

## Speed of Movement & the Mighty Metronome

Tempo refers to the speed of movement and is usually represented by a 4-digit number: eccentric (negative) contraction - isometric (pause between negative and positive) contraction - concentric (positive) contraction - isometric (pause between positive and negative) contraction. For example, a tempo of 3-1-2-0 means to lower the weight for a count of 3, pause for a count of 1, raise the weight for a count of 2, and do not pause before starting the next repetition. An "X" designation denotes eXplosive, meaning to lift the weight as fast as possible. It's not uncommon for people to race through their sets in order to get done sooner. Although this could benefit power development, hypertrophy might be sacrificed. For instance, if two individuals were to perform the same number of repetitions, but one completes the set in 6 seconds and the other takes 60 seconds, is the training effect the same? Obviously not! Tempo is a training parameter that is quite often neglected. You can calculate total time under tension (TUT) of a set simply by multiplying tempo (add all 4 digits) and the number of repetitions performed. The problem with tempo prescription is that cadence tends to vary among individuals and also between reps and sets. (Generally, the count speeds up as you fatigue!) For this reason, I recommend that you purchase a metronome - the Robic SC-700 Sports Chronometer available at Creative Health Products is a good choice. Set the watch to 60 beats per minute so that it beeps every second and try to keep the cadence uniform throughout the entire range of motion.

## About the Author

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