

PART 4 – TECHNIQUE & FORM

The following section contains several exercises you can do with your Vasa SwimErg. There are many more exercises possible, especially exercises that target specific muscle groups (back, chest, legs, shoulders). Many of the exercises you can do on the Vasa Trainer are also adaptable for the SwimErg. To get ideas and see a complete list of these exercises or additional workouts, please visit our website:

www.vasatrainer.com

EXERCISE TIPS

HANDLES VS. PADDLES

Most exercises will be more comfortable performed with the handles rather than the swim paddles. You may prefer to use the paddles for exercises that simulate swim or surf padding strokes. Swim Coaches feel that using the paddles force the athlete to engage the many muscles of the hand that you use while swimming or paddling in the water, resulting in stronger hands and better technique.

WARM UP AND STRETCHING

Always warm up with 5-10 minutes of light intensity aerobic activity before training with the Vasa SwimErg. Freestyle Endurance is an excellent exercise for warming up. Stretching after warm up and cool down after completing your workout is recommended.

SAFETY

Always practice strict safety when using the Vasa SwimErg. See PART 2, "Safety and the Vasa SwimErg" for guidelines on how to use the Vasa SwimErg safely, as well as tips for working with children.

For tips on how to safely get on and off the Vasa SwimErg for different positions, see the instructions on the next page.

PROPER BREATHING

- Always breathe rhythmically during exercise. Holding your breath can be dangerous because it stops the blood flow to your brain and could make you light headed or faint.
- Breathe in and out through both your nose and your mouth in order to get enough oxygen during each breath.
- Exhale when the exercise is the hardest, and inhale when the exercise is the easiest.
- Swimmers can practice "in water" breathing rhythm to simulate that aspect of the stroke.

PROPER FORM AND TECHNIQUE

Follow the directions in this manual for performing each exercise in a correct, safe manner. For exercises you do while lying on your back, press your lower back into the padded bench and tuck your chin to your chest. This will prevent lower back strain and will also give your abdominal muscles a better workout. For any exercises that are labeled ADVANCED, start slowly until you feel comfortable with the motion and follow the tips for safety and stability.

CHART YOUR PROGRESS

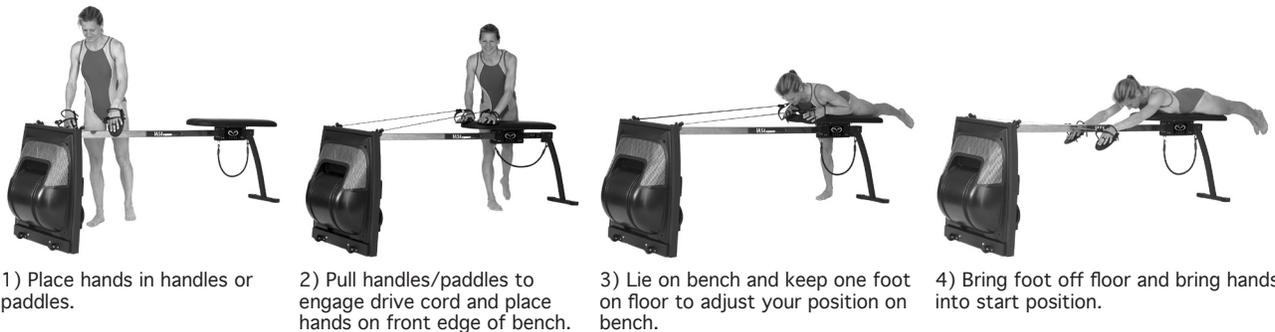
Tracking your improvements on the Vasa SwimErg, as in all training, will be a key in reaching your goals. One of the most effective methods for monitoring progress is to keep an accurate training log. A good log can serve to help you monitor the effects of each workout and the stresses associated with training. See the sample Vasa training log in the end of the "Workout" section. This can serve as a guide for tracking these components in your training program. You are more likely to be satisfied with your exercise program if you keep an effective log.

SWIMMING TECHNIQUE

There are two parts to the basic stroke: (1) the propulsive stroke and (2) the recovery. The movements are blended together since the entire stroke is smooth and continuous. There is no need to stop at any point of the stroke, unless you are isolating a certain part of the stroke or if you are working on technique aspects of the stroke. Complete the stroke sequence comparing your hand, arm, elbow, and body position to those shown in the pictures on the following pages. Improper technique can result in injury or poor results. Ideally, have a coach observe your technique too. You can also use a mirror or video camera / monitor set up in front of you to view your stroke.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Be certain your hand position in the paddles or handles is comfortable and stable.
- Keep your elbows high at the catch and throughout the stroke. Concentrate on simulating perfect stroke technique.
- Use a continuous, fluid motion throughout the stroke.
- To avoid bumping your feet on the rear stanchion as the seat roller forward, keep your feet 6-8 inches apart so that they straddle the monorail as you glide forward.
- Getting safely on and off your Vasa SwimErg is an important part of your program. Please follow the guidelines below for the basic swimming stroke. For other positions, please refer to "PART 5 - Vasa SwimErg Exercises".
- **CAUTION:** Do not release the paddles or handles while drive cords are extended. They could strike the monitor or front assembly and cause damage or injury. Always manually return the handles or paddles to the ready position on the front assembly.
- During the basic swimming or paddling strokes, your arm, hand, and body position need to simulate proper stroke technique as closely as possible. Ask your coach or a friend who knows proper stroke technique to observe and point out areas that need correction. You can also place a mirror in front of you (and beside you if possible) to watch your technique, or set up a video camera and film your workout in order to analyze stroke technique.

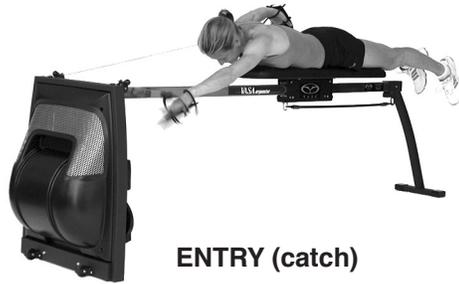


SAFETY NOTE: Do not release the paddles or handles while the drive cords are extended. They could strike the monitor or front assembly and cause damage or injury. Always manually return the handles/paddles slowly to the ready position on the front assembly (as shown in left insert).

FREESTYLE

ENTRY (the catch)

- Start the pull with your left hand, reaching forward and laterally out to “catch” the water.
- To help with the “catch”, drop your left shoulder slightly when reaching.
- Drive the opposite hip into the bench at the same time you catch and pull. Use the core abdominal muscles to initiate the hip drive.
- Keep your head neutral and look down.



ENTRY (catch)

MID-STROKE

- Out sweep: Press the hand laterally to the body with only slight elbow flexion and begin to rotate the hand at the wrist medially.
- In sweep: Press the hand towards the hips through further flexion of the elbow and wrist.
- Keep your elbows in a high position. If there were an eye on your elbow, it would be looking to the side in a direction perpendicular to the monorail.



MID-STROKE

FINISH

- With the hand at the hip and palm facing towards the feet, press back by extending the arm to approximately 90% of full extension.
- Keep your arm in line with your body to reduce drag.
- Finish strongly with a final push of the hand.



FINISH

RECOVERY

- Elbow leads, with hand relaxed, directly under the elbow, trailing fingers, then reach forwards to the entry position.



RECOVERY

NOTE: Since your body cannot rotate as much as in the water, we recommend that you keep the recovery hand & forearm below the level of the monorail to avoid impingement of the shoulder area.

TIPS

- If it seems “too easy”, open the damper door to a higher setting.
- If the seat rolls too far forward, attach a stretch cord.
- Have someone watch you to help you match your body positions to those shown, or set up a mirror or video camera to watch your stroke.
- Use a smooth and continuous stroke throughout the stroke.

BUTTERFLY

ENTRY (the catch)

- Fully extend your arms in the start and position. Fingers enter the water first, thumbs leading slightly. Cup and catch the paddle with both arms simultaneously in preparation for the out sweep.
- Imagine your arms are extended over a big ball.
- Keep your head neutral and look down.



ENTRY

MID-STROKE

- Outsweep: Together, the arms press laterally, and the arm begins to flex at the elbow.
- In sweep: As the arms continue to flex, the hands turn medially and press towards the body.
- Keep your elbows in a high position. If there were an eye on your elbow, it would be looking to the side in a direction perpendicular to the monorail. Also, imagine that your arms are still over the ball. This helps internal rotation.



MID-STROKE

FINISH

- As the hands come close to the body, they then press towards the feet, fully extending the arms at the elbow in preparation for the quick 'flick' out of the water for recovery.
- Press the finish with the heels of your hands. (Don't flick your wrists, keep wrists flexed at 90 degrees).



FINISH

RECOVERY

- Both arms return simultaneously, hand and forearms first, the arms swing outwards, elbows slightly flexed as they both continue to swing around and meet forward of the head, thumb and fingers first.
- Keep your elbows slightly higher than your shoulders. Your hands will be rotating during the return so that will be in position for "entry" phase of stroke.



RETURN

TIPS

- If it seems "too easy", open the damper door to a higher setting.
- If the seat rolls too far forward, attach a stretch cord.
- Have someone watch you to help you match your body positions to those shown, or set up a mirror or video camera to watch your stroke.
- Use a smooth and continuous stroke throughout the stroke.



PRE-LOAD

BREASTSTROKE - stroke segment training

Breaststroke training on the Vasa SwimErg can be performed in two ways:

A. Stroke Segment Training: In a prone position, you can practice segments of the breaststroke for conditioning and injury prevention.

B. Alternative Supine Position: Lie on your back and simulate the complete arm cycle.

SETUP - PRONE POSITION

Cross the drive cord under the monorail and put the left paddle in the right hand, and the right paddle in the left hand.

BREASTSTROKE ARM CYCLE SEGMENTS

1. REACH & GLIDE

Both hands, thumbs together, reach forward, fully extending the arm at the elbow.

2. OUT SWEEP

The hands rotate laterally and press laterally with slight flexion of the arm at the elbow.

3. IN SWEEP

The arms continue to flex at the elbow as the press on the paddle is now turned medially towards the chest.

OUT SWEEP



IN SWEEP



BREASTSTROKE KICK

SETUP AND GETTING SAFELY ON AND OFF

- Attach ankle straps to both legs, adjusting the ankle strap so the D-ring is in back.
- Grasp both drive cords on the front SwimErg assembly.
- Straddle the bench facing forward.
- Attach the drive cord to each ankle strap (left cord to left ankle, right cord to right ankle).
- Holding the front or side of the bench, with your chest at the front edge of the bench. Hold onto front or sides of bench with hands and bend your knees (see START).



hold front or sides of bench

START

- Bring your feet up so your knees are bent 90 degrees.
- The heels should be drawn up toward the hips and the toes are turned outward to initiate the propulsive phase.

KICK

- Straighten legs by pushing heels toward rear and simulating breast stroke kicking motion.
- The heels should continue to be the leaders and with the heels in a position outside of the knees, propulsion begins. The heels take an elliptical path as the legs are extended—pressure maintained on the bottom of the feet.

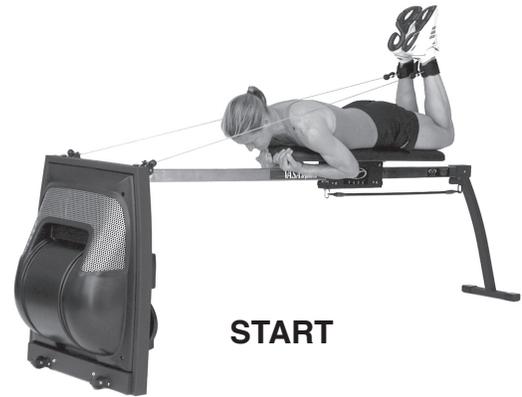
FINISH

- Return to start position by flexing knees to 90 degrees.
- At full extension the heels come together and the completion of the kick occurs as the toes are extended to maximize the streamlined position.

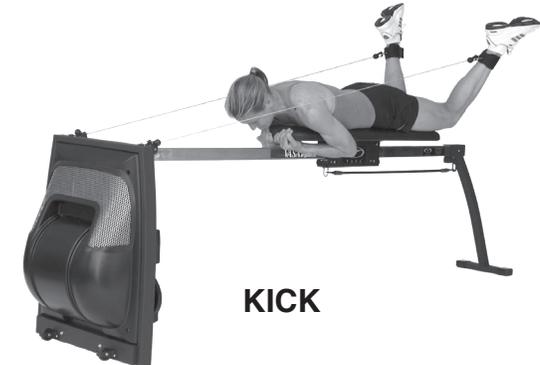
NOTE: When doing this exercise, DO NOT tether the bench so that your legs extend beyond the rear stanchion (the bench should be free moving). This could extend the drive cord beyond its intended length and damage your SwimErg.

TIPS

- If it seems “too easy”, open the damper door to a higher setting.
- If the seat rolls too far forward, attach a stretch cord.
- Have someone watch you to help you match your body positions to those shown, or set up a mirror or video camera to watch your stroke.
- Use a smooth and continuous stroke throughout the stroke.



START



KICK

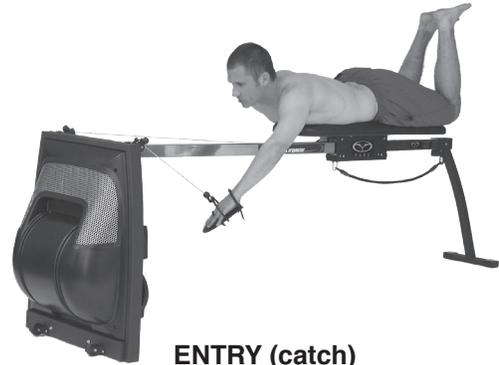


FINISH

SURF PADDLING

ENTRY (the catch)

- Start the pull with your left hand, reaching forward and laterally out to “catch” the water.
- To help with the “catch”, drop your left shoulder slightly when reaching.
- As on a surfboard, keep your head up and look forward.



ENTRY (catch)

MID-STROKE

- Out sweep: Press the hand laterally to the body with only slight elbow flexion and begin to rotate the hand at the wrist medially.
- In sweep: Press the hand towards the hips through further flexion of the elbow and wrist.
- Keep your elbows in a high position. If there were an eye on your elbow, it would be looking to the side in a direction perpendicular to the monorail.



MID-STROKE

FINISH

- With the hand at the hip and palm facing towards the feet, press back by extending the arm to approximately 90% of full extension.
- Keep your arm in line with your body to reduce drag.
- Finish strongly with a final push of the hand.



FINISH

RECOVERY

- Elbow leads, with hand relaxed, directly under the elbow, trailing fingers, then reach forwards to the entry position.

TIPS

- You can also do this exercise in a kneeling position to simulate paddleboarding, or the ready position to catch that killer wave! (See next page).
- If it seems “too easy”, open the damper door to a higher setting.
- If the seat rolls too far forward, attach a stretch cord.
- Have someone watch you to help you match your body positions to those shown, or set up a mirror or video camera to watch your stroke.
- Use a smooth and continuous stroke throughout the stroke.
- You may choose a “feet up” or “feet down” position, whichever is more comfortable.



FEET DOWN

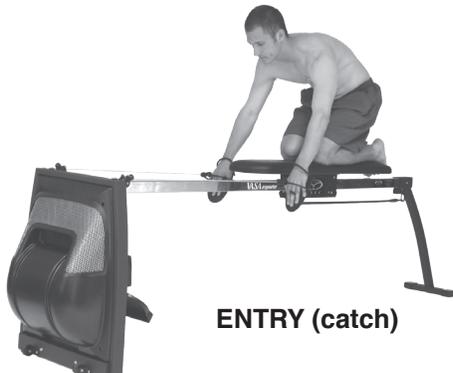
FEET UP

SURF PADDLING KNEELING (PADDLE BOARDING)



CAUTION: This is an advanced exercise. Be sure to hook your instep over the bench and engage your abdominals for stability. Start slowly until you feel comfortable with the motion and your stability.

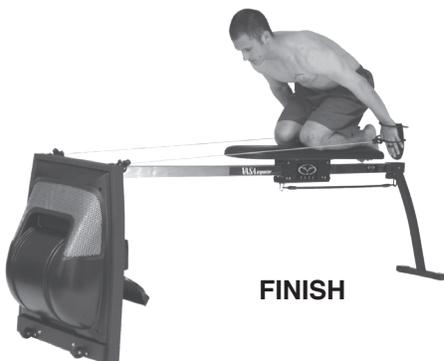
----- DOUBLE ARM -----



ENTRY (catch)

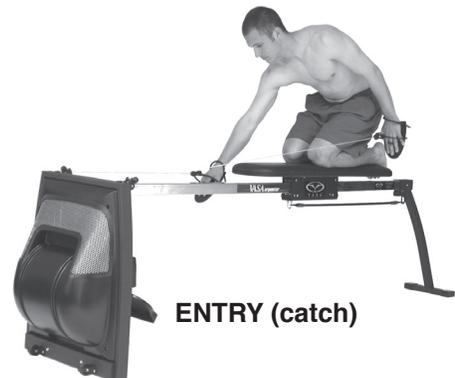


MID-STROKE



FINISH

----- SINGLE ARM -----



ENTRY (catch)



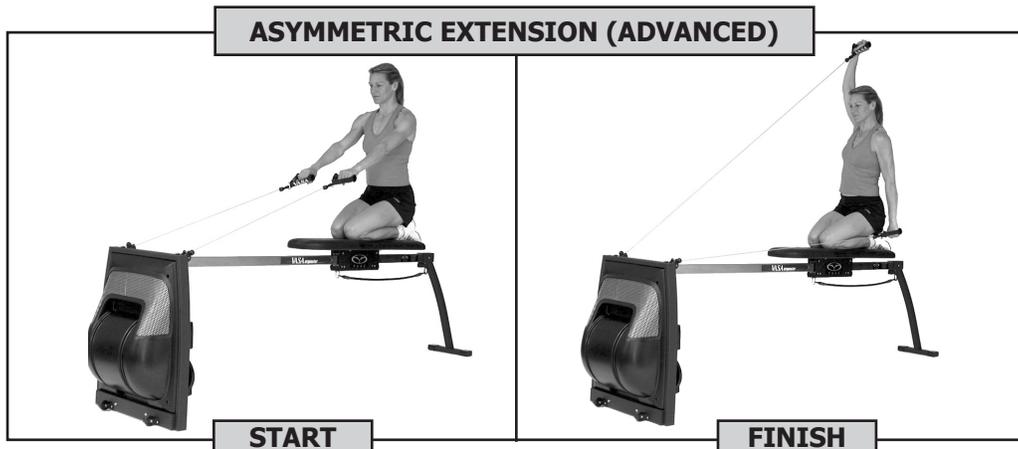
MID-STROKE



FINISH

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING EXERCISES

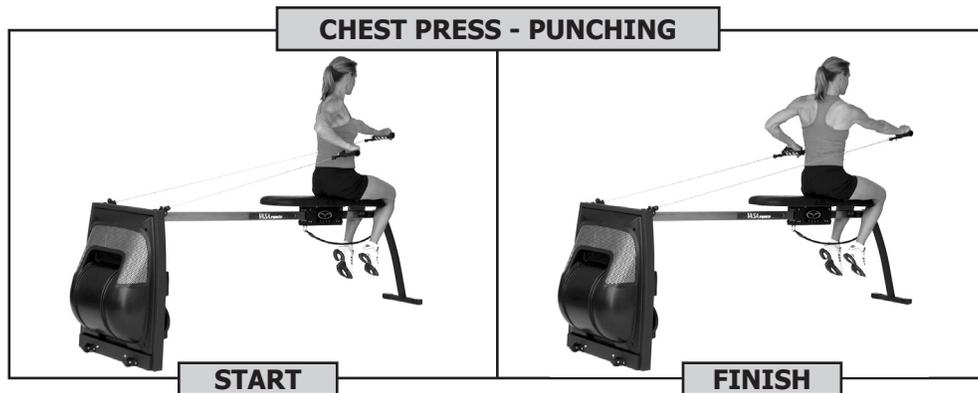
The following is a sampling of many other exercises possible to do on the Vasa SwimErg for Rehab, Endurance and Circuit Training. See our website for full listing and updates.



CAUTION: This is an advanced exercise that requires a strong core and excellent balance. Start slowly until you feel comfortable with the motion and your stability.

- Hold both handles and kneel on the bench facing forward. Hook instep over back edge of bench for stability.
- Start with your arms extended in front, shoulder-width apart. Keep back straight and hips stable.
- Simultaneously raise one arm toward ceiling while the opposite arm pulls straight down and back. Fully extend both arms. Reverse the motion raising the opposite arms up and back.

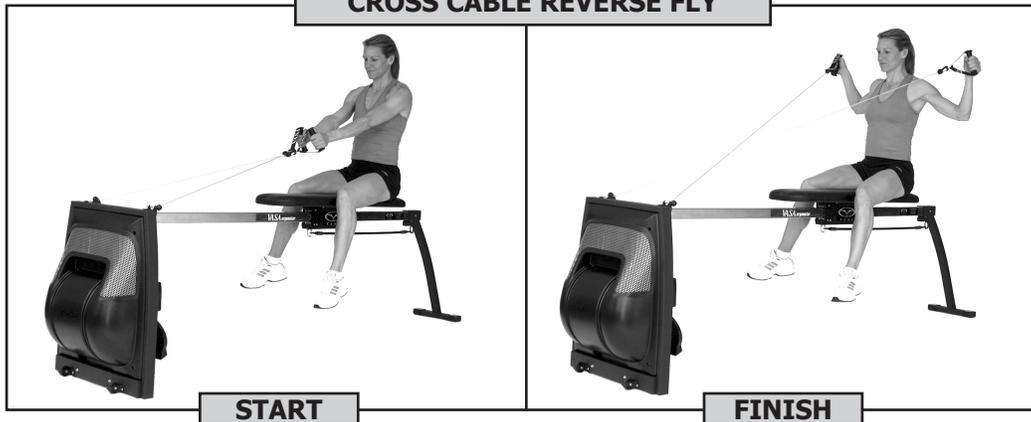
- ✓ DO: Fully extend both arms. Keep an upright posture and hips stable.
- ✗ DON'T: Do not tighten neck muscles or allow hips to move forward or backward.
- 🎯 TARGETED MUSCLES: Triceps, Deltoids (Shoulders), Latissimus, Upper Back, Core Stabilizers



- Hold both handles, facing backwards, pull on handle to engage drive cord and walk to the bench.
- Straddle the bench facing the back of the Vasa SwimErg, then sit on the bench with your knees bent 90 degrees. The bench should be fully supporting your upper legs.
- Start with upper arms at your side and elbows bent 90 degrees, palms facing down.
- Extend your right arm out in front of your chest until your arm is fully extended (punching motion).
- As you return your right arm back to the start position, extend your left arm out.
- Repeat this sequence.

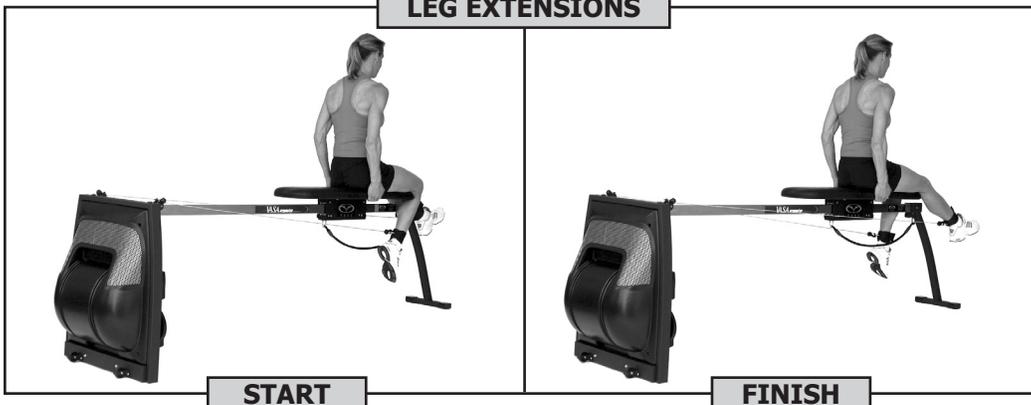
- ✓ DO: Pause briefly in the FINISH position and flex the pectorals for an extra contraction.
- ✗ DON'T: Do not twist upper body during the press. Movement should be from the pectorals.
- 🎯 TARGETED MUSCLES: Outer Pectorals

CROSS CABLE REVERSE FLY



- Cross the cables by taking the right handle with left hand & the left handle with right hand.
 - Hold handles as you sit on the bench facing forward with knees bent over the front of the bench.
 - Start with arms fully extended in front of you with your palms facing in or down.
 - In a sweeping motion, pull the handles outward and back.
 - Reverse motion to return to starting position.
- ✔ DO: Contract core muscles at all times. Feels like “pinching” shoulder blades together.
 - ✘ DON'T: Do not arch/curve back.
 - 🎯 TARGETED MUSCLES: Rear Deltoids (Rear Shoulders)

LEG EXTENSIONS



- Attach ankle straps around your ankles. Taking the drive cord clips in opposite hands (left cord in right hand & right cord in left hand), straddle the bench facing the rear. Clip the drive cords onto the ankle straps so cord is on same side of monorail. Sit on the bench with your legs bent over the end of the bench. Grasp sides of bench for stability.
 - Extend one leg until it is straight. As you bring one leg back to start position, bring the other leg towards finish position, so legs are continuously moving.
- ✔ DO: Contract the quadriceps muscles when the legs are fully extended.
 - ✘ DON'T: Do not allow the knee to go beyond a 90 degree angle when in the start position. This will put excessive stress on the knee.
 - 🎯 TARGETED MUSCLES: Quadriceps

NOTE: When doing this exercise, DO NOT tether the bench so that your legs extend beyond the rear stanchion (the bench should be free moving). This could extend the drive cord beyond its intended length and damage your SwimErg.

PART 5 – SWIM TRAINING TIPS & WORKOUTS

5.1 - DRILLS FOR IMPROVING SWIM TECHNIQUE

The Vasa SwimErg can help you to better see and correct flaws in your stroke. Here are a few drills to help some common problems and weaknesses.

GOAL: ELIMINATE CROSSOVER

Problem: Hands and Forearms cross the midline of the body at the catch phase of stroke. This motion will create excessive strain on your shoulders and possible injury. It will also slow you down by the side to side (fishtail) action you create with your body. This will quickly increase your drag in the water.

DRILL: WIDE CATCH

Stroke: Freestyle
Distance: 25 meters x 3-5 repeats
Damper: Level 1-2
Attachment: Paddles
Pace: Below Race Pace

Description: Using a "Catch-Up" or "Single-Arm" style drill, focus on making wide, exaggerated catches. Concentrate on keeping your hand in line with your shoulders at the catch. Pay close attention to make sure you are not crossing the midline of your body (or hitting the monorail).

Once you have success at the slower pace, gradually increase your speed to normal race pace. Swim with your head down in a neutral, streamlined position fully extended from your hand to toes. Monitor your hand position by looking up every few strokes. Make sure your catches are engaging above your shoulders.

Optional Tools/Aids:

1. Use a video camera to see your stroke pattern. Set up the camera so it is either at the front or the back of the Vasa SwimErg so you can best see your catch.
2. Lay a long mirror underneath the Vasa SwimErg so you can monitor your catch.
3. Ask a coach or friend to critique your stroke.

Assessment:

Times in the water should be improving due to more efficient stroke mechanics and less drag.

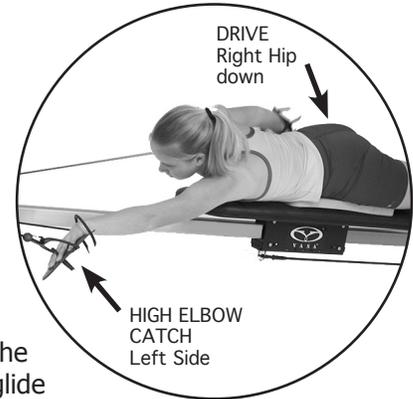
GOAL: IMPROVED HIP ROTATION

Problem: The swimmer has poor or weak hip rotation which creates a "flat" swim. The core muscles need to be activated to initiate the hip roll.

DRILL: HIP DRIVE

Stroke: Freestyle
Distance: 25 meters x 3-5 repeats
Damper: Level 1-2
Attachment: Paddles or Handles
Pace: Below Race Pace

Description: The swimmer simultaneously drives the opposite hip into the padded bench just at the catch. This won't give you the complete hip roll, but it will activate the same muscles in the core used to initiate the hip roll, which transfers energy and force into the stroking arm. It can also help with timing and getting a sense of glide between strokes.



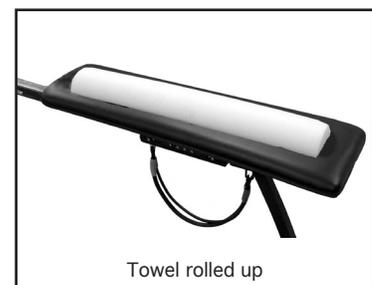
NOTE: all freestyle swim training on the SwimErg ideally would be done this way to maximize the conditioning and neuromuscular benefits.

Optional Tools/Aids:

1. To decrease stabilization, lay on a rolled up yoga mat or towel placed lengthwise on top of the Vasa padded bench. This destabilization will create an even greater demand for activation of core muscles.
2. Advanced swimmers: try items such as a long Aeromat pad or a foam half-round pad.

Assessment:

Typically, the energy cost for the Freestyle will increase when hip roll is initiated. Times will improve due to a longer, more powerful stroke with decreased drag.



You can purchase the Aeromat beams, and yoga mats at most online fitness supply stores. Or you can start by using a rolled up bath towel from your linen closet!

GOAL: IMPROVE ON YOUR HIGH ELBOW CATCH

Problem: The elbows drop during the catch thereby greatly reducing "pulling" power and increasing drag.

DRILL: FOREARM PULL

Stroke: Freestyle &/or Butterfly
Distance: 25 meters; Repeat drill up to 10 times
Damper: Level 1-2
Attachment: Handles
Pace: Below Race Pace

Description: Keep your head down in a neutral position while making your body long, head to toe throughout the drill. After you make your catch, focus on initiating the pull with your forearm. Be sure to keep your elbow high as if your arm needs to arch over a Physio Ball. (or there are eyes on your elbows looking out to the sides perpendicular to the monorail). Finish all the way to your hips with your fingers pointed down.

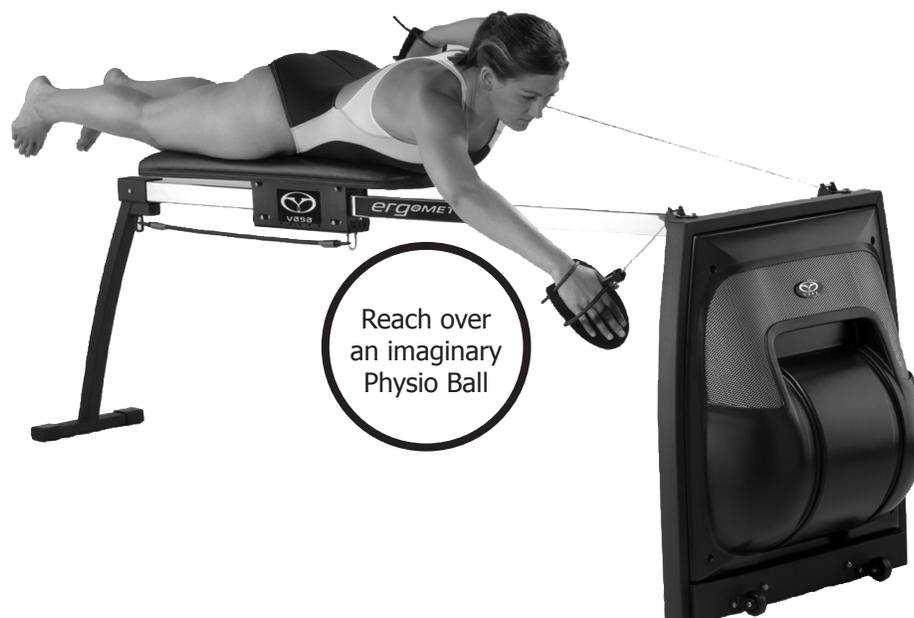
After you feel you have performed this with proficiency, gradually build your speed up to race pace continuing to focus on the high elbow catch.

Optional Tools/Aids:

1. Use a video camera to see your elbow position. Set up the camera at the back of the Vasa SwimErg so you can see if your elbows are dropping.
2. Place an object (like a large physio ball or large box) under the monorail to provide a visual and physical barrier. The object should provide enough clearance for a proper, high elbow catch & pull, however not so much room it allows for a straight arm pull. The largest box your SwimErg was shipped in may work well depending on your size and reach.

Assessment:

Times in the water should improve due to a more efficient stroke with a more powerful pull.



GOAL: RECOVERY STROKE

Problem: The recovery stroke breaks down thus creating a shorter and weaker stroke.

DRILL: RECOVERY

Stroke: Freestyle &/or Butterfly
Distance: 20 strokes; 2-3 sets
Damper: Level 1-3 for Endurance / Level 5-7 for Strength
Attachment: Paddles or Handles
Pace: Below or Equal to Race Pace

Description: Lie on the bench facing backwards to work on the "recovery" portion of the stroke. Replicate a freestyle or a butterfly recovery.

Optional Tools/Aids:

1. Use a video camera to see your stroke pattern. Set up the camera so it is either at the front or the back of the Vasa SwimErg so you can best see your form.
2. Lay a long mirror underneath the Vasa SwimErg so you can monitor your form.

Assessment: Times in the water should improve due to increased shoulder strength & endurance.

Watch a video of this exercise at: vasatrainer.com/blog/resources/training-recovery-stroke-video/



5.2 - COACH RICHARD SHOULBERG'S VASA SwimErg WORKOUT

Legendary swim coach Richard Shoulberg was the head coach at Germantown Academy for 44 years. He served multiple stints as U.S. National Women's Coach and Olympic Coach. He affectionately called his fleet of Vasa Trainers on deck "Lane 7" to complement the 6-lane pool at G.A.

"Whenever you improve strength in an athlete (the point of the VASA) it transfers to stroke technique. Vasa equipment can provide a strength increase that the water cannot. This transfers to stroke power and endurance. We use the Vasa SwimErg 3 days a week for 16 minutes. This depends on the individuals, their events and prime events for us to determine their workouts."



Coach Shoulberg

VASA SWIMERG WORKOUT

"Each of my swimmers records his or her information from every workout on the Vasa SwimErg. Use Vasa Training Log in Part 3 of the User's Manual or create your own."

MONDAY: MULTI STROKE

Warm-up: Swim 3-5 minutes of each stroke in IM order.
Workout: Swim 4 minutes of each stroke in IM order. No rest between strokes. Swim for 16 minutes. Record total meters and average watts to compare to next workout.
Cool-down: Easy Swim for 5 - 10 minutes to bring down heart rate. Stretch after.

WEDNESDAY: 2 MINUTE INTERVALS

Warm-up: Swim 5 - 10 minutes of desired stroke.
Workout: Swim desired stroke for 2 minutes at race intensity. Rest for 1 minute (active rest easy swimming). Repeat up to 8 sets. Record total meters & average watts to compare to next workout.
Cool-down: Easy Swim for 5 - 10 minutes to bring down heart rate. Stretch after.

FRIDAY: POWER INTERVALS - ALTERNATING SWIMMING AND LEG DRILLS

Warm-up: Do a 5 minute bike or run followed immediately by a 5 - 10 minutes swim of desired stroke.
Workout: Swim desired stroke for 1 minute (all-out effort). Switch to Leg drill (see below) for 2 minutes. Repeat up to 8 sets. Record total meters & average watts to compare to next workout.
Cool-down: Easy Swim for 5 - 10 minutes to bring down heart rate. Stretch after.

Leg drill examples:

1. Leg extensions on the Vasa SwimErg;
2. Breast stroke kick on the Vasa SwimErg;
3. Plyometric Push-Offs on Vasa Trainer;
4. Stationary Bike;
5. Step-Ups (Stepping up and down on a stable bench or block)

OTHER EXERCISES

Continuous Swim: "I have my athletes swim on the Vasa SwimErg all-out for 16 minutes to get their heart rate up. They can usually get their heart rate up to about 190 BPM."

Recovery Drill: "I use the Vasa SwimErg to focus on the recovery muscle groups. I've found that if the recovery is weak, the whole stroke tends to be weak."



5.3 - VASA SWIMERG WORKOUTS

This section has examples of different types of workouts that can be performed on the Vasa SwimErg. Use the built in features of the monitor to help monitor your training progress. You can use any of these workouts and adjust them according to your goal distance.

REMEMBER: The Vasa SwimErg will take some time to get adjusted to. It is an excellent tool and will improve your performance, but it is important to remember there is an adjustment period. Use the tips below to increase the rate of your success.

KEY TO SUCCESS FOR FIRST WORKOUTS

1. Set damper door to 1 (closed);
2. Plan to use same tempo or stroke rate as easy swimming for first weeks;
3. Always remember that technique is key. Focus on achieving a High Elbow Catch or Early Vertical Forearm (EVF) and do not apply much pressure on the paddles until your forearm is near vertical (or perpendicular to monorail). Then apply pressure until arm is fully extended to hip;
4. Let your hand "exit the water" in a neutral position. Do not "flick" your wrist at end of stroke.

HIGH ELBOW CATCH / EARLY VERTICAL FOREARM TIPS: Imagine you are paddling a surfboard, with the rails of the surfboard forcing you to stroke so the creases on the insides of the elbows pass the outside of the surfboard rails without touching the rails. If you imagine your elbow as an eyeball, then be sure that eyeball is looking out perpendicular to the monorail all the time. This sets the arm into a high elbow or EVF position. Also, imagine reaching over a physio ball and pushing back behind you.

HIP DRIVE: Once the above is built in the muscle memory, you can add the element of hip drive. This is done by driving your opposite hip into the padded bench when you apply pressure to paddles with each stroke. When you extend forward with right arm, set that arm into EVF, then as you apply pressure to paddle you drive left hip bone into bench at same time, thus transferring core muscle energy into the hand and arm.

Suggestions for athletes and coaches using the Vasa SwimErg:

Improving stroke technique: Use a long mirror on the floor or on the side so you can watch your form, focusing on a high elbow pull and recovery. Capturing your Vasa SwimErg workout on video (front/side) can also provide excellent feedback.

Endurance: Do longer sustained sets of 15 minutes and longer swimming at a power output around 70-75% of your '10 sec max. power'.

Anaerobic power & speed: Do shorter efforts, 5-15 seconds in duration, between 95-100% of your maximal efforts with almost full recovery (1-3 minutes).

Motivation: Mix up your workouts and doing alternative strokes in addition to freestyle like butterfly, breast stroke, and recovery strokes.

ANAEROBIC POWER INTERVALS

Set distance intervals at an intensity or a pace just below your race pace, with a 1 minute easy swim or rest between sets. (Use the stroke of your choice. Triathletes use freestyle. IM swimmers can vary strokes with each set.)

WARM-UP: 10-15 minutes of freestyle

WORKOUT: Sprint: swim 10x50M just below race pace. Rest for 1 minute between sets.
Middle: swim 10x100M just below race pace. Rest for 1 minute between sets.
Distance: swim 10x200M just below race pace. Rest for 1 minute between sets.

COOL-DOWN: Easy swim for 5-15 minutes followed by stretching.

TIME TRIAL AT RACE INTENSITY

Swim a set distance while you maintain a specific target pace or intensity. Record and log your time to evaluate improvement. NOTE: You can use the "Audible Stroke Rate Tempo Beeper" to help swim at your desired stroke rate. Details on setting the Audible Tempo Beeper, go to Section 2 on VM monitor operation.

WARM-UP: 10-15 minutes of freestyle

WORKOUT: Sprint: swim 100M at race pace. Recover with easy swim for 5 minutes.
Repeat 2-3 times.

Middle: swim 400M at race pace. Recover with easy swim for 5 minutes.
Repeat 1 time.

Distance: swim 1500M - 3000M at race pace.

COOL-DOWN: Easy swim of choice stroke for 10-15 minutes followed by stretching.

NOTE TO TRIATHLETES & OPEN WATER SWIMMERS: choose a time trial distance that is appropriate for your current training phase & relative to your race distance.

INCREASE STAMINA (AEROBIC ENDURANCE)

Swim at an intensity of 65%-75% for a longer duration.

WARM-UP: 10-15 minutes of freestyle

WORKOUT: Swim for 15-30 minutes at a steady pace.
Strive to maintain a constant power output (watts).

COOL-DOWN: Easy swim of choice stroke for 10-15 minutes followed by stretching.

ASCENDING OR DESCENDING TIMED INTERVAL WORKOUT

Swim a set of intervals increasing the work duration for each interval. Use "Race Pace" intensity appropriate for your current training phase and fitness level.

WARM-UP: 10 - 15 minutes of freestyle

WORKOUT: Swim 1 min., rest 1 min.;
Swim 2 min., rest 1 min.;
Swim 3 min., rest 1.5 min.;
Swim 4 min., rest 2 min.;
Swim 5 min., rest or easy swim for 3 minutes.
Descend this series 5 - 1 depending on your fitness level & race distance goals.
You may repeat this ascend/descend series 2-3 times.

COOL-DOWN: Easy swim of choice stroke for 10 - 15 minutes followed by stretching.

SPEED WORKOUT FOR FREESTYLE

Swim a set of intervals increasing the work duration for each interval.

NOTE TO TRIATHLETES: vary stroke rates to simulate tempos used at race pace start, surges, and steady state.

WARM-UP: 10-15 minutes of freestyle

WORKOUT: 100 meters - above race pace; 1 minute rest;
500 meters - at race pace; 90 seconds rest;
100 meters - below race pace; 1 minute rest;
100 meters - above race pace; 1 minute rest;
5x100 meters - at race pace; 10 seconds rest;
100 meters - below race pace.

If feeling good...

BONUS SET - Swim another 10 x 50 meters above race pace; 10 sec. rest.

COOL-DOWN: Easy swim of choice stroke for 10-15 minutes followed by stretching.

MINI INDOOR TRIATHLON

Using your Vasa SwimErg, indoor bike trainer, and treadmill you can keep your workouts fun, motivational and effective. This also serves as a great way to practice transition T1 & T2. You'll become accustomed to the feeling of going from swim to bike and bike to run, as well as improving on transition times. Here's a mini triathlon workout to get you started. Keep a log to monitor your progress. Have fun!

WARM-UP: SWIM: 10 minutes at an easy, steady pace (65-70% of max); Transition immediately to bike.
BIKE: 10 minutes at an easy, steady pace (70% of max / 90-100rpms); Transition immediately to run.
RUN: 10 minutes at an easy, steady pace (70% of max).

WORKOUT: SWIM: 10 minutes (85% of max for 1 min. on/1 min. rest), transition quickly to bike.
BIKE: 10 minutes (85-90% of max for 1 min. on/1 min. rest), transition quickly to run.
RUN: 10 minutes (85-90% of max for 1 min. on/1 min. rest).

COOL-DOWN: Gentle cool down of swim, bike or run for 5-10 minutes to lower your heart rate.

MORE TRAINING PLANS & WORKOUT VIDEOS ARE AVAILABLE ON VASATRAINER.COM

- 3-week Introduction Plan: <https://vasatrainer.com/swimerg-intro-how-to-guide-with-workouts/>
- 12-week SwimErg Training Plan - designed for Open Water & triathlon swim distances ranging from 1 to 5 KM. Contact Vasa Customer Service to request a copy. Email: info@vasatrainer.com

SwimErg Training Log

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Date							
PURPOSE (Endurance, Power, Intervals, Time Trial)							
Total Time							
Total Meters							
Heart Rate							
Work Time or Work Distance							
Rest Time (intervals)							
Damper Setting							
Tether Cords							
PACE							
Strokes / Minute							
Pace / 100M							
POWER							
Max Watts							
Average Watts							
CALORIES							
Total Calories							
Avg Calories / HR							
FORCE							
Avg Force Left							
Avg Force Right							
Max Force Left							
Max Force Right							
STROKE LENGTH (cm)							
Stroke Length Left							
Stroke Length Right							
TOTALS THIS WEEK							

Comments: _____
