

# Infiniti R99 Rower

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your fittest body

## Row your boat

Just sit down for a total body tone-up

By Caitlin Chang

**S**itting in a far corner of your gym, the rower is a lonely, neglected machine. In fact, only eight per cent of *WH* readers list it as their go-to at the gym\* – yet it's one of the best devices you can use. *WH* fitness advisor Ray Klerck says: "Compared to a treadmill canter that burns around 3213 kilojoules an hour, or a bike that reaches 2407 kilojoules an hour, the rower burns up to 3368 kilojoules." It's a full-body workout if you learn to master your form.

### Find your rhythm

"Rhythm, pacing and smoothness is much more efficient than yanking, ripping and pulling," says Bill Tait, senior rowing coach at the Victorian Institute of Sport. "Choose a lower resistance setting and aim for an aerobic rhythm." Your strokes should happen in a constant motion but break it down into these three stages (see right) to improve your overall movement.

### Perfect your position

Your biggest risk on the rower is injuring your lower back. "You get tired and start to use gravity and body weight from your back to leverage the rower along," says Klerck. Position your body right to reduce your chance of injury. **Hands and wrists** Employ an overhand grip to target your upper back and forearms more effectively. **Elbows** In the start position, they should be locked just above your knees and fully extended. Bend them as you bring the bar back and finish with them bent slightly behind your back and parallel to each other. **Neck** Keep neck straight. Relax shoulders and avoid hunching; imagine you're holding a tennis ball between your shoulder blades. **Back** When you reach the finish, ensure your lower back and hips are at a 90-degree angle. "Leaning past this point will weaken your posture and place undue pressure on your lower back," Klerck says.

### POSITION ONE: THE CATCH

Secure your feet and "bend your knees similar to a squat" says Tait. "Reach your arms directly in front, so your elbows are just past your knees." Your shins should be perpendicular to the ground. Also, don't grab the handles too tight. Klerck says leaving your arms loose "will help you avoid pulling with your arms too early, tiring them out". Most of your force should come from your legs.

Relax shoulder blades to avoid hunching



### POSITION TWO: THE MID-DRIVE

Drive backwards in a fluid motion. "Push the seat back with your legs until your knees are almost in a locked position," Tait explains. Lean back to leverage yourself and pull your arms with you, towards your body. Klerck adds, "Keep open angles between your calves and the back of your thighs, and between your abs and the tops of thighs."

Most of your force should come from your legs



### POSITION THREE: THE FINISH

Here's the tricky bit: "Once you hit the mid-drive, swing back with your body and draw the handle to your chest," says Tait. Fully extend your legs by tightening your quads. Squeeze your shoulder blades and tense your abs. Then reverse to return to the catch. "Straighten your arms, rock your body forwards and bend your legs while allowing the seat to move forwards."

Remember to engage your core



## YOUR ROWER WORKOUT

Set the fan (the device that controls the resistance) to two or three and try this workout devised by Tait. **Difficulty:** medium to hard **Time taken:** 19 minutes **Kilojoules burnt:** 596

TIME (MINS)	STROKE RATE	INTENSITY
	(STROKES PER MIN)	
4	18	Easy (30%) – about 3 seconds/500m
3	20	Moderate (50%) – about 6 seconds/500m
2	22	Solid (70%) – about 9 seconds/500m
1	24	Hard (80%) – about 12 seconds/500m
2	22	Solid (70%) – about 9 seconds/500m
3	20	Moderate (50%) – about 6 seconds/500m
4	18	Easy (30%) – about 3 seconds/500m

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