

PlyoJam[®]

Certification Manual

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PlyoJam® Mission

Our mission is to get people to burn as many calories as possible while dancing. We hope to inspire other teachers to take the concept of PlyoJam® and to incorporate it into their current dance-formatted class.

What is PlyoJam®?

PlyoJam® is a high-cardio, follow-along dance workout that combines plyometric-inspired movement with easy to follow dance steps to maximize calorie burning. Set to the best POP and Top 40 hits, PlyoJam® takes simple dance moves and incorporates short, fast, explosive jumping movements to make a fun and killer cardio workout.

What makes the PlyoJam® workout different from other workouts?

PlyoJam® is a workout that gives you the enjoyment of dancing with the added bonus of burning calories. A PlyoJam® workout is estimated to burn up to 1,000 calories depending on your level of fitness. It takes a basic step touch and enhances it with an explosive movement. These types of movements will increase the elastic properties of your muscles, help with toning and are known to increase bone density and muscle endurance. The concept is easily adapted to all types of dance. All moves can be modified for all fitness levels.



Meet the Founder

As a young kid growing up in Philadelphia, Jason Layden was exposed to dance fitness while watching his sister workout to Richard Simmons' *Sweatin' to the Oldies*. Jason recognized a worthy trend, and began choreographing routines in his head. This visual of his sister going crazy in the living room, dancing, sweating and most of all having fun, became the cornerstone of Jason's fitness philosophy.

Already primed with an appreciation for fitness, another life-changing event struck Jason to inspire people to move. Six years ago Jason's cousin died from a heart attack at the young age of 26; this was the catalyst that motivated him to pursue fitness as a full-time career as he realized just how important health, lifestyle and exercise were. Jason began to study nutrition and exercise and was passionate about finding ways to make exercise fun. Reflecting back on his childhood, he remembered that incorporating dance moves and good music can make a workout fun. Sensing a need in the marketplace for a cardio-dance fitness that focused on burning calories, he created his own dance format, PlyoJam®.

Workshop Agenda

The workshops cover the following:

- Learn the basic format and benefits
- Review 10 Plyometric movements with modifications
- 6 ways to apply the concept to Choreography
- Cueing techniques
- 8 standard PlyoJam® combinations

Individual Demonstration:

Each person will be evaluated on creating a short routine, including:

- Choreographing a full song
- Incorporating inspired plyometric movements
- Showing proper modifications
- Finding smooth transitions
- Apply at least 2 PlyoJam® concepts
- Demonstrating at least two of the eight combinations found in the manual

Benefits of Plyometric Movements

Better Performance:

For those who enjoy out door activities such as sports like track and field, exercise can greatly benefit running speed. If running isn't your game, perhaps you would like to punch harder or throw farther, plyometric exercise helps you achieve any athletic goal.

Developing Muscle Power:

Plyometric exercise gives your legs and muscles an intense exercise, which guarantees an increase in muscle potential.

Enhancing Your Ability to Burn Calories:

An increased muscular endurance and ability to burn calories would come to great use for someone hoping to lose weight.

Increasing Your Muscular Endurance:

If you are an athlete and you have a big competition coming up, plyometric exercise will help intensify your energy and increase your stamina just in time for the main event. Since plyometric exercising builds up an explosive amount of intense energy, it could be just the thing for athletes like you to have in your training routine.

Exercise Equipment is Not Necessary:

Exercise equipment can be expensive, and plyometric exercising doesn't require any. Anything that is needed could be easily found lying around the house.

Easily Calibrated to Suit Anyone's Needs:

Plyometric exercising can be as simple as jumping on a trampoline several times a day or even using your old jump rope from back in the day. For someone looking for a little more intense workout, perhaps jumping back and forth from a lower platform to a higher platform would suit their needs. There are many ways to increase the intensity of the exercise by simply increasing the distance or height of each jump. Plyometric exercising is simply utilizing the muscular energy that it takes to jump to your own exercising advantage.

Cueing Technique

Footwork:

It's very important with this type of explosive jump training that people don't get tripped up on what foot is leading. A simple hand signal, a tap on the leg or a shout out will, help the class keep up with the footwork. The use of a headset is highly recommended in teaching this concept; so that you could verbal prepare people for the explosive movement as well as encouraging them to do the inspired plyometric.

Directional:

If a change in direction is about to happen in the choreography, it helps to pre-warn the class a head of time by simply pointing in the direction your about to take them or verbally tell them.

Step names:

Be creative; give your most commonly used steps a name.

Rhythm:

Be sure to keep the rhythm consistent! If you're off, you can guarantee the students will be off. Choose music that stays in tempo and that will be easy to choreograph a routine to. This is especially important when adding the quick, fast explosive movement that the PlyoJam® concept offers.

Visual:

If you are not teaching with a headset, hand signals will keep your class following better. When doing sets of eight, count down with your fingers. Throw your arms up and down when the class is performing explosive movements to keep them in time.

Clap:

I find when movements change; a clap is a good cue. Sometimes it's easier for people to hear you than see you when they are focused on the movement. The clap also helps ignite the movement. It's also good to use a clap when a dance step turns plyometric.

How to apply the PlyoJam® concept

Here are the five approaches to adding the PlyoJam® concept to a dance formatted class. What's best about these approaches is that they can be adapted to any dance style. If you are currently teach a follow-along dance-formatted class, following these steps will help you incorporate the PlyoJam® concept to enhance the fitness level of your class.

Button: This is when you add the explosive element towards the end of the 8 count.. Repeating it for two counts of 8.

Tag: This is when you take an 8 count and you place the explosive element on the 2 and 4 count and or the 4 and 8 count. Repeating it for two counts of 8.

Showcase: This when you solo out the short, fast explosive movements for 1-2 counts of 8. It's very important not to do to many repetitions.

Accent: This is when you weave the explosive element into steps of the choreography. Depending on the music the explosive element can land on any count.

Build: This is when you take a dance step and gradually increase the intensity by adding the explosive elements as well as speed. This can be done through two counts of 8. The first 8 count being the easiest and the last 8 count being the most challenging.

Mirror: If a step is performed using the right side of the body, simply repeat the same formation of the step on the opposite side. Keep the workout balanced to avoid any injuries.

Things to Be Aware of as an Instructor

Hydration:

Because the PlyoJam® concept maximizes the calories burned, it also requires more water. You may need to modify your fluid intake depending on how many classes you teach. The Institute of Medicine determined that an adequate intake for men is roughly 3 liters (about 13 cups) of total beverages a day. For women it's 2.2 liters (about 9 cups) of total beverages a day.

Proper shoes:

PlyoJam® is not your traditional dance-formatted class, so it is so important you and your students wear the proper shoes. I found that cross trainers work best due to their lateral support. It is also important to pick your feet up while performing the dance movements to avoid sticking to the floor.

Monitor Intensity:

Monitor heart rate and the amount of calories you've burned.

Proper body alignment:

- Feet and hips shoulder width apart
- Knees unlocked
- Knees and toes pointed in the same direction
- Abdominal muscles slightly contracted
- Neutral spine
- Shoulders should be down and in a neutral position
- Head aligned with spine
- Eyes forward

Learn the Plyometric Modifications:

Every plyometric movement should have a modification to accommodate different levels of fitness. A movement that incorporates an inspired plyometric should begin with a modified (non-plyometric) version for at four to eight counts. See Page 15.

A movement that incorporates a plyometric should begin with a modified (non-plyometric) version for at least eight counts.

Personality:

Show off what it is that best defines you as an instructor by showing off your specialty. The great thing about the concept that PlyoJam® offers is that it works for all types of dance styles. Showcase your abilities and strategically place the fast explosive movements where appropriate!

Leading the class:

When teaching your class, having your back towards the class is perfectly fine. It actually helps the students from getting tripped up on the steps, face the class when you can. I also encourage you to move around the room. Engage the students, motivate them and correct them. This is not the time to watch yourself perform but to pay attention to the room.

Standard class format

- Pre-class announcements
- Proper warm up steps (BPM 120-135), dynamic stretches
- Work them up to intensity
- High cardio section (BPM 140-160)
- Music selection, class involvement, work the room, motivation
- Style of dance, breaking steps down when needed, otherwise demonstrate modifications throughout the routine.
- Go over explosive jumping movements, aka plyometric reps
- Toning (squats, lunges, arm movements) reps
- Abs (pelvic thrust)
- Thread the dance steps and explosive movements together
- Cool down, static stretches, quads, hamstrings and calve

Song Outline

Below is a standard outline of how a song is broken down. It is helpful when designing your routine to keep song structure in mind. For example if you have a dance step or PlyoJam® inspired movement used in the first verse, use the same steps in the second verse or a least a version of that movement. This will not only help you get the proper reps needed to maximize calories burned but it also helps the student remember what's next!

Intro

2 counts of 8

First Verse

4 counts of 8 or 8 counts of 8

Pre-chorus

4 counts of 8

Chorus

8 counts of 8

Second intro

2 counts of 8

Second Verse

4 counts of 8 or 8 counts of 8

Pre-chorus

4 counts of 8

Chorus

8 counts of 8

Bridge

4 counts of 8 or 8 counts of 8

Chorus

16 counts of 8

NOTE:

It's help to listen for changes in the music to pick out these sections. Mark the sections with symbol to give you a guideline. You also want to memorize your music so that transitions are done smoothly when teaching. I personally find that students respond best when your music selection is recognizable. It will actually help them anticipate the movement changes better.

PlyoJam® Standard Combinations

Eight Standard combinations that are good to have in your back pocket. Again keeping it simple will help your students catch on quicker and in the end will offer a better workout.

Step 1 - Smooth Ride

Behind step touch step, *1 count of 8*

(Same step done with an explosive element)

Ski jumps to cross back lunge side-to-side, *1 count of 8*

Step 2- Shake Down

Forward cross step touches, *1 count of 8*

(Same step done with an explosive element)

Jump up with forward cross touch, *1 count of 8*

Step 3- Live it Up

Alternating knee raises, with a center squat, *1 count of 8*

(Same step done with an explosive element)

Squat jumps with alternating knee raises, *1 count of 8*

Step 4 – Swagger Time

A side-to-side step sway with an arm pump, *1 count of 8*

(Same step done with an explosive element)

Get little wider with a squat alternating side hop, *1 count of 8*

Step 5- Throw it Away

Side to side step touch with arm swipe, *1 count of 8*

(Same step done with an explosive element)

Lateral Jump over, *1 count of 8*

Step 6- Good Times

Pelvic thrust forward and back, *1 count of 8*

(Same step done with an explosive element)

2 feet forward/backward hop with arms following, *1 count of 8*

Step 7- Jump and Shout

Forward step touch with an half turn, *1 count of 8*

(Same step done with an explosive element)

180-degree turn jump, *1 count of 8*

Step 8- Party Rock

Side to side step touch with arms up, *1 count of 8*

(Same step done with an explosive element)

Alternating Lateral hop feet together, *1 count of 8*

20 Plyometrics & Modifications

Here's a list of short, fast explosive jumping movements along with proper modification. Only 10 will be covered.

Plyometric

- 1.) 2 feet Lateral Hop
- 2.) Squat jumps
- 3.) 2 feet forward /backward hop
- 4.) Tuck jump
- 5.) Side lunge with a hop
- 6.) Pencil Jump
- 7.) Alternating High knee Raises
- 8.) Jump up
- 9.) 180-degree turn
- 10.) Opposite skips
- 11.) Ski jumps
- 12.) Straddle Jump
- 13.) Alternating side knee up jumps
- 14.) Star jump
- 15.) Frog Jump
- 16.) Alternating knee raise center run
- 17.) Alternating one leg hop
- 18.) Jump over (Side)
- 19.) Forward Jump
- 20.) Squat center hop

Modification

- Remove the hop
- Remove jump
- Step forward and back
- Reach up onto your toes
- Step side to side
- Hands up
- Knee raises only
- Raise Heals
- Forward step touch/turn
- Side to side sway
- Remove jump
- Alternate legs to side
- Remove jump
- No jump, legs side to side
- Hold a lunge position
- No hop
- Remove hop
- Step touch
- Step Forward and Back
- Remove center hop