



1 Hour Spinning Workout: Over-Under Intervals

If you only have one hour to ride your bike, you want to have some fun, work hard, and get faster. This one hour spinning workout targets just that.

Workout Description/Purpose:

This one-hour cycling workout, classically referred to as “Over-Under” Intervals helps to improve a cyclist’s functional threshold power (FTP). In other words, it helps to increase the pace that you can hold for an extended period of time.

The “Over” portions of the interval pushes the body to a higher intensity than it is comfortable with, therefore requiring the body to make adaptations and overtime, improvements. The “Under” portions of the interval makes the “Over” portions sustainable while still teaching the body to recover at high intensities.

From a mountain bike specific standpoint, this workout serves an additional purpose because it helps an athlete adapt to speed changes and accommodate effort changes. Trails often require effort changes as the terrain dictates speed and intensity quite often.

Pre-Workout Preparation:

Before starting your workout prepare your body and your workout space. Here is a short pre-workouts checklist:

Water

Towel

Headphones/Speaker

Gu or Other Ride Food

Bike Computer or Other Timer

Calibrate Powermeter

Heartrate monitor/strap

Short Dynamic Stretching/Mobility Routine

Studies have shown that static stretching can actually decrease maximal muscular contractions and fatigue resistance. Therefore, save static stretching for the end of workouts and pre-prepare your body with dynamic movements. Foam rolling and leg swings are optimal exercises for before workouts.

Warm Up:

Warm Up for the first 15 minutes of the workout. Spin in an easy gear and allow your legs and body to find a good rhythm. After 5 minutes, complete 3 x 1 minute at 90+ RPMs. These efforts should be completed in an easy gear so that it is not difficult to turn over the pedals. Your power or effort does not need to be high during these warm up intervals. The leg speed alone will help to warm up your body. Spin at a “normal” cadence for 1 minute between the leg speed drills. After the leg speed drills, finish the warm up by feel and prepare mentally for the workout.

Workout:

Execute the following for the main set of the workout:

- 3 x 9 minutes completed as:
- 1 minute @ 102-105% FTP
- 2 minutes @90-90% FTP
- 1 minute @ 102-105% FTP
- 2 minutes @90-90% FTP
- 1 minute @ 102-105% FTP
- 2 minutes @90-90% FTP

There is no additional rest during the 9-minute interval. After the 9-minute interval, recover with 4.5 minutes of very easy spinning before the next interval.

If you do not have a power meter, or are not comfortable training with power then you can also complete this workout based on heart rate or rate of perceived exertion.

If you are completing the workout based on heart rate then complete the “Over” intervals at 3-5 beats higher than your threshold heart rate and the “Under” intervals at 3-5 beats lower than your threshold heart rate. Keep in mind that the intervals are short so your heart rate will take time to adjust to your effort shift and your monitor will take time to dictate that change. Consider also completing the workout based on rate of perceived exertion (RPE).

If you are completing the intervals based on RPE then complete the “Over” intervals at a 9/10 effort and the “Under” intervals at a 7/10 effort.

Pro Tip: Determine your threshold power or heart rate by completing 30 minutes at your best sustained effort. Your threshold will be the average power or average heart rate that you maintained during that effort.

Cool Down:

Finish the final 9 minutes of the workout as a cool down. It is very important to ease your body out of such a hard effort instead of just stopping immediately after the final interval.

Stretching:

After your workout is the perfect time to complete a stretching routine. Here is a list of stretches that you can complete after your workout:

High Lunge
Warrior Pose
Downward Facing Dog
Pigeon Stretch
Quad Stretch
Piriformis Stretch
Thomas Stretch
Butterfly Stretch

Music/Playlist:

I think music is such a personal thing so I have never been one to impose my music choices on someone else. I know some people who like to listen to pump up music during workouts, and others who enjoy calmer music to keep them in control during hard efforts. Sometimes, I even enjoy listening to podcasts during a workout. There is no right or wrong answer. I like listening to Pandora or Spotify so that they pick the music for me. Don't be afraid to try out a few things and see what works best for you. Here are some ideas to get you inspired:

- **Stronger by Kanye West**
- **Don't Stop the Music by Rihanna**
- **I Like It by Cardi B feat J Balvin and Bad Bunny**
- **Believer by Imagine Dragons**
- **Hey Look Ma, I Made It by Panic! At the Disco**