Ramp It Up (Through the Doors)
3-2-1 Intervals Audio Master Class

Created By: Jennifer Sage, ICA Master Instructor
Ride Objective: Working just below and up to threshold in gradual increases
Working intensity: Zones 3-4 (Recovery in Zone 1)
Class Length: 60 minutes

A Very Versatile and Simple Profile!
This may very well turn out to be the most versatile profile in your playbook! I am presenting it here with the highest intensity at which we ride right at threshold, but you can vary the intensity depending on your desires and the time of year if you are periodizing. You can also change the terrain for each interval each time you teach this profile. I’ve provided a long list of ways to vary this profile based on intensity and terrain. And if you change terrain, you vary your cadence and resistance as well. You can teach it several times in one month with such different focuses that it will seem very different each time.

I first saw this ride presented on a Bicycling magazine online video. It was called “3-2-1 Intervals”. The concept is to gradually progress from a moderately hard level for three minutes, then go a little bit harder for two minutes, then even harder for one minute. Follow that with a recovery of 3-4 minutes and repeat 4-5 times. Brilliant! I like to call it “Ramp it Up” because each time you progress from one level to the next, you are ramping up your intensity and focus. I subtitle this one as “Through the Doors” for the simple reason that all the recovery songs are Doors songs - we step through the door of recovery to the next interval!

Each interval takes six minutes, and we will do five of them with threshold as the ceiling.

Each level is about five heartbeats apart, making a ten-beat difference between the three-minute first level and the one-minute highest level. To give an example, if a rider’s lactate threshold heart rate is 162, then that is the ceiling of this ride. The second level would be an effort of about 5 beats lower, or 158, and the first level would be at 153. Note, there is no need to be exact, just coach them to peak at threshold and gradually get there in approximately 5-beat increments.

Recovery should be “Somewhat Easy”, at a HR that is at least 25-30 beats below threshold. Recovery segments are about 2.5 - 3 minutes long in this version. Since we only spend one minute at threshold, this is plenty of time to recover, although keep an eye on students if they are fatiguing towards the end, and let them hold off on starting the final interval if needed.

Using RPE
If your students don’t use HRMs, you can easily guide them using perceived exertion. Since threshold intensity is hard on the RPE scale, then that will be their ceiling (on a
subjective level). While still very challenging, it is manageable and “comfortably uncomfortable”, yet you feel like you are on the edge if you pushed it one more heart beat. Level two is 5 beats below, slightly less challenging, somewhere between hard and somewhat hard. The first level would be equivalent to somewhat hard, where breathing is deep and there is a sensation of challenge, but not of impending doom.

**Terrain**

This is one of the elements that you can change every time you do this profile. In THIS version I am alternating hills with flats, for three total climbs and two intervals as moderately fast flats.
Variations
There are so many possibilities!
1. Intensity = hard to very hard: Use 5 beats above threshold as your highest level, level two right at threshold, and level three 5 beats below. This will be a much more challenging ride – make sure your students are up for it, and give them options to not push as hard. Your recoveries will need to be at least 4 minutes.
2. Aerobic Intensity = moderate to somewhat hard: Aerobic intervals, staying in Zone 3. The highest level would be about 8-10 beats below threshold. Perfect during the Base period of a periodized program, or when you need a less intense ride. Your recoveries don’t need to be that long – use songs of 2-3 minutes.
3. Terrain: All hill climbs. Vary the cadence of each interval from 55-80-ish rpm. These become a version of “hill repeats”. Or, for another variation, keep all the climbs to a narrow range, just to focus on the strength at that particular cadence, such as 65-70rpm.
4. Terrain: All flats. Each interval performed at a slightly higher cadence, from 80-85-90-95-100rpm. The faster you go, the less you will stand up, so use recoveries to stretch the legs and take a saddle break.
5. Terrain: Alternate the terrain, but go to the extremes of the cadences. For example, your three hills will be steep climbs of 55-65rpm, no faster. Your two flats will be 100-105 rpm. This will dramatically highlight the different effect on heart rate that these ends of the cadence (and resistance) spectrum will have.
6. Terrain: Alternate terrain but keep them pretty close. Climbs are high cadence climbs of 72-82rpm and flats are 85-90 rpm. Use imagery to get them to feel the difference.
7. Start faster and get progressively slower in cadence (or vice versa). Intervals will be 95-85-75-65-55rpm.
8. Increase intensity using cadence not resistance. I usually recommend using one 6-minute song for each interval. If you use the bpm of the music to dictate your cadence, then usually you will stay at the same cadence for each interval and increase the intensity via the resistance. However, if you don’t tend to ride to the beat, or if you want a slightly different challenge, you can start your first level at the bpm of the song (say 65rpm) then for each successive level, ask riders to increase cadence by 5rpm, or enough to elicit a heart rate increase of about 5 beats, pedaling faster than the beat of the song.

You will notice I didn’t suggest using movement to vary the profile, since this should be something utilized through every version of this profile. On climbs, you will probably sit for the first 3-minute level (except to stand the first 30-45 seconds to raise the intensity), then stand the first 30-seconds of the next level, sitting the rest of it. Finally, use a standing climb for the final 1-minute effort. On flats, go ahead and stand at the beginning of each level. I’m not one to encourage a long time out of the saddle on a “flat” road, especially at a high cadence, because it’s not a very effective way to ride. Use standing flats for surges or to raise the heart rate. Why? Because very few people can stand with good form and keep control of their heart rate when their feet are turning faster than 85 or 90rpm. If you want a slower flat (75-85rpm) then it’s perfectly fine to get out of the saddle for the final minute.
Use the recovery periods for saddle breaks if needed. Note that if you do this with the highest level above threshold, then your recoveries should be a little longer, about 4 minutes.

**Music Selection**

Select 6-minute songs for each interval. For best results, use the BPM of the song to help your students select the cadence that you have chosen for that interval. As mentioned above, you can change the cadence against the starting resistance, but still use the BPM to set the initial cadence. Keep in mind that the faster the cadence, the more of an effect it will have on the cardiovascular system, and on the slower end, the effect will be felt more in the working muscles.

Select songs for the recovery segment that are around 3-minutes long (or 4 minutes for higher intensity versions). For fun, you can make them all one group (as in this profile), or era (such as all retro or disco) or genre (pick a genre completely different than you’ve selected from your other songs). This allows you to be creative, fun and varied with your music choices.
Ramp it Up (Through the Doors) – Coaching The Profile

(Italics represent the coaching by the instructor, speaking directly to the students. Standard font is my direction to the instructor.)

Song #1 Whole Lotta Love (Kompleks Dynamic Love Edit), 90bpm, 6:51

Warm-up

Today's ride is a very simple interval profile, yet it will deceptively challenging. You will need to be focused to raise your intensity in small increments.

We are going to do five 6-minute intervals. They are called 3-2-1 intervals because you will start out at a moderately hard pace for 3 minutes. Then you will raise your intensity by about 5 heart beats, just a little bit harder, for 2 minutes. Then you will finish it off with a 1-minute push right at your threshold.

So if you know your threshold, you will use that as your ceiling, for your 1-minute effort. Subtract 10 beats from that and there is your 3-minute effort. If you don’t know your threshold, or don’t have a HR monitor (shame on you!) – that is ok. I’ll coach you using perceived exertion. You all know what “Hard” feels like, right? That will be your 1-minute ceiling. It will feel hard, breathing hard, but not overwhelmed, not burning, not breathless. Hard, but still in control.

Got it? Great!

Right now, I want you to pedal at whatever cadence you prefer, but I’d rather it be towards the faster side. This song is 90 rpm – that’s a good place to warm up the legs.

(About 5 min into your warm-up, let them stand up a few times to surge the legs, still in control though).

We are going to do five of these intervals, so you’ll be spending 5 minutes at threshold, and 10 minutes just below. Nothing to scoff at! WE’ll start the first one on a hill, then alternate climbs with flats. The climbs will get progressively faster, and the two flats will be 90 and 95 rpm, which is fairly quick legs.

Are you ready?

Song #2 Sinnerman (Felix da Housecat Heavenly Housecat Mix), 128bpm/64rpm

OK, let’s get out of the saddle right away, and bring your intensity up. Grab that beat – it’s 64 rpm, a fairly slow climb.

(As the interval approaches) OK, it might take you about two minutes to fine-tune your intensity, especially on this first one, since you aren’t completely warmed up. Ease yourself into a sensation of “somewhat hard”. You
should be 10 beats below threshold by the third minute. Get ready, we’re going to take it up by five beats…

(After 3 minutes) Stand up and raise your intensity 5 beats. Only 5 beats. Make sure to leave some room to increase it. Sit back down and finish off these two minutes, holding the rhythm, keeping the pace.

(After 2 minutes) You ready? Let’s take it up! Right to your threshold. Right to “HARD”! But not breathless. Stay standing this final minute, but monitor yourself, don’t go over. Remember – we’re just getting started.

**Song #3 Break On Through, 184bpm 2:27 Recover**

Hear that song? The Doors will be your sign. Every time you hear the Doors, you know it’s time to recover. We’ll be stepping through the Door of recovery! Use this time to bring down your HR, breathe, relax.

(Just before the song ends…) You ready for the next interval? This one is a flat road at 90rpm. That is a lot faster than we were just pedaling on this last one. You’re going to have to watch closely how much resistance you put on.

**Song #4 Dorsett Perception (Deep Dive Corp Remix), 90bpm 6:24**

(Note the song takes 15-20 seconds to get going, so don’t start your 3-minute count until then. The beat won’t be very noticeable until about 1:05)

Stand up for 40 seconds to bring up the intensity, grabbing that beat as you sit back down. By the end of the first two minutes, you should be right on target with your intensity – 10 beats below your ceiling. Because this is a faster cadence, you might feel the perceived exertion a little different, even if your HR is the same.

(After three minutes)

Stand up (15-20 seconds) and bring your intensity up those 5 beats. Don’t stand long – you’ll spike your HR too high. Remember, your job is to learn to be much more precise in managing your intensity. That’s one of our purposes today.

(After two minutes)

Let’s go – final minute. Stand for only about 15 seconds, then sit and drive. Focus, your legs are spinning quickly against a decent gear. Do you all see that this is harder than you might have thought it would be? Ha, but wait! If you think this is hard, wait until the next flat road – it will be even faster!

**Song #5 Touch Me 3:10 Recover**

Ah yes, Jim Morrison is telling you to rest now. Once your HR comes down be sure to take a nice long drink of water. This song is only 3 minutes, so don’t get complacent.
**Song #6 Snakefood 138bpm/69rpm 6:03**

Stand with the drums! You know what to do now, remember how the last hill felt – you’re shooting for those same intensity sensations you felt on the first level of the last hill. The only difference is that this cadence is 5 rpm faster.

(After 3 minutes)

I’m going to ask you to try something here – can you raise your intensity by those 5 beats while staying seated? You have the ability – it’s not necessary to stand up every time – just make it a slightly harder hill and keep that same rhythm! Don’t let the legs slow down. Awesome. You’ll get to stand up that entire final minute, so work from the saddle here.

(After 2 minutes)

And here you are – stand up and go for it. Remember, don’t go breathless – I still need you to stay in control. HARD, but not VERY HARD!

**Song #7 Love Her Madly 3:19**

Ah yes, easy. Recover.

(Let them stand and jog towards the end if they need more of a saddle break. The next flat road will be mostly in the saddle except for the first 30-40 seconds)

**Song #8 Kanji 95 bpm 6:1**

Stand up for 30-40 seconds (the beat doesn’t get going until 45 seconds into it). As you know, we’ve been working these higher cadences a lot lately. They are so effective – but as you know, they take total concentration. Don’t get distracted. No bouncing, sit deep in the saddle, connect with those pedals. How are your arms and shoulders – mellow and relaxed, right? Any tension up here robs your legs of the energy they need to turn those pedals quickly with good technique. This song is about perfecting the technique.

(After 3 minutes)

You’re going to raise your intensity with a subtle increase in resistance, while staying seated. Turn the knob, ever so slightly, and do not let go of that tempo. There, feel the difference? Your HR should creep up just those 5 beats. If it goes too high, you know what to do…back it off.

(After 2 minutes)

One more minute – I know you can focus 60 more seconds. Raise your resistance just a little more. Do not let up! If you’re challenged by this more than the climbs, you are not alone. Accept this challenge. We’ve got a hill to finish on – but not until you get through this flat fast section. Work it from the saddle!

**Song #9 Love Me Two Times 3:15**
We are so close. One more interval. I bet these are harder than you thought. Enjoy this recovery section, there’s one more hill in front of you. Make sure you are staying hydrated.

**Song #10 Sneaky Drums, 72 bpm 6:13**

(Stand for 30-40 seconds at the start) Need I tell you what to do? You guys are experts by now. One slight difference – this hill is a little less steep, a little faster legs. You’re going to pedal at 72rpm. Feel this rhythm, it’s a very fun tempo. The song is called “Sneaky Drums” – those sneaky drums are going to help get you through this last interval – just stay connected to those drums. At 72rpm, you can’t be at the same resistance you were at the last hill – it has to be a tiny bit less

(After 3 minutes)

Stand for 30 seconds. Be precise with your HR. Ease back into the saddle if it starts going too high.

(After 2 minutes)

This is it, stand up for the final minute IF you can. If the HR goes too high, sit back down and control it to the top. This is your final minute, right at threshold. Finish strong! Finish right on target!

**Song #11 Rapture Riders 3:52**

Time to bring down the HR.

**Songs #12 and 13, Summer Rain, One Love.** Let them ride at whatever cadence they prefer. Coach them through a good 8-10-minute cool down and stretch.)
Ramp It Up (Through the Doors) Playlist and Resource Directory

Song title, (bpm/rpm), artist, album name, source

Song #1 Whole Lotta Love (Kompleks Dynamic Love Edit), Led Zeppelin

Song #2 Sinnerman (Felix da Housecat Heavenly Housecat Mix), Verve Remixed
eMusic, Amazon

Song #3 Break On Through, The Doors, Greatest Hits 1980
The Doors Greatest Hits is available on most download sites, including eMusic.

Song #4 Dorsett Perception (Deep Dive Corp Remix), Shpongling, Unreleased Remixes
This 6-min version Deep Dive Corp Remix is hard to find. You can get it at
[www.twistedmusic.com/shop](http://www.twistedmusic.com/shop) as a digital download (for sale in British pounds). If you have Mixmeister, you can use the longer version (available at most download sites) and shorten it. Or, just use the extra as part of the recovery.

Song #5 Recover Touch Me, The Doors, Greatest Hits 1980

Song #6 Snakefood, Safri Duo, Episode II
Amazon

Song #7 Love Her Madly, The Doors, Greatest Hits 1980

Song #8 Kanji, Lemonchill, Sentant
eMusic

Song #9 Love Me Two Times, The Doors, Greatest Hits 1980

Song #10 Sneaky Drums, Etnosco, Drums From the Dawn of Time

Song #11 Rapture Riders, Blondie vs The Doors
This is a mashup that may be hard to find. Google it, and check [www.discogs.com](http://www.discogs.com) to see if there is a listed source. If you can’t find it, select another Doors song from Greatest Hits.

Song #12 Summer Rain, Schiller, Life
eMusic

Song #13 One Love/People Get Ready, Bob Marley and the Wailers, Exodus
eMusic
Alternative 6-ish-minute songs at various BPMs (from slower to faster rpm – all rpm is at half the bpm, except where noted*)
(song title, artist, album, song length, bpm)
Sympathy For The Devil, The Rolling Stones, Forty Licks [Disc 1], 6:19, 116bpm
I Heard It Through The Grapevine, Marvin Gaye, 6:09, 117bpm
Happy Dreamer, Laidback, Hotel Costes X, 6:09, 118bpm
Back To Ibiza, Waterjuice, Liquid Journeys, 6:01, 120bpm
Midnight Oil - Beds Are Burning (remix) Midnight Oil, 6:16, 120/60bpm
(Wish I Could Fly Like) Superman (Disco Mix Extended Edit), The Kinks, Low Budget, 6:02, 123bpm
Sweet Child O’ Mine, Guns N’ Roses, Greatest Hits, 5:57, 125bpm
In The End (Techno Rmx), Linkin Park, Project Revolution - The Remixes, 6:22, 126bpm
Rise, The Grid, Evolver, 6:08, 127bpm
Les Djinns (Trentemøller Mix), Djuma Soundsystem, Les Djinns Remixes, 6:17, 128bpm
Astral Flight, Ra, To Sirius, 6:03, 128bpm
In Love (Killer Mix), Cheky & Spider, Global Underground 025: Toronto [Disc 1], 5:57, 128bpm
Carpe Diem, Umo Detic, Electronic Classix - The Best Of European Synth-Core, Tech-D, 6:04, 128bpm
Soul Code - Vito Cacciapaglia, Vito Cacciapaglia, Subliminal Sessions Summer 2009 - mixed by Erick Morillo, 6:07, 130bpm
Rods and Cones, Blue Man Group, Spinning Volume 6, 5:59, 130bpm
Move Any Mountain (Beatmasters 12" Mix), The Shamen, Move Any Mountain '96, 6:13, 130bpm
Cruisin’, Peter Mergener, Cruisin’, 6:05, 130bpm
Time (The Scumfrog Remix), Murk, 6:06, 131bpm
Somebody to Love (UK Club Mix), Boogie Pimps, Somebody to Love CDM, 6:03, 131bpm
The Best Revenge (Tocadisco's Macaco Gordo Mix), Fischerspooner, Danse en France,, 6:15, 132bpm
Laughing Buddha, Vanessa-Mae, Subject to change, 6:09, 134bpm
Thunderstruck Remix ACDC, 5:59, 134bpm
Click, Mittelstandskinder, 72-144, Weltmusik, 6:22, 135bpm
I Gotta Feelin’ (Dave Guetta FMIF Remix), Black Eyed Peas, 6:12, 130bpm
Empire Hybrid, Disappear Here (Widescreen Edition), Disc 1, 6:01, 135bpm
Sunburn, Armin Van Buuren, 76, 6:17, 136bpm,
Knights Of Cydonia, Muse, Black Holes And Revelations, 6:07, 136bpm
Te Amo (Madgipsy Mix), Sultana, 80 vs. 90 - Golden Rare Extended Tracks, 6:08, 138bpm
Poor Choice Of Words, Hans Zimmer, The Dark Knight Remixes EP, 6:13, 140bpm
La Aurora, Feuerhake, 6:12, 140bpm
Cryogenik, Hiligt Trib, Love Medicine and Natural Trance, 6:14, 143bpm
All Is Nothing, Electric Universe, Higher Modes, 6:02, 144bpm
Miserlou (dance remix), Spaghetti Surfers, 6:05, 144bpm
Silver Rain, Bosstronic, Dreaming Angel, 6:08, 160bpm
Dance Of Soul, Bosstronic, Dreaming Angel, 6:02, 160bpm
Leaving Planet Earth, Talisman & Hudson, 6:05, 162bpm
Come With Me, Puff Daddy, Unknown Album, 6:01, 164bpm
Masters of the Universe (Edit), Juno Reactor, Odyssey, 6:05, 170bpm
Visions, Arbre Noir, Madurai, 5:59, 90bpm (*ride at 90rpm – fast flat)
Wheels of Fortune, Koan, 6:19, 95bpm (*ride at 95rpm – fast flat)
Emotions, Lemonchill, Sentant, 5:59, 100bpm (*ride at 100rpm – fast flat)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:00</td>
<td>6:51</td>
<td><strong>Warm-up and Introduction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Song #1 Whole Lotta Love (Kompleks Dynamic Love Edit),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00</td>
<td>6:12</td>
<td><strong>First Interval</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sinnerman (Felix da Housecat Heavenly Housecat Mix)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 min Level 1 (threshold -10) slow climb at 64rpm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 min Level 2 (threshold -5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 min Level 3 (threshold)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:30</td>
<td>2:27</td>
<td><strong>Recover</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Break On Through, The Doors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:00</td>
<td>6:24</td>
<td><strong>Second Interval</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dorsett Perception (Deep Dive Corp Remix), Shpongle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 min Level 1 (threshold -10) fast flat at 90rpm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 min Level 2 (threshold -5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 min Level 3 (threshold)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25:10</td>
<td>3:10</td>
<td><strong>Recover</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Touch Me, The Doors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31:15</td>
<td>6:04</td>
<td><strong>Third Interval</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Snakefood, Safri Duo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 min Level 1 (threshold -10) climb at 69rpm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 min Level 2 (threshold -5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 min Level 3 (threshold)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34:35</td>
<td>3:19</td>
<td><strong>Recover</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Love Her Madly, The Doors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40:45</td>
<td>6:11</td>
<td><strong>Fourth Interval</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kanji, Lemonchill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 min Level 1 (threshold -10) fast flat at 95rpm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 min Level 2 (threshold -5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 min Level 3 (threshold)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:00</td>
<td>3:15</td>
<td><strong>Recover</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Love Me Two Times, The Doors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50:15</td>
<td>6:13</td>
<td><strong>Fifth Interval</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sneaky Drums, Etnoscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 min Level 1 (threshold -10) fast climb at 72rpm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 min Level 2 (threshold -5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 min Level 3 (threshold)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54:05</td>
<td>3:52</td>
<td><strong>Recover</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Song #11 Rapture Riders, Blondie vs The Doors, 3:52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60:45</td>
<td>6:40</td>
<td><strong>Cool down, stretch</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Summer Rain, Schiller 3:52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>One Love/People Get Ready, Bob Marley 2:5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>