

1 Cadence/spin

Cadence is a term for how fast you are pedaling a.k.a. revolutions per minute. This is one of the most important factors in your pedaling efficiency. The following will outline how to go about getting the most out of each turn of your pedals.

It is best to keep a cadence (rpm's of pedals) of 80-100rpm. Use the small front chain ring during the initial stages of your training. Using this easier gear will allow you to create a smooth and consistent cadence. Simply adjust to easier or tougher gears by using the rear cluster/cogs. Once you have spent time creating a smooth cadence, it is then time to use the larger front chain ring. This larger chain ring is not to be used constantly, but during times when you want to create greater speed on a down hill or if you are maintaining a fast speed on the flats.

When determining what gear (rear cog) to use, you must learn to recognize your cadence, and what cadence is comfortable for you. If you are spinning too fast, use a slightly higher (tougher) gear. If you are spinning too slow and noticing muscle fatigue, use a lower (easier) gear. When climbing your cadence will naturally drop a bit so don't so don't forget to use your muscles instead of spinning out.

Your muscles and knees will survive longer and feel fresh if you maintain a good cadence. By slowly pushing tough gears, the constant resistance will create strain, cramping and fatigue in your muscles.

A great way to improve your cadence is to do high cadence segments of your rides. Spinning at rate much higher than your optimal rate will make riding at your normal revolutions 80-100rpms feel slow. When I do this workout I ride at 120-130rpms for one hour.

The best way to accurately know your revolutions is to utilize a cycling computer that has the cadence function. A cadence computer has a sensor that picks up your revolutions off of a magnet on your crank arm.