

## QUICK WORKOUTS

**I**t happens to all of us: a project takes longer than expected or traffic is terrible on the way home, and you watch your precious workout time disappearing. Soon, you think, it won't even be worth taking the time to change into your workout clothes. But don't give up yet! In as little as 30 minutes total (meaning about 20 minutes of actual rowing or skiing) you can get a worthwhile workout.

Here are some short but effective workouts to try the next time you are tight on time.

### Tabata Intervals

The Tabata interval workout was shown to be effective in a study done by Tzumi Tabata in 1996. Specifically, doing these short intense intervals five times per week was shown to be more effective at improving both aerobic and anaerobic capacity than an hour of steady moderate work five times a week.

You'll want to warm up, so do a 10 minute warm-up, including several 10–15 stroke bursts in the last five minutes.

Row or ski 7–8 repetitions of: 20 seconds maximum effort, 10 seconds very easy. That's it.

Take 5 minutes for a cool-down, easy rowing or skiing.

### 3–30 Intervals

After a 5–10 minute warm-up, alternate 3 seconds of maximum effort with 30 seconds of very easy effort for a total of 10 minutes. Cool down for 5 minutes and you're done.

### Short Rest Intervals

Warm up for 5 minutes, then alternate between 1:45 of moderately hard rowing or skiing and 15 seconds easy. Do this for 10 minutes or longer if you have the time. Save 5 minutes for the cool-down.

### Ten Minute Build

Warm up for 5 minutes, then begin a 10-minute block during which you will gradually build the intensity from relaxed to all-out. By the time you reach the last minute of the block you should be at maximum effort. Then cool down for 5 minutes.

## MONTH BY MONTH MOTIVATION

A fitness goal and a little camaraderie can really help the meters add up. And a great place to find both is in our annual calendar of online challenges. Here's a glimpse of what's to come in 2012:

### January

- **Virtual Team Challenge (VTC)** Join an existing team, or create your own, and see how many meters you can row or ski during the month of January.

### February

- **Tour de SkiErg** This challenge offers a series of four different challenge pieces, one per week.
- **Valentine Challenge** Row 14k February 9–14 and you'll be able to download some special erg-friendly Valentine's Day cards.

### March/April

- **March Madness** Every day in March we draw a lucky winner's name from everyone who rowed or skied at least 5k that day.
- **World Erg Challenge (WEC)** This team-based challenge attracts a large field of both real and virtual teams. Join the fun and see how many meters your team can row or ski between March 15 and April 15.

You can find more information about all our challenges at [concept2.com/challenges](http://concept2.com/challenges).

## TO WARM UP OR NOT TO WARM UP

**M**ost everyone talks about warming up before a workout, but there's surprisingly little research out there to prove the effectiveness of doing a warm-up—or what a proper warm-up should include.

The general belief is that a warm-up will help improve your performance. The theory is that it increases the blood flow to, and the temperature of your muscles, which increases the oxygen supply—and all of this improves your efficiency. Indeed, this would seem to be proven anecdotally by the simple fact that most serious athletes do warm-ups before their races.

There is also speculation that a warm-up decreases the risk of injury—but again, there is no definitive proof to back this up.

So what's an athlete to do? Our feeling is that a warm-up is a good idea. It may be nothing more than five minutes of easy rowing or skiing, but our experience is that it helps prepare both your body and your mind, resulting in a better workout.

Here's our advice:

- If you already do a warm-up, don't stop. Consider varying your routine to see if you can develop an even better warm-up.
- If you don't currently do a warm-up, we encourage you to give it a try. You may find that it allows you to perform with greater intensity in your workout, and for a longer duration.



Here are a few sample warm-ups to try:

### 1. 10s and 20s

Row or ski easily for 2–5 minutes, then do a series of 10-stroke bursts with 10 easy strokes in between. Start with moderate intensity and increase the intensity with each successive "10."

### 2. Pyramid

Row or ski easily for 2–5 minutes, then do a 10-stroke burst followed by bursts of 15 strokes, 20 strokes, 15 strokes and 10 strokes, increasing the intensity slightly with each piece. Take 10 easy strokes between pieces.

### 3. 30 Seconds On/ 30 Seconds Off

Row or ski easily for 2–5 minutes, then alternate 30 seconds harder with 30 seconds easier, gradually building the intensity as feels comfortable.

**A note about stretching:** Opinions about stretching vary widely—when to stretch, what kind of stretching to do and whether it helps. Based on what we've read and what works for us, we suggest doing your stretching after you have warmed up, or even after your workout. The body seems to stretch better when it is warm.