

How Much and How Often

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This document is endorsed by the British Rowing Technical Panel.

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, you should 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. 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. You should also take into consideration what is appropriate through the "Codes of Conduct" document, which looks at the rights of individuals in our sport.

Objectives

British Rowing wishes to develop all athletes in the following areas:

- 1) Ensuring that appropriate athletic skills and physical literacy for rowing and life are developed early in a rower's career and continuously thereafter.
- 2) Encouraging the long term process of development rather than achieving short-term outcomes of just winning.
- 3) To ensure that athletes train at the appropriate level depending on their ability. Developmental and training age as well as chronological age should also be carefully considered.
- 4) Looking at the environment and the role that coaches, family and sometimes support staff can play in the life of a developing rower.

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.

Rower Pathway		Advice for Rowing Specific Activity (On Land or Water)					
Development Level	Minimum Age	Numbers of Sessions per week*	Example breakdown of Sessions	Session Length	Hours of Training per week	Notes	
Level 4	Competitive club rowers and those breaking into High Performance.	17+	Up to 12	3/4 Water/Ergo 2/3 Strength Training 2/3 Cross Training	Water <90' Land <80'	10 - 14	
Level 3	Rowers competing regularly.	15+	Up to 8	4/5 Water/Ergo 2 Strength Training 1/2 Cross Training	Water <75' Land <60'	7 - 10	Under J16's and those new to strength training to be conditioning only.
Level 2	Developing rowers or those taking part for enjoyment.	13+	Up to 5	2/3 Water/Ergo 1/2 Land	45' - 60'	4 - 6	Water activity for J14's and under should be sculling only.
Level 1	All Rowers of any age.	11+	Up to 3	2 Water	30' - 40'	1 - 2	Rowing specific training should be focused on skill development.
				1 Land			

*The number of sessions means specifically 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 three activity-based sessions a week other than just rowing. It is important that they are allowed 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.

Each level is supported by five training pillars (Physical Literacy, 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.

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)
- Moulding a human, not programming a robot
- Being an individual as part of a squad, while working as a team
- Being able to converse with athletes and coaches

Puberty & physical changes

- Being able to discuss changes that are happening with athletes in an appropriate and sensitive manner
- Training considerations around those changes, such as growth spurts and menstruation
- Physiological and psychological changes
- Ensuring you are pushing 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 (such as at school, other clubs)
- Allowing appropriate recovery (both physically and mentally)
- Promoting a healthy, balanced diet
- Promoting ownership of their own training

Education/work considerations

- Exam periods
- Homework
- Special needs, e.g. dyslexia, etc
- 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 – Christmas, Lent, Ramadan, religious days

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