

SENIOR CROSS-TRAINING BADGE

Badge Purpose: When you've earned this badge, you'll have developed a great cross-training routine that keeps your workouts interesting and fun.

Activity	Materials Needed
Eyes on the Prize <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide on your cross-training goal and get advice on the steps to achieve your goal. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Notebook and pen
Stretch Goal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use dynamic stretching to warm up before you train. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone or computer with internet access
Pump It Up! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose a cardio activity that complements your primary cardio sport. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone or computer with internet access
Weight for It...! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate bodyweight strength exercises into your program. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone or computer with internet access
Don't Break the Chain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a calendar to keep track of your progress and stay motivated. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Wall calendar <input type="checkbox"/> Marker

Getting Started

- Your cross-training program should last for at least two months. There are a few ways to go about this—pick the one that works for you. You can create your entire program before you begin and then do a weekly schedule that includes all three elements (stretching, cardio, and strengthening), or you can separate weeks focusing on one specific element (one week of stretching, one week of cardio, and one week of strengthening) before finishing off the five weeks with a combination of the three elements.
- Feel free to tweak the plan as you go along—some exercises you wrote for yourself might not work the way you thought. Experiment, consult with a professional, and adapt as needed.

Activity #1: Eyes on the Prize

Badge Connection: Step 1 – Set your cross-training goal and Step 5 – Stay motivated to reach your goal
 Materials Needed: Notebook and pen

- Cross-training has lots of benefits (reducing repetitive injury, improving muscle strength and flexibility, etc.), but you need to stick to your cross-training activities for it to be beneficial.



2. Decide on your goal—what do you want to gain from cross-training? If you're a runner, are you hoping to compete in your first 10K or half-marathon? If you're a swimmer, do you want to post a faster time at your next meet?
3. After you've come up with your goal, meet with a coach or personal trainer to get advice on how to reach that goal. What specific activities do they recommend to improve your performance?
4. Then, set aside your goal (for now!) and focus on systems. Remember, the best cross-training program is one that you actually do. If you're a runner, your **goal** would be to run your first 10K, but your **system** would be your training schedule for two months.
5. You'll find that when you focus on your system and the process to *getting* to your goal rather than the goal itself, you'll still see results. (And you might also discover that once you've firmly established your habits, it's easier to stick to your cross-training regime.)

Activity #2: Stretch Goal

Badge Connection: Step 2 – Start a stretching and flexibility program

Materials Needed: Phone or computer with internet access

1. Stretching and flexibility are great ways to prevent injury and increase performance. There's been a shift from static stretching (holding a specific pose for 30 to 60 seconds) to dynamic stretching (movement-based stretching). Dynamic stretching, more than static stretching, prepares your joints and muscles for the way they'll stretch during your specific physical activity (like running or swimming).
2. Incorporate dynamic stretching as part of your warm-up activity for your cross-training program. For ideas:
 - womenshealthmag.com/fitness/stretch-workout
 - bit.ly/dynamicwarmupvideo

Activity #3: Pump It Up!

Badge Connection: Step 3 – Add a cardio element

Materials Needed: Phone or computer with internet access

1. Cardio helps increase your heart rate and trains your muscles to use oxygen more efficiently. Endurance is also highly transferrable—if you're normally a runner, but add swimming to your training regime, you'll still see benefits in your ability to run (your lung capacity and overall cardiovascular strength).
2. The cardio component of your cross-training program should engage muscles that your primary cardio sport doesn't use. For example, if you normally run, try a barre class or rowing to work on your upper body strength.
3. For some ideas on which workouts to do together:
 - dailyburn.com/life/fitness/runners-cross-training-workouts
 - shape.com/fitness/tips/cross-training-workouts

Activity #4: Weight for It...!

Badge Connection: Step 4 – Add a toning or strengthening element

Materials Needed: Phone or computer with internet access

1. You don't need a bunch of machines or an entire set of dumbbells to build and strengthen your muscles. Use gravity and your own body weight to your advantage. Incorporate strength exercises into your cross-training program (and make sure it's at least 15 minutes long).
2. For some ideas:
 - greatist.com/fitness/50-bodyweight-exercises-you-can-do-anywhere



- womenshealthmag.com/fitness/strength-training-without-weights
- runnersworld.com/strength-training/10-essential-strength-exercises-for-runners

Activity #5: Don't Break the Chain

Badge Connection: Step 5 – Stay motivated to reach your goal

Materials Needed: Wall calendar; marker

1. Focusing on the system rather than the short-term goal is one way to keep you motivated. Another way to sustain healthy habits is by creating a positive feedback loop. Basically, a positive feedback loop is a chain reaction that strengthens your drive to accomplish something: X makes you feel Y, which causes you to do more of X. In this case, working out makes you feel good, which motivates you to stick with your cross-training program.
2. Here's a trick that Jerry Seinfeld used to pressure himself to write. He got a big calendar to put on the wall and for each day that he completed his task (to write), he put a big X on that day. "After a few days, you'll have a chain. Just keep at it and the chain will grow longer every day. You'll like seeing that chain, especially when you get a few weeks under your belt. Your only job is to not break the chain."
3. Get a big calendar to put on your wall, and for every day (except your rest day, of course!) that you stick to your cross-training program, write a big smiley face on that day. And every day after you've finished your workout, reflect on how you feel. You'll most likely feel a rush of endorphins (that's what's responsible for "runner's high"). Making note of that feeling will also help reinforce your brain's positive feedback loop and motivate you to continue your cross-training program.

