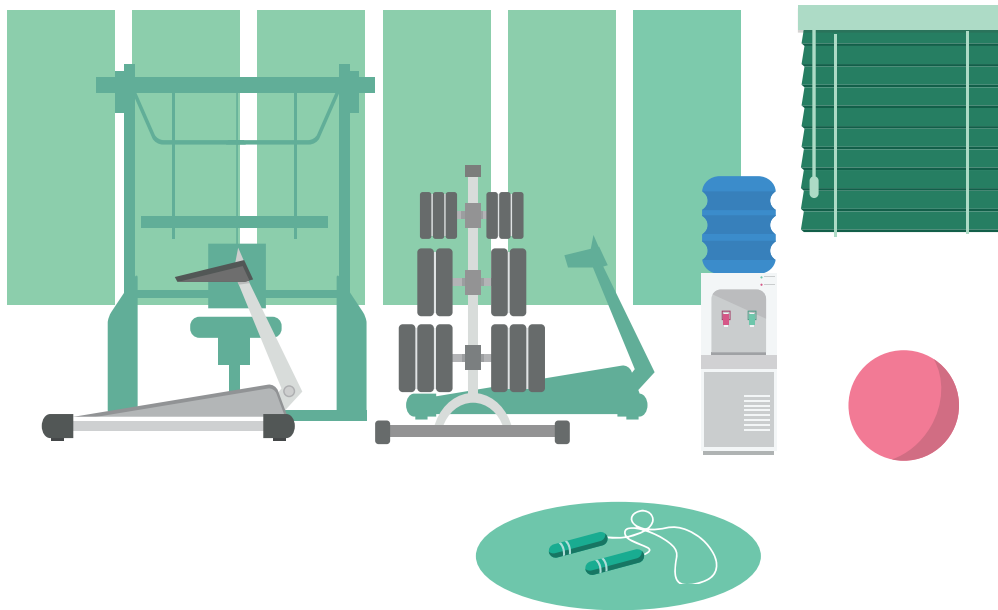
Maximum effort to prescribe an all-out effort for the set amount of time or reps prescribed.

Scaled

Used to indicate that an easier version of the movement can be substituted if it's too difficult to be completed with proper form. This may be by using a lighter weight or an earlier progression of the movement e.g. assisted pullups instead of strict pull ups.

Failure

This involves performing an exercise until you can no longer continue without a break. Working until failure is often used to build strength and muscle mass.



JARGON YOU'LL HEAR IN THE GYM

Globo gym

A term that's often used by CrossFitters to describe large, commercial gyms.

Newbie

Someone who's new to exercise. The term may also be used in the context of 'newbie gains' whereby faster gains are often made when starting out.

Ripped

Used to describe someone with very low body fat and defined muscles.

Cut

Refers to the sharp lines that create muscular definition in someone with low body fat.

Bulking

The practice of trying to build muscle mass that's often done without worrying about also gaining excess body fat.

Cutting

the practice of trying to reduce body fat, usually after a period of muscle building.

Jacked

Used to describe people who have a lot of muscle.

Juice

Slang word for steroids e.g. "they're on the juice".
Pump – This term describes what happens when muscles fill with glycogen and water and is usually from resistance training. It makes the muscles look larger than normal and feel tight to touch.

Spot

A spot is someone who assists another person to complete an exercise safely by being prepared to lift some of the weight if the exerciser is unable to do so due to fatigue.



CROSSFIT JARGON

CF

CrossFit

CrossFitter

Someone who trains using the CrossFit methodology.

Box

A CrossFit gym that's named as such because it's often an almost empty room containing just the basic amount of equipment and pull up bars.

AMRAP

As many repetitions or rounds as possible. Typically given with a set time frame to complete the work.

The girls

A set of standardised benchmark CrossFit workouts that are used to universally measure an athlete's performance and/or progress over time.

Hero workout

A benchmark workout that's usually longer in duration and named after a fallen military member of first-responder in honour of their memory.

RX

As prescribed. Refers to the suggested parameters of an exercise e.g. non-scaled movements and/or a recommended weight to be used.

The games

Refers to the CrossFit Games, an annual international competition.

Paleo

The Palaeolithic diet that's often recommended within the CrossFit community. It involves eating the whole foods that were presumably eaten by our early ancestors.

The Zone

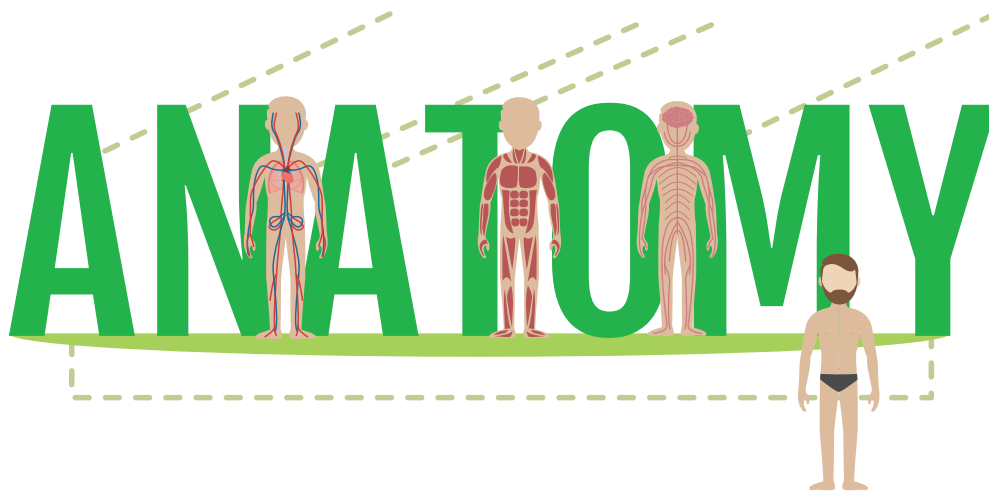
A diet that's often recommended within the CrossFit community. It involves eating a ratio of 40% carbs to 30% protein and 30% fat with each meal.

Pood (PD)

The original unit used to measure the weight of kettlebells. 1 pood is equal to 35 pounds.

Pukie

A cartoon clown that's pushed so hard he's thrown up during a workout. Also often used to refer to a bucket kept in most CrossFit gyms in case of vomiting.



JARGON RELATED TO ANATOMY

Pecs

The pectoral muscles of the chest.

Lats

Latissimus dorsi, the muscle that runs from your shoulder down the outside of your back.

Traps

The trapezius muscle which run across your neck, shoulders and upper back.

Delts

The deltoid muscles of the shoulder.

Tri's

Triceps, the muscle that runs down the back of your upper arm.

Bi's

Biceps, the muscle that runs down the front of your upper arm.

Quads

Quadriceps, the large muscle that runs down the front of your thighs.

Hammies

Short for the hamstrings, the large muscle that runs down the back of your thighs.

Glutes

Short for the gluteal muscle of the buttocks.

Torso

The trunk of the body excluding the head, arms and legs.

Core

The entire torso. However, exercising the core usually refers the full set of abdominal and lower back muscles including the transverse abdominals, pelvic floor, diaphragm and erector spinae. Some people may incorrectly use the word to refer solely to the '6-pack muscles' and the obliques.

Pelvic floor

One of the abdominal muscles that's attached to the pelvic bone, holds the organs in place and prevents incontinence.

The midline

Refers to the complete muscles of the core including the abdominals and lower back. Often used in the context of 'stabilise the midline' when instructing a client to contract the core muscles for safety, proper form and improved balance.



JARGON RELATED TO TRAINING STYLES

Aerobic exercise

Any type of exercise where your body uses oxygen to move over an extended period of time. It's often thought of as traditional, steady-state cardio like walking, running or cycling and helps to improve fitness and endurance.

Anaerobic exercise

Any movement that can be completed without the use of oxygen. They're generally short and fast such as a 50 metre sprint and are used to improve speed and power although they're great for fitness too.

Strength training

Any type of training that uses resistance to work your muscles. It could be your own bodyweight, dumbbells, kettlebells, barbells, resistance bands, etc. While there's numerous benefits, strength training is usually done to increase muscle mass and improve strength.

Plyometrics

Plyometric exercises (or jump training) involve fast, high-intensity movements that use the fast twitch muscles to exert a large amount of force. It includes exercises like jump lunges, burpees and box jumps and are a great way to improve fitness and burn calories while increasing power and speed.

Isometrics

Any exercise that requires a position to be held and maintained with proper form for a set amount of time. Isometric exercises like planks and wall sits are great to build strength and stability.

Calisthenics

A popular type of training that uses bodyweight to increase muscle mass and improve strength.

Cross-training

Combining different types of training methods into a single program to create a balanced plan that addresses multiple aspects of fitness e.g. using yoga to increase flexibility and HIIT to increase speed when training for a running event.

Recovery session

A light workout that's designed to relieve muscle soreness, improve flexibility and speed up recovery.

Active recovery

This term refers to 'rest' days that incorporate low-intensity activity to improve circulation to speed up recovery and reduce DOMS. Examples include walking and yoga. It's also useful for anyone who's trying to lose weight and/or change their lifestyle by encouraging general activity.



JARGON RELATED TO WORKOUT TYPES

WOD

Workout of the day. A CrossFit blanket term used to refer to a set daily workout. The term is now being used outside of CrossFit gyms.

Boot camp

A common style of group training that evolved from the military and consists of cardiovascular and strength exercises. They're often focused on improving strength, fitness and weight loss and use bodyweight, sandbags or kettlebells.

Circuit

A workout that consists of rotating sets of exercises. The duration of each exercise could be based on a set amount of time or completing a set number of reps before moving on with minimal rest.

HIIT

Stands for high-intensity interval training. HIIT uses short bursts of intense activity, alternated with shorter recovery periods to improve cardiovascular fitness and burn a high number of calories in a short amount of time. It can be applied to almost any movement such as sprint training or resistance exercises.

MetCon

Metabolic conditioning. Any exercise/exercises performed at high intensity with the purpose of improving the storage and delivery of energy.

Tabata

This type of HIIT involves working at high intensity for 20 seconds then resting for 10 seconds before continuing for a total of 8 rounds or 4 minutes. It's a great way to build cardiovascular fitness and burn a substantial number of calories in a short time.

Chipper

A style of workout where you complete a lot of reps of a few movements by 'chipping' away at them until complete.

EMOM

Every minute on the minute. Refers to completing a set number of reps and/or exercises starting on the minute. Once complete, you can rest for the remainder of the minute. It may also be written as E2MOM, E3MOM, etc. where it refers to a longer cycle e.g. 2 minutes or 3 minutes.

MOB WOD

Mobility workout of the day. Designed to improve flexibility and practice safe movement patterns.

JARGON RELATED TO MOVEMENT TYPES

Eccentric contraction

The movement of a muscle as it lengthens under load e.g. lowering a dumbbell back down during a bicep curl.

Concentric contraction

The movement of a muscle as it shortens under load e.g. raising a dumbbell during a bicep curl.

Isometric contraction

Refers to any time that a muscle is contracted with little or no movement e.g. the quadriceps are isometrically contracted while holding a wall squat.

Form

The correct way to perform an exercise.

ROM

Short for 'range of motion', this refers to the maximum amount of movement that occurs around a joint and usually prescribes proper exercise form.

Compound movement

Any type of exercise that uses more than one muscle group e.g. squats, deadlifts and cleans. These movements burn more calories and are a great way to improve strength and muscle mass because they recruit more muscles than isolation exercises do.

Isolation movement

Any type of exercise that places emphasis on a single muscle through the movement of a single joint e.g. bicep curls. They're ideal for strengthening or shaping a particular area and are often used in bodybuilding style workouts.

Functional movement

These exercises mimic everyday movements to make general life easier. They're often focused on increasing strength and range of motion and are an ideal way to form work-related exercise schedules.

Negatives

This type of training involves slowing down the eccentric part of a movement to build muscle mass and strength. For example, a negative pull-up involves raising your chin over the bar quickly then lowering your body slowly to the ground.

Static stretching

This type of stretch holds a muscle just past its natural maximum range of motion for 10-30 seconds to improve flexibility.

Dynamic stretching

This type of stretching involves moving your muscles through full range of motion to lengthen the muscle without holding it in place. Leg swings and walking lunges are both examples and are thought to be a better way to warm up as they increase power and range of motion to prepare the body for movement.

Dynamic warm-up

A short routine completed before exercising to increase the heart rate while practicing movements and increasing range of motion. Dynamic stretches are often included as are slow cardiovascular movements.

Foam rolling

This type of massage is performed by an individual by carefully moving their muscles over a foam roller to release tension and improve mobility.

Movement skills

Exercises that are designed to increase movement efficiency by improving range of motion, targeting muscle strength and/or improving power and speed. They're often incorporated into a warm-up to maximise the benefit of the rest of the training session.

Corrective exercises

These purposeful exercises aim to increase mobility and strengthen targeted weak spots to improve movement efficiency, reduce pain and risk of injury.





OTHER COMMON FITNESS JARGON

DOMS

Stands for delayed onset muscle soreness and is the soreness that occurs 24 to 72 hours after a new or difficult workout as damaged muscle fibres begin to recover.

PB

Short for 'personal best', a PB can be a one rep max, a best time or a maximum number of repetitions completed in a set amount of time. They're useful to measure progress.

PR

Personal record.

Body composition

A ratio measure of fat to muscle.

Lean mass

The total amount of muscle mass somebody has. This is significant as it affects the BMR.

Muscular imbalance

The situation when one muscle is stronger than its opposing muscle e.g. the quads are very strong while the hammys are weak. This can cause incorrect movement patterns and increase the risk of injury.

BMR

Stands for basal metabolic rate which is the number of calories your body would burn over a 24-hour period if it was at rest.

TDEE

Stands for total daily energy expenditure. This is the total calories a person burns during a 24-hour period and includes their BMR plus all exercise and incidental activity.

Rhabdo or Uncle Rhabdo

Short for rhabdomyolysis, a rare but very serious condition where muscle fibre rapidly breaks down and is released into the bloodstream. While there are a number of causes, it's been reported in the CrossFit community due to the large strain of high intensity exercise.