

12-WEEK ROWING PROGRAM

A PROGRESSIVE, METHODICAL, AND SIMPLE
(NOT EASY) PLAN TO BUILD YOUR FITNESS
USING THE CONCEPT 2 ROWING MACHINE



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HOW THIS PROGRAM CAME TO BE

Early in my fitness career, there were mentors and people I looked up to.

To learn from, guide me on my path, and help me grow as a coach. One of which, was Eric Cressey.

The program I am about to share with you is based upon, and a progression of his. I always try to give credit where it is due, and I thank Eric for helping me build this.

I originally developed this program all the way back in 2017.

It is tried and tested.

By many students I have coached, and also on myself (I walk my talk).

It is simple to follow once you understand the ins and outs of it, and what makes it work so well.

Let's discover why it's so brutally effective.



UNDERSTANDING "INTERVALS"

Interval training isn't a new form of training. It's been around forever. The problem most people make when doing intervals, is they confuse what "effort" means.

Intervals are where you alternate between a work and rest period. Work for a set time period (or duration), and then rest and recover.

So you can do it all over again...YAY!

For the purposes of this program, this is what it means;

Work

- Give your maximum level of effort
 - For the prescribed distance. Meaning;
 - If it says 300m, make 300m hard.
 - If it says 400m, make a 400m effort hard.
 - If it says 250m, make 250m your 100% level.

Rest

- Recuperate as much, and as quickly, as possible
 - Slow your breathing and heart rate down.
 - Concentrate on "relaxing" your mind and muscles.



WHAT A "WORK" STATION LOOKS LIKE

If you're doing 5x300m, it should look and feel like this;

- Round 1 = difficult
- Round 2 = difficult
- Round 3 = difficult
- Round 4 = difficult
- Round 5 = difficult

"Perpetual max effort" is a phrase you need to remember.

You don't conserve, hold back, or save energy for a later interval. If you have the capacity, use it. Here, and now.

This isn't to say you go "all out" on round 1, and then 'gas out'. Only to have the rest of your times get slower and slower each subsequent set.

I am saying that each set (or round) should be completed at a similar level or intensity, finishing in a similar ballpark.

Not huge changes in speed or time (faster/slower) – but around the same time each interval. They all feel hard, because you are pushing yourself, *whilst being consistent*.



HOW TO MAXIMISE YOUR "REST"

As soon as you have finished your interval, write down your time, and then concentrate on your next task, recovering.

Every week, and phase of the program, gets slightly more demanding. Meaning you need to learn how to recover.

Believe it or not, this is a skill. Something you learn and develop through practice. Deliberate, attentive, and mindful application of specific recovery techniques.

The two most important things to focus on are;

1) Don't panic

When you do a bout of hard and intense work (interval training, in a nutshell), people panic and get flustered.

Your pulse rate is up, your lungs are pumping hard, and your heart is beating out of your chest.

Take a moment to focus and flip the proverbial switch from "ON" to "OFF". You and your muscles can now relax.

The mission is to go from fight or flight mode, to relaxation.



...RECOVERY, CONTINUED

2) Nasal breathing.

After doing a demanding interval and pushing hard, you will want to breathe quicker - it's natural.

Tell yourself that you're OK and that you aren't going to die. Breathe slowly, calmly, and deeply THROUGH YOUR NOSE.

The old saying "in through the nose, out through the mouth", is wrong.

Breathing through your nose will make your body more efficient at utilising oxygen, thus, making you fitter.

The goal isn't to breathe more rapidly, and shorter, taking on board more air. But rather, it's to make the body adapt and get better at using the oxygen you do intake.

This is where slower and less frequently is key.

If you can't transition from mouth to nose breathing, try holding some water in your mouth. Works a charm.

Sit down - or go for a slow walk - breathe, and *relax*.



THE THREE PHASES OF THE PROGRAM

This plan consists of 3x4 week mini-programs.

They can, absolutely, be used independently as stand-alone cardio-builders. But together, they form an integral part of the larger picture.

Each phase builds upon the previous and serves a unique purpose

Here are the three phases of the program

Phase 1: 5x300m

Phase 2: 4x400m

Phase 3: 6x250m

The first phase is a nice starting point, a good medium. It's not short, it's not long. It's not a full sprint, it's not a cruise.

It's what's known as "The Goldiloks Zone", *just right*.

The 4x400m gets harder in the fact you have an extra 100m to cover. And the 6x250m is harder in the fact there are two extra sets, and performed at a higher intensity.



DIMINISHING REST PERIODS

As you will soon find out, the program gets slightly harder each week. This is a form of progressive overload.

The weekly difficulty goes up. Not by way of more resistance or distance - but by way of reducing the rest periods between intervals.

This is known as "*diminishing rest periods*".

- Number of intervals, is the same.
- Distance per interval, is the same.
- Rest period per interval, is reduced.

It's a small and subtle change that hits hard. The reduction is 15-30 seconds each week.

Your goal is to set good (challenging) times on week 1.

And then try to keep your timings as close to that all the way through to week 4, when you have 50% less recovery.

Don't smash interval 1, then flounder on interval 5. Keep them all nice and tight together. Easier said than done.



SET THE ROWER UP, FIRST

It's very important that you set up the rower and the interval before you start. That way you don't have to keep adjusting things, use a handheld timer, or your phone.

To keep things as smooth and efficient as possible.

Here is how to set up the monitor for your intervals. At the Main Menu, follow these steps;

- Select workout
- New workout
- Intervals: Distance
- Set distance
 - 300m (if doing 5x300m)
 - 400m (if doing 4x400m)
 - 250m (if doing 6x250m)
- Set rest periods
 - Varies, depending which week of the program you are up to
- ✓ (Icon at the bottom right of the screen)
- Change display
 - Metres/500m (pace)
 - Duration
 - Stroke rate (strokes per min, shown as 's/m')
- ROW!!!



BEFORE YOU GO AND ROW, ROW, ROW

The aim for each row is to complete the distance as fast as possible, using good technique!

The sequence for proper, efficient rowing form is;

- "Legs, Arms, Arms, Legs".

You aren't trying to do *as many strokes as possible*. You want to do the least. Row as far as possible, PER STROKE!

Try to accumulate as many metres as you can on each and every stroke. This means you should row powerfully, not fast. Don't use short and choppy strokes.

Last thing. Try to have minimal variation in your times each round. Use the first row as a guide.

It should be very hard, without compromising technique.

If it was easy, go harder. If it was too much, back off slightly. If it was 'comfortably difficult', you're where you need to be.

Efficient technique + inefficient modality = Intervals.



PHASE 1 - 5X300M

1,500M TOTAL	
<u>WEEK 1</u> = 2 MIN REST PERIODS	<u>WEEK 3</u> = 75 SEC REST PERIODS
1 =	1 =
2 =	2 =
3 =	3 =
4 =	4 =
5 =	5 =
<u>WEEK 2</u> = 90 SEC REST PERIODS	<u>WEEK 4</u> = 1 MIN REST PERIODS
1 =	1 =
2 =	2 =
3 =	3 =
4 =	4 =
5 =	5 =



PHASE 2 - 4X400M

1,600M TOTAL	
<u>WEEK 1</u> = 2 MIN REST PERIODS	<u>WEEK 3</u> = 75 SEC REST PERIODS
1 =	1 =
2 =	2 =
3 =	3 =
4 =	4 =
<u>WEEK 2</u> = 90 SEC REST PERIODS	<u>WEEK 4</u> = 1 MIN REST PERIODS
1 =	1 =
2 =	2 =
3 =	3 =
4 =	4 =



PHASE 3 - 6X250M

1,500M TOTAL	
<u>WEEK 1</u> = 2 MIN REST PERIODS	<u>WEEK 3</u> = 75 SEC REST PERIODS
1 =	1 =
2 =	2 =
3 =	3 =
4 =	4 =
5 =	5 =
6 =	6 =
<u>WEEK 2</u> = 90 SEC REST PERIODS	<u>WEEK 4</u> = 1 MIN REST PERIODS
1 =	1 =
2 =	2 =
3 =	3 =
4 =	4 =
5 =	5 =
6 =	6 =

