

The Effects of Self-Selected Music on Exercise Performance

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Existing research has shown that listening to music may improve aerobic exercise performance, however, music's effect on anaerobic exercise performance has not been fully investigated.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of self-selected music on anaerobic exercise performance. **METHODS:** Fifteen (8 men; 7 women) healthy college-aged students between 18-25 years old (20.1 ± 1.79 yrs) participated in this study. The testing consisted of three sessions: one initial familiarization trial followed by two testing trials [with music (M) and without music (NM)] completed in a randomized order. During the familiarization trial the participants' body composition (bioelectrical impedance analysis) and one-repetition maximum (1RM) bench press were determined. Each participant also submitted five songs to be used during the music trial. These songs were reviewed to ensure an upbeat tempo (> 120 bpm). During each testing trial, the participants performed a warm-up at 50-60 % 1RM for 5-10 repetitions. Each participant then performed the bench press for a maximal number of repetitions using 70% 1RM for five sets with a 1 min and 15 sec rest period between sets. After a 10 min rest period, a 30 sec Wingate test was used to determine total work, and relative peak power. **RESULTS:** During the M condition there was a significant increase in total work (M: 16121.8 ± 4287.3 kJ; NM: 15021.7 ± 4370.6 kJ; $p = .024$), relative peak power (M: 44.6 ± 8.4 W; NM: 41.4 ± 8.4 W; $p = .014$), and the total number of bench press repetitions (M: 41.7 ± 8.7 reps; NM: 38.3 ± 8.1 reps; $p = .001$). **CONCLUSION:** Overall, self-selected music had a positive effect on anaerobic exercise performance. The results from this study may help to enhance exercise performance by using self-selected music as a motivational tool.