



BRITISH ROWING

# How Much How Often

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This document is endorsed by the British Rowing Technical Panel.

TEAMWORK | OPEN TO ALL | COMMITMENT



## Introduction

This document provides guidance from British Rowing around good practice for what is appropriate training at different stages in a rower's development, so that they gain the best experience and enjoyment of the sport to progress over time at the appropriate rate. It includes the need to offer variety in training and to develop an all-round athlete, preparing them for life, not just the sport of rowing.

The purpose of this document is to provide background considerations for rowers, coaches and parents. It is important that it is used in parallel with the "Rower Development Guide". This looks at the training aims for rowers to develop appropriately in the sport to maximise their time, enjoyment and performance.

While following this guidance, it is important to remember that some rowers may not want, or may not have the opportunity, to row or to do specific rowing training more than once a week. Any undue pressure on the rower to attend the club for further training or rowing sessions may result in them unnecessarily dropping out of a sport that they are enjoying. To help plan what is appropriate you may wish to take into consideration the British Rowing "Codes of Conduct" document, which looks at the rights of individuals in our sport. This can be found under Safeguarding at [www.britishrowing.org](http://www.britishrowing.org).

When considering "How Much How Often" we must also consider other demands and pressures on rowers. Life must be a healthy balance and we all have a responsibility to provide the appropriate support and education for our rowers. We must consider many factors when demands are placed on our rowers to train. Our aim is for everyone to stay in the sport for a long time and become our future club captains, committee members, umpires as well as our future Olympic Champions. Rowers, family members, friends or crewmates may want them to do more, we sometimes have to say NO! Remember it is often the case that family members or friends need educating to enable them to contribute positively to the individual rower's development.

## Objectives

The objectives of the How Much, How Often document are as follows:

- 1) To ensure that athletes train at the appropriate level depending on their age (Maturational, chronological and training ages) as well as ability including any special needs.
- 2) To raise awareness of the other activity's rowers, participate in and the pressures this builds on them. (see effective training under training plan considerations.)
- 3) Improve the awareness and importance of the wellbeing of the rower.
- 4) To promote appropriate rest and recovery as an essential part of the training programme

## Training Plan Considerations

When creating your training plan, along with using the “Rower Development Guide”, there are other very important considerations to take into account. This list is not exhaustive but is intended to be used as prompts to what coaches should be considering.

### Creating a self-aware athlete

- Coaches should promote the five C’s (Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character and Creativity)
- Developing a human
- Enjoying the sport as an individual, while working as a team Being able to converse with athletes and coaches

### Puberty & physical changes

- Be aware of physiological and psychological changes that are happening with athletes in an appropriate and sensitive manner
- Training considerations around those changes, such as growth spurts and menstruation
- Ensuring you are supporting long-term aims, not short-term goals
- Being aware of the athlete’s emotional state

### Effective training

- This may include looking at fewer but more focused sessions
- Being aware of all the other forms of exercise they are doing (such as at school & other sports and activities.)
- Allowing appropriate recovery (both physically and mentally)
- Promoting a healthy, balanced diet
- Promoting ownership of their own training

### Education/work considerations

- Exam periods
- Homework
- Downtime for revision or increased work load – but also encouraging the importance of stress relief by attending reduced sessions

### Practicalities

- Travel time
- Training times/timetabling
- Length of sessions
- Time of year – holidays
- Religious considerations

### Allowing for a social life

- This should be more than just at the rowing club
- Encouraging the importance of other interests outside rowing
- Duty of care for the athlete’s emotional state



### Coping with setbacks

- Injury
- Winning & losing
- Selection – accepting decision
- Not being able to control every situation

### Promoting SMART goals for everyone

- Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time based
- Success criteria led by the athletes
- To support everyone in being the best they can be (this is not just winning medals)
- Including coxswains

## **Recovery and Wellbeing**

The next session is only as good as the recovery (refueling, repairing, rehydrating and resting) from the previous session. Adequate recovery may help avoid unnecessary illness.

## **Guidelines for Rower Development**

British Rowing recognises that there are several levels for the development of a rower. It is important to remember that all new rowers will start their rowing life at the same point. All rowers will start at Level 1 before progressing onto other levels.

The rate of progression through each level will vary depending on the rower's ability, age, maturity and previous athletic experience, but each level is equally important to a rower's development. No level should be overlooked if we wish to give new rowers every opportunity to thrive in the sport and maximise their opportunities to enjoy the sport fully and for a long time.

A new rower needs to have a positive experience at their first point of contact with the sport to keep them engaged for life.

Each level is supported by five training pillars (Technical Development, Athleticism, Fitness, Knowledge, Understanding & Application and Ethos & Behaviours). For further information regarding the five pillars please use our "Rower Development Guide". It is important that training includes each pillar and it is developed to an appropriate standard before moving onto the next level.



| Rower Pathway                   |   |  |                          | Advice for Rowing Specific Activity (On Land or Water) |                            |                              |                            | Notes   |
|---------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------|--|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Development Level <sup>N1</sup> |   | Requirements <sup>N2</sup>   |                          | Number of sessions per week <sup>N3</sup>              |                            | Session Length <sup>N5</sup> | Hours of Training per week |   |
|                                 |   |  |                          | Average  | Maximum <sup>N4</sup>      |                              |                            |   |
| <b>Level 4</b>                  | Competitive club rowers and those breaking into High Performance. | Rowers should complete and be competent in all pillars in levels 3, 2 & 1. | Rowers aged 17 and over. | 6  | 8                          | Water <90'<br>Land <80'      | 6 - 12                     |   |
| <b>Level 3</b>                  | Rowers competing in national events.                              | Rowers should complete and be competent in all pillars in levels 2 & 1     | Rowers aged 15 and over. | 4  | 6                          | Water <75'<br>Land <60'      | 4 - 8                      | J15 and under and older rowers new to strength training to be core/trunk & conditioning only.                               |
| <b>Level 2</b>                  | Developing rowers or those focusing on local events.              | Rowers should complete and be competent in all pillars in levels 1.        | Rowers aged 13 and over. | 3  | 4                          | 45' - 60'                    | 2 - 4                      | Water activity for J14 and under should be sculling only. General athleticism should also be encouraged for all age groups. |
| <b>Level 1</b>                  | All Rowers of any age.  | -  | Rowers aged 11 and over. | -  | 2 (Skill development only) | 30' - 40'                    | 1 - 2                      |   |

Please see the next page for further information on notes.

Please see British Rowing's "Rower Development Guide" for more information on training guidance. This can be found at [rowhow.org](http://rowhow.org) under "Online Learning."



Additional notes on our training guidance table:

N1: Advice given on training amount is for rowers wishing to progress up the rowing levels. As an example, a rower may wish to stay rowing at the amount required for level 1 but still work on completing pillars above this level. If the rower, then wishes to progress it is recommended they spend some time training at the level 2 guidelines before progressing to Level 3 etc.

N2: The age requirement is the minimum starting age for any rower to start the relevant levels. A new rower who is older than the suggested minimum age should still start their rowing life at level 1. They should only progress if they wish to and when they have met all criteria laid out in the pillars for each level. There should be no pressure on a rower to move up a level until they are ready.

N3: The number of sessions refers specifically to the number of rowing specific sessions, (i.e. any session where you are simulating the rowing movement) either on water or on land. It is expected and encouraged that a new rower will be doing more than two activity-based sessions a week other than just rowing. It is important that they are encouraged to participate in other activities to develop an athlete with a varied skill set. This can include other sports or skill-based activities such as swimming, drama or learning to play an instrument.

If someone has converted from another sport with a significant training history, we would still aim to keep the number of rowing specific sessions as recommended until they were competent in the relevant areas they needed to improve. They could of course continue to do a significant amount of cross training to maintain fitness.

N4: The guidance for the number of sessions shows both the average number of sessions and the maximum number of sessions during a normal training week. The average is what you would normally see during the majority of someone's training at this level. This may peak to the maximum number of sessions shown if building up to a competition or specific training cycle. The number of sessions may be more than the number shown in the guidance if for a specific reason such as a training camp.

N5: The length and intensity of the session should depend on the rower maintaining good technique and posture. The quality of the session must be a priority. The stage at which rowers become tired, where technique and posture fluctuate, is where the rower is most prone to injury.