



The Secret Circuit

This is a brilliant workout for adults and children to do together at home. After well over 10 years of working as a personal trainer, 8 years of being a parent, and many years of working-out, *The Secret Circuit* has to be one my favourites. It was certainly a favourite with my clients, and it is even more fun when you try it out with children. Somehow, the surprise element of each exercise makes it feel less like a workout and more like one big game. Make no mistakes though, you'll be sweating by the end, especially if you try to keep up with the kids!

Equipment

- **Circuit cards.** See following pages.
- **Timer.** If you type 'Interval timer' into a search engine, there are a few you can use online. You can also download an app onto your phone or just use the phone's stopwatch. Or, of course, use a normal clock, stopwatch, oven timer, or even just good old-fashioned Mississippi counting!
- **Exercise mat(s).** This is not essential so don't worry too much if you don't have one.
- **Music.** Again, not essential but feel free to play music during your workout to help keep the energy up.

Health and safety

- **All activities suggested in this resource should be supervised by an adult and are undertaken at the participants'/supervising adult's own risk.**
- Make sure you check your area is clear of tripping hazards and sharp corners etc. before you start. Adapt the workout to make sure it is safe and suitable for the space you have. Always have water on hand so that you can all stay hydrated whilst you exercise.
- Make sure you warm up before starting. 5 minutes of moving all the joints and slowly elevating the heart rate will be fine. Your kids will more than likely have done warm ups and cool downs in PE at school so get them to lead this section if you like.

So, how does *The Secret Circuit* work?

- Print out and cut out the exercise cards on the next page.
- Shuffle the cards and spread them out face-down around your workout area.
- Set your timer to either 30 or 40 seconds per interval, decide who will be the first person to collect a circuit card (you will be taking it in turns), do your warm up, and then get ready to have fun.
- The first person runs (or hops, skips, crawls ...) to a card and brings it back to the workout area. Everyone then performs the exercise on the card for either 30 or 40 seconds, depending on what you have decided beforehand.
- Once the time is up, it is the next person's turn to collect the card. Keep going until all of the cards have gone.

Exercise alternatives

This format works with any set of exercises. The ones provided on the next few pages are designed to be fun and simple for children to understand and can be adapted for most levels of fitness. You can use the exercises provided on the next few pages or make your own circuit cards if you prefer. If you are unsure about any of the exercises, feel free to adapt them. The important things is that you stay safe and have fun.

There are 18 circuit cards included in this download. You can repeat the whole thing as many times as you like. Equally, if you have less time, just pick 10 or 15 of the cards and lay those out for a shorter circuit.

How much space do I need?

Not much. The exercises themselves do not take up much room, but it can be fun to get a bit more running (or skipping or hopping) in between each exercise by placing the cards a little further away if you have the space.

We usually do the circuit at home in the living room. We spread the circuit cards out on tables, sofas and on the floor and it works perfectly well. You could even place the cards upstairs in the house and have the workout area downstairs so that you have to run upstairs between each exercise. Or, if you have access to a garden or field, go outside. If it's a windy day, shuffle the cards up and place them in a pile with a stone on top instead of spreading them out.

As you can tell, it's completely up to you how you make this work. The most important part of it is that you have fun.

Jog on the spot.

Hop on right leg.

Shadow punches.

(Imagine you have a punch bag in front of you and punch it as fast as you can. Be careful not to lock the elbows out though.)

Jump high and reach for the sky. Bend down touch the floor.

Jump like a frog.

High knee runs.

Fast shuffles/
gallops side to
side.

Lie down on
your front,
then get up
again with a
jump.
(as fast as you can).

Sumo squat
walks.

(Squat down with knees
and toes pointing outwards
rather than straight
forward. Stay in your squat
as you walk forwards 4
times and back 4 times.
Repeat.)

Sprint on the
spot.

Star jumps.

Bum kick runs.

<p>Inch worm. (Start standing. Walk hands along the floor until you are in a plank position. Walk back up again to standing. Repeat.)</p>	<p>Mountain climbers. (In straight arm plank, bring one knee into chest and back. Then the other. Keep alternating.)</p>
<p>Hop on left leg.</p>	<p>Triceps dips. (See exercise explanation on next page.)</p>
<p>Super heroes. (See exercise explanation on next page.)</p>	<p>Freestyle: exercise of your choice.</p>

Exercises explained

Straight arm plank:

This is a great exercise to hold as a static position but you will also need to know it for mountain climbers and inch worms in *The Secret Circuit*.

Be careful not to let the bottom drop or the back arch. The bottom shouldn't be too high either. You should look like a plank rather than a triangle.

Imagine trying to keep your tummy and ribs tucked in and your bottom tucked under so that you could rest a cup on your back.



Super heroes:

Lie on your tummy with arms and legs stretched out.

Carefully lift both arms and legs a small way off the floor, hold, lower.

You don't need to lift high. It is more important to think about lengthening than lifting. Imagine someone is pulling your fingers forwards and your toes backwards.

Alternative option: lift one arm and opposite leg, lower, repeat on other side.



Triceps dips:

Sit on floor with knees bent. Place hands just behind your bottom, shoulder width apart with fingers facing forwards.

Lift bottom.

Keeping the bottom up, bend the elbows and stretch. Repeat.

Think about pointing the elbows backwards as if you are trying to keep hold of a ball between them. Try not to use the legs too much. You should feel it in your arms.

