



# Beginner 123 Programs

Practical Program Design Mastery

BUILDING MUSCLE  
WITH A PURPOSE

**STRENGTH  
ZONE  
TRAINING**  
™

# When to Use These Programs

- If you're just starting out, or if it's been a while since you've done any strength training.
- Once you've been through these beginner workouts, you can start with using the Base programs.



# When NOT to Use These Programs

- If you've been regularly using moderate levels of resistance training, you can begin with the next phase: Base Training Programs.



# Why Use These Programs?

- The main goal of these programs is to familiarize your body with the demands of performing non-complex exercises.
- Primarily, to help your brain learn how to engage your muscles more efficiently as you progress through the early stages of the program.
- Also to minimize post workout soreness by minimizing exercise volume (especially on the lower-body).



# Newbie Gains

- These neural adaptations often bring rapid strength improvements during this phase.
- Even though neural adaptations are primarily responsible for increased strength in the early phases of training, research has also found that changes in muscle size are detectable within the first three or four weeks of resistance training (1, 2).



# How to Use these Programs

Workout  
Guidelines



# What Do these Programs Consist Of?

## 3 Total Phases:

- **Phase 1** is a single workout program that you repeat for 6 total workouts
- **Phase 2** involves alternating between *Phase 2: Workout A* and *Phase 2: Workout B* for 12 total workouts:
- **Phase 3** involves alternating between *Phase 3: Workout A* and *Phase 3: Workout B* for 12 total workouts:



# Weekly Training Frequency

- You'll repeat each workout in each phase for six times.
- Train either twice, three times, or four times within a week.
- How often you train throughout the week depends on your fitness level, schedule and other physical activities.
- Perform the workout on no more than two consecutive days without a rest day.





# Phase 1: Twice Per Week

## Week 1

### Day 1

Program 1:  
Workout 1

### Day 2

Program 1:  
Workout 2

## Week 2

### Day 1

Program 1:  
Workout 3

### Day 2

Program 1:  
Workout 4

## Week 3

### Day 1

Program 1:  
Workout 5

### Day 2

Program 1:  
Workout 6

# Phase 2 & 3: Twice Per Week

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
<b>Day 1</b> Program 2A: Workout 1	<b>Day 1</b> Program 2A: Workout 2	<b>Day 1</b> Program 2A: Workout 3	<b>Day 1</b> Program 2A: Workout 4	<b>Day 1</b> Program 2A: Workout 5	<b>Day 1</b> Program 2A: Workout 6
<b>Day 2</b> Program 2B: Workout 1	<b>Day 2</b> Program 2B: Workout 2	<b>Day 2</b> Program 2B: Workout 3	<b>Day 2</b> Program 2B: Workout 4	<b>Day 2</b> Program 2B: Workout 5	<b>Day 2</b> Program 2B: Workout 6



# Phase 1: Three Times Per Week

## Week 1

### Day 1

Program 1:  
Workout 1

### Day 2

Program 1:  
Workout 2

### Day 3

Program 1:  
Workout 3

## Week 2

### Day 1

Program 1:  
Workout 4

### Day 2

Program 1:  
Workout 5

### Day 3

Program 1:  
Workout 6



# Phase 2 & 3: Three Times Per Week

**Week 1**

**Day 1**  
Program 2A:  
Workout 1

**Day 2**  
Program 2B:  
Workout 1

**Day 3**  
Program 2A:  
Workout 2

**Week 2**

**Day 1**  
Program 2B:  
Workout 2

**Day 2**  
Program 2A:  
Workout 3

**Day 3**  
Program 2B:  
Workout 3

**Week 3**

**Day 1**  
Program 2A:  
Workout 4

**Day 2**  
Program 2B:  
Workout 4

**Day 3**  
Program 2A:  
Workout 5

**Week 4**

**Day 1**  
Program 2B:  
Workout 5

**Day 2**  
Program 2A:  
Workout 6

**Day 3**  
Program 2B:  
Workout 6



# Phase 1: Four Times Per Week

## Week 1

### Day 1

Program 1: Workout 1

### Day 2

Program 1: Workout 2

### Day 3

Program 1: Workout 3

### Day 4

Program 1: Workout 4

## Week 2

### Day 1

Program 1: Workout 5

### Day 2

Program 1: Workout 6

# Phase 2 & 3: Four Times Per Week

**Week 1**

**Day 1**  
Program 2A:  
Workout 1

**Day 2**  
Program 2B:  
Workout 1

**Day 3**  
Program 2A:  
Workout 2

**Day 4**  
Program 2B:  
Workout 2

**Week 2**

**Day 1**  
Program 2A:  
Workout 3

**Day 2**  
Program 2B:  
Workout 3

**Day 3**  
Program 2A:  
Workout 4

**Day 4**  
Program 2B:  
Workout 4

**Week 3**

**Day 1**  
Program 2A:  
Workout 5

**Day 2**  
Program 2B:  
Workout 5

**Day 3**  
Program 2A:  
Workout 6

**Day 4**  
Program 2B:  
Workout 6



# Phase 1: Total Weeks Per Program

## Training TWICE Per Week

- 3 weeks to complete *program (phase) 1*.

## Training THREE Times Per Week

- 2 weeks to complete *program (phase) 1*.

## Training FOUR Times Per Week

- 1.5 weeks to complete *program (phase) 1*.



# Phase 2 & 3: Total Weeks Per Program

## Training TWICE Per Week

- 6 weeks to complete *program (phase) 1*.
- 6 weeks to complete *program (phase) 2*.

## Training THREE Times Per Week

- 4 weeks to complete *program (phase) 1*.
- 4 weeks to complete *program (phase) 2*.

## Training FOUR Times Per Week

- 3 weeks to complete *program (phase) 1*.
- 3 weeks to complete *program (phase) 2*.





# Total Weeks to Complete All Phases

## Training TWICE Per Week

- 15 weeks to complete *all three phases*.

## Training THREE Times Per Week

- 10 weeks to complete *all three phases*.

## Training FOUR Times Per Week

- 7.5 weeks to complete *all three phases*.



# (Active) Rest Days

- During your days off, you can do some low-impact activities, such as:
  - Going for long walks
  - Hikes
  - Bike rides
  - Swims
- Yoga can also be a great option for your active rest days.



# What Comes After Finishing Each Phase?

- Start with Phase 1, and move on to Phase two after all workouts in Phase 1 have been completed.
- Move on to Phase 3 after all workouts in Phase 2 have been completed.
- Once all workouts in all three phases have been completed, move on to the Base Training programs.



# Train the Person, Not the Chart!

- After completing the first two workouts in Phase 1, you can move directly to Phase 2 if:
  - 1) The workouts feel very easy.
  - 2) There is no post workout soreness.
- You can move directly to Phase 3 after completing the first four (total) workouts by following the same two guidelines.



# Adjusting the Amount of Sets

- In Phases 1 and 2, you can increase the amount of sets on the upper-body only.
- Increases sets on the lower-body tends to bring about soreness that seems to more negatively impact other life activities.

# Programming Point of Emphasis (POE)

- Your primary focus of these programs is not to reach full exercise fatigue but to improve your exercise technique and your muscle awareness when performing the exercises.



# Achieving competency in an exercise

Building a foundation of competency will happen as a result of these two things:

1. Finding a limited number of non-complex, pushing, pulling, knee bend, and hip hinge exercises that best fit your current ability and that you're able to do pain-free.
2. Consistently practicing these exercises to achieve basic competence.



# Wants and Needs

- Although some beginners may prefer more variety, they've first got to achieve competency in an exercise before adding intensity or complexity to it.
- Just like in boxing, you don't get into throwing punch combinations until you've first learned the basic boxing stance and how to throw a proper punch. Advancing in any skill requires a foundation.
- The Warm-Up sequences provide regular variety.





# Warm-Up

- Perform *only* the *Get Warm* and *Get Mobile* exercises before all beginner program workouts.
- Do *not* use the *Get Athletic* exercises.
- You can perform two sets of each mobility exercise in the *Get Mobile* section of the given Warm-Up sequence to increase the length of the workout session if your fitness level allows.



# Rep Tempo

- Do the concentric (lifting) portion of each rep at a normal tempo.
- Maintain control during the eccentric (lowering) portion.

# Choosing the Weight on Each Exercise

- Use a weight that challenges you enough for the entire set but allows you to maintain good control and creates only mild muscle fatigue at the end of each set.
- Choose a weight for each set that allows you to complete all indicated reps while still being capable of performing a few more (two or three) before you reach muscular failure.



# Rest Between Sets

- You can rest a bit longer than indicated between sets (if necessary) to complete the designated number of reps with good control.



# Finisher

- No finishers are performed with the Beginner Programs.
- If an individual is progressing fast through Phases 1 and 2, you can incorporate one round of a finisher from the *Endurance Day* section of the finisher sequences.
- Only incorporate a Finisher after you've completed at least 4 total workouts in Phase 3 with:
  - 1) The workouts feel fairly easy.
  - 2) There is no post workout soreness.



# References:

1. DeFreitas, J.M., et al. 2011. An examination of the time course of training-induced skeletal muscle hypertrophy. *European Journal of Applied Physiology* 111 (11): 2785–90.
2. Seynnes, O.R., et al. 2007. Early skeletal muscle hypertrophy and architectural changes in response to high-intensity resistance training. *Journal of Applied Physiology* 102 (1): 368-73.

