

GIVE IT A TRI



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Recently, a friend in another state mentioned that they were going to participate in the Orange Theory “DriTri” which is a three part event that apparently has been happening about twice a year for some time. I had no idea. While I’m more a fan of leading group fitness than participating in group fitness, I was intrigued by this interesting benchmark workout.

I’d also recently purchased a [rowing machine](#) for variety and experimentation here at home – and to share with the upstairs neighbors if they wish to train with it as well.



THE 2000 METER ROW...

A QUALITY TIME WITH MY NEW [CONCEPT2 ROWER!](#)

The fact that the “DriTri” starts with a 2,000 meter row was reason enough to give it a try – with some modifications. The event as it was explained to me consisted of three parts – the row, 300 total reps of [bodyweight](#) exercises, and a 5K run. In the context of an Orange Theory location, these things would all be done indoors on equipment.

YES! While I'd been sneaking in some rowing time here and there with the new machine—especially on days where I wanted to get moving but was taking a break from heavy kettlebell lifting or swings on the previous day—I wanted to evaluate where I was with rowing in general. Doing a quick 2000 meters was a good way to kind of get an idea. It also gave me an excuse to study up a little more on the damper setting which I had set at 5 because well... middle? I dunno. Working on it. But for lack of a better description, the rowing machine has been my active rest / cardio on non-lifting days, or as a 15-20 minute “burnout” after a short but heavy duty kettlebell workout at home. Sometimes I'd just been going in for a row to burn off extra energy without too much cognitive load. Ok, so that took about 10 minutes — remember I'm a beginner to rowing and still getting my form dialed in, so don't say mean stuff! Currently looking to hire a rowing coach to make sure I'm not doing something goofy. It doesn't feel like I am, but I want to be sure.

NO ROWING MACHINE?

I came up with a weird alternative to try instead—and tested it with my advanced client when we did our “garage-based” version of it with no machines and no running (see the 5K part to see what we did there). While this alternative is it not a direct correlation and certainly not a replacement for rowing in general, it is kind of fun and weird, and seems to fit the bill effort-wise (at least from my own testing with myself and an advanced client).

You'll need an interval timer to go for a little over 10 minutes of the following interval pattern: 30 work, 15 seconds “rest”. There will be a total of 14 work intervals.

As for [kettlebells](#)—go too light and the bases are so dang small that it can be a danger to your wrists or just plain anxiety inducing. Alternately, hex-dumbbells are great for this too), or [bodyweight](#) squats.

If you're working with a partner, you can alternate every other round if you only have one pair of [kettlebells](#) or dumbbells. This alternative is meant to be self-scaling and submaximal. Though if you find yourself yawning with boredom feel free to add a [kettlebell](#) to the squats, or up your weights on the plank rows. Personally, I found that with intentional effort and focus, this was an appropriate intensity to roughly approximate what happened during my 2,000 meter row the previous week.

Each work interval will be either plank rows (with reasonable weight

Rowing Alternative Interval Experiment 7 Rounds of:

- 30 seconds [kettlebell](#) plank rows (I used a pair of [16kg kettlebells](#))
- 15 seconds rest and setup
- [Bodyweight](#) squats
- 15 seconds rest and setup

THE 300 REPS OF BODYWEIGHT EXERCISES PART...

After a quick google search I found the previous few years of the bodyweight exercises chosen for this portion of Orange Theory's DriTri. I modified this a bit too as well... I do a lot of bodyweight exercises with the two online fitness classes I lead twice a week for a local company.

Talking while doing these exercises realtime for over a year now has given me some weird “superpowers” mainly the fact that I can get anaerobic on them and keep talking. That whole “if you can talk you’re in the fat burning zone!” myth can in no way apply to me anymore, I’m not even sure what’s happening at this point on a physiological level (ok I’m joking, I know what’s up, it’s just... atypical).

I needed to modify the choices of exercises to take out the need for a bench – because I just don’t have one – and that’s fine, the way I train, I don’t need one. I did at least have a couple of fun options for step-ups given the way the gym at home is built, and because of the super plyo boxes I bought from a local OCR gym at the beginning of the pandemic. So step ups? Yeah, bring it!

Also, I modded the abs-move to be [hanging knee raises](#) instead – because I like those, and because of course there’s a [pull up](#) bar at home. Floor based leg raises are of course a great alternative if you’re without a pullup bar.

I don't agree with the idea of having both [push-ups](#) and burpees in the same circuit, but given my current state of [pushup](#) madness it wasn't going to matter much to me. Feel free to swap in another move if having both those moves in there will be too many push-ups and push-up adjacent exercises.

The burpees are fun though. Yes, I like burpees. Sorry not sorry.

BODYWEIGHT EXERCISE CIRCUIT – 2x = 300 TOTAL REPS:

- 20x [Push-Ups](#)
- 20x Floor Tap Lunges with Knee Raise (These have been a recent favorite – I will make video – some people call these “sprinter lunges”)
- 20x Burpees (break it up into 2 sets of 10 or 4 sets of 5... I hate counting to 20, so I do 2x10 with a little staggering around between the sets)
- 40x Step-ups (Ohhhh Yeahhh)
- 30x [Hanging Knee Raises](#) (or leg raises from the floor)
- 20x Plank Jacks (plank position, but you’re doing jumping jacks with your legs basically)

THE 5K PART...

While I’m not a runner at all (other than the occasional hill sprint), I have a personal belief that someone who is reasonably physically fit should be able to run a 5K in a reasonable amount of time without additional training.

While I haven’t “officially” run in a very long time, I was pleased to see that even with the additional 1 mile downhill quick walk to the paved walking/running trail near the house, I was still able to complete the 5K portion of this challenge outdoors in a little over 33 mins.

While running is still not something I enjoy, I did have more fun with the run portion that I thought I would, mainly because our wonderful running trail. I’ll definitely do this whole challenge again when we’re further into Fall. The timing gave me the idea for a no-run version of this challenge too.

NOWHERE TO RUN?

Instead, consider a kettlebell variation – and it can be as simple as 10-30 mins of 30 sec on, 30 sec off kettlebell swings with a moderate weight. More experienced folks would want to consider the longer duration. This is also a great chance to practice a lot of hand to hand swings with a lighter weight as well. I don't normally like to train kettlebell swings as an endurance event as I stick to the "Hardstyle" attitude of short, fast, intense. But this is a good and notable exception.

HAVE YOU DONE A DRITRI?

Have you done the DriTri benchmark challenge workout at Orange Theory or on your own? Let me know if you have and/or if you try some of the ideas I've outlined above. I'm actually thinking of doing it again this weekend once the rain stops – it's a nice Sunday Challenge and a way to finish out the week strong. If I haven't accomplished all my goals for the week, I know I can at least nail this one.

Did you enjoy this post? Let me know in the comments on the original blog post

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