

The Bork Protocol

It breaks down as cycling between maximal overcoming isometrics and maximal yielding isometrics.

Why it's beneficial and unique

1. Strength adaptations to both the Muscle & Sinew (tendons/connective tissue) (targeted separately)
2. Hyper Focused Efforts yield results faster (better adaption signaling)
3. High Frequency / High Intensity/ Low Volume (regular adaptation signaling / safer)
4. Forces a thorough warmup

A Training Block is comprised of a Cycle of Recruitment Pulls (#1) followed by a cycle of Max pickups (#2) this should collectively take 2-4 months. Then you can rinse and repeat for the next grip and cycle through them throughout the year.

1. Recruitment Pulls - Finger Flexors Isolated | (overcoming isometric)

- <https://youtube.com/shorts/VDuDQCjn394?feature=shared>
- <https://youtu.be/Ci8z9VCPByo?feature=shared>
 - Recruitment Pull aka Pulling against an immovable object like a bolt in the floor or a sling connected to the base of a squat rack, standing on a sling attached to your tension block). The Key here is only flexing your finger flexors and not using your legs, shoulder, arms, body to do the pulling. Just curl the fingers up into the edge.
 - Pull as hard as you possibly can for 3-5 seconds then let off.

2. Heavy / Max Weighted Pickups | (yielding isometric).

- <https://youtu.be/72yloyN-gs4?feature=shared>
 - Max pickup - picking up 90-95% of your max with tension block on a loading pin
 - Pick up in a controlled manner for 2-5 seconds (controlled), no timers needed

1. Cycle 1 (6-8 individual workouts)

1. Recruitment Pulls (using Tindeq, Crane Scale, Exsurgo etc. to track numbers)

1. 1-2x per week, 3-5 sets of 3-5 maximal reps / pulls
2. Cycle 2. (6-8 individual workouts)
 1. Max Pickups
 1. 1-2x per week, 3-5 sets of 1 maximal rep

Then repeat these 2 cycles but for the next grip (Half Crimp, then Open Crimp, then 3 finger drag etc)

THE MOST IMPORTANT PART

*****WARMUP WORK***** - EVERY SINGLE CLIMBING SESSION (if possible) & before the above workouts

Tension block weighted pickups progressing from super low up to what feels to be your 85-95% of max that day based on gut feel. Do this in each of the 3 primary grips (open 4 finger crimp, 4 finger half crimp, and 3 finger drag).

I do this as my warmup before every single climbing session and go up to like 85-95% of my max every single time. I shoot for what feels like 90-95% that day

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- I'm a huge advocate for doing both of these with the tension block below you in a standing fashion to better isolate the finger flexors. Our legs are so strong that the use of them to assist in picking weight up in a max pickup doesn't put enough load into them to detract from the neurological adaptation that is going to your forearms/fingers.
- If you have not been doing lots of maximal strength work error on the side of less is more. Only do the "training" or working sets 1x per week. With the warmup which i still encourage doing every session or every other start by Only go up on the weighted pickups to 75-85% instead of 90-95%. It'll be safer as you work into it and over the course of your training. Progress with time, SLOW PROGRESSIVE OVERLOAD is critical especially when adopting a new training modality.
- With Recruitment Pulls - Give every single pull your absolute hardest effort like you want to break the block. Verbal encouragement is proven to help boost your results.

- **Consistency** is *KEY*
- Rest 2-5min between each set. Good rest = higher quality efforts.

Optional

3. Forearm and wrist strength work.

I suggest these for everyone. Doing wrist strengthening work with dumbbells both in the form of extension and flexion to strengthen your extensors as well as doing ulnar and radial deviation along with pronation and supination for the wrist and forearm. As Climbers our finger flexors and wrist flexors are almost always much stronger than the extensors (back side of forearm). However the extensors support the wrist and hand in a lot of climbing grips and if they can't keep up your finger gains will not be able to progress so it's always good to keep strengthening these.

[Reverse Wrist Curls](#)

3-6 sets of 8-12 reps with the heaviest weight you can do with good form

[Supination & Pronation](#) - These are 100% the best thing for keeping your elbows healthy and are great for strengthening your wrist. BEST PT for elbow pain right here.

^ I use a 5lb mini sledge hammer for these and its awesome. Can be done as just eccentrics (lowering only doing the outside, then assisting it up with other hand and lowering to the inside)

3-6 sets of 8-12 reps with the heaviest weight you can do with good form

Bork verb (the dictionary of Aaron Townsley & Friends)

'bɔrk

variants: **borking** *also* **Borking**; **borks** *also* **Borks**

Athletics & Weight Training, informal

: The action/effort of building strength and or hypertrophy through some form of training.

- Dono just left to go bork.
- Christa has a long history of consistent borking and that's why she's so strong!

Borked Adjective (the dictionary of Aaron Townsley & Friends)

'bɔrkd

Athletics & Weight Training, informal

: The visual identifiers of strength and or muscle mass.

- Damn Shane you're really getting borked this spring!

Sources:

<https://www.youtube.com/@c4hp>.

<https://www.camp4humanperformance.com/>

Huge shoutout to Tyler Nelson from C4HP

<https://www.youtube.com/@EllipseAthletics>

<https://www.youtube.com/@OrthoIndyIOH>

Donovan - he who coined the Bork and always embodies the Bork life.