

## CV

One thing that I am regularly asked about is cardio vascular work. This whole area is a mine field and quite honestly you can go round and round in circles reading all of the various studies and “double blind research surveys” whatever the heck they are.

**As I always do, I can only tell you what works for me and for everyone that I coach. I’m not saying that this is the only way to do it but the one thing that I consistently do is use myself as an example.**

I’ll prove that with a short story. Once, an out of shape girlfriend who begged me to coach her, regularly challenged me about this particular part of my training methods by saying “where is your research?” to which I promptly replied “I’m the f\*\*\*\*\* research, look at me!” She then watched some of my show videos on my YouTube channel <http://www.youtube.com/user/KevanWilson> and conceded that I probably was right. It didn’t take long for me to dump her; I can’t be doing with people like that, if people come to me for help then they shouldn’t second guess me, if people think that they know better than me then why come to me in the first place? I never advertise my services, instead, people seek me out, I can only tell them the things that I know will work, plenty of other methods are freely available!

So to basics then, these are the rules that I always apply to myself and to those that I coach, everyone on the personal training page of my website [www.kevanwilson.com](http://www.kevanwilson.com) has abided by these rules and they look pretty good as far as I’m concerned.

Firstly, when bulking up do no cardio, use all of your energy to train like an animal instead! Bulking up is all about looking for extra weight, extra reps, extra sets and extra food! It’s not a time to be worrying about how your abs look or if you’re the prettiest boy or girl in the nightclub, it’s a time to eat well & grow and you should make the most of it. Personally I don’t even think about cardio until I’ve hit the off season size, shape and weight targets that I always set myself.

When you are sure that you have reached your off season targets and it comes to the time of the season for cutting up, the best time to do cardio is as soon as you get up in the morning, before you eat anything, as you are burning off stored fats and carbs as energy, it’s commonly known as “fasted cardio” and to me is an essential part of good show prep. The second best time is 15 minutes after weight training, have the post workout protein shake that your coach has prescribed for you while your body has a break and then hit the cardio area as your body will be releasing growth hormone, and despite its name the main effect of GH is to burn fat, so doing cardio with this coursing around your body virtually doubles its effect. In almost all cases I do one hour cardio sessions, never more or less, as this seems to be the optimum time to burn fat without burning any muscle tissue. However, I also occasionally do “movie cardio”. Sometimes I will use this as a punishment for someone missing a cardio session the day before although personally I actually enjoy doing it and it helps if the weight loss and fat burning isn’t happening quickly enough. Movie cardio is when you put a movie on your tablet or laptop and set it up to watch the whole thing in just one cardio session. Most movies last about 90 – 100 minutes so it’s a long session. Just pick your movie carefully, I once started watching an old favourite, “Pulp

Fiction” and got so into it that I did over 2 hours, felt numb all over and worst of all was late for a meal!

Now, the big question, what sort of cardio? I have heard people make out very good cases for all kinds of cardio, things like high intensity training (HIT) interval training (IT) and high intensity interval training (HIIT) but I have to say that none of them have ever convinced me. Whilst I can see the sense in doing say HIT or HIIT for a few weeks and then switching to something else to protect the muscles, I always do and always prescribe low intensity steady state cardio only, simply because I believe that high intensity cardio will burn muscle as well as fat; here’s my logic.

In my experience, aerobic activity done at a low intensity, 50-75 percent of Maximal Heart Rate (MHR) or within the mythological fat burning zone appears to burn more actual fat. Anything with a higher intensity is burning glycogen and muscle tissue, not fat. This becomes far more relevant if you are doing the cardio at the times that I have described. When you wake up in the morning, assuming your diet is right, your muscles should be pre loaded with glycogen, ready to hit some serious weight training as soon as you have topped up your glycogen stores with a good breakfast. So why then would you do high intensity cardio and burn up the pre loaded glycogen? Surely that glycogen is better preserved for when you do your weight training, the most crucial time of the day. The same applies to cardio after weights, if you have depleted the glycogen stores then what is the body going to do if you make it do high intensity work? Cannibalise itself of course, which it is incredibly adept at during show prep, even more so if your diet isn’t spot on of course.

So what is low impact steady state cardio? Well it’s just stuff like walking on a treadmill at a reasonable incline only fast enough to make you slightly out of breath, or working on a cross trainer or stepper, again not hard enough to make you red in the face with your lungs bursting but hard enough to make you breathe faster and harder than usual. Another option is a bike or a recumbent bike, again at the same pace as the other methods. I always recommend mixed cardio, if for no other reason than spending an hour on the same machine is mind numbingly boring. I usually put on some headphones to listen to music or answer a few emails to pass the time, cardio is not fun but it is necessary if you want your show prep to be thorough. You can also target your cardio areas, well to an extent anyway. Although cardio will burn fat as energy from all over the body it stands to reason that whatever muscles you’re using the most will get the greater benefit. For instance an hour on a recumbent bike will hit the hamstrings first and then the quads although it will still burn energy from all over, albeit at a slightly lesser rate from other body parts.

The idea of cardio is to burn fat, not muscle. It is a difficult balancing act, if you overdo the cardio you will lose muscle tissue as well as fat, if you don’t do enough then fat loss is difficult, but if you get it right then the muscle doesn’t deplete and the body just uses the fat from around the muscles for energy, giving the result of a truly ripped physique. Everyone is different, find what works for you both physically and mentally. There’s no point in sitting on a bike in tears (which I have seen before) if you hate it that much. Some strange people actually enjoy cardio, I’m definitely not one of them I have to say, but I do realise the massive importance of it and plan my cardio sessions as meticulously as my weight training, meals and rest periods.

I hope that you can do the same and that this will help you reach your goals.