



## Sample Class: Zoomer Boot Camp

Appeal to active Baby Boomers with an intense, fun circuit that is also easy on the joints.

Active Baby Boomers, or “Zoomers,” are a largely untapped market for boot camp-style classes. Zoomers were at the heart of the running and aerobics crazes of the 1980s and still want to maintain a high level of fitness. At the same time they may be cognizant of previous injuries and current limitations. Boot camps offer you a versatile way to create exercise experiences with the variety, intensity and interactivity this group craves, while leaving you the room to modify exercises “on the fly” to match the abilities and physical challenges of aging participants.

### Zoomer Boot Camp Details

**FORMAT:** circuit-style boot camp

**TOTAL TIME:** 60 minutes

**EQUIPMENT NEEDED:** TRX® Suspension Trainers, medicine balls, bath-size towels and foam rollers. If you don't have TRX Suspension Trainers, alternative exercises using common equipment are provided below.

**MUSIC:** Use upbeat, motivating music in the range of 135–145 beats per minute. Since the class is not choreographed to the beat, the music is intended as motivational background sound.

**GOAL/EMPHASIS:** Simple athletic drills target all major muscle groups and build strength and stability. Cardio drills keep the heart rate and energy expenditure up throughout the work phases. Balance training reduces the risk of falls, a specific vulnerability of aging Zoomers. Finally, the flexibility/relaxation component aims to recover, maintain and enhance mobil-



ity and to ameliorate the functional imbalances caused by an active lifetime of repetitive sports activities or the inactivity of long hours spent behind a desk.

**CLASS SETUP:** You can set up a circuit in just about any way you can imagine, depending on your space. My favorite circuit is a series of stations around the perimeter of the room. Keep the middle of the area free for a group warm-up, drills that require a lot of elbow room and the cool-down.

### Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Zoomers need a thorough warm-up. A dynamic warm-up increases heart rate and blood flow to the working muscles

and enhances muscle elasticity. Use simple athletic movements to elevate core temperature and prepare joints. When choosing exercises, target both upper and lower body and involve all planes of motion; work from simple to complex and more reps to fewer. Examples include walking on heels and then toes, retro walking, heel-toe squats, leg pendulums, lateral lunge and lift, butt kickers and “open and reach” moves.

### Zoomer Boot Camp Circuit (25 minutes)

Participants will be paired for some exercises. Do 1 minute per station, allowing





15–20 seconds to move to the next station. Perform the circuit twice. These exercises are high energy, yet easy on joints. Encourage and assist participants to modify any exercise that causes them real pain, as opposed to normal discomfort. Newbies may have trouble knowing the difference. This is an opportunity to teach.

**Lunge Matrix.** Level 1: Stand with feet about hip width apart. Begin with forward lunges (10 right, 10 left). Change to side lunges (10, 10). Final set; step back at 45-degree angle and lunge (10, 10).

Level 2 (with arms): On lunge forward, reach arms overhead and pull back (behind ears if possible). For side lunge, place medicine ball on floor by side and slightly behind you. Rotate and step toward ball with same-side foot. Continue to rotate torso while reaching with opposite arm to touch ball. On 45-degree back lunge, reach up and extend opposite arm.

**Push Me, Pull You.** Pair up. Place bath towel on floor and position partner A in push-up position, chest over towel, ends extended to sides. Partner B straddles partner A, facing forward. *Using legs*, partner B squats down and grips towel ends, forming sling to support partner A. While A does assisted push-up, B does standing row, using some of A's body weight as resistance.

**Retro-Relay.** This is an old-fashioned relay race in reverse. Keep path clear, and remind retro-runners to look behind them from time to time and to watch out for fellow participants' safety.

**TRX Pull-Ups and Negative Reps.** Shorten TRX straps as much as possible. Facing anchor point, grasp handles over-

head and lower your body to sit directly under anchor with knees bent, feet flat on floor. Pull elbows down and back as you lift weight off floor. Do not tuck hips. Keep tailbone down and slightly back, spine neutral. Lower with resistance. Repeat.

**Alternate Exercise:** If you do not have a TRX Suspension Trainer, use pull-up bands or a low bar for modified pull-ups.

**Medicine Ball Hurl.** Partners stand side by side and about 4 feet from each other with partner A holding medicine ball just above waist level. Partners rotate away from each other. As they rotate back, partner A tosses ball in transverse plane (sideways). Partner catches ball, both rotate away and repeat.

**Fast Feet.** Standing on balls of feet, take tiny, quick steps in place as fast as possible. For variety, move right, left, forward and back, or add additional tasks, like doing high-fives with your partner on command.

**Atlas Press.** Stand with feet about hip width apart. Hold medicine ball in both hands just over head. Keep chest open and elbows back. Press hands into ball as you raise and lower it, as in overhead shoulder press. Avoid hunching shoulders or neck.

**TRX Climb & Press.** Lengthen TRX straps. Stand with anchor point behind you, leaning away, holding handle in each hand, arms forward about shoulder height, pressing down. Do eight mountain climbers (hop, scissoring legs in sagittal plane) as you move feet incrementally backward, decreasing body angle relative to floor. Stop and do four chest presses at this angle. Repeat for 30

seconds, going lower each time until angle is as difficult as you can manage. Reverse direction and continue for 30 seconds, returning incrementally to starting position. If you do not have a TRX Suspension Trainer, perform mountain climbers and push-ups on step platform, against wall or on floor.

**London Bridges.** Lie on back with knees bent and feet on medicine ball. Press through feet as you lift hips off floor into bridge. For variety, try single-leg bridges with one foot on ball and one foot lifted in air or crossed at knee. Alternatively, use foam roller.

**Row-Tation.** Holding medicine ball in both hands, hinge at hips, bringing torso parallel to floor. Do not flex spine. "Row" medicine ball to one side of body and up. Drive leading elbow up and back. Allow some torso rotation if appropriate.



## Balance and Focus; Cool-Down (20–25 minutes)

Balance the body and improve mobility with a yoga or tai chi component, which complements the high-energy circuit phase. Then, since the class is already stretched out from yoga, finish with a round of foam roller massage. This facilitates myofascial release and breaks up trigger points while increasing blood flow and circulation to the soft tissues. It also leaves participants feeling great and ready to "re-enlist." ■

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