

Getting Started on the Indoor Rower

No piece of fitness equipment works unless you work it! That's why we have always tried to make rowing fun, effective and rewarding for our rowers. Over the past 15 years we have developed a variety of programs for a variety of folks - from competitors and weekend athletes to people interested in general fitness and weight control. To help you get started we've included a short section on technique.

General Notes for Beginners:

1. To get the best workout, use a damper setting of between 3 and 5. This may feel too easy at first, but once you get used to the rowing motion and become able to get the wheel spinning faster, you will feel more resistance. The faster you get the wheel spinning, the more resistance is generated.
2. Start a training log. Use a calendar, our Online Ranking's [Personal Logbook](#) feature, your own spreadsheet or a logbook supplied by Concept2 (call or e-mail us for a free copy). It will be rewarding to monitor your progress. Be sure to record every meter so you can join the Concept2 [Million Meter Club](#) when you get that far!
3. Look for a workout partner. It will probably make your workouts more fun and will help you stick to your new routine.
4. Stretch before and after your workouts.
5. Warm up for 5 minutes by rowing easily, with a few 10-15 stroke spurts of harder rowing.



Learning to Row:

Rowing is really a very natural motion — most people pick it up quickly. Review the technique information below or [request a free Technique DVD](#).

Have someone watch you row, comparing your body positions to those shown in the pictures. Don't pull hard until you are comfortable with the technique.

First Workouts

The Very First Row.

Resist the temptation to row for 30 minutes the first time on the machine. We recommend starting with no more than 3-5 minutes at a time. Then take a break to stretch and walk around. If you feel good - do up to 4 of these short intervals of rowing.

The Second Row.

Begin experimenting with stroke rate and power. Stroke rate is your cadence in strokes per minute. It is displayed in the upper right corner of the Performance Monitor. Power is how hard you are pulling. It is displayed in a choice of units in the central display area : watts, calories, or pace. Try some 3 minute intervals of rowing, varying stroke rate and pace, as described below.

Workout

- 3 min at 20 spm, comfortable effort; 1 min rest
 - 3 min at 22 spm, harder effort; 1 min rest
 - 3 min at 24 spm comfortable; 1 min rest
 - 3 min at 24 spm, harder, 3 min rest.
- End with 10 minutes of steady state rowing at whatever spm and power are comfortable.
Be sure to note the power and spm you settle on - you will use it next workout.

The Third Row.

Introduce longer rowing with stroke rate variation.

Workout

Do four 5 minutes pieces, varying the stroke rate as follows

- 20 spm for first 2 minutes
 - 22 spm for next 2 minutes
 - 24 spm for last minute. Then rest by rowing very easily for 2 minutes, before starting the next 5 minute piece.
- Your work pace should be faster than your 10 minute pace from last workout.

The Fourth Row.

Longer steady rowing.

Workout

- Two 10 minute pieces with 3 minutes rest in between.
- Try to go a little faster than you did for the 10 minute piece in workout 2. Stroke rate 20-24 spm.

The Fifth Row.

Short intervals for variety and for a chance to see how fast a pace you can achieve.

Workout

- Row 1 minute hard, 1 minute easy for a total of 20 minutes. Watch the central display for your pace. Stroke rate 20-24. Record your paces after the workout using the recall/memory function on the Performance Monitor.

Benchmark Piece.

- 30 minutes, non-stop.
- Definitely record your total meters rowed for this piece. You should repeat this workout periodically, every few weeks, to see how you are progressing. You can also enter it in the [Concept2 Online Ranking!](#)

For more workout ideas visit the [Concept2 Workout Library](#).