



METER MONSTER



Welcome to **METER MONSTER!** You are now part of our UCanRow2 crew, and we couldn't be happier to have you. We're here to help you get more out of your rowing machine workouts and establish or stay consistent with your workout plan.

These tried-and-true workouts harken back to the rich history of on-water rowing. Do these workouts, and you are channeling the blood, sweat, and tears of on-water rowers going back nearly 200 years to the beginnings of the sport.

Many of these are Michigan Tech "Row with the Crew" workouts, or ones that college or masters crews use in their winter or off-water training. Don't be intimidated by that, though. By adjusting your effort level you can adapt them to any fitness level.

The workouts were designed either by on-water rowing coaches or UCanRow2 master instructors with years of experience teaching indoor rowing and coaching on-water rowing.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

If you are new to rowing: Consult a physician for clearance to exercise before you start, and be sure to mention that you want to row.

As with any exercise regimen, if you have back, neck, knee, or hip issues; or other medical conditions such as diabetes or seizure disorders, you should be sure your physician is aware of these and evaluates you accordingly. Rarely is rowing contraindicated, but it's better to be safe than sorry.

You may also want to find a certified instructor to teach you proper rowing technique (see our [certified instructor list](#) for your area). Custom online coaching for home users is also available. Contact info@ucanrow2.com for more info or to sign up.

WHAT TO WEAR TO ROW

Be sure you wear proper clothing. Rowing is a spandex sport for a reason. Avoid wearing long shirttails or super baggy shorts that can get stuck in the rowing machine's seat and monorail. Cross training shoes with a flatter sole and some flex in the forefoot are recommended over road running shoes or anything with a thick sole.

Have a water bottle and sweat towel handy, and don't forget to have glass cleaner to clean your monorail and disinfectant wipes for the handle and seat when done.

HOW TO USE THESE WORKOUTS

It is perfectly okay to modify these workouts according to your own fitness level, or those of your students if you are an instructor. We include a suggested workout calendar at the end of this document, but you are free to pick and choose, mix and match.

The rowing machine meets you where you are and takes you as far as you want to go. And, as an ergometer, it responds to your effort level. You're the boss of your boat!

You will find these workouts are more focused on stroke rating—the number of strokes you take in a minute—than we usually are in our interval workouts (For example #FlywheelFrenzy).

For most people, 26-28 strokes per minute (spm) is the upper limit of where they can row hard but still hold good technique. In a couple of instances we have included stroke ratings of 30-32 spm because they are commonly used in on-water racing, and sometimes a little challenge is good.

If a higher stroke rating is too much for you, however, don't hesitate to back it down! On water or on the erg, there is no point in rowing fast if you can't do it with good technique.

If it feels too easy, on the other hand, resist the temptation to speed up your stroke. Focus instead on pushing harder off the catch and really engaging with your legs.

Follow our mantra:

If you can't row well low (slow), you can't row well high.

THIS WORKOUT SET IS DIVIDED INTO THREE CATEGORIES:

- **Long-Distance Workouts:** Workouts totaling roughly 10,000 or meters. Generally you will do these at a slower pace and effort level. These are excellent for building endurance and cardio base, and for grabbing meters in a Concept2 meter challenge. One or two of these workouts a week may also be useful if your goal is fat loss.
- **Middle-Distance Workouts:** The bread and butter of the dedicated erger or on-water rower. These are the workouts you can finish in under an hour at moderate to higher intensity.
- **Short-Distance Workouts:** These are sprint, empty-the-tank workouts that will really get your heart rate going if you choose to work at that level. Alternatively, they are great at any effort level if all you have is a few minutes to work out.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- You never stop completely in rowing until the workout or race is over. When the instructions say “rest,” that means you row easy with little to no pressure. That’s also your chance to take a drink so keep your water bottle handy!
- For longer workouts totaling 8-10k meters or more, plan at least an hour from start to finish. Usually you can include the warm-up as the early part of your workout.
- If you would like to get a baseline on your rowing fitness, we recommend the [O’Neill Fitness Test](#). Of course, you can also do the rowing standard of a 2000- or 6000-meter row, but the O’Neill test is just 4 minutes and comes with information to help you determine your fitness based on your results. One-stop shopping!

VIDEO RESOURCES TO HELP YOUR ROWING

We have posted a number of videos online to help you improve your technique, row more efficiently, and more. Be sure to subscribe to our [YouTube channel](#), as we often update it with new videos.

- **Indoor Rowing Basics:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euE85LB1va0>
- **Generating Power on the Rowing Machine:** <https://vimeo.com/48273138>
- **Drills for a More Fluid, Powerful Rowing Stroke:** <https://vimeo.com/60358825>
- **Concept2’s Technique Videos:** <http://www.concept2.com/indoor-rowers/training/technique-videos>

DISCLAIMER: Meter Monster is not intended to prevent, cure, or treat any medical conditions. Participating in this program is optional, and therefore neither Terry Smythe, Sarah Fuhrmann, nor UCanRow2 will be held liable for any injuries sustained while performing the workouts listed in this program.

TERMS TO KNOW

<p>Common Workout Formatting</p>	<p>- 4 x 500m: 4 rounds of 500 meters - 4 x :30 on, :30 off: 4 rounds of 30 seconds rowing hard, 30 seconds rowing easy</p>
<p>Open Rating</p>	<p>No limit on the stroke rating—go as high as you want, as long as you maintain good technique.</p>
<p>Split</p>	<p>The “split per 500 meters,” or the time it takes you to row 500 meters. This will be displayed in a central location on your monitor. Your goal is to make the number smaller, which means you’re getting faster!</p>
<p>Strokes per Minute (SPM), also known as Stroke Rating (rating)</p>	<p>The number of strokes you take in a minute. Remember, a high stroke rating does not necessarily equate to a faster split or overall time. The key is to generate as much power as you can when you push off with your feet, no matter how many strokes you take in a minute. For more on this, watch our video on generating more power on the rowing machine.</p>
<p>Damper Setting</p>	<p>The placement of the damper on a Concept2 rowing machine. We recommend a setting of 3-5, which is also where most competitive rowers have it. Setting the damper at 8-10 opens the flywheel for maximal air flow and thus resistance as you row. Very much like riding a bike on a hard gear, rowing will feel heavy at 10 and thus be hard to sustain over a long workout. For more about damper visit the Concept2 website.</p>
<p>Paddle or Rest</p>	<p>In rowing you never completely stop until the workout or the race is over. When you see “rest” in a workout here that means you row easy, taking the pressure off, for the time or distance specified.</p>
<p>Equal Rest</p>	<p>Rest the same time or distance as the work interval.</p>
<p>Piece</p>	<p>A “piece” of a workout. For example in a workout that is 4 x 500 meters, each 500 meter effort is a piece.</p>
<p>Steady-State Rowing</p>	<p>Often found in longer workouts, this is rowing at about 60-70 percent of your max, where you can talk but it’s an effort. A pace that you feel you can hold for quite a while.</p>

LONG-DISTANCE WORKOUTS

MINDFUL METERS

The “hour of power” is a classic erg workout. Here’s our twist on it, inspired by Canadian Master Instructor Cheryl Arends, a champion on-water rower who also teaches indoor rowing at Barrie (ON) Rowing Club.

Pick a stroke rating you can maintain for each piece. Holding a low rating is a mental challenge, particularly on the last piece when you will be tired. Aim to at least match your split from the first piece, or beat it if you can. You should be working throughout though. If you can chat while doing this workout, you’re not working hard enough.

- Row the first 20 minutes steady-state at 16-19 spm.
- Row the second 20 minutes doing 30 seconds on, 90 seconds off at 28-30 spm
- Row the third 20 minutes steady-state at 16-19 spm

2K ALL DAY

On this workout you will row 2000 meters (the classic rowing race distance) 4 times, with different stroke ratings over each 500-meter segment of the row.

Use this workout as a way to find your optimal stroke rating – the one where you feel most comfortable and get the best results.

- 4 x 2000 meters with 4 minutes paddle rest between each 2000-meter piece
- Rounds 1 and 2: 20/22/24/28 spm
- Rounds 3 and 4: 22/24/26/28-30 spm

SLOW DOWN TO SPEED UP

This workout, a favorite of Master Instructor Cheryl Arends, allows you to practice controlling your stroke speed by forcing you to slow your recovery. Make sure you are rowing with at least a 1:2 drive to recovery ratio, if not 1:3.

- 2x30 minutes with a 6-minute paddle rest break in between
- 15 minutes at 18-20 spm
- 10 minutes at 22 spm
- 5 minutes at 24 spm rate dropping your split by 5 seconds at each increment

1K, 2K, 3K, AND MORE!

You can do this as a just-get-the-meters-done workout at whatever intensity you’re comfortable with, OR you can ramp it up by challenging yourself to hold a certain pace and intensity for each piece.

For example: Row the first 1000m hard and then set a goal split for each following piece. Always have in mind a goal split, and a bottom acceptable split. You could say, “I will not allow myself to row slower than a 2:20 split, but my goal is to hold 2:15.”

Note: If your monitor has the Intervals>Variable function this workout is a breeze to set up.

Row intervals of:

1000m /2min rest, 2000m/3min rest, 3000m/4min rest, 2000m/2 min rest, 1000m/3min recovery paddle.

MIDDLE-DISTANCE WORKOUTS

RACE WITH THE CREW

Michigan Tech's crew did this workout in preparation for a regatta where it was going to take about 15 minutes to cover the race distance.

Row 2 x 15 mins. with a 5-minute paddle rest in between. Stroke rating is 24 spm. Every 4 minutes during the 15-minute pieces, do a hard 20 strokes at 26-28 strokes per minute.

ROW WITH THE CREW

This was an on-water workout for Michigan Tech's crew. Imagine you're in a boat for this one!

Row pieces of 10, 8 and 6 minutes with 3 minutes of paddle rest between each piece.

On the first two pieces maintain a stroke rating of 24 strokes per minute (spm). On the 6-minute piece, bump it up to 26-28 spm, and take a hard 10 strokes every minute.

SLICK SIX

NOTE: A stroke rating of 30-32 spm is for advanced rowers with solid rowing technique. To scale this workout, drop the strokes per minute to a level where you can maintain good technique and complete each piece.

6 x 3 min on at 30-32 spm.

2-minute paddle rest in between each 3-minute piece.

JASON'S LADDER

Master Instructor Jason Hoey teaches this workout to his classes at Terra Firma Rowing in Ann Arbor, MI.

3-4 rounds of row 12 minutes with 4-minute paddle rest in between each round. The stroke rating changes every 3 minutes on the work. This workout will challenge your focus because it jumps around on the stroke rating. See if you can hit your target stroke rate in 2-3 strokes every time.

- **Round 1:** 18-22-18-22
- **Round 2:** 20-24-20-24
- **Round 3:** 22-26-22-26
- **Round 4:** 24-choose your spm-24-choose your spm

BUILD & REPEAT

Warm up well before starting this workout that Master Instructor Cassi Niemann does with her classes in Richmond, VA. Low stroke-rate rowing is challenging, particularly when you are trying to also cover a lot of meters.

2 rounds of:

- 2:00 at 20 spm
- 1:30 at 22 spm
- 1:00 at 24 spm
- 0:30 at 26 spm
- 2:00 easy paddle
- 2:00 at 22 spm
- 1:30 at 24 spm
- 1:00 at 26 spm
- 0:30 at 28 spm
- 2:00 easy paddle - rest & water

SHORT-DISTANCE WORKOUTS

It is critical that you warm up well before beginning these workouts if you want to do them as a sprint. You will want to take at least 10-15 minutes ahead of time to get a good sweat rolling, then be ready to hit your target mark right off the bat.

RALLY ROW

4 x 500-meter intervals with 500m (equal rest) in between. Add more rest time if you are newer to the machine or feel that you need it.

METER BEATER

5 x 250 meters on, 250m off. Aim to maintain your split or lower it every time on the work intervals.

PULLING DOWN THE STARS

This workout is popular with UCanRow2 Master Instructor Cassi Niemann's classes in Richmond, VA. If you do the [O'Neill Fitness Test](#), use your average split on that test as your base to calculate your split for the first 1000 meters of this workout. From there you will work to gradually take more seconds off your split with each progressively shorter piece.

- 5 mins at your 1000m pace +5 seconds (or sustainable to challenging pace)
- 4 mins taking 3-5 seconds off your split from the previous piece
- 3 mins taking 3-5 seconds off your split from the previous piece
- 2 mins at previous average (hold it exactly)
- 2 mins - Decide what pace you'll hold and stay there
- 1 mins - all out

ROW-LER COASTER!

Row intervals of 1-2-3-3-2-1 mins. (6 total rounds) with the same amount of rest on each round.

Start each round with a few short strokes to get going and build to your rating. Each piece (interval) should be done at 80 percent of your max: You can talk but you'd rather not. Stroke rating 24-30 strokes per minute.

Use how you feel to determine what stroke rating to hold, your goal is to at least maintain the same split within about 5 seconds on each round. If you find you can't talk, you're going too hard!

FIVE IS FINE

You will find Master Instructor Chad Fleschner using this workout with his classes at Rock Creek CrossFit in Kensington, MD.

Practice building quickness in the legs and control on the recovery.

3 x 5 mins (you can do up to 8 rounds)

Each round is:

- 2 mins at 22 spm
- 2 mins at 24 spm
- 1 min open rating

SUGGESTED WORKOUT CALENDAR

This calendar is a sample of how you might do these workouts over the course of a month. It is perfectly OK to modify or scale these as needed. You will see that we have incorporated two rest days per week. Keep in mind that your body might need more than that, particularly if you are doing vigorous workouts!

Listen to your body: You may have a heart-pumping sprint workout planned and realize as you're warming up that you're not feeling up to it. That is perfectly normal and a good sign that you need to either take the day off or do something less strenuous.

Feel free to mix and match these workouts and do not think you will make more progress by making every workout a killer. The body needs proper nutrition, hydration, exercise, sleep and recovery time. Too much intensity can result in injury, illness or exhaustion, and then you have to start all over again.

Your body will thank you for listening to it by getting stronger, staying well, and letting you feel the benefits. Win-win.

SAMPLE MONTH

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
WEEK 1						
Race with the Crew	Slow Down to Speed Up	Active rest day: bike ride, walk, hike, yard work	Jason's Ladder	Slick Six	Build & Repeat	OFF
WEEK 2						
Rally Row	1K, 2K, 3K, and More!	30-min steady state recovery row at 24 SPM, 60-75% effort	O'Neill fitness test-record results. Warm up well & cool down.	Row-ler Coaster	Repeat Wednesday workout	OFF
WEEK 3						
Row with the Crew	Pulling Down the Stars	Slow Down to Speed Up	2K All Day	Race with the Crew	Jason's Ladder	OFF
WEEK 4						
10K Day-set the monitor and row	OFF	Build & Repeat	Rally Row	Slow Down to Speed Up	2K All Day	OFF

There you go! Let us know how you like the workouts, and don't forget to use the hashtag **#metermonster** online so we can see how you're doing and give you a virtual high five.

ROW ON!