

Pre-Performance Routines

Follow the 3-Phase Model to maximize your potential!

What is your sport? _____

What self-paced tasks are part of your sport?

What distractions are there during the self-paced tasks?

Example Routine (Bench): Load bar. Sit on bench. 2 deep breaths and clear mind. Elongate torso/stretch. Arch and lay back on bench. Grip bar right, left hand. Center bar on rack. Put fingers on edge of knurling and slide out 1 in. Take deep breath and arch back. Dig right, left foot into ground. Feel tension through next breath. Unrack the bar. With each step, became one with the lift, let all external noises be silenced as total focus is in this moment.

Now that you have that, go through the phases and write what you could do to help yourself overcome distractions. If you already have a routine, think of how you can elevate it to support greater success.

1

List different routines and aspects to incorporate (self-talk, imagery, attentional focus). Then practice!

2

Pick the routine that worked best for you and practice. Practice in controlled settings to build confidence.

3

Practice your routine in situations that mimic real-life (fans, coaches, trash talk, commentators, music, events).

Use your new routine in competition to overcome distractions, increase control, and reduce negative internal thoughts.



Pre-Performance Routines

Coach Sheet

The Why: This worksheet is to help athletes navigate through the process of creating pre-performance routines. These routines are an effective way to promote physical and mental readiness prior to the execution of a self-paced skill. Self-paced skills in sport are often ones that require a higher level of precision or accuracy to be successful. To do so, it is imperative that the athlete prepares for the event and changes their focus and bodily reactions to sport. Often, athletes will implement breathing techniques to lower the heart and breathing rates. Athletes also incorporate other mental skills into this routine; the implementation of self-talk, imagery, and attentional focus blurs out the background and helps the athlete to be hyper-focused on the task at hand.

Learning how to properly create, practice, and implement routines will not only assist athletes in the weight room, but will allow athletes to effectively use routines in their performances and competitions. These strategies can also be applied to events outside of sport, such as academics, personal, and professional aspirations. As a strength & conditioning coach, we know that our work and relationships with athletes helps them to become a better, more rounded individual. Teaching this skill will help them to be successful and strive for greatness throughout every aspect of their lives.

The How: This can be done using the worksheet in a breakdown or by working with athletes individually via discussion and demonstration. In this second scenario, you negate the reliance on the worksheet; however, an athlete might benefit by receiving the sheet after practicing the routine to assist in reflection and modification of their new/improved routine.

Phase 1: Preliminary Preparation Instructions

- provide evidence/demonstrations
- emphasize trying different routines
- practice including different skills

Phase 2: Task-Specific Preparatory Instructions

- athlete selects the routine that's best for them
- coaches motivate athletes to keep practicing
- athletes practice their routine in low-risk space to build confidence

Phase 3: Preparatory Instructions for the Real-Life Self-Paced Event

- practice their routine in a space that mimics competition, time constraints & distractions
- ensure routine fits the time-regulated self-paced task
- practice with distracting "fans," coaches, music, events going on around you

The Prompt: No prompt for this sheet. This skill and routine will take some time for athletes to practice and incorporate into their competitions. Start small, asking their routines before coming to a lift, before hitting a set of an exercise, before practice. Have them practice routines and modifying them in the weight room and then talk about how they can benefit their sport. This will be a long-duration skill that will always be evolving, keep having conversations with athletes!