

Erg Set-Up Checklist

A printable tick list for setting up your rowing machine and getting ready for each session

THE ROWING TUTOR

Work through sections 1 to 4 once, when the machine is new to you or has been moved. Use section 5 before every session. The menu names are for a Concept2 with a PM5 monitor. On other rowers, follow the maker's manual and keep the same principle: find a setting, write it down and repeat it.

1. The machine

1. ☐ The rower sits on a firm, level floor and does not rock when you pull.
2. ☐ There is room to slide the full length of the rail, with space for the handle at the front and your back at the finish.
3. ☐ The seat runs smoothly and the rail is wiped clean.
4. ☐ The handle pulls out smoothly and returns on its own, with no slack or snagging.
5. ☐ Any folding or joining parts are locked, and no bolts are loose.
6. ☐ Children and pets are kept away from the flywheel and chain whenever the machine is in use.

2. Foot stretcher

7. ☐ Your feet sit flat against the plates, with the strap across the widest part of your foot.
8. ☐ The straps are tight enough that your feet stay put through the finish.
9. ☐ Your heels can lift slightly as you come forward to the catch.
10. ☐ With your legs flat at the finish, the handle travels to your lower ribs in a straight line, clear of your knees. If your knees are in the way, move the stretcher one setting and try again.
11. ☐ You have written down the setting: _____

3. Drag factor

The damper is not a resistance setting. A higher damper lets in more air and makes the machine feel heavier, but it does not mean you are training harder.

12. ☐ The damper is set somewhere around 3 to 5 to start with.
13. ☐ You have opened More Options, then Display Drag Factor, taken a few strokes and read the number.
14. ☐ You have moved the damper until the number is where you want it. Rule of thumb: many home rowers sit around 110 to 130, with smaller or newer rowers towards the bottom and bigger, stronger rowers towards the top.
15. ☐ You have written down the drag factor: _____ and the damper position: _____
16. ☐ You use the same drag factor every session, and check the number rather than the lever. The same damper position can give a different number as room temperature and flywheel dust change.

4. Monitor

17. ☐ The monitor is angled so that you can read it without craning your neck.

- 18. ☐ The batteries or power supply are working.
- 19. ☐ Pace shows per 500m, with stroke rate visible. Use the Change Units and Change Display buttons.
- 20. ☐ You know how to set a workout: Select Workout, then New Workout.
- 21. ☐ If you use a heart rate strap, it is paired and reading.

5. Before every session

- 22. ☐ You feel well. If you have a fever, chest symptoms or a stomach bug, do not train.
- 23. ☐ You know today's session, target rate and target effort.
- 24. ☐ The drag factor matches your written number.
- 25. ☐ The workout is set on the monitor.
- 26. ☐ You are wearing fitted clothing that will not catch on the seat or rail.
- 27. ☐ Water, a towel and a fan are within reach.
- 28. ☐ Your feet are strapped in and the straps are tight.
- 29. ☐ You will warm up first, starting easy at r18–20.
- 30. ☐ Your log and a pen are ready for recording the session afterwards.

Stop straight away if you get chest pain, dizziness, faintness or unusual breathlessness. If chest pain does not settle quickly, call 999. This checklist is general guidance, not medical advice.

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