RankTime

FREE PRINTABLE · 4 PAGES

REST CHART · REST TEST · LOG

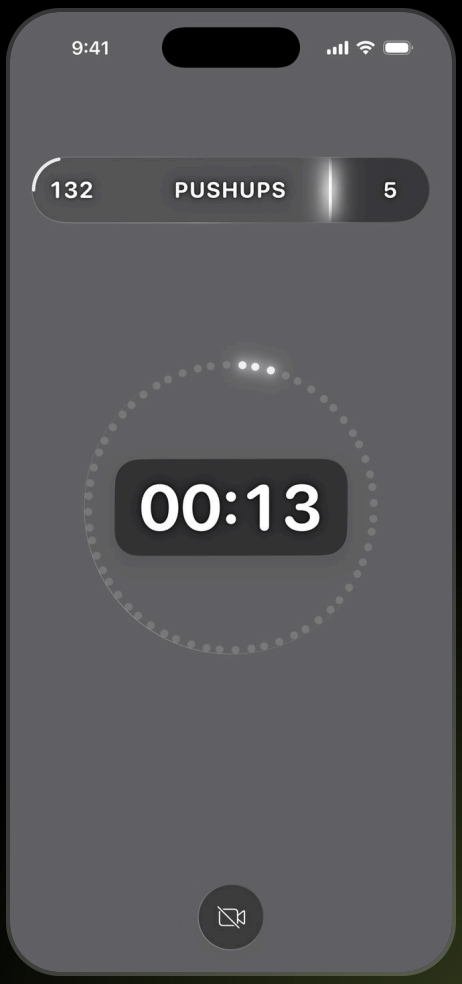
Rest Between Sets

How long to rest for strength, muscle and endurance, rest times for push-ups, pull-ups, squats and swings, and a test to find your own.

2 The rest chart on one page

3 Your rest test and set log

4 Train it with RankTime



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From the free guide at ranktime.app/guides/rest-between-sets/
Made by RankTime, the workout timer that counts your reps.

HOW LONG TO REST

Rest between sets

Rest between two sets of the same exercise. Whatever the goal, the closer a set took you to your limit, the longer the rest it needs.

GOAL	REST	WHAT THE SETS LOOK LIKE
Strength, power	**2 to 5 min**	Heavy sets of 1 to 6 reps, explosive work, any set close to your max.
Muscle growth	**1.5 to 3 min**	6 to 15 reps, close to failure. Longer for big exercises. Beginners: 1 to 2 min.
Endurance	**30 s to 2 min**	Under a minute after 10 to 15 reps, 1 to 2 min after 15 to 20 or more.
Easy practice	**30 to 60 s**	Sets of about half your max, far from failure. They recover fast.
Intervals	**By the clock**	Tabata 10 s, EMOM what is left of the minute, a circuit only the walk to the next one.

Bodyweight rest times

EXERCISE	HARD SETS	EASY SETS
Push-ups	**2 to 3 min**	30 to 60 s, at half your max
Pull-ups	**2 to 3 min**	About 1 min, or an EMOM
Squats	**2 to 3 min, jump squats**	30 to 60 s
Swings	**2 to 3 min, heavy**	EMOM of 10, or 30 on, 30 off
Burpees	The interval sets the rest: 30 on and 30 off, EMOM or Tabata	

What the research says

Short rest costs reps. Four heavy squat sets: about 18 reps in total with 1 minute of rest, 25 with 5 minutes.

Strength. Over 2 minutes works best once you are trained. 1 to 2 minutes is enough for beginners.

Muscle. More than a minute helps a little. Past 90 seconds adds little.

Endurance. Short rest on purpose.

Three rules. The harder the set, the longer the rest. Time it, so two minutes never turn into five. If the reps fall apart, rest longer next time.

Sources: Rahimi 2005; Grgic and colleagues 2018; Singer and colleagues 2024; Schoenfeld and colleagues 2016; American College of Sports Medicine 2009. Links in the guide.

YOUR NUMBERS

Find your rest time

1. **One exercise, one effort.** For example, 3 sets of push-ups, each stopped about 2 reps before failure.
2. **Rest 1 minute** between the sets. Write down the reps of each one.
3. **Next session, 2 minutes.** Same exercise, same effort. The session after, 3 minutes.
4. **Compare the totals.** Pick the shortest rest that keeps your total close to the best one.

REST	DATE	EXERCISE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	TOTAL
1 minute						
2 minutes						
3 minutes						

Exercise _____ Goal _____ My rest _____

My set log

DATE	EXERCISE	REST	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4	NOTES

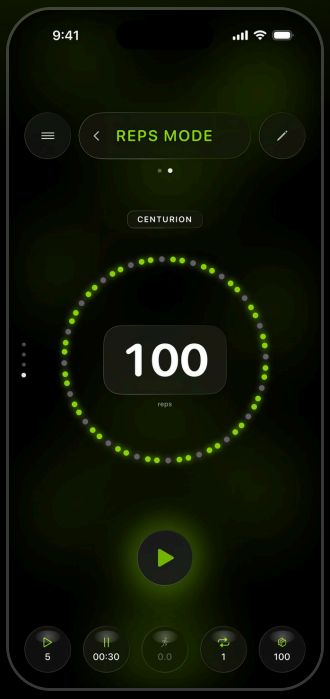
For endurance work, a small drop from set to set is fine: that is the training. For strength and muscle, a big drop means the rest was too short.

RankTime

TRAIN IT WITH RANKTIME

Time your rests with RankTime

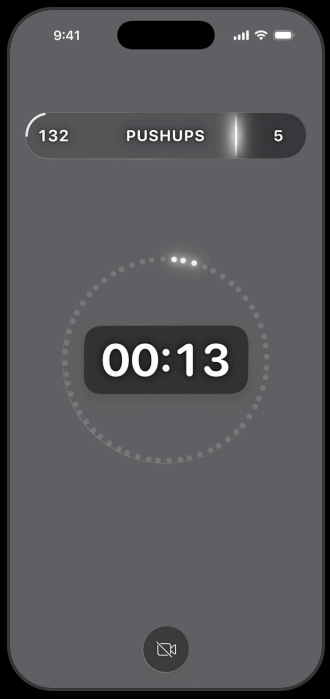
Set the rest once and stop watching the clock. In REPS mode the camera counts every rep, and the last rep of a set starts the rest.



CENTURION: sets of 5, with 30 seconds of rest.



The camera counts every rep of the set.



The last rep starts the rest: grey, counting down.

1. Swipe to REPS or TIME, then up or down to a saved workout like CENTURION.
2. Tap the rest circle, second from the left, and drag: 5 seconds to 10 minutes.
3. Set the reps per set on the first circle, then press play.
4. The last rep starts the rest. Tap to pause, then swipe left to skip ahead.

- ✓ The camera counts your reps on the phone itself. Nothing is uploaded.
- ✓ Timers built in: AMRAP, EMOM, Tabata, ladders, and GPS runs before or after.
- ✓ A military rank for every exercise, from Private at rep one to General of the Armies.

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Scan to get RankTime
on your iPhone