

Attakwas Extreme MTB — Sub-12h Training Plan

Dates: Mon 1 Sep 2025 → Sat 17 Jan 2026

Introduction

Who this is for: Riders targeting a **sub-12 hour** Attakwas Extreme MTB Challenge **2026**. Expect weekly time commitment to build from **~6–8 h/week** early to **10–12 h/week** in peak weeks.

Starting fitness & skills:

- Riding **3–4 days/week** for the past month.
- Able to ride **90–120 min at Z2** continuously and complete **2 h** off-road comfortably.
- MTB skills: safe braking and cornering, stable body position, shifting on climbs, comfort on **open gravel/jeep tracks** and **easy singletrack**.
- Equipment: well-serviced MTB, appropriate tyres (tubeless or robust tubes), basic spares (tube/plug, levers, pump/CO₂, multi-tool, quick-link). **HR monitor recommended, power meter optional.**

Safety guidelines (read before you start):

- Get medical clearance if new to structured training, returning from injury/illness, or if you have cardiac/respiratory/metabolic risk factors.
- **“The Neck-Check” Rule:**
 - *Above-the-neck* (runny nose, mild sore throat, sneezing, no fever): only **Z1/Z2** for **40–80 min**, no intervals.
 - *Below-the-neck* (fever $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$, chest symptoms, deep cough, body aches, GI upset): **Do not train**. Resume only after **24–48 h** symptom-free. Restart easy (Z1–Z2) and reduce volume **30–50%** for 3–5 days depending on feelings.
- **Stop immediately** and seek care for chest pain, unusual shortness of breath, dizziness/fainting, or palpitations.

- **Heat safety:** favour cooler parts of the day, hydrate consistently, include sodium on longer rides, avoid VO_2 /threshold work in peak heat, rehydrate and cool down after.
- **Ride safety:** always wear a helmet; use lights in low light, tell someone your route, carry ID/phone/cash, in remote terrain, ride with a partner when possible.

Important: This is a **generic plan**—no personalisation or medical advice. Always adjust for your context (work, travel, fatigue, illness). Use RPE and the Power/HR zones to scale sessions up/down.

Zones (RPE Quick Guide)

RPE = Rate of Perceived Exertion (how hard it feels): 1 = very easy, 10 = all-out.

- **Z1 — Recovery Spin (RPE 1):** Super easy. You can chat freely, breathe through your nose, legs just turning over. Use between hard days or after races.
- **Z2 — Endurance (RPE 2–3):** Easy–steady “all-day” pace. Full sentences possible. Builds aerobic base without much fatigue.
- **Z3 — Tempo / Sweet Spot (RPE 4–6):** Comfortably hard. Short sentences only. Strong but sustainable; good for fitness and climbing strength.
- **Z4 — Threshold (RPE 7–8):** Hard. Talking not really possible. Feels like a time-trial effort you could hold ~40–60 min total.
- **Z5 — VO_2 Max (RPE 9):** Very hard. 3–5 min repeats. Breathing is loud/gasping; conversation impossible.
- **Z6 — Anaerobic (RPE 10):** All-out sprints/attacks ≤ 2 min. Max effort—use sparingly.

Power & Heart-Rate Equivalents

Power = % of FTP. Heart rate = % of HR threshold (LTHR).

Zone	Power (%FTP)	HR (%LTHR)	RPE
Z1 Recovery	<55%	<81%	1
Z2 Endurance	56–75%	81–89%	2–3
Z3 Tempo / Sweet Spot	Tempo: 76–90% · SS: 88–94%	Tempo: 90–93% · SS: 94–97%	Tempo: 4–5 · SS: 5–6
Z4 Threshold	95–105%	98–102%	7–8
Z5 VO ₂ Max	106–120%	103–106%	9
Z6 Anaerobic	>120%	≥106%	10

FTP & HR Threshold

- **FTP (Functional Threshold Power):** the hardest average power you can hold for about **40-60 minutes**. Re-test every 4–6 weeks as fitness changes.
- **HR Threshold (LTHR):** the highest **steady** heart rate you can hold for roughly **40–60 minutes**. Practical estimate: take the **average HR from a 40–60 min solo time trial** or recent race.
- **How to use them:** Pace primarily by **power** when you have it; use **HR** to monitor drift from heat/fatigue/dehydration. If HR is unusually high/low for a given power, adjust the day's effort. Honest RPE has the final say.

Phase 1 — Base 1 (Train to Train)

Fueling cue: For rides >90 min aim ~30–50 g carbs/h; practice electrolytes in warm conditions.

Terrain focus : Open roads and smooth gravel; basic handling (braking drills on safe surfaces, stable body position), establish tyre-pressure baseline.

Heat adaptation : 2–3 exposures/week of 20–30 min in the warmer part of the day at Z2. If that is not possible a hot bath or sauna session will also work. Drink 400–600 ml/h with 300–500 mg sodium/h.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Mon 1st Sep Off	Tue 2nd Sep Endurance — 70 min @ Z2	Wed 3rd Sep Tempo/SS — 75 min (WU 15 min; 3×6 min @ Z3/SS; 4 min Recovery; CD 10 min)	Thu 4th Sep Endurance — 75 min @ Z2	Fri 5th Sep Recovery — 45 min @ Z1	Sat 6th Sep Endurance — 2h00 @ Z2	Sun 7th Sep Endurance — 1h15 @ Z2
Mon 8th Sep Off	Tue 9th Sep Tempo/SS — 75 min (WU 15 min; 3×8 min @ Z3/SS; 4 min Recovery)	Wed 10th Sep Endurance — 75 min @ Z2	Thu 11th Sep VO ₂ — 70 min (WU 20 min; 4×3 min @ Z5 / 3 min Recovery; CD 10 min)	Fri 12th Sep Recovery — 45 min @ Z1	Sat 13th Sep Endurance — 2h15 @ Z2	Sun 14th Sep Endurance — 1h30 @ Z2
Mon 15th Sep Off	Tue 16th Sep Threshold — 75 min (WU 20 min; 3×6 min @ Z4 / 5 min Recovery)	Wed 17th Sep Endurance — 75 min @ Z2	Thu 18th Sep Tempo/SS — 75 min (2×10 min @ Z3/SS / 5 min Recovery)	Fri 19th Sep Recovery — 50 min @ Z1	Sat 20th Sep Endurance — 2h30 @ Z2	Sun 21st Sep Endurance — 1h40 @ Z2
Mon 22nd Sep Off	Tue 23rd Sep Endurance — 60 min @ Z2	Wed 24th Sep Tempo — 70 min (2×8 min @ Z3 / 5 min Recovery)	Thu 25th Sep Off	Fri 26th Sep Endurance — 60 min @ Z2	Sat 27th Sep Endurance — 1h50 @ Z2	Sun 28th Sep Recovery — 50 min @ Z1

Phase 2 — Base 2 (Progress Z2, more Z3/SS)

Fueling cue: For rides >90 min aim 40–60 g carbs/h; hydration planning for warmer days.

Terrain focus : Rough jeep tracks, short sand patches, simple line choice on descents, seated traction on rocky ramps.

Heat adaptation : 3–4 exposures/week of 30–45 min with fluids 500–750 ml/h and 500–700 mg sodium/h.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Mon 29th Sep Off	Tue 30th Sep Tempo/SS — 75 min (3×10 min @ Z3/SS / 5 min Recovery)	Wed 1st Oct Endurance — 75 min @ Z2	Thu 2nd Oct VO ₂ — 75 min (5×2 min @ Z5 / 3 min Recovery)	Fri 3rd Oct Recovery — 50 min @ Z1	Sat 4th Oct Endurance — 2h40 @ Z2	Sun 5th Oct Endurance — 1h45 @ Z2
Mon 6th Oct Off	Tue 7th Oct Threshold — 75 min (3×8 min @ Z4 / 5 min Recovery)	Wed 8th Oct Endurance — 75 min @ Z2	Thu 9th Oct Tempo/SS — 80 min (3×12 min @ Z3/SS / 5 min Recovery)	Fri 10th Oct Recovery — 50 min @ Z1	Sat 11th Oct Endurance — 2h50 @ Z2	Sun 12th Oct Endurance — 1h55 @ Z2
Mon 13th Oct Off	Tue 14th Oct VO ₂ — 75 min (4×3 min @ Z5 / 3 min Recovery)	Wed 15th Oct Endurance — 75 min @ Z2	Thu 16th Oct Threshold — 80 min (2×10 min @ Z4 / 6 min Recovery + 1×6 min @ Z4)	Fri 17th Oct Recovery — 50 min @ Z1	Sat 18th Oct Endurance — 3h00 @ Z2	Sun 19th Oct Endurance — 2h00 @ Z2
Mon 20th Oct Off	Tue 21st Oct Endurance — 60 min @ Z2	Wed 22nd Oct Tempo — 70 min (2×10 min @ Z3 / 5 min Recovery)	Thu 23rd Oct Off	Fri 24th Oct Endurance — 60 min @ Z2	Sat 25th Oct Endurance — 2h00 @ Z2	Sun 26th Oct Recovery — 50 min @ Z1

Phase 3 — Build 1 (SS→Threshold, modest VO₂)

Fueling cue: For rides >90 min aim 50–70 g carbs/h; rehearse simple on-bike fueling.

Terrain focus : Technical descents, cornering lines and braking zones; repeated short descents under fatigue; rock-garden entries; controlled small drop-offs. **Heat adaptation :** 45–60 min heat blocks on one weekday + part of Saturday; monitor HR drift for a given power; use cooling at stops (bottle dousing/shade); avoid placing VO₂ sessions in peak heat.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Mon 27th Oct Off	Tue 28th Oct Tempo/SS — 80 min (3×12 min @ Z3/SS / 5 min Recovery)	Wed 29th Oct Endurance — 75 min @ Z2	Thu 30th Oct Threshold — 80 min (3×8 min @ Z4 / 5 min Recovery)	Fri 31st Oct Recovery — 50 min @ Z1	Sat 1st Nov Endurance — 3h10 @ Z2	Sun 2nd Nov Endurance — 2h05 @ Z2
Mon 3rd Nov Off	Tue 4th Nov Over/Unders — 80 min (4×9 min: 2 min @ Z3 / 1 min @ Z4)	Wed 5th Nov Endurance — 75 min @ Z2	Thu 6th Nov Tempo/SS — 80 min (3×12 min @ Z3/SS / 5 min Recovery)	Fri 7th Nov Recovery — 50 min @ Z1	Sat 8th Nov Endurance — 3h20 @ Z2	Sun 9th Nov Endurance — 2h10 @ Z2
Mon 10th Nov Off	Tue 11th Nov Threshold — 80 min (3×10 min @ Z4 / 6 min Recovery)	Wed 12th Nov Endurance — 75 min @ Z2	Thu 13th Nov Tempo — 80 min (3×12 min @ Z3 / 5 min Recovery)	Fri 14th Nov Recovery — 50 min @ Z1	Sat 15th Nov Endurance — 3h30 @ Z2	Sun 16th Nov Endurance — 2h15 @ Z2
Mon 17th Nov Off	Tue 18th Nov Endurance — 60 min @ Z2	Wed 19th Nov Tempo — 70 min (2×10 min @ Z3 / 5 min Recovery)	Thu 20th Nov Skills — 60 min MTB drills	Fri 21st Nov Off	Sat 22nd Nov Endurance — 1h55 @ Z2	Sun 23rd Nov Recovery — 50 min @ Z1

Phase 4 — Build 2 (Specificity, Longer Back-to-Backs)

Fueling cue: For rides >90 min aim 60–80 g carbs/h; test race-day foods.

Terrain focus : Steep, rocky climbs and extended rough sectors; technical climbing both seated and standing; torque work at Z3/SS; descending under fatigue.

Heat adaptation : Simulate race window timing; target fluids 600–900 ml/h and sodium 600–900 mg/h on long rides.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Mon 24th Nov Off	Tue 25th Nov Tempo/SS — 80 min (3×12 min @ Z3/SS / 5 min Recovery)	Wed 26th Nov Endurance — 75 min @ Z2	Thu 27th Nov Threshold — 80 min (3×8 min @ Z4 / 6 min Recovery)	Fri 28th Nov Recovery — 50 min @ Z1	Sat 29th Nov Endurance — 3h40 @ Z2	Sun 30th Nov Endurance — 2h20 @ Z2
Mon 1st Dec	Tue 2nd Dec Over/Unders — 80 min (4×10 min: 2 min @ Z3 / 1 min @ Z4)	Wed 3rd Dec Endurance — 75 min @ Z2	Thu 4th Dec Tempo/SS — 80 min (3×12 min @ Z3/SS / 5 min Recovery)	Fri 5th Dec Recovery — 50 min @ Z1	Sat 6th Dec Endurance — 3h50 @ Z2	Sun 7th Dec Endurance — 2h20 @ Z2
Mon 8th Dec Off	Tue 9th Dec Threshold — 80 min (3×10 min @ Z4 / 6 min Recovery)	Wed 10th Dec Endurance — 75 min @ Z2	Thu 11th Dec Tempo — 80 min (2×18 min @ Z3 / 6 min Recovery)	Fri 12th Dec Recovery — 50 min @ Z1	Sat 13th Dec Endurance — 4h00 @ Z2	Sun 14th Dec Endurance — 2h30 @ Z2
Mon 15th Dec Off	Tue 16th Dec Endurance — 60 min @ Z2	Wed 17th Dec Tempo — 70 min (2×10 min @ Z3 / 5 min Recovery)	Thu 18th Dec Skills — 60 min MTB drills	Fri 19th Dec Off	Sat 20th Dec Endurance — 2h10 @ Z2	Sun 21st Dec Recovery — 50 min @ Z1

Phase 5 — Peak & Taper

Fueling cue: Maintain longer-ride gut-training 60–90 g carbs/h; finalise race-day plan.

Terrain focus : Race-specific surface mix; brief recon to confirm tyre/pressure; keep technical volume low after early week to stay fresh.

Heat adaptation : Reduce to maintenance exposures 1–2×/week of 15–25 min; avoid additional heat load in race week.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Mon 22nd Dec Off	Tue 23rd Dec Tempo/SS — 75 min (3×10 min @ Z3/SS / 5 min Recovery)	Wed 24th Dec Endurance — 70 min @ Z2	Thu 25th Dec Recovery — 45 min @ Z1	Fri 26th Dec Off	Sat 27th Dec Endurance — 3h10 @ Z2	Sun 28th Dec Endurance — 1h50 @ Z2
Mon 29th Dec Off	Tue 30th Dec Tempo — 75 min (3×10 min @ Z3 / 5 min Recovery)	Wed 31st Dec Endurance — 70 min @ Z2	Thu 1st Jan Recovery — 45 min @ Z1	Fri 2nd Jan Off	Sat 3rd Jan Endurance — 2h40 @ Z2	Sun 4th Jan Endurance — 1h40 @ Z2
Mon 5th Jan Off	Tue 6th Jan Threshold — 70 min (2×8 min @ Z4 / 6 min Recovery)	Wed 7th Jan Endurance — 60–70 min @ Z2	Thu 8th Jan Openers — 60 min (6×30 sec @ Z5/6 / 3 min Recovery)	Fri 9th Jan Off	Sat 10th Jan Endurance — 1h50–2h10 @ Z2	Sun 11th Jan Recovery — 45 min @ Z1
Mon 12th Jan Off	Tue 13th Jan Openers — 50 min (2×3 min @ Z3/SS + 4×20 sec fast)	Wed 14th Jan Endurance — 45–60 min @ Z2 + 3×10 sec starts	Thu 15th Jan Off / 30 min easy	Fri 16th Jan Activation — 30–40 min (3×1 min @ Z3)	Sat 17th Jan RACE: Attakwas Extreme MTB	Sun 18th Jan Off / easy spin