

Training Zones

Marilyn Chycota

Training Zones	Goal	Intensity	Benefit	Examples	Duration	Fuel
Active Recovery	Speed recovery process	Easy pace, low resistance, light load, no impact sports Borg Scale: 9, very light	Increased blood flow; may reduce muscle soreness and inflammation	Yoga, light swimming, easy spinning	20-30 min	Not required
Easy	Injury prevention and recovery	Low (4/10 effort) Borg Scale: 11, light	Promotes increased O ₂ absorption; teaches the body to use fat as fuel	Warm-up & cool-down; Running, hiking, cycling, rowing; No weights	20-60 min	Not required
Aerobic	Develop tolerance for higher workload	Moderate (6/10 effort) Borg Scale: 13, somewhat hard	Develop body's ability to use fat as fuel	Conversational pace, minimal concentration	20-60+ min	Depends on athlete & training duration; Focus: Hydration
Tempo	Develop aerobic capacity	Mod-High (7-7.5/10 effort) Borg Scale: 15, hard	Develop fast oxidative glycolytic muscle fibers	Broken intervals (work to rest ratio = 3-5:1): Warm-up 3:00 easy + drills/accelerations 3-8:00 hard, 2:00 recovery; Cool-down	60+ min	Carbohydrates
Threshold	Develop ability of fast-twitch muscle fibers to generate energy aerobically	High (8/10) Breathing is difficult, but manageable Borg Scale: 17, very hard	Develops cardiac stroke volume & VO ₂ max; Improves athlete's ability to process lactate	Broken intervals (work to rest ratio = 2:1): Warm-up 5-10 min; Progressive build to 80% range for 3:00; 4x :30 fast, 1:00 easy, 3:00 easy; 6x 4:00 threshold on 2:00 recovery; Cool-down 10-20 min (*longer)	20-60 min	Carbohydrates (more may be needed)
VO2 Max	Speed	Very high (9+/10 effort) Borg Scale: 20, max exertion	Develops ability of O ₂ delivery system to get O ₂ to working muscle	Broken intervals (work to rest ratio = 1:2); Warm-up 15-20 min (*longer); 6x :15 sprints, :45 easy; 6 x :90 VO2 max, 3:00 recovery; Cool-down 20 min (*longer)	5-15 min	Carbohydrates
Neuromuscular Quickness	Recovery for experienced athletes	Extremely light load with high, smooth turnover Borg Scale: 7, extremely light	Building coordination & quickness under light load; skill development	Downhill strides, agility ladders, high RPM work, overspeed work with assistance		Not required
Absolute Max	Top power + speed	Very high (9+/10 effort) Borg Scale: 20, max exertion	Develops ability of O ₂ delivery system to get O ₂ to working muscle	Broken intervals (work to rest ratio = 1:5); Warm-up 15-20 min (*longer); 6 x :15 sprints, :45 easy; 3:00 easy; 4-6 x :10 start from stop; 2-3:00 complete rest; Cool-down 10-15 min	Short	Well-fueled prior; no fuel during; Focus: carbs post-workout
Conditioning Specific Strength Endurance		Resistance: high load Focus: torque & resistance Borg Scale: 15, hard	Sport-specific strength training	Big gear work, paddle work, towing work, hills		

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Borg Scale	
<i>Rating</i>	<i>Perceived Exertion</i>
6	No exertion
7	Extremely light
8	
9	Very light
10	
11	Light
12	
13	Somewhat hard
14	
15	Hard
16	
17	Very hard
18	
19	Extremely hard
20	Maximal exertion