

RPE: How Hard Does This Feel?


RPE

RPE stands for **Rate of Perceived Exertion**



It is a 1–10 scale that helps you describe how hard an exercise feels.



Your RPE may change depending on your sleep, stress, energy, soreness, medication, and the exercise itself.

1

Almost No Effort

I could do this while checking my email and telling you what I ate for breakfast.

2

Very Easy

I'm moving my body a little but still wondering whether we have actually started yet.

3

Easy

I feel some effort, but I can easily chat and still give you a detailed story.

4

Comfortable

I can talk normally and may even be questioning whether you are being too nice to me.

5

Moderate

I'm still talking, but the story is becoming shorter.

6

Moderately Challenging

I can answer your question, but please do not ask for unnecessary details.

7

Challenging but Controlled

I heard what you said. I just need a moment before I respond.

8

Hard

Our conversation has been reduced to nodding and short answers.

9

Very Hard

I am reconsidering our friendship, but I am still in the meeting.

10

Maximum Effort

My internet connection is suddenly unstable; I may need to end this meeting immediately.

Where Should Most of My Training Feel?

Most exercises do not need to reach a 9 or 10. Depending on the exercise and how you feel that day, **much of your training may fall around a 5–8:**

5-6

building confidence

7-8

challenging enough to
build strength while
maintaining control

9-10

used sparingly,
if at all