

# CrossFit Murph Explained: Tips, Tricks, Times And Frequently Asked Questions

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## **Contents**

What Is Murph? .....	3
History .....	4
Tips And Tricks .....	4
What To Expect .....	5
Doing Murph Tomorrow? 6 Things To Do Today .....	5
Murph FAQ.....	6
More Information.....	7



## What Is Murph?

If you're not familiar with the CrossFit classic hero WOD Murph here's the workout:

1 mile run  
then  
100 pull ups  
200 push-ups  
300 squats  
(partition pull-ups, push-ups, and squats as you see fit)  
then  
1 mile run

Competitive athletes may choose to wear a 20# weight vest or body armor for the workout.

## History

The Murph hero WOD was originally posted on CrossFit.com on August 18th, 2005 by Lauren Glassman. The description read as follows:

*In memory of Navy Lieutenant Michael Murphy, 29, of Patchogue, N.Y., who was killed in Afghanistan June 28th, 2005.*

*This workout was one of Mike's favorites and he'd named it "Body Armor". From here on it will be referred to as "Murph" in honor of the focused warrior and great American who wanted nothing more in life than to serve this great country and the beautiful people who make it what it is.*

*Partition the pull-ups, push-ups, and squats as needed. Start and finish with a mile run. If you've got a twenty pound vest or body armor, wear it.*

## Tips And Tricks

For most of the population Murph's 200 pushups are the limiting factor. Many athletes will bite off more than they can chew attempting to break them up in to sets of 20. By the time they've accumulated the first 100 pushups they are struggling to string three together at a time.

Pushup burnout can be prevented by partitioning the workout wisely. Listed below are some rep schemes to consider:

### 5-10-15

The 5-10-15 scheme is probably the most common pattern people succeed with. This mirrors the rep scheme of the CrossFit benchmark workout Cindy:

20 rounds of

5 pull-ups

10 pushups (If you are new to Murph, be smart and shake out your arms after five reps, from the very beginning).

15 squats

## 5-5-5-15

If pushups are a particular challenge for you consider the following scheme

20 rounds of

5 pushups

5 pull-ups

5 pushups

15 squats

## 5-5-5-10-5

Similar to the 5-5-5-15

20 rounds of

5 pull-ups

5 squats

5 pushups

10 squats

5 pushups

## What To Expect

Times vary quite a bit on Murph. The mile route will of course be a big factor in determining your time. As a rough guideline though consider the following for an athlete (male or female) completing the workout without a weight vest:

+70 Minutes Beginner

40-70 Minutes Intermediate

30-40 Minutes Advanced

30 Minutes or less Elite

## Doing Murph Tomorrow? 6 Things To Do Today

1. Hydrate! With water (not beer, you lushes). And I mean LOTS of water!!! When you feel sufficiently hydrated, drink a little more. You'll thank me for it tomorrow.
2. Don't overdo it today... no intense WODs that are going to cripple you for tomorrow. It's a good day to rest or do a strength WOD focused on shoulders. Your legs will be sufficiently brutalized tomorrow. Give them the day off today.

3. Hand care 101 – take a file to those calluses! Nothing ruins a good post-WOD BBQ like blood in the chips & dip. ‘Nuff said.
4. Eat a LOT. Plenty of fat and protein today will help ensure you have sufficient gas in the tank tomorrow. A couple of bacon burgers with avocado will do the trick.
5. Watch the four star movie “Murph: The Protector” and remind yourself that Murph is not just a workout. (Available on [Amazon Instant Video](#))
6. Plan your post-WOD meal... Sweet potatoes with coconut oil immediately after are my favorite. Invite yourself to someone else’s spread where there will be lots to munch on. Now you can have that beer.

## Murph FAQ

Here are some of the most frequently asked questions about the CrossFit workout Murph:

**Q:** Am I allowed to divide up the pull-ups, pushups, and squats or do I have to do them in order?

**A:** The original post on the CrossFit.com website clearly says “partition as needed”. Although a handful of people may disagree, this has been broadly interpreted to mean you may divide the work into whatever rep scheme works for you, interspersing the pull-ups, pushups, and squats

**Q:** How often should this workout be performed?

**A:** One to two times per year is plenty. Many CrossFit gyms have a tradition of performing Murph on Memorial Day. Murph is a great test of your endurance and mental toughness, but consider it a benchmark of your fitness rather than a workout you would perform on a regular basis.

**Q:** What style of pull-ups can be used? Are chin-ups allowed?

**A:** Either/any method is accepted. Although the workout says “pull-ups”, in CrossFit Land kipping is allowed unless it is specifically excluded (e.g. “strict pull-ups”). Also, there usually is no distinction made between pull-ups and chin-ups. The standard is typically to go from a hanging position with the arms completely extended to the chin breaking the horizontal plane of the bar (check the masters standard for pull-ups from the [2011 CrossFit Games Event 6](#)). Many people will change up their grip across sets as a way to try to give some muscle groups a bit of a rest.

**Q:** Are the push-ups done “hand release” style?

**A:** No. Standard push-ups are the norm. Chest to deck.

**Q:** How did Lt. Michael “Murph” Murphy perform the workout?

**A:** Unknown. Reviews of the CrossFit message boards and other sites has not provided a conclusive answer. If you have any information on this please email [contact@functhat.com](mailto:contact@functhat.com).

# More Information

If you're interested in learning more about "Murph" the man you can check out [Wikipedia: Michael P. Murphy](#).

The original post for Murph on CrossFit.com can be found here: [CrossFit: Thursday 050818](#).

Learn more about the movie "Murph: The Protector" at: [www.murphmovie.com](http://www.murphmovie.com)