



"NRXC is a group of friends that have fun running together and are excellent in our integrity, teamwork, and fitness."

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CROSS-COUNTRY HOW-TO GUIDES

[Interval Training]

- Interval training involves workouts that are made of up short (1 minute to 3 minutes) work periods with equal or longer recovery. The total length of the work periods of a typical interval workout is 10-24 minutes.
- The work periods of interval workouts are run faster than lactate threshold pace, anywhere, depending on the length of the repeat, from 3K (1.86 miles) to 10K (6.2 miles) race pace. The recovery period between intervals is generally as long as the work period and is typically (though not always) either standing or walking/very slow jogging recovery.
- A common error when running interval workouts is to run the first interval too fast, and end up slowing down or skipping intervals. You should take care to avoid this error. When in doubt as to the correct effort, start easy and finish strong. If you consistently overshoot your interval paces and struggle at the end of workouts, you are teaching your mind and body to slow down during hard efforts, i.e., you get into a habit of slowing down. We want to reinforce the habit of staying consistent or speeding up as we go.
- Interval workouts offer a powerful training stimulus and can result in quick improvements to fitness. However, they can easily be overused, in which case runners will find they quickly hit a fitness plateau or regress.
- Interval workouts are generally saved for in-season training, to be used in the last few weeks preceding the goal race for the year. Otherwise, runners will find themselves peaking early, with their fitness stagnating (and even regressing) as they approach their most significant races.
- In the offseason or summer training period, interval work is used very sparingly, principally as a tool to remind runners what it feels like to push hard and run fast. Interval workouts can also be used in the week of a race as a quick preparatory stimulus. Occasional racing is a good substitute for interval workouts during an offseason training period.