

Strength Training for Cyclist

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Strength training is usually done during the winter months while cyclists are training with less intensity and building the aerobic base or foundation miles. Try to strength train on days that are designated as a "day off" or an "easy" day in your cycling schedule. If you find that your strength training program makes you sore or leaves your arms and legs feeling "dead" for endurance workouts, you may want to reduce the amount of sets and repetitions.

Strength training is divided into three phases, Adaptation, Power, and Maintenance. Each phase includes the same basic exercises, however the amount of sets, reps (repetitions), speed, frequency, and phase length will vary.

Before beginning your strength training workout, always do a 10-minute warm-up, either on a stationary bike/trainer, running, or an aerobic workout. After a strength training session, cool-down with a 5-10 minute easy spin on a stationary bike. Running is not recommended as a cool-down.

When determining how much weight to lift, you should slightly underestimate the load and then adjust as the phase progresses. Always start with less than you think is possible for the number of reps, and then slowly add more.

Complete all sets of each exercise or paired exercises before starting next exercise.

Recommended Exercises:

1. Lower body (squat & heel raises, step-ups)
2. Upper body (bent-over rows, shrugs)
3. Legs (hamstring curls, knee extension, and secret weapons)
4. Push-ups (20-30 reps)
5. Crunches/abs (your choice of type, 30-50 reps)

Strength Training Phases

1. Adaptation Phase:

Sets: 2-3

Reps: 15-20

Speed: Moderate emphasizing form

Frequency: 2-3 times per week

Phase Length: 2-4 weeks

2. Power Phase:

Sets: 2-4

Reps: 4-6

Speed: Slow to moderate emphasizing form

Frequency: 2-3 times per week

Phase Length: 3-6 weeks

3. Maintenance Phase:

Sets: 1-2

Reps: 6-12

Speed: Slow to moderate

Frequency: 1 time per week

Phase Length: indefinite