



STRENGTH & SIZE

PROGRAM

Please PLEASE READ Read

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Introduction

WELCOME TO YOUR NEW AND IMPROVED PHYSIQUE!!!

I'm so grateful you took advantage of this program that is sure to bring you value. I'm Sean and I've helped thousands of men, just like you, achieve their physique and strength goals. I specialize in giving you the tools to build an incredible physique! I'm committed to helping you reach your full potential with the proper knowledge, motivation, and training techniques. It is truly an honor to be part of your fitness journey.

Growing up, I have always been lean and struggled for years to put on any decent size or strength. For many of us, putting on muscle naturally is complex, and for some of you a chore! You know the struggle if you have a long, thin frame like me. At 6'5, I maintained 205 lbs. my entire college career despite maintaining a consistent workout schedule 6 days a week supplemented with six protein-rich meals a day – sprinkled with intermittent late-night benders and the occasional cheat day. I was going through what my body naturally favored. Or, in other words, homeostasis. I couldn't gain a pound if my life depended on it. All the advanced techniques and party trick exercises that fitness media and fitness influencers were advocating weren't necessary or didn't work. Program progressions were spotty at best, if not entirely left out, and mobility and recovery protocols

were never addressed due to a lack of clarity over muscular imbalances. Sustaining a strong muscular physique was difficult, if not impossible. Mindset and personal development never

really became integral to my life until I started surrounding myself with like-minded individuals and people crushing it happily in their relationships and careers. That's when I saw the necessity to bridge the gap between building an incredible physique and having a strong mind. This program will address proper workout progressions and recovery methods while establishing the mindset necessary to complete this program with your ideal results.

A Word on Genetics

Genetics have a fair amount of impact on the shape of your body. Some of you will be blessed with great genetics, and putting on muscle will come quickly, but you are prone to body fat accumulation, while others will struggle to gain any amount of muscle but can maintain a lean physique year around. There are pros and cons to both. The Strength and size program was designed with different body types in mind and is the culmination of hours spent researching and applying the best techniques to gain



strength, build quality muscle and sustain your efforts long-term.

The principles of this program have been field tested on hundreds of clients and are the most effective way to achieve a quality physique on

your terms. If you commit yourself to the next fifteen weeks, stay consistent with this program, work hard, and leave it all on the gym floor every workout, you will become stronger, bigger, and more confident.

You are what you repeatedly do. ~Aristotle

Lastly, I recommend you read this eBook more than once. Throughout my time in the fitness industry, I must have read through my stack of fitness and nutrition books fifteen times. I found that I missed much information. Studies show that people only retain less than 20% of their reading information. That's why I recommend that you read this eBook 10 to 15 times if you want to understand these strategies and have the body of your dreams. Repetition is the mother of skill, and having a working knowledge of fitness and nutrition and sustaining those efforts long-term is essential.



Establishing ESTABLISHING Your YOUR Intentions INTENTIONS



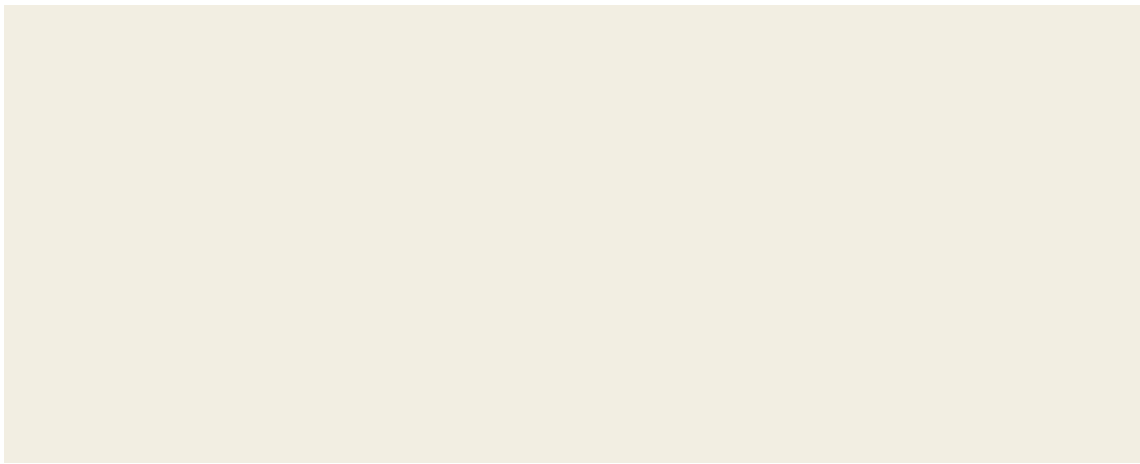
GOAL SETTING & MAXIMIZING YOUR EFFORTS

What makes this training program so unique and extraordinary from anything you've seen before is in this section! I can't say I've ever seen a fitness plan that bothered with addressing goals and setting intentions TO SEE RESULTS. This is the same approach I take with every single one of my clients before I even let them touch a weight. Everyone is unique in their experiences, thoughts, and perceptions about health and fitness. When you know what "fills your tank" and keeps you going, you can sustain your efforts and build the physique you have always wanted rather than burning out, losing focus, or looking for short-term gains at the expense of long-term growth. This is an opportunity to get to know yourself. So DON'T skip ahead.

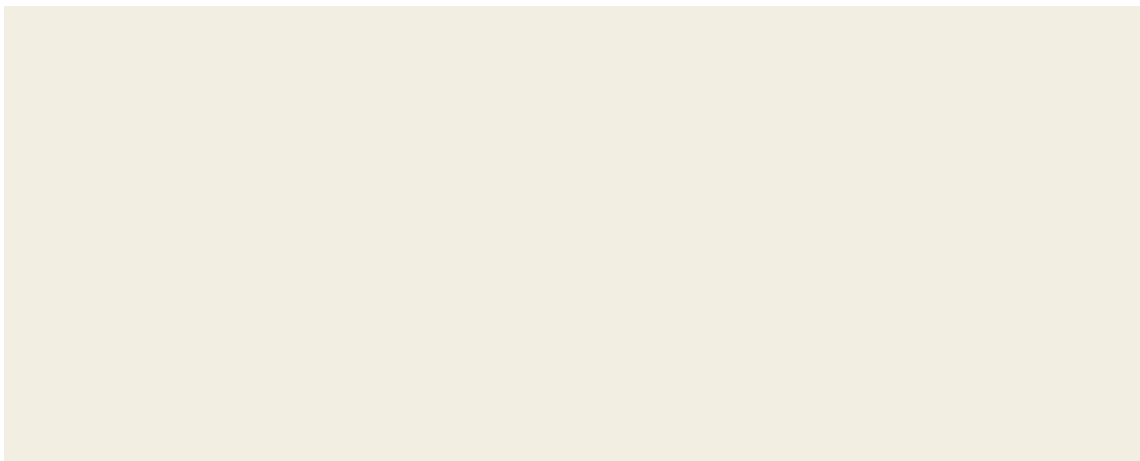
Take a few minutes to ask yourself these questions to identify the most critical aspects of your goals. I encourage you to get to the emotional "selfish" why. Be as descriptive as you can, and don't leave anything out! There is much value in reflecting on your goals and going through these questions. Your well-thought-out answers will become increasingly powerful, precise, and inspirational in moving you toward your goals. These questions can be used again and again to reaffirm your commitment to your goals and establish the connection you need. Feel free to recycle these questions as needed and write on a separate piece of paper or a word document.

GOAL SETTING & MAXIMIZING YOUR EFFORTS

What are your physique goal/s? Be as descriptive as possible. I want you to be so clear in your answer that anyone would know exactly what you're wanting to accomplish.

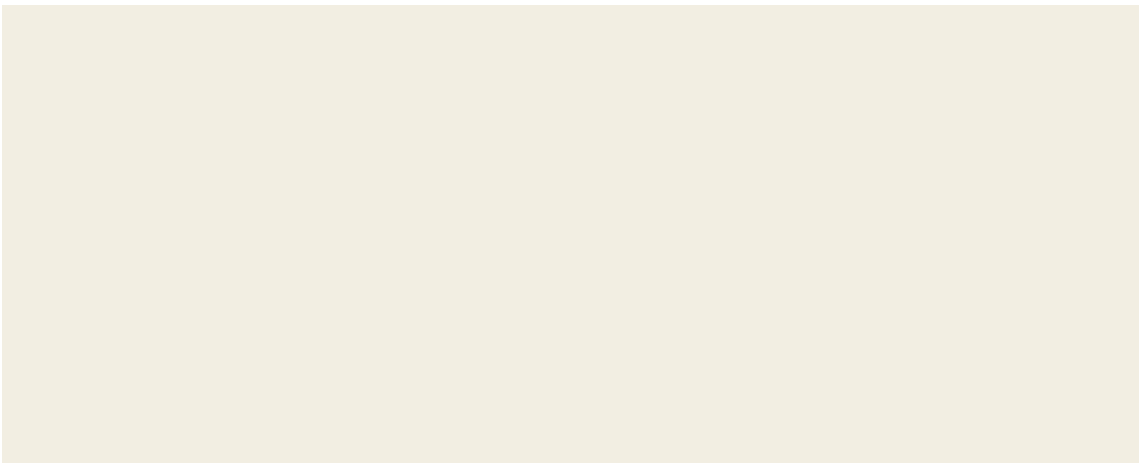


Why is this goal so special to you?

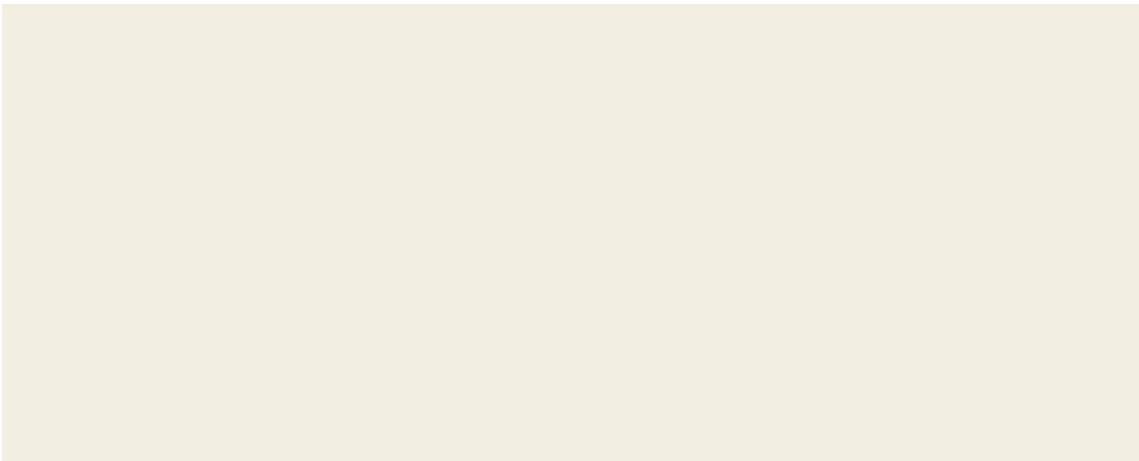


GOAL SETTING & MAXIMIZING YOUR EFFORTS

What will this do for you? How will this make you feel?

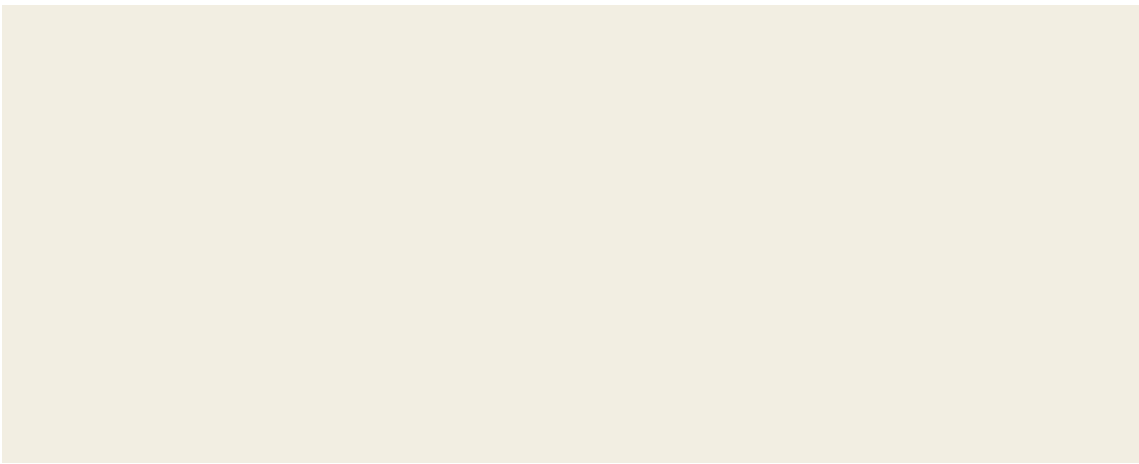


What is keeping you from getting the results you want?

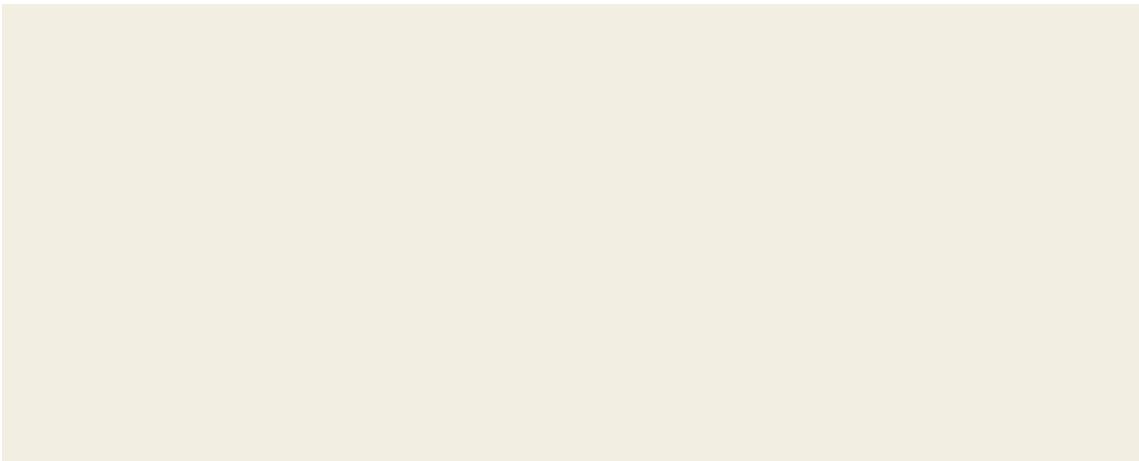


GOAL SETTING & MAXIMIZING YOUR EFFORTS

Where do you think that will leave you if you do not address said problems?



What are you willing to do to accomplish your goal?



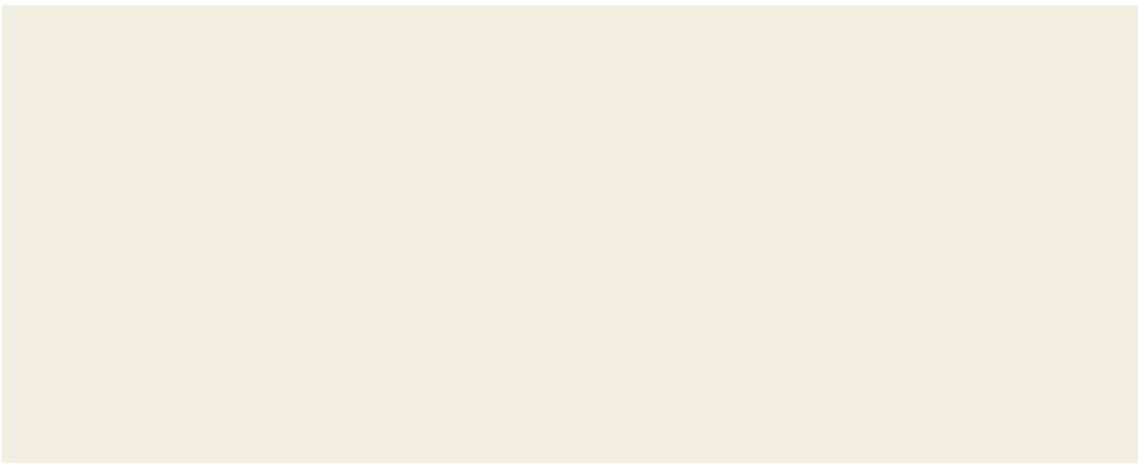
GOAL SETTING & MAXIMIZING YOUR EFFORTS

How confident do you feel working on these goals/habits?

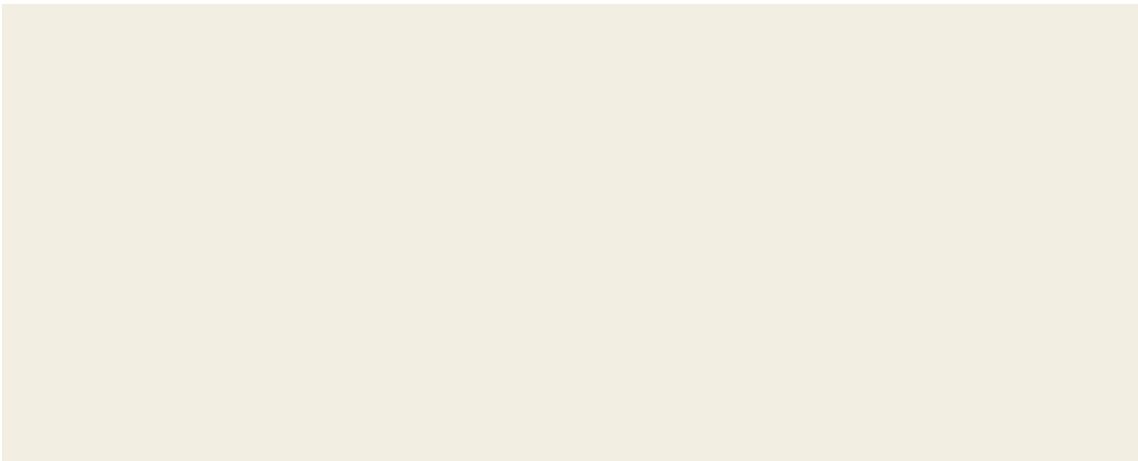
Do you foresee any challenges with this?

GOAL SETTING & MAXIMIZING YOUR EFFORTS

What planning/preparation do you need to work through these challenges?



On a scale of 1-10, how committed are you to creating habits and a lifestyle that translates to your success? Why?



The Science Behind Strength & Size

This program will maximize your potential by utilizing three distinctive phases to gain strength and increase lean muscle using the tried-and-true strength progression system. We begin all your programs in a testing week to assess your strength levels for critical lifts. From there, we tailor specific movements based on your maxes so you can eliminate the guesswork and know you're increasing your strength weekly. On the last week of each phase, you begin a DE-LOAD. This is where you take a week to allow your muscles, joints, and central nervous system to recover appropriately. Intensity is strategically reduced to promote longevity and maintain the hard-earned muscle you gained. So, make sure you are taking the DE-LOAD seriously. If you decide to skip the DE-LOAD or increase the intensity to make it harder, you will negatively affect your medium- and long-term success. Please don't skip it.

Each phase within the program offers various protocols so you won't get bored, hit plateaus, or risk overtraining.

If you have spent any time working out, you know building quality muscle begins by breaking down and re-building muscle tissue. Research suggests you should train reasonably close to failure to maximize hypertrophy on most sets. We must take sets adequately close to failure in this program. Some exercises will push you beyond the typical failure point through specialized intensity techniques - like forced reps, negatives, drop-sets, fascial pump training, etc. I will indicate precisely where this happens within your program to maximize your results.

Hypertrophy Phase - Hypertrophy Phase - In the first phase, you will focus on building a quality foundation of stabilizing your joints and optimizing your mobility to enhance your range of motion for each exercise in this phase. Strength training tends to create imbalances within your body that could develop aches and pains that will directly hinder your progress. We're not taking any chances here and will deliver solutions to help you on your journey. Not only do we build a proper foundation that directly translates into future phases, but each workout has a unique warm-up and recovery protocol to keep your body balanced. And don't worry, the first phase has enough volume (amount of training) to get you to grow muscle effectively, but it starts nice and easy to get you acclimated and then gradually gets harder as you go, and by the end, it will be a real challenge. When you've completed the first phase, you'll be much stronger

and better at performing the movements confidently.

Metabolite Phase - The second phase is the "metabolite" or metabolic stress phase and will see the introduction of "specialized intensity techniques" described above. After the first phase is complete, your body will be a bit resistant to muscle growth, and we'll need to pull out all the stops for you to keep progressing at the best rates. You may have heard individuals talking about lactic acid buildup in the muscles. Or, in other words, "the burn" during training. This kind of training raises your level of lactate or accumulated hydrogen ions causing an acidic environment in the muscle. This side effect has been shown to play a significant role in stimulating your muscle cells to grow. Your reps per set in this phase will go up considerably as the weights will be intentionally lighter. In addition, the rest time will shorten to just enough time for you to barely catch your breath.

Re-Conditioning Phase - This program's third and final phase is called "re-conditioning." After throwing your body through the wringer, it will be resistant to further growth. So how do we get your body to grow again? We must re-condition it by using lower volume amounts and putting the muscle under tension with the heaviest weight possible. Sets will be performed anywhere between 5-10 reps. At a deep physiological level, your body is forgetting the high-volume training of the past phases. The next time you train with high volumes again (circling back to phase 1 when you've completed the third phase), your body will be primed and ready again.

STRENGTH & SIZE PROGRAM



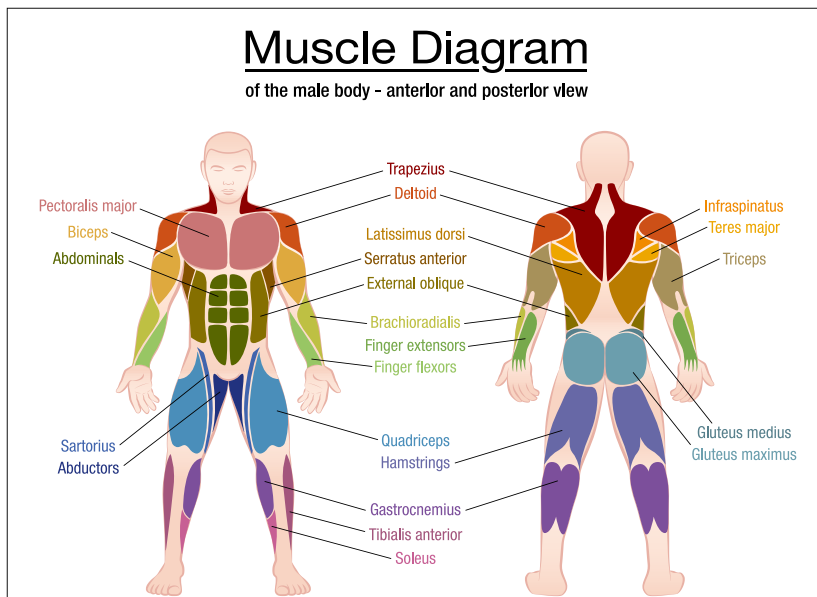
Anatomy

ANATOMY

101

101





Let's take a moment to review the primary muscle group's functional anatomy and biomechanics that we'll be training. Having some working knowledge will lead to a better appreciation of how best to train them.

When looking at a muscle's functional anatomy, there are two things to consider: origin and insertion. Muscles attach themselves to the bone from at least two points by tendons. The origin is the fixed attachment which does not move, and the insertion is the attachment that moves closer to the origin when a muscle contracts. This contracting phase, referred to as the concentric phase (known as the "positive" portion of the rep), is typically followed by the eccentric phase (lowering the weight – also known as the "negative" portion of the rep).

MAIN MUSCLE GROUPS

Upper Body

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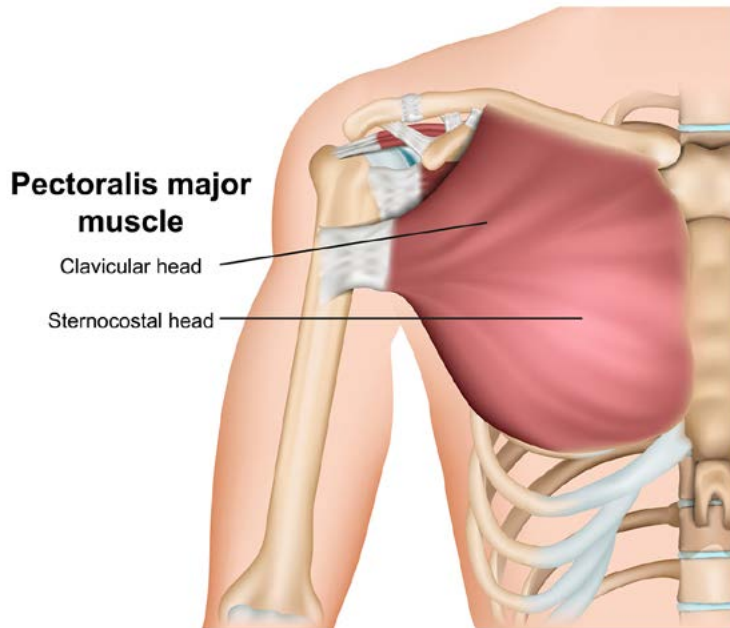
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PECTORALIS



There are two pectoralis muscles (otherwise known as pecs) on your chest: the pectoralis major and the pectoralis minor. The pectoralis major can be divided into two heads: the clavicular head or “upper chest” (which originates at the clavicle) and the sternal head or “lower chest” (which originates at the sternum). The pecs act to adduct the upper arm (bring the upper arm across the body) and to internally rotate the shoulder joint. The clavicular fibers also aid shoulder flexion (raising your upper arm), but the sternal fibers do not.

Origin: The pectoralis major originates on the sternum and clavicle. The pectoralis minor originates on the 3rd-5th ribs.

Insertion: The pectoralis major inserts on the humerus. The pectoralis minor inserts to the coracoid process (front of your shoulder).

Exercises for the Pecs: Barbell bench press, incline barbell bench press, decline barbell bench press, incline dumbbell chest press, pec deck fly, and push ups.

BACK



The back comprises many different muscles, so for the sake of time and simplicity, we will focus on the largest muscles of the back – the lats and traps.

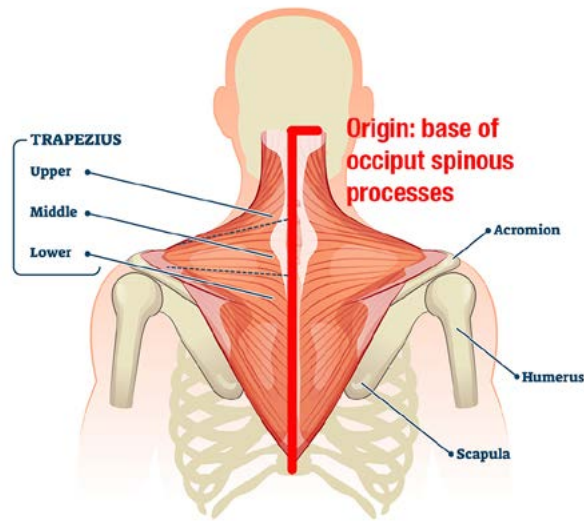
The latissimus dorsi (the lats) is a big muscle that runs from underneath your armpit down to the bottom of your back. The lats primarily act to extend the shoulder (bring your upper arm downward) and adduct the shoulder (moving your elbows towards your mid back).
**You will see the lats highlighted as a primary focus within this program to get that fabulous and attractive “V-Taper” look.

Origin: Spinous processes of vertebrae T7-L5, Iliac crest and thoracolumbar fascia.

Insertion: Floor of intertubercular groove of the humerus

Exercises for the Lats: Wide-grip lat pull-down, reverse-grip lat pull-down, weighted pull-ups, straight-arm pull-down, and chin-ups.

BACK TRAPEZIUS



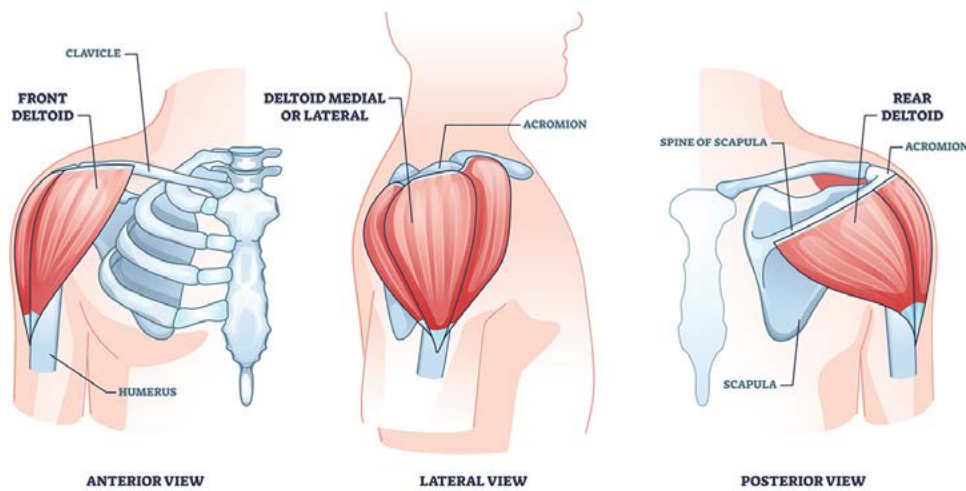
The trapezius (otherwise known as traps) is another large muscle running from the base of the skull down to the middle of your inner back. When people think about the pitfalls, they only think of the upper portion, but the middle and lower fibers are also present. Unfortunately, the middle and lower traps don't get the attention they deserve. **Don't worry; exercises will be included to address the mid and lower pitfalls to combat postural dysfunctions. The traps act to elevate the scapulae (shrugging your shoulders), retract the scapulae (pulling the shoulder blades back) and extend the shoulder (pulling your arms backward when your elbows are raised).

Origin: Occipital bone (upper traps), corresponding supraspinous ligaments for the mid and lower traps.

Insertion: nuchal ligament, posterior border of the clavicle, acromion process, and spine of scapula.

Exercises for the traps: Prone ball WY raise, IYT's, barbell shrugs, dumbbell shrugs, reverse pec deck fly, cable face pulls, and chest supported T-Bar row.

DELTOIDS



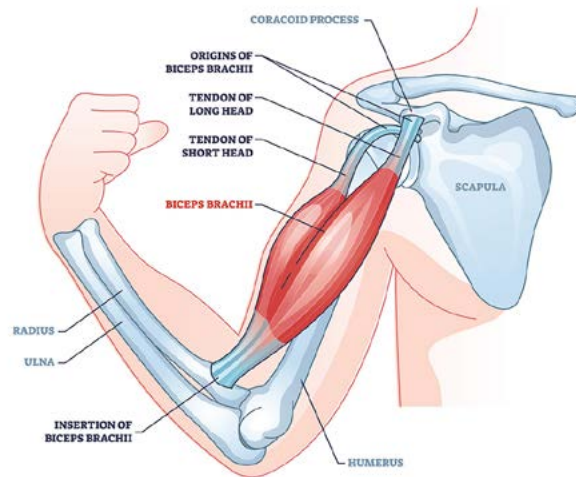
The deltoids (otherwise known as the delts) are comprised of three different heads, the anterior deltoid (front delt), the lateral deltoid (middle delt), and the posterior delt (rear delt). The anterior delt flexes the shoulder (raise the arm), and the lateral delt abducts the upper arm (raise your upper arm out directly to your sides). The posterior delt acts to abduct the shoulder (pull the shoulder back when the elbows are extended**Also, emphasized to complete the “V-taper” look.

Origin: Clavicle, acromion process, spine of scapula.

Insertion: deltoid tuberosity of humerus.

Exercises for the delts: Dumbbell front raise (front), overhead barbell press (front, middle), dumbbell overhead press (front, middle), Arnold press (front, middle & rear), lateral raise (middle), cable upright row (middle), bent-over rear delt fly (rear), reverse pec deck fly (rear).

BICEPS



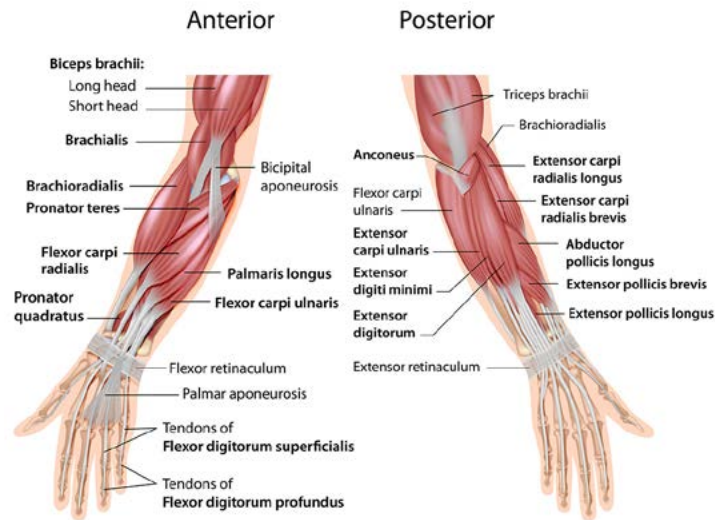
The biceps brachii is a two-headed muscle containing a long and short head. They synergistically act to flex the elbows (bring the elbow from a straightened position to a bent position) and supinate the wrist (twist the pinky upwards). The brachialis, which runs underneath the biceps brachii, is also a strong elbow flexor.

Origin: Short head: coracoid process of the scapula, Long head: supraglenoid tubercle.

Insertion: Radial tuberosity of the radius, deep fascia of forearm (insertion of the bicipital aponeurosis).

Exercises for the biceps: Barbell biceps curl, dumbbell biceps curl, preacher curl, dumbbell hammer curls, Scott curls, dumbbell spider curls, incline dumbbell curls and EZ bar curls.

FOREARMS



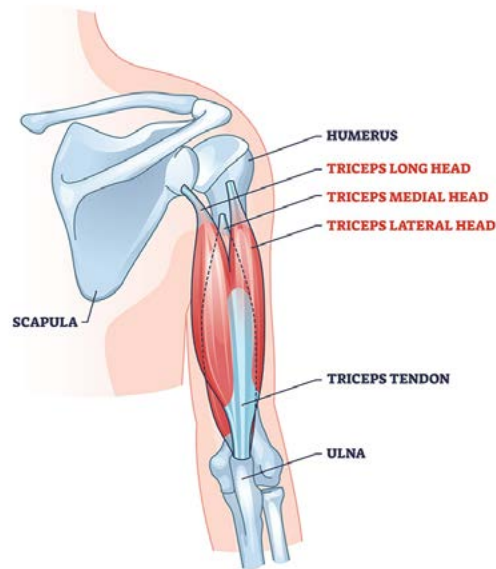
The forearm, sometimes referred to as the lower arm, is the region of the body that lies between the elbow and the wrist. The forearm muscles consist of flexors, which lie in the anterior compartment of the forearm, and extensors, which lie in the posterior compartment. The forearm muscles also consist of supinators, which turn the palm down, and pronators, which turn the palm up. Additionally, the brachioradialis is another forearm muscle, one which flexes the elbow.

Origin: Most of the extensor muscles originate on the lateral epicondyle of the humerus, whereas most of the flexor muscles originate on the common flexor tendon.

Insertion: There are a variety of insertion points, but most muscles insert somewhere on the fingers.

Exercises for the forearms: EZ bar reverse curls, dumbbell hammer curls, cross-body dumbbell hammer curls, barbell wrist extension, barbell wrist flexion, plate-pinches, behind-the-back barbell wrist curls and farmer carries.

TRICEPS



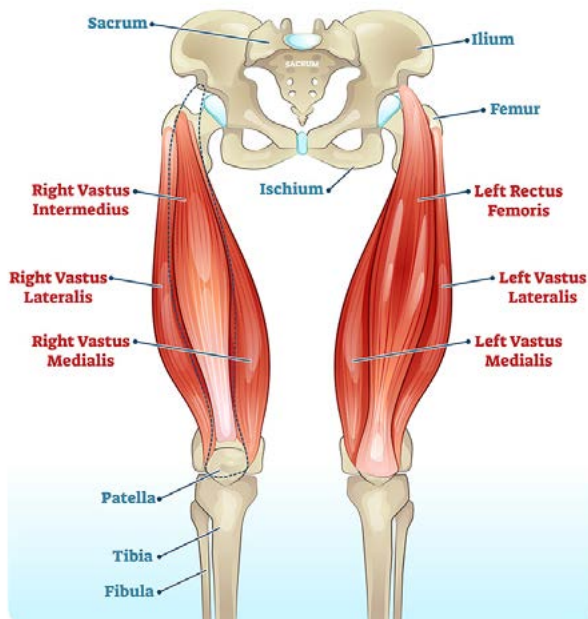
The triceps lie on the back of your upper arm and are made up of three heads: the long head, medial head, and lateral head. The triceps work to extend the arm at the elbow (the elbows from a bent position to a straightened position).

Origin: The long head originates from the infraglenoid tubercle of the scapula, while both the lateral head and the medial head both originate from the humerus.

Insertion: The three heads converge into a single tendon, which attaches to the proximal portion of the olecranon process (the bony prominence of the elbow) located on the upper part of the ulna.

Exercises for the triceps: EZ bar lying triceps extension, dumbbell lying triceps extension, dumbbell overhead triceps extension, overhead rope extensions, bench dips, EZ bar triceps pushdowns, and rope triceps pushdowns.

QUADRICEPS



The quadriceps (otherwise known as the quads) are comprised of four muscles, often referred to as “heads”: the vastus lateralis (quad sweep), vastus medialis (teardrop), rectus femoris (the middle portion of your upper thigh), and vastus intermedius (which runs underneath rectus femoris). The quads act to extend the knee, taking the leg from a bent position to a straight position. Each muscle of the quad has its unique insertion, which we won’t go too much into for the sake of time and simplicity. Just remember that the main action of the quads is to extend (straighten) the knee.

Origin: The vastus muscles originate on the femur. The rectus femoris originates from the anterior-inferior iliac spine of the pelvis.

Insertion: Base of patella and tibial tuberosity of the tibia.

Exercises for the quads: Barbell back squats, leg extensions, dumbbell box step ups, walking lunges, leg press, hack squat, Bulgarian split squats, and barbell front squats.

MAIN MUSCLE GROUPS

Lower Body

QUADRICEPS

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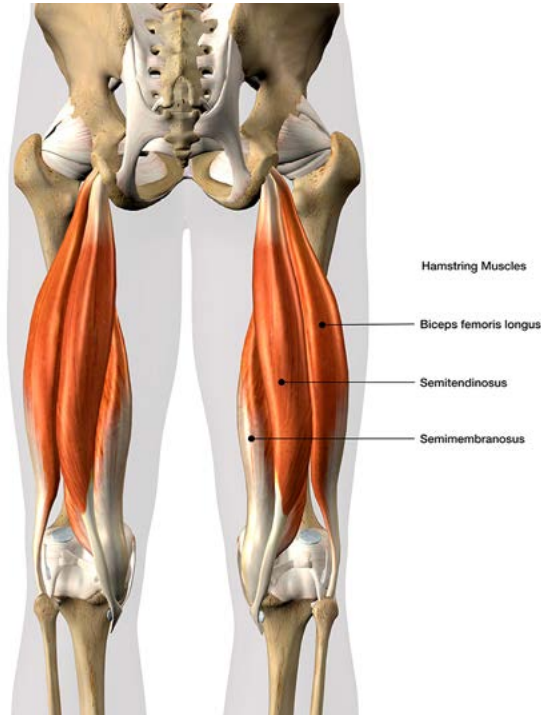
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HAMSTRINGS



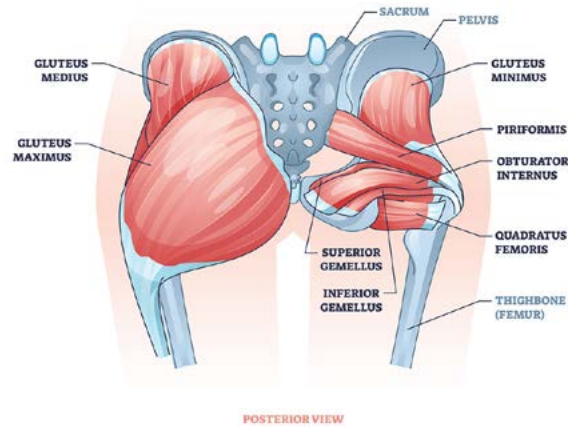
The hamstrings comprise four muscles: semimembranosus, semitendinosus, and biceps femoris (consisting of a long and short head). The hamstrings act to flex the knee (take the leg from a straightened position to a bent position, as in a leg curl) and extend the hip (pushing your hips forward, as in a deadlift).

Origin: The semitendinosus, semimembranosus, and long head of the biceps femoris originate on the ischial tuberosity. The short head of the bicep femoris originates on the lower one-third of the posterior aspect of the femur.

Insertion: The semitendinosus and semimembranosus both insert on the tibia, while both the long and short heads of the biceps femoris insert at the fibula.

Exercises for the hamstrings: Barbell deadlift, barbell Romanian deadlift, lying leg curl machine, lying leg ball curl, and single-leg Romanian deadlift.

GLUTEALS



The gluteals (otherwise known as the glutes) are also a complex of muscles consisting of the gluteus maximus, gluteus medius, and gluteus minimus. The gluteus maximus is the largest of the three, followed by the gluteus medius, and the smallest is the gluteus minimus. The gluteus maximus has multiple origins, including the pelvis, sacrum, coccyx, and thoracolumbar fascia, and various insertions, including the upper femur and IT band. Because of this, it can perform a wide variety of functions, but primarily: hip extension (push your hips forward), Hip abduction (moving away from the midline), Hip external rotation (rotating your thigh bone outwards), and Posterior pelvic tilt (scooping your butt “in”).

The smaller glute medius still occupies a hefty portion of the rear hip musculature and functions primarily as a stabilizer during dynamic movement and as a hip abductor. It originates on the pelvis and inserts on the femur. It is most effectively trained with exercises that require a high degree of stability, especially unilateral movements such as walking lunges, and exercises that train hip abduction, such as side-lying banded clam shells.

Origin: The gluteus maximus, medius, and minimus originate on the ilium.

Insertion: The gluteus maximus and gluteus minimus insert to the iliotibial tract (IT band) and the gluteal tuberosity on the femur. The gluteus medius inserts to the greater trochanter of the femur.

Exercises for the gluteals: Barbell hip thrusts, constant-tension banded glute bridges, side-lying banded clam shells, pause bodyweight single-leg hip thrust, reverse hyper-extensions and lateral band walking.

CALVES



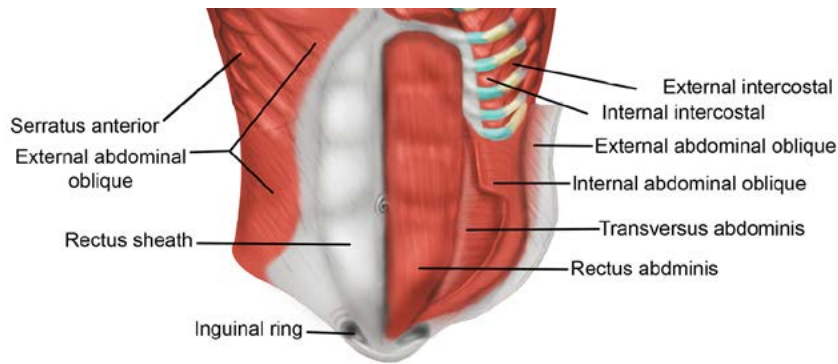
The calves consist of two muscles – the gastrocnemius (the gastroc for short) and the soleus. The gastrocnemius is the big muscle underneath the back of your knee, and the soleus is a smaller, flatter muscle that runs underneath the gastroc down to your ankle—both the gastroc and soleus act to plantarflex the ankle (point your toes down).

Origin: Lateral and medial condyle of femur.

Insertion: Calcaneus via the Achilles tendon.

Exercises for the calves: Machine standing calf raises, seated calf raises, single-leg standing dumbbell calf raises and bodyweight calf raises.

ABDOMINALS



The abs contain many muscles that have a similar function. When talking about the abs, we typically refer to the rectus abdominis – the “6-pack.” The external and internal obliques and the transverse abdominis act to flex the spine, rotate the torso, and resist spinal extension (prevent your lower back from arching inwards). More importantly, they act synergistically to stabilize the lumbo-pelvic-hip-complex. (In other words, when these muscles are strengthened – they protect your lower back).

Origin: The rectus stems from the pubic symphysis of the pelvis. The external oblique originates from the outer surface of ribs 4-12. The internal oblique derives from the iliac crest of the pelvis and thoracolumbar fascia, and the transverse abdominis stems from ribs 7-12 of the iliac crest of the pelvis and thoracolumbar fascia.

Insertion: The rectus inserts into the xiphoid process. The external, internal oblique, and transverse abdominis inserts into the linea alba.

Exercises for the abs: Hanging leg raise, cable crunch, ab roller, lying leg raise, weighted crunch (rectus), side plank holds, side plank with knee tuck, cable wood chop, pallof press (oblique), elbow planks, dead bugs, bird dogs and quadruped holds.

Recovery & Stretching Protocol

In your quest for building a high-performing physique, one of the biggest obstacles you may have to overcome is nagging pain and joint discomfort from the physical demands of work and the high volume of training you put in. Repeated functions associated with your line of work and the consistent breaking down and rebuilding of muscle tissue create abnormal weight on joints and stress the muscles and tendons, thus manifesting into poor posture. Subsequently, this could lead to chronic tendonitis or even injury. To reduce any chances of getting sidetracked by aches and pains, I have included a comprehensive stretching routine for you to follow every day or as needed. This routine is going to stretch and lengthen each muscle that is used within this program. I'll also provide stretches for the most common postural dysfunctions and range of motion discrepancies to help facilitate better posture and movement.

Many fitness influencer programs need to address your mobility within a muscle-building program. So, to ensure your success with your routine long term, it's vital to have some tools at your disposal to optimize your progress.

These stretches can be done after your workouts or at night before you go to bed. I find it's best to do these stretches at night before bed because they alleviate any tightness from your day and help optimize your recovery leading into your next workout. Plus, it's a great way to help with having a good night's rest. For those who deal with tightness and/or joint pain, I recommend doing the stretches you need daily after your workouts and before bed. Another option is to only complete the stretches with the corresponding muscle groups trained that particular day. For instance, if you train delts one day, you want to stretch out your neck and delt muscles (muscles associated with the delt exercises). Or you can make this complete list of stretches on rest days only. Do what feels best and ensure you're addressing your mobility weekly. **DO NOT PERFORM** any stretches if they push you beyond your

limitations or increase pain. There will be a small margin of discomfort associated with some of these stretches – especially if you're tight. However, they should never be done beyond what you can control. If a stretch is too painful, or you can't bring your body to hold that stretch for the prescribed amount of time, think about holding the stretch for 5 to 10 seconds and do those five times through.

RECOVERY & STRETCHING PROTOCOL

Proper recovery in between workouts is critical to achieving a muscular physique. Time for rest or recovery between workouts is just as important as training. Your muscles don't grow when you work out. Instead, muscles develop during your periods of sleep and recovery.

Stretches

Sets

Time

Neck – corresponding muscle groups trained:

(If you are experiencing discomfort in your neck or trained lats, traps, chest or delts – do these stretches).

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| a. Lateral Neck Flexion | 1 | 30-60 sec each side |
| b. Upper Trapezius Stretch | 1 | 30-60 sec each side |
| c. Levator Scapulae Stretch | 1 | 30-60 sec each side |
| d. Anterior Neck Stretch (Scalenes) | 1 | 30-60 sec each side |

Chest – corresponding muscle groups trained:

(If you trained chest – do these stretches).

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------|
| a. Banded Pec Stretch | 1 | 30-60 sec each side |
| b. Pec Minor Wall Stretch | 1 | 30-60 sec each side |

Back – corresponding muscle groups trained:

(If you trained lats or traps – do these stretches).

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------|
| a. Banded Lat Stretch | 1 | 30-60 sec each side |
| b. Crossbody Rhomboid Stretch | 1 | 30-60 sec each side |
| c. Kneeling Swiss Ball Mid-Back/Lat Stretch | 1 | 30-60 sec |

Low-Back – corresponding muscle groups trained:

(If you are experiencing low-back discomfort, and/or you trained legs – do these stretches).

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---------------------|
| a. QL Wall Stretch | 1 | 30-60 sec each side |
| b. Low-back child's pose | 1 | 30-60 sec |

Delts – corresponding muscle groups trained:

(If you trained delts – do these stretches).

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---------------------|
| a. Cross-body delt stretch | 1 | 30-60 sec each side |
|----------------------------|---|---------------------|

RECOVERY & STRETCHING PROTOCOL

Taking a rest day allows your body to heal. On the other hand, muscle recovery diminishes the risk of injuries and strengthens muscles to perform better for your next training session.

Stretches	Sets	Time
Biceps – corresponding muscle groups trained: (If you trained biceps – do these stretches).		
a. Banded Biceps Stretch	1	30-60 sec each side
b. Doorway or Wall Biceps Stretch	1	30-60 sec each side
Triceps – corresponding muscle groups trained: (If you trained triceps – do these stretches).		
a. Overhead Triceps Stretch	1	30-60 sec each side
Quads – corresponding muscle groups trained: (If you are experiencing low-back discomfort, and/or you trained legs – do these stretches).		
a. Kneeling Quad Stretch	1	30-60 sec each side
b. Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch	1	30-60 sec each side
Hamstrings – corresponding muscle groups trained: (If you are experiencing low-back discomfort, and/or you trained legs – do these stretches).		
a. Waiters Bow Stretch	1	30-60 sec
b. Single Leg Standing Hamstring Stretch	1	30-60 sec each side
Glutes – corresponding muscle groups trained: (If you are experiencing low-back/hip discomfort, and/or you trained legs – do these stretches).		
a. Pigeon Pose Stretch	1	30-60 sec each side
b. Twisting Gluteal Stretch	1	30-60 sec each side
Calves & Abs – corresponding muscle groups trained: (If you trained calves or abs – do these stretches).		
a. Standing Gastroc Stretch	1	30-60 sec each side
b. Standing Soleus Stretch	1	30-60 sec each side
c. Supine Mid-Back & Abdominal Stretch on Ball	1	30-60 sec

Addressing Obstacles

If you find your results are less than satisfactory and you're running into road blocks – it's possible you are not practicing some these core habits to ensure your success. To pinpoint the outlier that's responsible, ask yourself this:

- Are you getting 7-9 hours a sleep regularly?
- Are you eating every 3-4 hours on most days? (Especially workout days).
- Are you dealing with high levels of stress in meaningful way?
- Are you drinking enough water throughout the day?
- Are you consuming less than two alcoholic beverages a day?
- Are you consistently following your workout routine?



If you answered NO to any of those questions, you're not addressing the prerequisites needed to build a muscular physique. I recommend that YOU commit to forming healthy habits around these particular areas. For instance, if you answered NO to getting 7-9 hours of sleep a night, then make going to bed early a priority. If you answered NO to more than just one, I recommend addressing no more than two areas simultaneously. Focus on the healthy habits that are most relevant to you for 2-3 weeks before

considering jumping to another. Please DO NOT attempt to tackle them all at the same time. If you're looking for a surefire way to overwhelm yourself and reduce your probability of creating success around these areas, then go full bore. I'm just kidding. Please don't do it. And don't worry - I will provide you with some strategies for each area if you answer NO.

STRATEGY 1 SLEEPING 7-9 HOURS A NIGHT

Getting quality sleep is one of the most underrated performance-enhancing habits. If you believe you can get a lousy night of sleep and still power through and perform at your best, you're not being honest with yourself. Some people struggle with finding a healthy balance with rest due to a sleep disorder or a hectic lifestyle. If you find yourself in this position, you may want to reconsider your priorities.

The Late Night Bender

Do you stay up late to watch a few episodes of your favorite Netflix show? Or scroll Instagram and YouTube? Industrialized Western culture does not support recovery well. Maybe your job, relationship, or current situation is causing you much stress; it's possible that this time spent binge-watching Netflix shows or whatever you occupy your time with... is perpetuating your hectic problem. Distracting ourselves with TV may feel good at the moment, but you prioritize short-term (feel-good moments) at the expense of long-term growth.

Neglecting your sleep to feel good is just our way of creating a construct in our minds for not dealing with the issue. If your life is hectic and out of control, pinpointing the problem and dealing with it in a healthy and meaningful way is a great start.

The Workaholic

Do you stay up late to fulfill demanding work deadlines? Or maybe you're putting extra time

and energy into your dream start-up after your regular job and quality time with friends and family. If you're staying late to bring home the bacon or fulfill your dream, I commend you! You are an inspiration. However, this may be at the expense of your emotional and physical health. It's vital that you know this. A tired man is a stressed man, and a stressed man can lack focus. If you are sleep-deprived to work, your gifts are not being shared with the world around you. The courageous, confident man you are is only firing on a few cylinders. You'll eventually run out of gas and have nothing else to give.

For instance, if you find your life hectic because your work schedule is consuming your energy emotionally and physically, then it's time to look at your time management to see where you're filling your extra time. Is it too much screen time? Is late-night socializing with friends? Too much time focusing on tasks that don't produce results? We are always connected, but it also makes us feel overly distracted by different stimuli. These things aren't necessarily wrong, but they're probably not serving you. It's okay to give yourself some screen time and socialize with friends when appropriate. Fill your time with activities that will elicit the desired results. Finding balance is key. So, if getting quality work is essential and you also want a good night's sleep, think clearly about establishing rituals and routines. Put more simply, stay focused on your most important and demanding tasks. When you're

able to do this, you'll end up working smarter, not harder. With this in mind, you will be able to focus maximum effort on your sleep, subsequently improving your overall mood and optimizing your memory. This will foster better decision-making while helping you connect better with the people around you.

Here are some strategies to get you heading in the right direction with your sleep:

Reverse engineer your wake-up time. If your goal is to wake up at 6 am and sleep 8 hours, then count backward from 6 am. So, you would want to be in bed sleeping by 10 pm. (If you struggle to fall asleep immediately, get in bed at least 30 minutes to an hour beforehand to prepare your body and mind for sleep mode.

Begin your "bedtime routine" 1-2 hours before bed. Getting ready to sleep can take up to an hour and sometimes 2 hours, especially if you have essential needs like putting your child to bed, walking the dog, food prepping, and quality time with your significant other. This allows you to get the non-negotiables out of the way.

Avoid caffeine consumption at least 6 hours before bedtime. You would be surprised how much having a mid-day coffee can stick with you all day. For those of you who live for this mid-day consumption, you will want to scale back on your serving size as best as possible.

Eliminate any screen time 1-2 hours before bed. Computers, tablets, smartphones, and TV are incredibly stimulating to the brain and keep you psychologically engaged. Furthermore, electronic screens emit "blue light," and researchers have found a correlation between suppressed melatonin levels and exposure to blue light. Melatonin is a hormone responsible for controlling your sleep-wake cycle. So when your body runs low on it, you can experience insomnia, making you tired and irritable.

Read a good book. Reading relaxes you and can sometimes help you fall asleep in a matter of minutes.

Take a hot shower. Washing away the sweat and grime from the day will make your sheets feel soft and cozy. The hot water relaxes your muscles, and there's something to be said about washing away your day's difficulties in a hot shower. (Symbolic, if you will). It's a great place to reflect and meditate as well.

Meditate or pray. Use an APP or a tried and trusted source to help reflect on your day. We are so busy with performance anxiety that we never give ourselves enough time to process these emotions. Processing your stress and feelings as they arise throughout the day may help you feel like you have less to deal with when you're getting ready for bed.

Journaling (aka – the brain dump). Writing has been a therapeutic way to deal with thoughts and feelings for centuries. You may find it silly or a “woo-woo” way of dealing with problems. However, something must be said about writing whatever is on your mind. Your hopes, your dreams, your anxieties, and your fears. It’s a way of having our own personal therapist to share with. If you find this difficult, start writing whatever is on your mind. It can be absolutely anything. In addition, you can separate your journal entry into multiple sections. Here are a few ideas:

- What things went well for you today?
- What things didn’t work well, and what can improve them?
- What are you grateful for?
- Write five affirmations. Who are you?
- What do you want to manifest?

Stretch your achy tight muscles before bed. If you work in a career where you make repetitive motions throughout the day. Desk job, construction, retail, etc. Your body is developing much dominance in specific ranges of motion, thus translating into overworked, overused muscle groups. Stretching out these tight muscles (especially with the stretching protocol above) will relax and stretch those muscles out for a better night’s sleep.

STRATEGY 2 DEALING WITH STRESS IN A MEANINGFUL WAY

Stress is going to be a fact that no one should avoid. Yes, you heard me correctly, and let me explain. There are two types of stress, good stress and bad stress. Good stress is you have an important presentation to prepare for that could land you a huge promotion. Bad stress is, well... the unthinkable. Insert worst nightmare here. (Bad stress can even turn into good stress, and vice versa). If we didn't have some stress in our lives - the "good stress" variety - we'd feel rudderless, lacking confidence, and depressed. If we define stress as anything that alters our homeostasis, good stress in its many forms is essential for a healthy life.

The reality is that you will deal with multiple levels of stress throughout your life, and it's essential to deal with it in a meaningful way so you can adequately progress within your workout program and grow within your life. When you feel constantly depressed and stressed out, it impacts your attitude, your sleep, your diet, your energy levels, and your body's ability to recover from one day to the next. Your workouts will suffer, and your results will take a back seat until you deal with stress in a meaningful and healthy way.

Here are a few ideas to address your stress.

Self-Awareness – Noticing and naming thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and how these things are causing stress. For instance, you

are likely going through a list of scenarios that could go wrong. Allowing yourself to be present with your feelings enables you to act. Here are some possible scenarios you may encounter:

- "How might my emotions affect my eating behavior this evening?"
- "How does my late night out affect my 8 am workout tomorrow?"
- "I am exhausted from work and too lazy to meal prep this evening. If I don't meal prep, I won't have anything decent to eat tomorrow."
- "I am not feeling the greatest today. Maybe I need to skip my workout and do something that makes me happy."
**If you decide that missing a workout is the best course of action, that's cool! It's okay, and I want you to know that. If it means taking a day or multiple days off, then do it. Just know that when you take any number of days off your workouts, be okay with your decision, understand the trade-offs, and jump back in asap. Taking a mental health day can be just what the doctor ordered.

Goal Setting – Having a clear picture of where you want to go. Be as specific as possible. Make it so clear that anyone knows exactly what your goal is. Adjust your plan as needed, being flexible if things change.

How this might look like for you in your program:

- “Where do I want to be at the end of 5 weeks? What specifically will I work on to get there?”
- “What specifically will I accomplish this week?”
- “What specifically will I accomplish today?”

Focusing - Your ability to formulate a course of action and then stay true to it, despite distractions and interference from internal and external factors. Some possible strategies include:

Focus on your goals and priorities, even if other options seem more appealing. Remember your “why.”

Manage your time better with “time blocking” in your calendar. Allocate time to tasks you can individually focus on. Set time increments that suit your needs. Block out 1 hour every evening for meal prepping and cooking. Block 1 to 2 hours for your designated workouts. You book times to see your doctor, so why not have a non-negotiable with your appointment at the gym? It’s not about having time; it’s about making time.

Sticking to your training program rather than stopping and starting when it’s convenient. (When you’re inconsistent with your workout routine, it’s going to feel like you’re starting from scratch every time. Your body never gets the chance to elicit an

adaptation, so your body is going to feel sore with every “new workout,” and this “yo-yo” mentality is going to cause frustration and potentially become harmful to your recovery).

You might hesitate to go to the gym because you’ve had a long day. You formulate an excuse for not exercising during that moment of reluctance. It’s easy to dissuade ourselves from challenging tasks when we hesitate. Still, you can use an effective strategy designed by Mel Robbins to address these moments of hesitation: the 5-second rule.

Applying the 5-second rule to your routine is very simple; count backward from five. Once you reach “one,” you execute the task no matter what feelings have arisen.

For example, suppose you experience a moment of hesitation before heading to the gym. In that case, you can count backward from five; once your countdown is complete, you need to take action. Research indicates this practice works because there’s a 5-second window between an instinct or motivation and the hesitation to not act on it. Our brains create constructs to protect us from harm – so they’ll amplify any feelings of doubt and trick us into not taking action. It’s vital to take advantage of the moment during that initial 5-second window.

Re-Focusing Your Attention – Getting back on track after getting distracted or “falling off the wagon.”

Some helpful suggestions:

First off, don't beat yourself up. If you miss a workout or multiple workouts, meals, etc. It's okay. Give yourself some grace and get back to it. Life happens.

Have a non-negotiable to show up to each workout as your "best self," no matter what happened before. Ask yourself, "whom do I get to be in this situation." Rather than, "why is this happening to me?"

Plan accordingly. Ask yourself, "What do I need to do to get back into a routine?"

Know Your "Why" – Knowing and living your core beliefs and priorities.

Some helpful strategies are:

Being true to yourself and having integrity around getting your workouts done, prepped, and cooked meals. Despite temptations with taking the path of least resistance, be true to your commitment.

Decide purposefully how you want to "show up." What kind of person do you want to be, and what's important to you?

You might be this individual: "I value my happiness and being the best version of myself. So, I want to confront life's challenges, pushing myself out of my comfort zone, on purpose, as part of my growth."

Be the Author of Your Own Story – Notice when you rationalize and create reasons to explain the unfortunate "facts" in your life. Then consciously re-frame that story to one that empowers you.

What it might look like for you:

You re-frame "I don't have enough time to work out" to "I am extremely organized, and my schedule is what I want it to be."

You re-frame "I fail every time I try to lose weight/gain weight" to "I have fallen a lot but always managed to pick myself back up and try a different approach."

You re-frame "I don't want to make any mistakes here" to "I'm going to do the best I can because it's important that I do a good job."

Don't Ignore Your Fears & Anxiety – When you address your fears and anxiety directly, rather than avoiding them or trying to make them go away, you're allowing this discomfort to become an option, so it becomes more tolerable down the road.

What it might look like for you:

Focus on what you're learning and doing well. Instead of the negatives.

Take risks. Remember, when fear or anxiety enters your mind, it's just your way of constructing a block to protect yourself. Acknowledge the feeling and act anyways. What's the worst thing that will happen?

If you fail, get rejected, or screw things up – remember it's okay. Treat these setbacks as lessons for opportunities and growth.

An example: Speaking openly with your partner or co-worker about setting clear boundaries regarding your fitness goals. OR...

Focus on what can be learned from not prepping and cooking your meals for a busy

week rather than the setback itself. So that the setback isn't so paralyzing.

Life Happens: Embrace Change and Recognize Your Limiting Factors – Identify the thoughts that hold you back or block you from moving forward. Find ways to remove them or work around them.

Here are some helpful suggestions:

Concentrate on the things that work for you and find ways to do more.

Remember, your circumstances don't define you.

If your hectic work schedule makes it hard to take care of yourself, consider making it a priority.

Eliminate "distractions." Forfeit 1 Hour of Netflix time for time at the gym or cooking your meals. There will be time to binge-Netflix another time.

Regulate Your Impulses – Have an awareness of impulses and cravings for certain foods and activities and be able to address them. How this might apply to you:

Before you eat, ask yourself, "why am I eating this?" (Are you hungry? Bored? Stressed out? Etc.) Be okay with whatever conclusion you make from that insight.

Make sure to pause and direct yourself to the present moment.

Being Comfortable with Discomfort– Pausing or "sitting with" uncomfortable situations & feelings and not feeling obligated to respond.

Pause to acknowledge what you're thinking and feeling.

"Sitting with" urges to eat an entire large 18" pizza or overeat/make a poor food choice.

Learning a new habit. Be uncomfortable being uncomfortable. You're growing.

STRATEGY 3 REDUCING ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

If you're consuming more than two alcoholic beverages a day, you may be sabotaging your muscle's ability to recover and adapt to exercise. Alcohol is a big part of our society, contributes to many of our social engagements, and can temporarily assist with coping with stress. However, if getting in shape and building a high-performing physique is essential to you, then reducing your alcohol intake should be a priority to you.

Sure, drinking lowers our inhibitions and makes us feel good at the moment, but let's face it, it's a surefire path to late-night pizza benders and greasy brunches. And some of you swear by the method of sweating off a hangover, or worse, you won't even be able to get out of bed, let alone hit the gym, the day after a big night out. Even if it's three beers over Thursday night football, it's still impacting your body's systems and processes, like your sleep, metabolism, brain performance, injury recovery, heart health, and hydration levels.

The reality is that moderate drinking is a great and relatively harmless way to relax, socialize and enjoy life, and have no problem stopping or cutting back. However, not everyone has this relationship with alcohol. Drinking beyond moderation can lead to various issues, depending on the individual. It could lead to nutrient deficiencies, excessive body fat, low muscle mass, digestive

disturbances, dehydration, headaches, nausea, stomach irritation, low sex drive, and the potential of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes.

So, what is considered a moderate or "healthy" consumption of alcohol? Definitions vary around the world, but according to the United States Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, "moderate drinking" means, on average:

- For women: up to 7 drinks per week, with no more than one drink per day.
- For men: up to 14 drinks per week, with no more than two drinks per day.

What's the sweet spot?

It depends on your goals, age, body type, genetic tolerance, etc. Walk yourself through the pros and cons. There are benefits to moderate drinking. For many people, alcohol is very much connected to the quality of life, enjoyment, and social connections, all of which are essential to health. Drinking or not drinking isn't about health vs. not healthy. It's about understanding the trade-offs.

- If you want six-pack abs, you should skip the extra drinks at the bar.
- If you want to do Friday happy hour with friends, you might skip your Saturday morning workout.
- If you want to complete tomorrow

morning's cardio, you should skip boozy Sunday brunches.

- If you want better sleep (focus and mood), you should skip your daily wine with dinner.
- If you want to enjoy moderate alcohol consumption, then find a way to say "no" to stress triggers (or human triggers) that make you want to drink more.
- Moderate and occasional/rare drinking is generally acceptable. If you're struggling with gaining muscle and shaping your physique the way you want it, then reducing your weekly alcohol consumption will be very helpful. Here are a couple of useful tips to reduce your intake.
- Observe your drinking habits
- Are there patterns in my drinking? Perhaps you habitually over-drink on Friday because your job is stressful.
- Is alcohol helping me enjoy life, or is it stressing me out? The cost can outweigh the benefit if you're not sleeping well or worried about drinking.
- How does alcohol affect your body?
- Do I generally feel good?
- Am I recovering? How's my physical performance after drinking? How would I feel and perform if I hit the gym on

Saturday morning after a Friday night with friends?

- What happens afterward? Do I get a hangover, upset stomach, poor sleep, and other discomforts?
- How does the alcohol intake work for my goals? Is alcohol adding some calories that I don't want? Am I trying to lose body fat and gain muscle, for instance?

Notice how alcohol affects your thoughts, mood, and general perspective.

- What kind of person are you when you are drinking? Are you fun, just slightly wittier and more relaxed, while savoring a beer with friends? Or are you thinking, let's make this shitty day go away as you pound back the liquid emotional anesthetic down your gullet?

Delay your next drink. Just for 10 minutes, to see if you still want it.

Look for ways to avoid your patterns.

If you usually hit the bar after work, try booking an alcohol-free activity (like a movie date or exercise) with a friend instead. If you stock up on beer at the grocery store, skip that aisle and pick up some teas and sparkling water instead.

Savor your drink. Tune into your senses in front of you. Here's an idea: Look at it, swirl it, sniff it, taste it. Take sips instead of gulps.

Buy quality, and ditch the low-grade stuff. Swap out the cheap beer for an exceptional craft brew. Whatever it is, drink less of it, and treat yourself to something that keeps you from overdrinking. The more expensive, the more likely you'll savor it long-term.

With this insight - start by setting a goal of reducing the serving size to a realistic amount by the end of the week. Let's say you're moving from three beers a night to just one. Make a conscious effort each day until you've reached the desired amount. Adjust accordingly to what works for you.

When in doubt, call an expert. Change almost always works better when you have support.

Talk to your doctor about your drinking patterns and your health.

Get a nutrition coach or dietitian.

STRATEGY 4 MAINTAINING A CONSISTENT WORKOUT SCHEDULE

Congratulations.

You purchased an incredible training program that will transform your physique from what it is now to a muscular high, performing one! So how do you complete this program from beginning to end? It might be easy for some of you. You may have more than a few hours to commit to working out each day, with little time constraints and commitments. For the rest of us, it's not that easy. Work commitments, family time, hobbies, etc. Set yourself up for success by following some of these solutions:

Time blocking. Just like you schedule a dentist appointment to clean your teeth, you need to set an "appointment" for your workout at the gym. Recognize how much time will be required and plan for it in the AM or PM, knowing both the pros and cons. Please put it in your calendar, make it a time priority, and stick to it.

Stop obsessing over details while neglecting the bigger picture. Do the right things for your goals consistently. Not everything is going to be perfect for you to accomplish your goals. Be flexible and consistent in showing up daily.

There's no such thing as unwavering motivation. You'll be wasting your time if you're waiting for the perfect time to get your workout in OR tackle your goals. It's not going

to happen. You will not always be "motivated" or "inspired." What differentiates an "expert" from an "amateur" isn't necessarily motivation. It's action. "Experts" find focus. They find ways to move their body through necessary actions, regardless of how they feel. Action often comes before motivation. Action creates the mindset of momentum.

If your workout is in the mornings - create an evening ritual of packing your gym clothes and meals the night before. Vice versa for evening workouts - make a morning ritual of packing your gym clothes and meals for the day.

Recurrent behavior teaches your brain to automate. The habit of working out consistently is formed when we repeat the behavior repeatedly. You may encounter resistance when you're first starting because your brain might feel betrayed. After all, that is not what it is used to. Your job here is to reward yourself for your efforts. Here it would be best if you concentrated on the muscle pump you're experiencing or how sweaty your t-shirt is after doing HIIT cardio while simultaneously thinking about the benefits the gym has already brought you. Much more is to come in the future.

STRATEGY 5 EATING WELL CONSISTENTLY

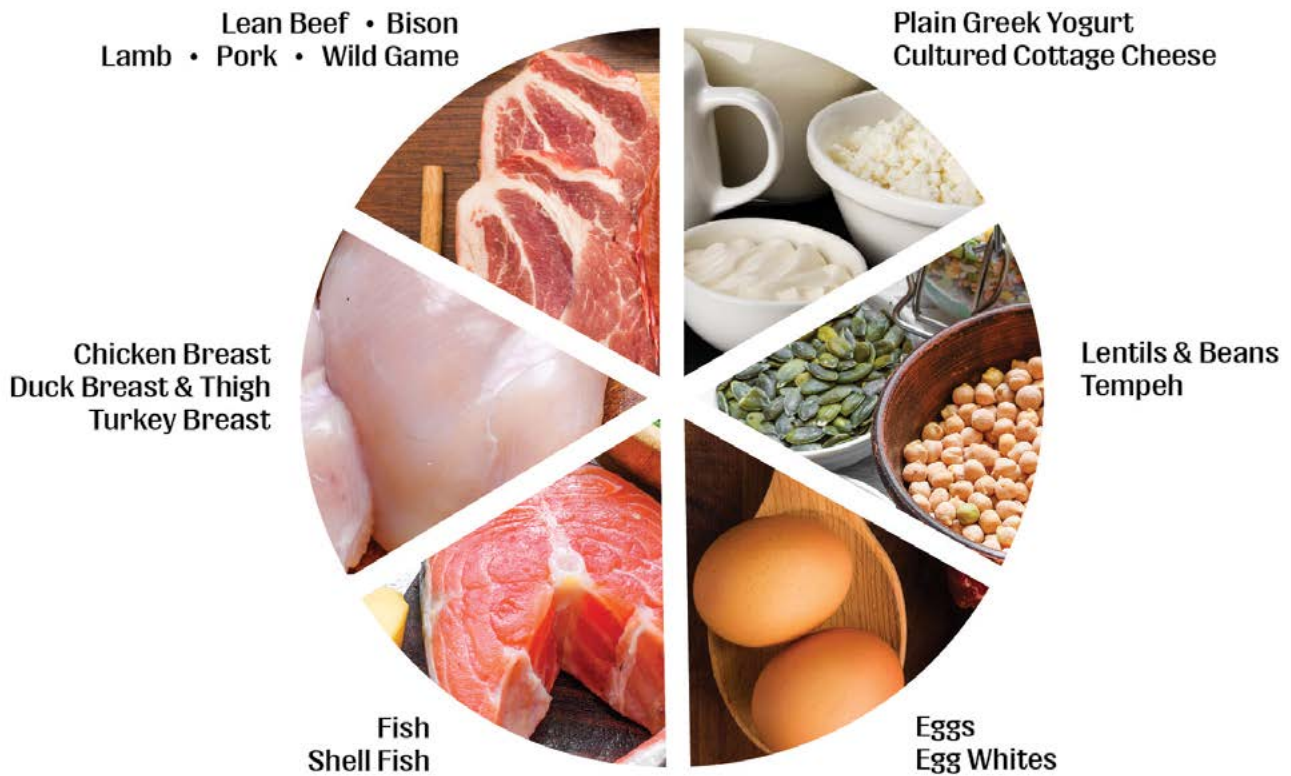
If you've spent any time working out, you know nutrition can make or break your results. You have probably heard some experts say, "nutrition makes up 80% of your muscle gains," or "your abs are made in the kitchen, not the gym," and "you can't out-train a lousy diet." This is true, and for some of you, this may be the thing that's holding you back from seeing the results that you truly want.

- First, establish your set point – do you like “smaller” meals, eating more frequently (eating every 2-3 hours)? Or going extended periods without thinking about food and eating more significant portions less frequently (eating every 3 to 4 hours)? Typically for individuals looking to gain size and strength, I recommend you eat a minimum of 3 to 6 meals daily. Whatever works best, commit to managing your nutrition to gain muscle.
- 85 percent of your food should come from minimally processed **WHOLE FOODS** (try not to rely on “diet foods,” aka protein bars, dried fruits, etc..) and the other 15 percent are discretionary (sweets, fried foods, comfort foods, etc.). We all crave certain foods from time to time, and you're probably not going to stick with something if you're feeling deprived. By allowing yourself small amounts of foods you crave, you don't feel deprived and won't slip up and binge or give up altogether. Consider adding a “break meal” into your mid-week schedule and on the weekends. Remember that the more you rely on processed foods and dip into discretionary calories, the harder it is to stick to your goals.

PROTEIN

Protein is essential for building muscle, so include a portion of protein at each meal. Prioritize fresh, lean, minimally processed protein sources, and consider limiting red meat to 18 Oz or less per week. Plan your menus and establish your “Top 6 Proteins” to choose from. (Chicken Breast, Salmon, Turkey Breast, Lean Beef, Bison, and protein powder are some perfect options).

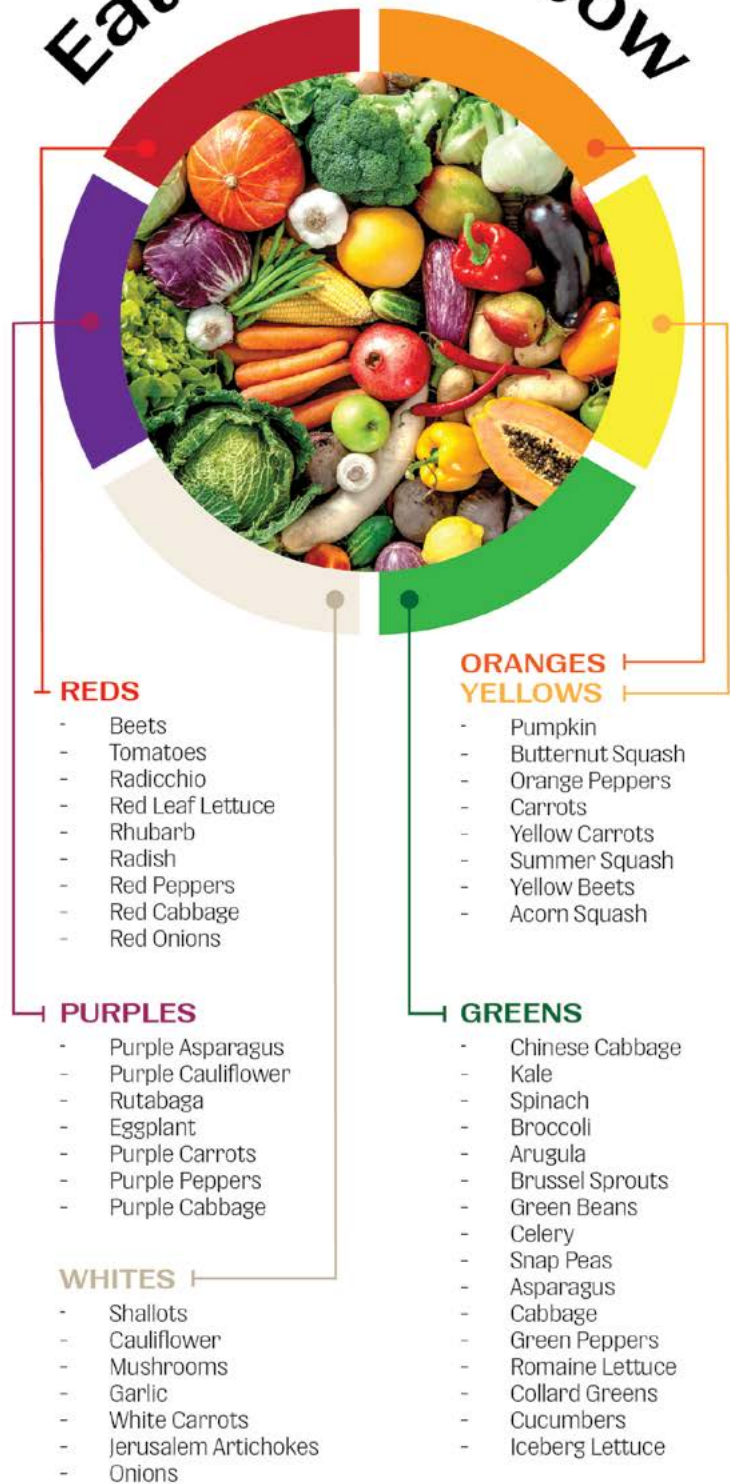
STRENGTH & SIZE PROGRAM



VEGETABLES

Include a minimum of two servings of colorful fruits and two servings of colorful vegetables to your daily menu. These add a tremendous amount of nutritional benefit to your day, adding a plethora of vitamins, minerals, and fiber to your diet. Establish a “Top 6 Fruits” list and a “Top 6 Vegetables” list to create your meals. Mine are strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, bananas, apples, and pineapple. Broccoli, green beans, spinach, red bell peppers, acorn squash and asparagus.

Eat the Rainbow



CARBOHYDRATES



Include minimally processed sources of carbohydrates that pack lots of nutrition and fiber at each meal. Carbs are essential for fueling exercise, supporting muscle growth, preventing muscle breakdown, and promoting faster recovery after training, all of which are vital when athletes are training for size and strength. Don't go overboard, however. Adjust serving size per your body type and needs.

FRUIT

Fresh
Frozen

GRAINS

Amaranth
Barley
Buckwheat
Farro
Millet
Quinoa
Sorghum

STARCHES

Corn Potatoes
Taro
Yuca

YOGURT

Plain
Non-Fat Greek
Yogurt
Plain Kiefer

BREADS

Whole Wheat
Sprouted

OATS

Steel Cut
Rolled
Old-Fashioned

RICE

Whole-Grain
Black
Wild Rice

OTHER

Beans
Lentils



OILS

- Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Walnut Oil
- Avocado & Avocado Oil
- Fresh unprocessed coconut

Marinades and dressings with oil in this category

Pesto made with extra virgin olive oil

CHEESES: ages 6 months or more

- Egg Yolks
- Olives

SEEDS

Chia, Flax, Hemp, Pumpkin & Sesame

NUTS

- Cashews
- Pistachios
- Almonds
- Brazil Nuts
- Pecans

Peanuts & Natural Peanut Butter

Nut butters made from other nuts in this category

HEALTHY FATS

Aim for a mix of whole-food fats (like coconut, avocados, nuts, seeds, and nut butter) and pressed oils (like olive oil) in your nutrition plan.

****Add these sparingly because you would be surprised how much this all adds up. These fats keep your hormones healthy, your brain happy and intelligent, your fatty tissues (such as your eyes and skin) well-lubed, and your body chemistry working smoothly. If you get enough of these essential fats, your hormones stay healthy, you keep kicking ass in the gym (and the bedroom), and you stay bright and happy.**



How to HOW TO Create the CREATE THE Perfect Meal PERFECT MEAL

Step 1: Choose food from each category above (proteins, veggies, carbs, and fats). Make your selection based on what you're in the mood for or whatever is easiest.

Step 2: Cook the food, preferably in bulk, so you have food for the next couple of days.

Step 3: Portion your cooked foods with the hand portioning method. **Feel free to use a macro calculator or calorie calculator. The hand portioning method is the easiest to use regarding portion control.

Step 4: Portion your foods in separate Tupperware containers the night before or the morning to save time and effort.

SAMPLE FULL DAY OF EATING/MID-DAY WORKOUT

Menu for a 214 LBS Male, aged 30,
6 feet 5 inches are wanting to gain muscle. Prefers four meals a day.

Breakfast (7AM): 2 Scoops of protein powder mixed in Water

Two cupped hands of Oatmeal mixed in Almond Milk (1 cup)

One cupped hand of fresh blueberries

Two thumbs of almond butter

Lunch (11AM): 2 palms of grilled chicken breast

Three cupped hands of roasted sweet potatoes

One fist of fresh broccoli

One thumb of extra virgin olive oil

Intra-Workout Shake “sip on throughout workout” (12:30PM):

5 grams of BCAA mixed in

20 oz. Coconut Water or Sports Drink

Post-Workout Meal (1:30PM): 2 palms of grilled chicken breast

Four cupped hands of roasted gold potatoes

Roughly 24 “count” raw Almonds

Dinner (7PM): 2 palms of grilled Salmon

Three cupped hands of quinoa

One fist of grilled asparagus

One fist of grilled red bell peppers

Optional/Desert (8PM): 1 cupped hand of fresh pineapple

One cupped hand of fresh raspberries

Daily Average: 215 grams of Protein, 100 grams of Fat, 290 grams of Carbs

HOW THE HAND PORTIONING METHOD WORKS

Use the guide below to portion your meal**
 (Remember you can make more than one portion for leftovers the next day).

Per Serving:

Protein Palm	Veggies Fist	Carbs Cup	Fats Thumb
			
			
Women: 1 palm Men: 2 palms	Women: 1 fist Men: 2 fists	Women: 1 cupped hand Men: 2 cupped hands	Women: 1 thumb Men: 2 thumbs

Adjust portions according to:

- How frequently you eat
- Your body type/caloric needs
- How active you are
- Your results
- Appetite & satiety
- How frequently you eat

Protein	One Palm	~20-30 grams of protein	~3-4 oz of cooked meat, 2 whole eggs or 1 cup of Greek yogurt
Carbs	One Cupped Hand	~20-30 grams of carbs	~1/2 to 2/3 cup cooked grains, legumes or 1-medium size piece of fruit/tuber
Fats	One Thumb	~7-12 grams of fat	~1 tbsp

Research shows that any effort can result in real, measurable progress, no matter how imperfect. Learning and accepting that better and even a little effort can translate into real progress and health benefits. For more reasonable goals, a target of 75-80% consistency is often the sweet spot to make continual progress while still living an enjoyable and sustainable lifestyle. For more advanced goals, a target of 90%+ consistency is often needed to push boundaries and reach more extreme levels of human physiology.

STRATEGY 6 DRINKING PLENTY OF WATER

We need water to live. Our bodies require water, as every system in the body uses water to function properly. Water helps keep the joints lubricated, regulates body temperatures, prevents infections, helps the brain function optimally, and is responsible for increasing nutrient absorption to the cells. In addition, the kidneys and the liver help the body rid itself of toxins, and both organs rely on water to do their job well.

If you're drinking too little, you'll likely feel:

- Too sluggish and fatigued
- Feel brain fog or slow thinking
- Not recovering effectively after physical activity
- Feel unsatisfied after meals

When you're drinking enough water consistently, you'll feel:

- Satisfied from meals
- Sustained all-day energy
- Sustained energy during longer prolonged bouts of exercise
- Better focus and attention
- Optimal recovery from workouts

General Hydration Requirements

During this program, I highly recommend consuming up to a gallon of water daily (roughly 128 ounces US). This amount accounts for the loss of fluids you will experience during workouts and the fluid loss when going to the restroom.

However, a familiar recommendation is 8 eight oz. glasses of water per day. As a general standard, that's a helpful starting point. If your water intake requires adjustments, use your insight based on what you already know about yourself and your routines, and choose a starting baseline for what you need to stay hydrated. Then pay attention to internal signals and adjust accordingly.

Step 1: Consume one 8 oz glass of water first thing in the morning upon waking.

Step 2: Consume one 8 oz glass of water before exercise.

Step 3: Consume one 12 - 16 oz of fluids every 5-15 minutes over the course of a workout.

Step 4: Consume one 8 oz glass of water with each meal/snack.



Program

PROGRAM

FAQ

FREQUENTLY
ASKED QUESTIONS



Should I follow the Program exactly as written?

Yes. The programs are broken into multiple-week cycles with a “de-load” on the last week and should be followed sequentially. You’ll notice that most movements are the same as in previous weeks. Repeating movements and following a progression plan is the best way to get stronger and bigger and master a movement. Endless variety is the enemy of mastery. Trust the process. I do things here for a reason, and if you trust the process, you will see results. I want to make sure you know that we aren’t going to do the same things forever. Our typical phase will last for five weeks. Each workout will last 60 to 90 minutes, tops. Ensure you abide by the rest periods and training with intensity and intention. Pay attention to the instructions; each phase will be unique and different, calling for other methods like pyramids, drop-sets, burn-outs, etc. However, don’t try to set personal records on every exercise every week. Always focus more on the mind-muscle connection and strive for quality over quantity.

I just want to take a short break. Can I perform just one phase cycle?

No. Building muscle is hard, whereas maintaining muscle is easy. If you’re advanced and have built up your muscle mass substantially, and you want them to shrink in terms of muscle mass, it’s going to take a few months to see results. I should clarify. Let’s say you stopped lifting altogether for three months. Your legs would atrophy markedly. This program will keep your muscles full and build them up. Therefore, I recommend doing the program in its entirety.

How do I determine how much to lift (weights used)?

Use a load that allows you to hit the prescribed rep scheme and pushes you close to muscle failure. For example, if the program calls for 15 reps of Barbell Biceps Curls, then use a load that you can do for 15 reps. It would be best if you struggled to get to 15 reps or were shy of hitting 15. Of course, this will take some experimentation. So, determine a baseline with your first set, and then increase the load based on how many reps you have in reserve. In addition, you will also notice that I have programmed progressions each week, and I will have prescribed a percentage of

your max weight for “bigger” movements like the Bench Press. You will notice that rep schemes have stayed the same for specific exercises, but you will want to increase the weight. For some sets, the reps will decrease as we increase in weight. For accessory movements, where there is no percentage prescribed, you should try to go heavier than you did last week. You generally want to push big lifts like Bench Press or Deadlifts as close to muscle failure or one rep shy of failure. Accessory lifts like bicep curls, overhead shoulder presses, etc., shoot for 1-2 reps shy of failure. Special instructions will be offered if each set should be taken to failure, or the last set will be done with an AMRAP (as many reps as possible).

Do I need to follow the rep schemes strictly?

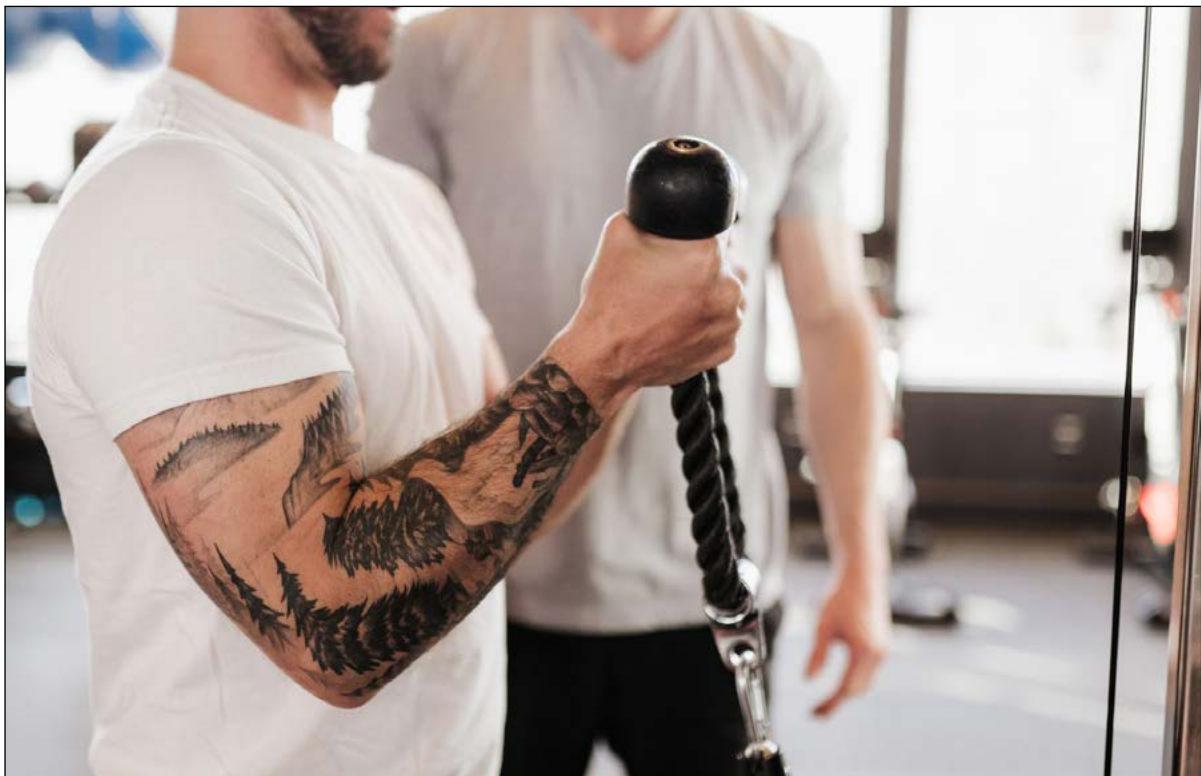
The short answer is no. However, I encourage you to try your absolute best. You won't always hit the prescribed rep schemes precisely as written. So, think of them as recommendations to calculate your working weight and then try to get close. Numerous protocols are used within this program, but I will mention the two most important ones to carry out your sets. The first protocol is to do the same loading on each set (I refer to this as straight sets – which could be 3 sets of 10 reps). With this protocol, I recommend choosing a working weight that you can do for 12 reps. In this situation, your first two sets are more manageable, and only your last set is to muscle failure. You may indeed end up getting three sets of 10 reps. The second protocol is to adjust your working weight so that every set is close to failure. These are ascending sets (or pyramid sets) because you must increase the load with every set. For instance, say the program calls for three sets at 10 reps, 8 reps, and 6 reps of back squats, and you want to push every set close to muscle failure. If your 10-rep max back squat is 185 pounds, that is your first set's load. However, you must increase the load to get 8 reps with your second and 6 reps with the third set. So, your second set might be 190 pounds, and your third set might be 195 pounds. When it comes to the protocol, this depends on the exercise and where you are at in your training cycle. If you're feeling beat up or taking it easy, you may only push your third set to failure. If you're going to fail on at least one of your sets, then you are following the program recommendations and getting enough stimulus to improve strength and grow muscle.

If I can perform 15 reps when the set call for 12, do I push the set to failure and keep the weight the same, or stop at the prescribed rep and increase the load?

Let's say you're doing Front Squats, which calls for 4 sets. One set at 12 reps, one set at 10 reps, one set at 8 reps, and one at 6 reps. Say you pick 165 pounds, get to 12 reps, and realize you could do a few more reps. In this case, up the load to 175 pounds. Suppose that's too easy; up the load to 185 pounds for the next set. Eventually, you'll hit your settling point and arrive at the proper load to hit the right reps. Week 1 of every cycle is dedicated to mastering proper form and figuring out the suitable loads to use the following week. Regardless, you can always stray and get a few more reps. The main thing is to go up over time and utilize progressive overload.

Should I push every set to muscle failure?

Absolutely not. Taking each set to failure would be a mistake and increase your likelihood of over-training. Some sets will require you to use a pre-determined load of your %1RM (% 1 rep max), while others will ask you to adhere to the program's RPE (rate of perceived exertion). Here's how it looks on a scale from 1 to 10.



What it feels like	
1	No effort
2	Light activity; can maintain activity for hours
3	Easy to breath; can carry on a conversation
4	Still easy, something you'd have to do 20 or more reps to exhaust your muscles
5	Your first warm-up set; you could easily do twice as many reps
6	2 nd warm-up set; but starting to feel like work
7	First working set; the weight is hard but do-able
8	Strong effort is needed; you will end most sets here. You could do at least 2 more reps
9	A tough set; at most, you could do one more rep.
10	An all-out set, the most reps you can do for that set, with that weight

The RPE means you stop the working set as soon as you reach x number of reps away from muscular failure. In other words, you should rack the weight and end the set when you have x reps left in the tank. For example, if the instruction is RPE 7, you should lift until you only have 3 reps left in the tank, with good technique. Typically, RPE 7 will see a significant decrease in bar speed towards the end of the set, but it is usually perceived as relatively easy to crank out. RPE 8 is where straining and shaking may occur and will feel very tough. RPE 9 is close to all you have and will feel like a near-maximal effort. Remember that failure means when your technique fails, not an all-out failure when you can no longer perform a rep. Good form/technique should always be used for safety purposes. Special instructions will be provided each workout on how hard to exert yourself on each set. You will typically see RPE 6,7,8,9, and AMRAP (as many reps as possible).

How much should I progress each week?

When it comes to increasing load or reps, try to bump things up gradually over time—The weight only goes up by roughly 2 to 5 lbs. increments from week to week. Sometimes, the weight may stay the same. If you're doing 4 sets of an exercise, consider your 4-set total or your 4-set volume load. Here's an example for Barbell Biceps Curl for the month for someone relatively new to the exercise (say the program calls for 4 sets of 15, 12, 10, 8 reps) – here's how they might progress throughout the month:

Week	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4
1	40 lbs x 15-reps	45 lbs x 12-reps	50 lbs x 10-reps	55 lbs x 8-reps
2	45 lbs x 12-reps	50 lbs x 10-reps	55 lbs x 8-reps	60 lbs x 6-reps
3	50 lbs x 10-reps	55 lbs x 8-reps	60 lbs x 6-reps	65 lbs x 4-reps
4	55 lbs x 10-reps	60 lbs x 8-reps	65 lbs x 6-reps	70 lbs x 4-reps

This is just an example and doesn't necessarily mean this is the way you should progress each week. Listen to your body and check in with yourself on how you feel going into your workout.

How should I warm-up and cool down?

Warming up is critical to having a productive workout. It is essential to stay injury-free, so don't rush into your workout. Always follow the prescribed warm-up in the template and 5-10 minutes of low/moderate intensity cardio before the weight training portion. Your warm-up is meant to prepare your body for movement, prevent injuries and optimize your routine. The workouts in this program will include big lifts, such as squats, deadlifts, or Bench Press, which require more extensive warm-ups. You should not avoid warming up and prepping your body for the workout. I recommend doing dynamic stretching and possibly performing warm-up sets to get

your body prepared for the exercise session. In short, tailor your warm-up to the exercise, workout, and how you are feeling. If you're feeling stiff and cold, you might need a longer warm-up with different exercises to get your body primed. On other days, you might come in ready to go, and you can do some light dynamic stretching and get to work. With regards to a cool down, I recommend doing what helps you recover faster and feel good. Stretching after your workout or at night before bed and walking work best.

What if I miss a workout or a week?

First, don't sweat it! It happens. If you miss a workout or a week of training, you can start the program where you left off. If you get injured, you're sick, or you fall off the wagon and miss a few weeks of training, you might consider easing back into the program by starting from the beginning of the phase you're on. Try your best to stay as consistent as possible. The BEST results are had when you're consistent and intentional about your training & nutrition program. No one ever had a perfect training regimen in the beginning. Just remember why you started and persist until you get to your goals!

I don't feel a specific exercise working (or causing pain). Should I substitute something else or keep it?

Only perform an exercise that is well-tolerated if it is in the program. If a particular exercise doesn't feel right or you don't feel it working, replace it with one that does; ideally, one from the drop-down menu on the template. For example, let's say that squats irritate your knees. If this is the case, you may want to substitute these for leg presses. Don't forget that your warm-up dramatically affects how your body responds to the exercises in the program. Make sure you're mobilizing your joints properly before the workout and stretching again after and even before bed to help your body recover faster. Stretching before bed also enables you to fall asleep and stay asleep. If problems persist, schedule an appointment with a physical therapist you trust.

I feel fatigued and sore, should I take the day off, modify the workout, or just push through it?

If you follow the program in sequence and the strategies provided (e.g., you take your prescribed rest days and follow the "RPE" for load and effort), then you shouldn't get excessively sore. However, some people recover slower than others, and you have to plan around the unexpected—say, you do something you're not accustomed to, and

it leaves you fatigued. Perhaps you tweaked your pec, slept, or ate crap the night before your workout. It's up to you to determine what you can and can't do. When in doubt, take the day off. When I was younger, almost every time I was injured or super fatigued in training, my body tried to tell me something, but I was too stubborn to listen. Learn from my mistakes by paying close attention to your body's signals. Also, when your body gets tight and sore, it's a sign that you need to stretch. Don't neglect this area of your training. Stretching will minimize, if not eliminate, injury altogether!

What can I do on non-training days to feel productive?

Listen to your body, and don't do anything that might disrupt your training sessions or move you further away from your physique goals. For example, you can go for a walk, hike, a light swim, do yoga, or do anything you enjoy that doesn't interfere with your next training session. Your heart will be healthy from all the walking and physical activity. Use your non-training days to focus on meal prep, make up your cardio, or stretching.

What if I don't have time to finish the workout?

If you can't come back later that day, finish what you can and move forward without making up the lifts. When you block off training time, ensure it's enough to complete the workout.

How do I know if I am progressing?

Building a high-performing physique is a marathon, not a sprint. It can be difficult to accurately determine if you are making visual progress daily or weekly. Taking physique progress photos every five weeks and comparing them side by side is an excellent way to detect visible differences you would overlook in the mirror. But ultimately, because of the relationship between strength gain and muscle gain, the primary metric I want you to use for tracking your progress is strength. If you're getting stronger, you're progressing. I highly recommended to log every workout either in writing (print the program out or use a separate notebook) or in an app, so you don't have to rely on memory to keep track of personal strength records. Taking body measurements every quarter can also be helpful. Simply focusing on steady strength progression will be your best representation for determining muscular progress.

How much muscle can I expect to gain?

How you respond to training will be primarily determined by genetic factors and your

specific training history. As a rough ballpark estimate for early intermediates with about one to two years of lifting experience, you can expect to gain roughly 0.5-1 lbs. of muscle per month (6-12 lbs. of muscle gained in your second year). For intermediate-advanced trainees, 0.25- 0.5 lbs. of muscle gain per month is reasonable (3-6 lbs. of lean muscle gained per year).

Should I gain weight, lose, or maintain weight on this program?

This program was designed with gaining weight in mind – specifically, building quality muscle mass and strength. However, individuals looking to maintain or lose weight may also find this program useful. If you're looking to gain muscle, you should be looking to slowly increase your body weight over most or all the first 3 phases of the program. If you're looking to lose fat, you should lose weight slowly during most or all the first 2 phases, then maintain your lost weight for the third. How can you go about these goals in a logical and informed fashion? Please keep a lookout for my male and female nutrition guidelines for a more detailed approach.

What if I need to figure out how to perform the exercises?

Each exercise and stretch listed in this program have a hyperlink to a tutorial video on YouTube. Just tap the video icon on the workout template.

I am not getting sore from my workouts. Am I doing something wrong?

Do not gauge success by the “sweaty and sore” scale. Delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS) isn't required to gain muscle and strength, but the associated muscle damage might play a role. With that said, the main goal of this program is to build muscle and strength, not to get you feeling sore. Reduced soreness over time indicates that your body is adapting and recovering well, which is good for continued progress.

How often do I need to test my 1 Rep Max?

Individuals looking to gain strength on a particular lift and NOT a competitive athlete should test their 1RM at least three times per year. For instance, do another training cycle if you want to re-test your Bench Press after each 3-phase cycle of the strength & size program. Using metrics to gauge progress is essential for any strength training

program. However, it's still important to remember that testing your 1 rep max is very hard on your body and poses a higher risk of injury when done beyond the prescribed amount. Vary your strength movements periodically if you did Bench Press for three months. Find out your 1 rep max for Incline Bench Press or the Plate-Loaded Machine Incline Chest Press, and then work on that strength progression for 3 months. This same principle can also be applied to legs, back, and delts.

Do I need to perform the “De-Load Week”? I feel fine. What should I do?

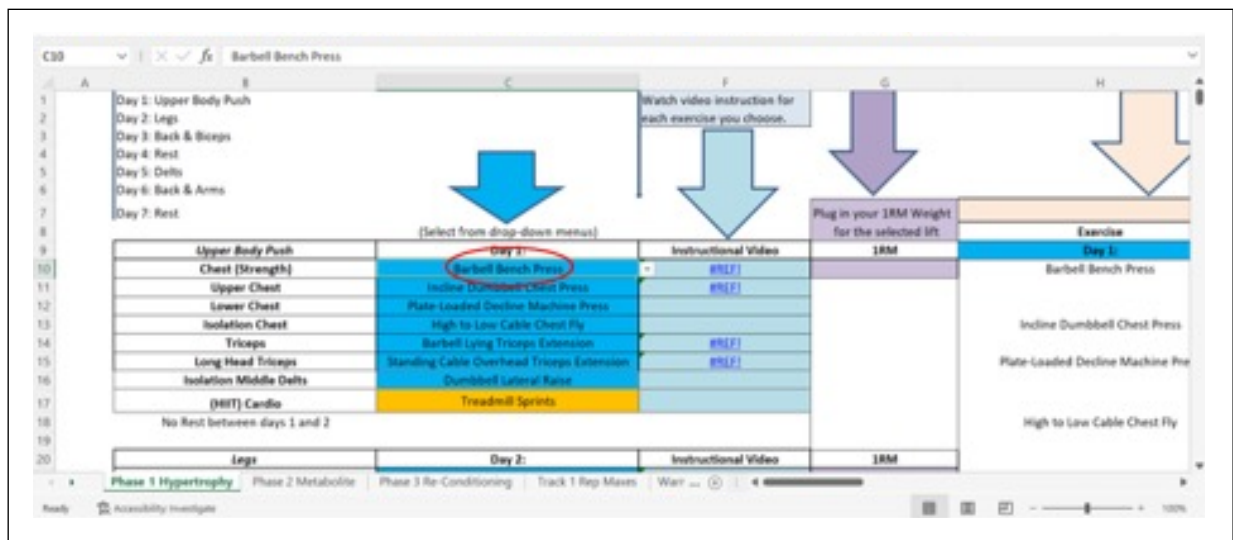
YES, perform the de-load. Even if you're feeling fantastic after a phase, you'll need to be at your best to get through the entirety of the program, so make sure to take the de-load seriously, even if you feel “ok.” The idea after a de-load is to still feel fantastic, not just OK.

How to Read the Workouts Properly



The workouts provided are in a separate file that you can download directly to your smartphone, tablet, or desktop. You will need Excel to use the template, so make sure you download it. Before diving into your first workout, remember these things while approaching this routine.

1. Read the workout “special instructions” at the top of the template. (Depending on your device, you may need to scroll to the right before seeing the highlighted box. You will want to know the special techniques applied to specific movements that will enhance your progress. These are KEY to the Strength & Size program.
2. Each exercise and stretch have a hyperlink to video tutorials. Tap the exercise, and it will direct you to the tutorial.
3. ****A NOTE ON THE STRENGTH EXERCISES:** For each workout throughout the program, you will have one (Strength) exercise. It will be listed in the top row of each workout.
 - Make sure you know your 1RM (1 rep max) for each strength exercise before going into your first workout. You will plug that weight into the cell, which will auto-prescribe your weight each week of the phase.
 - ****General Rules for Determining your 1RM:** You can either estimate your 1RM with



a 1 Rep Max Calculator (I recommend www.strengthlevel.com/one-rep-max-calculator) and enter your heaviest weight lifted with the associated reps to date. Or go through a testing phase before completing your first week of training.

- Choose your strength exercises from each day on the template. For each exercise, devote the time necessary to determine your 1RM. Or group day 1,2,3 exercises on one day and your 4 and 5 exercises on the other day.

Day 1 Testing:

Barbell Bench Press

Barbell Back Squat

Max Pull Ups

(Rest Day)

Day 2 Testing:

Standing Overhead Barbell Press

Barbell Bent Over Row

The Testing Scheme should be completed as prescribed for each strength exercise (except for Pull-Ups). The benefit of this format is that you're prepping the targeted muscles for maximum performance while gradually increasing each set's weight. Your strength levels will increase from set to set in this controlled manner.

Warm Up – 5 minutes of cardio

Dynamic Warm-Up (specific to workout)

Set 1: 10 reps
Rest 90 sec
Set 2: 8 reps
Rest 90 sec
Set 3: 6 reps
Rest 2 mins
Set 4: 4 reps

Rest 3 mins
Set 5: 2 reps @ 85%
Rest 3 mins
Set 6: 1 reps@90%
Rest 3 mins
Set 7: 1 rep @ 95%
Rest 3 mins
Set 8: 1 rep @ 100% (Your 1RM)
Rest 3 mins

The first two sets will be treated as warm-ups, so choose a lighter weight than you're used to for that rep range. Increase your weight by 5 to 10 lbs. for each consecutive set.

*** I Highly recommend using a spotter for any of these testing days.

Once you have completed your 1RM tests, there is a 1RM Tracker tab to record all your heaviest lifts for future use. Update them as you need to throughout the program.

4. The attraction to this program is your ability to select the exercises YOU want to do in all three phases. Select an exercise from the drop-down menu on the template for each workout. I have already grouped the best exercises for each muscle group, so there is no guesswork on your part. Select the most important to you based on your goals, convenience, or skill level.

5. Each workout will highlight various movements to ensure proper growth and recovery between workouts. You'll notice that most exercises are the same as in previous weeks.

Repeating movements and following a progression plan is the best way to get stronger

and bigger and master a movement. Endless variety is the enemy of mastery. Trust the process. The program is designed this way for a reason, and if you trust the process, you will see results. I want to make sure you know that we aren't going to do the same things forever.

Our typical phase will last for five weeks, and each phase has a specific goal, so you're consistently progressing and gaining strength. Each workout will last 60 to 90 minutes, tops. Ensure you abide by the rest periods and training with intensity and intention. Each phase will be found at the bottom with its corresponding tabs.

- You will also notice that the reps for various exercises are managed in a descending rep method on the template. This is called a pyramid technique, which will allow you to hit multiple rep spectrum's each set - meaning you get stronger in a variety of rep ranges and ensures you hit all the muscle fibers in a single session each set - meaning you get stronger in a variety of rep ranges and ensures you hit all the muscle fibers in a single session.
- Simply increase the weight 5 lbs. each set to match the reps you want to complete. So, if your first set calls for 12 reps, second set 10 reps and your third set 8 reps, choose a weight that corresponds with that rep goal.
- Your Dumbbell Chest Press may look like this: Set 1: 12 reps at 40 lbs. Set 2: 10 reps at 45 lbs. and Set 3: 8 reps at 50 lbs. Rest the 90 seconds in between each set. DO NOT confuse 12,10,8 as one working set. That is not how this technique works.

6. Make sure you complete the warm-up on a corresponding day before each workout. To ensure proper progression week to week while mitigating injury, it's essential to complete the warm-ups each workout day. You will see a tab at the bottom of the template titled "Warm-Ups."

1.1 The warm ups are designed to prepare your body for movement and help mobilize the joints prior to the workout, so take them seriously. This is necessary to keep your body performing at it's highest level and minimize the risk of injury. I have prescribed a unique list of stretches & activation moves for each workout so you don't have to do a full body warmup to save yourself time. You may also include a cardio warm up beforehand for 5 minutes. *Note: for cardio days, you will want to include the leg day 2 warm up before your prescribed cardio session.

Upper Body Push: Day 1		Warm Up	Instructional Video
	Time/Reps		
Neck Rotational Stretch	Slow & Controlled - 2x's clockwise/2 x's counter clockwise		
Foam Roll Chest Stretch Complex	20 sec of each		
Cable or Band External Rotation	2 sets of 12 reps each side		
Legs: Day 2		Time/Reps	Instructional Video
Dynamic Quad Stretch	2 sec hold - 10 x's each side		
Kneeling Hip Flexor	5 sec hold - 5 x's each side		
QL & Oblique Side Lying Swiss Ball Stretch	2 sec hold of each - 5 x's each side		
90/90 Hip Stretch	30 sec hold - 1 x each side		

Phase 2 Metabolic Phase 3 Re-Conditioning Track 1 Rep Moves Warm-Ups

7. The Abs workout will also be found at the bottom of the template. These core days will coincide with the phase of training you are currently doing in the strength & size program. You will complete the workouts three days a week with a day's rest in between, and they should be done before your prescribed workout.
 8. Track and record all your rep results and weights used on the template. The weights for big strength lifts, like Barbell Bench Press, will have been calculated for you based on your 1 rep max. For other lifts with no prescribed weight, you will use a load that allows you to hit the defined rep scheme and pushes you close to muscle failure. For example, if the program calls for 15 reps of dumbbell bicep curls, then use a load that you can do for 15 reps. You should need help to get to rep 15 or come just shy of hitting 15. Of course, this will take some experimentation. So, determine a baseline with your first set, and then increase the load based on how many reps you have in reserve.
- You will also notice that the reps for various exercises are managed in a descending rep method on the template. This is called a pyramid technique, which will allow you to hit multiple rep spectrum's each set - meaning you get stronger in a variety of rep ranges and ensures you hit all the muscle fibers in a single session each set - meaning you get stronger in a variety of rep ranges and ensures you hit all the muscle fibers in a single session.
 - Increase the weight by 2.5 to 5 lbs. each set to match the reps you want to complete. So, if your first set calls for 12 reps, the second set 10 reps, and your third set 8 reps, choose a weight that corresponds with that rep goal.
 - Your Dumbbell Chest Press may look like this: Set 1: 12 reps at 40 lbs. Set 2: 10 reps at 45 lbs. Set 3: 8 reps at 50 lbs. Rest the 90 seconds in between each set. DO NOT confuse 12,10,8 as one working set. That is not how this technique works.

Week 1									
Exercise	Sets	Rep Goal for each Set	Set 1 lbs	Set 2 lbs	Set 3 lbs	Set 4 lbs	Rest	Rep Results	Exercise
Day 1:									
Incline Barbell Bench Press	4	12,10,8,6	0	0	0	0			Incline Barbell Bench P
90° External Rotation	4	15					2 min		90° External Rotatic
Dumbbell Chest Press	3	12,10,8							Dumbbell Chest Pre
Dips for Chest	3	10,10,8					90 sec		Dips for Chest
Plate-Loaded Machine Chest Press	3	12,10,8							Plate-Loaded Machine Che
Seated Cable Fly	3	12,10,8					90 sec		Seated Cable Fly
EZ Bar Lying Triceps Extension	3	12,10,8							EZ Bar Lying Triceps Ext
Seated Dumbbell French Press	3	15,12,10					90 sec		Seated Dumbbell French
Straight Bar Triceps Pushdown	8	8 to 12					30 sec		Straight Bar Triceps Push
Dumbbell Lateral Raise (Double-Drop Set)	3	10/10/10 x 3					90 sec		Dumbbell Lateral Raise (Doub
Week 1									
Exercise	Sets	Rep Goal for each Set	Set 1 lbs	Set 2 lbs	Set 3 lbs	Set 4 lbs	Rest	Rep Results	Exercise
Day 2:									
Barbell Deadlift	4	15,12,10,8	0	0	0	0	2.5 min		Barbell Deadlift
Hack Squat	3	15,12,10							Hack Squat

9. While completing this program, you must perform each exercise with good form. If you have seen any of my exercise videos, then you will know that I coach toward maintaining proper technique throughout the entire set. Adequate movement mechanics leads to better posture and better health. Faulty movement mechanics in the gym leads to increased muscular imbalances, thus creating more pain. How we move in and out of the gym dramatically impacts how we maintain healthy longevity with fitness. So, what is the best way to keep good form with each exercise?

- Practice perfect technique on all reps (especially your strength exercises; squats, bench presses, deadlifts, etc.) Study the tutorial videos and the form optimization series on YouTube. Then translate what you learned into your lifts.
- Leave your “ego at the door.” If you’re doing these exercises to lift the most weight with little to no mastery of the movement, you’re wasting your time. You leave yourself vulnerable to injury and no longer strength training. You’re training your ego. Do yourself a favor and focus on what you can do now. With time and effort, you’ll ensure that who you are now is stronger than the person you were when you started the program.

10. Use a “mind-muscle connection” and maintain a high level of “body awareness” while working out. Focus on the muscles you’re supposed to target with each exercise. This doesn’t mean focusing on one muscle group but on how the body performs during a specific exercise. For instance, with the dumbbell biceps curl, you assume that curling the dumbbell to shoulder height involves the biceps. However, what is your head doing? What are your hips doing during this movement? No one considers what their posture is like while executing the curl. Your hips may be pushed forward, and your head is cranked to the side. All characteristics are associated with poor form and potential joint discomfort. Always consider these while working out.

- Actively squeeze the targeted muscle on each rep and control the negative (lowering phase of the rep).
- Draw your stomach in and brace your mid-section during the exercise. This protects your lower back and pelvis from the forces exerted on them.
- Keep your head up and your chin slightly tucked in. This will help maintain a safe, neutral spine position.



- Keep in mind that you should “feel exercises” in the muscle, not in tendons or ligaments.
- Always focus on the movement of your entire body and execute the exercise with proper technique and control through a full range of motion.

For the record, research has shown increased muscle activation when subjects are instructed to use “internal cueing” (such as squeezing your glutes as hard as possible to get the barbell to move in a hip thrust) as opposed to “external cueing” (such as simply moving the barbell upwards). In addition, recent data have suggested that use of a mind-muscle connection can be used to enhance muscle hypertrophy.

So, practicing and cultivating a strong mind-muscle connection is well-advised if your goal is to achieve the best muscular development possible.



Final Thoughts

FINAL THOUGHTS

Congratulations!

If you've made it this far, you've just gone a shirt size up (or down)! Thank you again for trusting me to guide you through your workout program. I hope this program empowers you to be the best version of yourself. This program was designed with you in mind! I'm always looking for ways to improve and bring value to you.

Feel free to recycle this program throughout the year or take a look at one of my other programs at www.strengthmentalityinitiative.com

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