

Rowing for Jacked-itude

Strategies for using the Rower for Fat Loss

1-3 workouts a week, up to 52 weeks a year

Designed for someone who resistance trains regularly

Designed to be used as an adjunct to resistance training .

Unless noted, set the flywheel damper to between 3-6. If you will be using the Erg Data app, try to find the setting that gets you a drag factor between 110-120.

Stroke Rates will be provided.

Remember to focus on technique each and every stroke.

Technical Primer:

- 1) Starting from the Catch, Drive with your legs,
- 2) then open your hips,
- 3) then snap your hands to your sternum.
- 4) Release your hands,
- 5) Close your hips,
- 6) And bend your knees until you get back to the Catch position

The Catch Position:

1. Heels down, feet flush against the foot stretcher
2. Knees bent
3. Back tall
4. Chest and hands forward

Keep a loose overhand grip on the handle, thumb around, at the ends of the handle.

Breathe when you need to! If you're looking for an easy to remember cadence is to breath out at the Catch and at before you release your hands.

Let's get to the workouts!

Basic Strategy:

There's no one size fits all approach that works for everyone. You have to use your best judgement here. I can't tell you exactly what to do from where I am.

This programming assumes that you've been resistance training consistently for a while and that resistance training is your focus.

If you are already resistance training, you're essentially getting the anaerobic stimulus you need. Your greatest initial gains will come from doing low intensity steady state (LISS) efforts, i.e. aerobic capacity. Assuming you've been doing no dedicated aerobic training recently, I prefer to start with 1 session a week and titrate up the time in the session over a few weeks before adding an additional session.

Here's where the nuance comes. I would still have you do at least 1 LISS session a week, but when it comes to adding a second session, you have the option of choosing either:

1. Another LISS session
2. Some flavor of High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)

The choice is yours, but for most athletes in powerlifting, weightlifting, strongman, or similar barbell sports, a LISS and a HIIT is usually a sufficient additional work to improve body composition and work capacity. So, to recap:

My general recommendation is to include 1 LISS and 1 HIIT per week outside of your lifting.

In the case a third session is indicated, the options are limitless and goal and context dependent. I typically wouldn't program 3+ rows a week for someone who wants to prioritize something other than rowing, but you're welcome to do what you want.

Types of Workouts.

We can set the Concept 2 rower to track Calories, Time, or Distance as units of measurement. Accordingly, we can achieve similar results using any of them, so long as the programming accords to basic principles of good programming. Additionally, you can alternate between those domains at your leisure - since you're not going for your fastest 2000m it doesn't matter.

The progressions below are to give you illustrative examples that you can apply as you wish. No matter which you pick, I strongly suggest a 3-5 minute warm-up and cool down on the erg before and after each session.

Here is a Distance based HIIT program:

Session	Reps x Distance	Rest between Reps
1	5x200m	90 seconds - 2 minutes (i.e. 2x the time it takes to complete the rep)
2	5-6x200m	90 seconds - 2 minutes
3	6-7x200m	90 seconds - 2 minutes
4	7-8x200m	90 seconds - 2 minutes
5	4x250m	1 minute
6	4-5x250m	1 minute
7	5-6x250m	1 minute
8	6-7x250m	1 minute
9	7-8x250m	1 minute
10	4x500m	2 minutes
11	4x500m	2 minutes
12	4x500m	2 minutes
13	4x500m	1 minute

That one gets difficult, fast. You *could* fly and die - try to go as fast as you can for each piece, but I find a much more productive method to be picking a pace (e.g. 1:52.5/500m = 45 second 200m) and sticking with that for the cycle. As you can see, you build the volume and then shrink rest periods while also lengthening distance of the effort. I would also recommend that you not move from the 200m to 250m distance until you can hit your target pace for all 8, and same for the 250m to 500m, and from 2 minutes between 500m to the final, 500m sessions at 1 minute.

Once you finish this cycle, you can start over with a faster pace back at the 200m distance and build up again. Generally, you want your stroke rate on this program to be between 26 and 32.

Here are three time based HIIT programs:

Time A: 10-15 rounds of 30 seconds work + 90 seconds rest. (e.g. 1:3 work to rest)

Time B: 10-15 rounds of 1 minute work + 1 minute rest (1:1 work to rest)

Time C: 6-10 rounds of 1 minute work + 2 minutes rest (1:2 work to rest)

In these modes, the goal is to increase the cumulative meters session to session. Now, what is important here is I want to you to exercise a bit of additional control over your effort.

Control option 1: all intervals at the same pace (and ideally, same rate)

Control option 2: each successive interval must increase by 1m (for 30 seconds) or by 2m (for 1 minute)

Control Option 3: divvy up rounds by rate. For example, 4 rounds @ 20, 4 rounds @ 22, last two rounds @ 24.

Finally, the same basic concepts above can apply to Calories as well.

For LISS work, there are lots of ways to divvy this up. Here are example LISS sessions:

- 1) 7500m, broken up as 2000m @ 20 rate and 500m @ 22 (distance based).
- 2) Or as a time based prescription you might do: 30 minutes, alternating between 2 minutes @ 20 and 2 minutes @ 22.
- 3) Or 2-3 rounds of 10 minutes, 1 minute rest between rounds. First round 5 minutes @18, 5 @ 20. Second round 5 @ 20, 5 @ 22. Third round 5 @ 20, 3 @ 22, 2 @ 24
- 4) There are even intervals that could function as LISS, such as: 20 minutes of 30 seconds faster work + 30 seconds easy - just like the faster intervals you'd want to make each of these consistent - use a pace that's 8-10 seconds slower than the fast intervals.
- 5) Or 10x 30 seconds work + 90 seconds rest, but in the 90 seconds you have to complete 5 push-ups or 10 sit-ups. (more on this in a minute).
- 6) Or Every minute on the minute, for 30 minutes (6 rounds)
 - Station 1: 10 calories on the rower
 - Station 2: 20 air squats
 - Station 3: 15 push-ups
 - Station 4: 25 crunches
 - Station 5: 10 Med Ball Slams

The Keys with LISS are that over time (weeks/months/years)

- The amount of work done in a given time must increase and/or
- The same amount of work gets easier (as measured by HR and/or RPE)

LISS does not need to be long, boring. It just needs to be easy enough to do enough of it, enough being around 30 minutes at a session. You can, of course, go longer than that, but much more per session (to say nothing of 3 or more sessions of that length or longer) begin to take away sufficient resources for resistance training adaptations.

Track and Field aficionados might recognize the fifth one there as a classic tempo workout. It is in fact, and is an excellent method for speed and power athletes' aerobic conditioning.

Here's a 4 week plan using the Tempo workout.

Week 1: 2 rounds of 6 reps. Each rep is 30 seconds rowing at about 75% of your 500m time, followed by 90 seconds rest. In the rest period, complete either 5-10 push-ups or 10-20 of any abdominal movement. Rest 5 minutes between rounds

Week 2: 2 rounds of 8

Week 3: 2 rounds of 10

Week 4: 2 rounds of 5 - but either A) increase meters rowed per 30 seconds, or B) reduce rest period between rounds (e.g. 4 minutes instead of 5). Optionally, you can C) add reps to the push-ups, sit-ups, or a different exercise

And you'd start the cycle over again.

Adding a Third Session to your training week

You may, at some point, decide you need a third rowing session in your training week. Valid reasons might include it being your offseason and you want to lose weight and or increase your work capacity. Or you may need to a third session to more fully develop that intermediate energy system, the Glycolytic system (please, don't say lactic acid).

Your options are:

1. Add an additional LISS session
2. Adding in a long interval session

I do not recommend a second (or third and on) HIIT session if you're already engaging in other high intensity training (such as strenuous resistance training or most sports).

Adding an additional LISS session is usually a good (and often the best) idea.

However, the rowing erg's unique benefits - using 85% + of your muscle mass with little to no joint impact - lend itself particularly well to longer intervals. Longer in this case meaning between 3 and 8 minutes or so per rep. Rests are typically less than the length of the interval, often closer to ½ the time of the interval.

You of course, can use distances - I'd suggest 750-2000m - but I prefer times. Below is a sample program to introduce you to longer intervals.

Week 1	5x3 minutes	2 minutes rest
Week 2	5x3 minutes	90 seconds rest
Week 3	4x4 minutes	2 minutes rest
Week 4	4x4 minutes	2 minutes rest
Week 5	3x5 minutes	3 minutes rest
Week 6	3x5 minutes	2 minutes rest

As was the case with most of the other suggestions, trying to hold the same pace longer and longer is the goal. I would not add a third session unless you've already been comfortably doing two sessions/week for at least 4-8 weeks prior.