Seven-Day Training Readiness and RPE Log

A practical worksheet for matching strength-training load to today's performance without abandoning progression, technique, or safety.

Use feedback, not mood alone

Keep the planned exercise, repetition range, and target effort visible. Readiness notes provide context; the first work set provides the strongest session-specific signal. Adjust only when the evidence is clear, then record the decision.

RPE	REPETITIONS LEFT	PRACTICAL MEANING
6	About 4	Easy work; useful for technique or early warm-up
7	About 3	Comfortable work with clear speed reserve
8	About 2	Challenging, repeatable training effort
9	About 1	Very hard; use selectively
10	0	Maximum effort; not a routine target

Adjustment rule

If the first work set is about one RPE point easier or harder than planned, consider changing load by 2.5-5 percent or changing one set. Larger surprises require a cause check: plates, rest, technique, pain, illness, or an unrealistic estimate. Never add load to chase a number when technique is unstable.

Safety boundary

Stop and seek appropriate help for sharp pain, neurological symptoms, dizziness, chest discomfort, acute injury, or clinician restrictions. RPE does not diagnose illness or determine whether an injury is safe to train through.

Seven-day decision log

Record the first meaningful work set. Use trends across days, not one disappointing session.

Day	Exercise / target	Load x reps	Actual RPE	Decision / note
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				

Before the first work set

Sleep: ____ Unusual soreness: ____ Pain: ____ Illness signs: ____ Motivation: ____ Warm-up quality: ____

Weekly review

Which exercise repeatedly overshot the target? Did a small adjustment improve technique and the remaining work? Are RPE estimates becoming more consistent? Keep one useful rule. If performance falls while RPE and symptoms rise for several sessions, reduce stress and review recovery or programming rather than forcing the planned number.

Evidence note

Meta-analytic evidence suggests autoregulated and percentage-based load prescription produce broadly similar strength improvements. RPE is valuable as a low-cost feedback method, but accuracy varies with experience, exercise familiarity, fatigue, and proximity to failure. Sources: Hickmott et al. (2022); Orange et al. (2022); Janicijevic et al. (2024).