

Ride 80-80 What Watts?

Description: This is an assessment of your current level of fitness blended with a really high energy ride. The goal is to assess your average power output or the distance traveled over a five-minute steady state ride. The intensity level is hard. The purpose is to assess if you are gaining power or can ride further on the bike by gathering the data and letting the numbers answer the question. If you are over-trained, strained, or experiencing training monotony, it will show up in the numbers every time. Since the Steady State Power Fitness Test is brief, the ride plan calls for repeating this five-minute test 2-4 times. The numbers become even richer when you can look at average power output or ride distance at the end of the ride and compare it with the first set of this ride.

Ride Format: Begin with an easy warm up. You need to know your maximum heart rate or your threshold heart rate. If you have not measured either of these anchor points for the training zones, I'd recommend reading the protocol at [w](#) and referring to the resources section on that site. There's an excellent article on measuring maximum or threshold heart rate. After the warm-up, slowly increase your effort to raise your heart rate to 80% of maximum or 90% of your threshold heart rate. Maintain a constant cadence of 80 rpm. For the five-minute assessment period, measure average power in watts or measure how far you have traveled. Repeat this protocol 2-4 times, each time tracking the average power output or distance or both of the ride. Take a 2-3 minute rest or until your heart rate drops below 60% of maximum before beginning the next assessment.

Event	Description
Warm-Up	Easy pedaling at 60-80 RPM+
Repeat this assessment 2-4 times	• Increase intensity to 80% of maximum heart rate at 80 rpm for 5 minutes. • Record average watts or distance
	Recover to 60% maximum heart rate
Cool Down	Easy pedaling at 60-70 rpm
	Total Elapsed Time:

Challenge: The challenge in the *80-80 What Watts?* is to ride this assessment monthly, like the first Monday of every month. Record the data and then compare it over the next 12 months to see the direction of change. Are average watts or distance you have ridden improving or getting worse? Your challenge is to design a training plan or to hire a cycling coach to increase your average power output or increase how far you can ride in 5 minutes while holding constant the intensity, as measured by heart rate and cadence.

Ride strong. Ride with power. Ride with heart.

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