

The Advanced Guide to The Gym



*Continuing Your Journey With The
Proper Program and Recovery*

Congratulations! You've made it to the advanced level of lifting.

You've put in the hours, built a great foundation, and are ready to take your fitness journey to the next level. However, as an advanced lifter, there are a few things to keep in mind to help you continue progressing and avoid hitting a plateau.

We will build upon the foundation you set up, adding new exercises, increasing the intensity, increasing the number of exercises per training session, and training sessions per week.

This program won't be solely focused on the training aspect. Instead, we'll provide some key advice regarding recovery and nutrition, which you'll need to maximize your progress and minimize injuries.

We included 17 comprehensive exercise instructional videos and an easy-to-follow table to get you going! In addition, you can choose from two templates: one being a 3 times per week, full body program, and the other one a 4 times per week, upper/lower program.

What got you to this point is the same thing that will allow you to push forward. Any ideas as to what that may be?

You're right. It's consistency and hard work!

Let's get into it.

MEDICAL DISCLAIMER

The information in this program, including but not limited to text, pictures, and other material, is provided solely for educational and informational purposes. The content in this article isn't intended to replace any professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the opinion of your physician or another trained health care practitioner regarding any questions you may have about a medical condition or treatment, and never disregard professional medical advice or delay in getting it because of something you read in this program. As it is, we can guarantee no results for your specific condition.



TRAINING TIPS & PRINCIPLES

You need to understand a few key training principles before going all in with the advanced program.

PROGRESSIVE OVERLOAD

The concept of progressive overload is perhaps the most fundamental one in all of training.

It essentially describes how intensity or volume needs to rise over time. While some people might not be familiar with it, some lifters find it rather intuitive.

The ancient Greek wrestler, Milo of Croton, was renowned for winning the Olympics six times.

According to a legend, a young Milo regularly walked the streets of Croton, carrying a baby calf on his shoulders. He continued carrying it for years until the bull reached its full size.

How did he accomplish this? Progressive overload!

Day by day, Milo got stronger as the bull got bigger and heavier.

Although it's doubtful that you'll be able to lift an 800 kg bull, you learn a thing or two from Milo and keep those lessons in mind while training.

As a beginner in the gym, you can do anything, and your strength and muscles will grow, but when the newbie gains slow down, you need to force your body to grow.

The muscles don't want to grow anymore unless you give them a reason to, so it's your job to convince them that they need to grow in order to survive.

Your body is smart. If it weren't, we wouldn't be alive as a species. Its sole purpose is to keep you alive, and consuming 3000kcal on a protein-rich diet isn't the most optimal way of ensuring survival for everyone in the tribe.



Since the program is written for you, your primary method of using progressive overload is to increase the weights on the exercises.

This doesn't mean you should blindly ramp up the weights and kill yourself under the bar.

There's a way we can determine whether or not we are using the right weight, which leads me to the next principle.



THE RATE OF PERCEIVED EXERTION

Rate of Perceived Exertion, or RPE, is a scale that subjectively measures the intensity of any given lift. It goes from 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest intensity on the scale.

This is basically how the scale feels in real-time:

- 10** – Max effort. You have no more reps left in the tank
- 9** – You have another rep left in you, but it's a grinder
- 8** – You have around 2 left. This is your sweet spot, along with RPE 7
- 7** – You should do most of your work here. Around 3 reps left in the tank
- 6** – Pretty light. Add more weight unless said otherwise
- 5 & below** – This is basically a warmup

Judging your RPE for every set can be tricky since this is something that improves with experience. The good news is that the more you use it and think about it, the better you'll judge it.

When it comes to strength and hypertrophy training for the general population, you should usually leave 2-3 reps in the tank during every set. Meaning you should perform the sets at an RPE 7 or 8. Studies have shown that there isn't much of a difference between going to failure and stopping a few reps short of it.

Always going to failure will increase the time needed to recover and the chances of injury.

You can sometimes go all out and max out at RPE 10 or 9, but make sure you are doing it sparingly.

This doesn't mean you shouldn't go hard in the gym; on the contrary.

People typically have no idea what actual training to failure looks like, and they think that they are training at an RPE 8 when instead, they are training at RPE 5 or 6.

Be honest with yourself. Your gains and recovery will thank you for it.

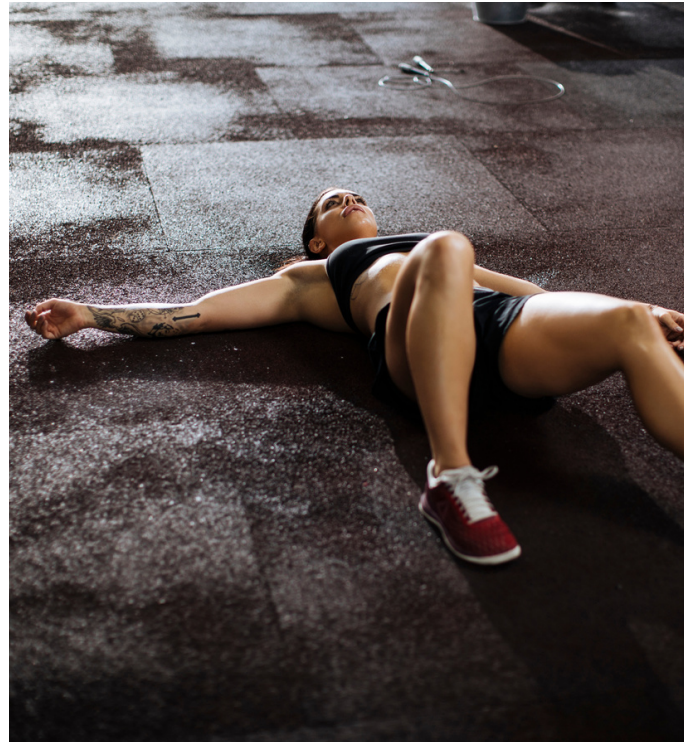


RESPECT THE REST INTERVALS

The rest times make or break the program because they dictate the physiological adaptation that will occur in the muscle.

The general rule of thumb is that you should rest about 4-5 minutes when training maximal strength, 2-3 minutes when training for hypertrophy, and rest less than the length of your set when building endurance. Of course, you can build hypertrophy and strength with shorter rest, but that won't make it optimal. Some maximal effort sets can be prescribed with rest intervals as long as 15 minutes, although you won't be doing that here.

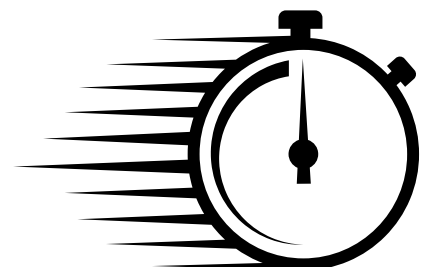
It's also worth mentioning that larger muscle groups and compound movements require more rest compared to smaller muscles and isolation exercises.



That being said, the rest prescribed in this program is calibrated in such a way that we are always getting the adaptation we're looking for.

Also worth noting is that if you can bang out a full set on the bench press after 60 seconds of rest using the same weight as the set before, you aren't working with the right weight.

Keep track of and respect your rest intervals.



TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

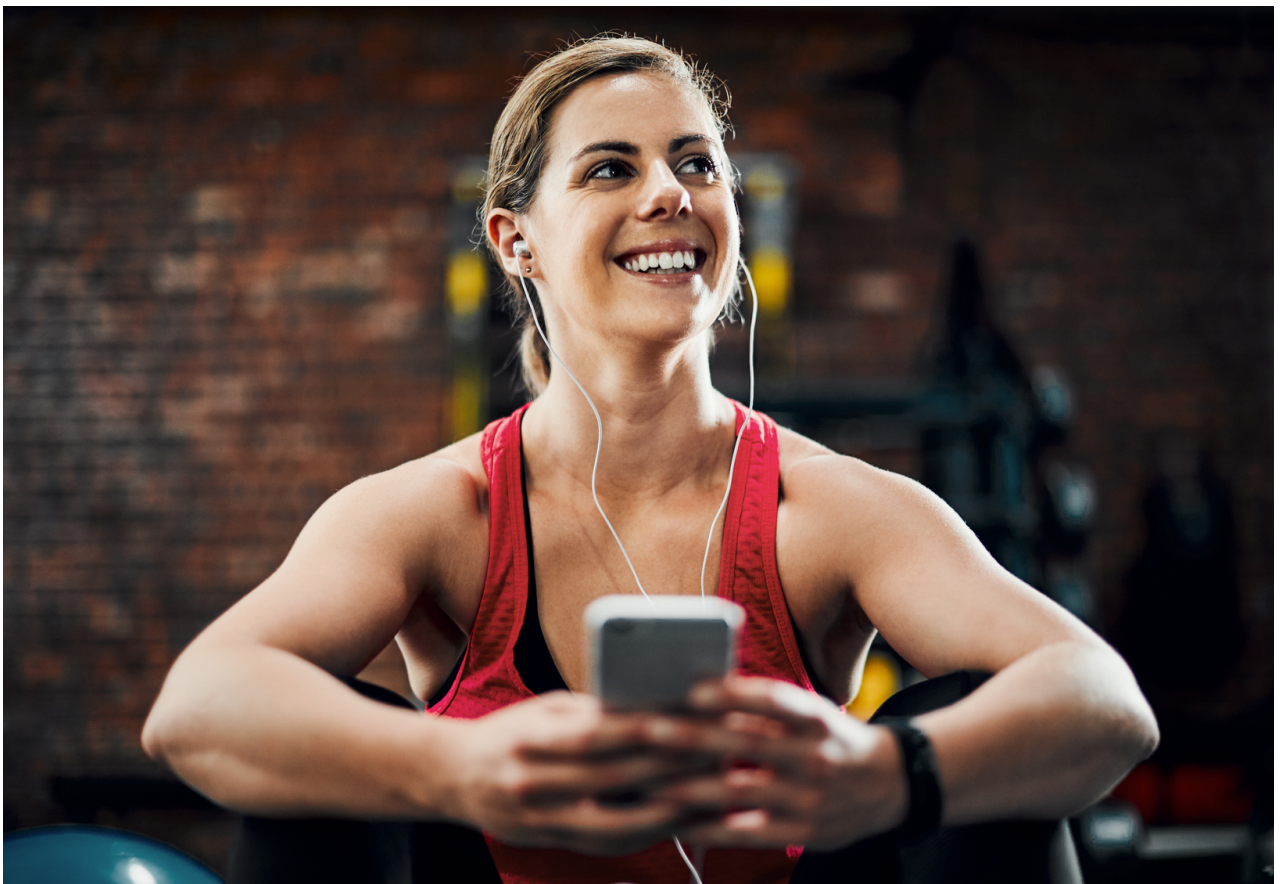
Being an advanced lifter means that your gains will slow down significantly, making you lose your motivation quickly.

One of the best ways to stop that from happening is to track your progress along the journey.

Keep a training log where you'll track every workout and every set, noting the weight used and maybe even things like RPE. Doing this will keep you on the right course and prevent you from forgetting your progress.

You can also take progression photos from time to time and measure the circumference of any body part that might be relevant to your goals.

When you look at yourself every day, it's easy to fall into the trap of thinking you haven't gained any ground.





RECOVERY AND NUTRITION TIPS & PRINCIPLES

People usually find training easy and fun, but when it comes to proper diet and recovery, it's a whole different story

Let's just say that not many people like doing boring, seemingly unimportant things.

SLEEP IS KING

Sleep is a crucial component of overall health and well-being, and getting adequate sleep is especially important for people who train.

When we sleep, our bodies produce growth hormone, which is essential for repairing and rebuilding damaged muscle fibers, among other things. Without adequate rest, our muscles won't recover and repair, leading to decreased performance and increased risk of injury.

Sleep deprivation can also lead to slower reaction times, worse coordination, and decreased focus.

Sleep also plays a role in regulating hormones that are important for weight management. For example, when you're sleep-deprived, your body produces more ghrelin, a hormone that increases appetite, and less hormone leptin, which signals fullness. This can lead to increased cravings and overeating, sabotaging your weight loss or weight management goals.



CALORIC SURPLUS

Is it possible to build strength and muscle while in a caloric deficit? Yes.

Is it anywhere close to optimal? Absolutely, most definitely, no.

If you don't already know, a caloric surplus means consuming more calories than you burn. A caloric deficit, then, is the opposite of that.

Getting gains as an advanced lifter is hard, and not being in a surplus makes it even harder. If you aren't getting enough calories in, your body thinks it needs to ration every calorie in order to keep you alive. So it definitely won't be quick to build any muscle that will, in turn, burn even more energy.

Remember, your body's primary goal is to survive, not build freakish amounts of muscle.

When in a surplus, the body has spare energy to allocate to muscle and strength building.

Make sure you're getting your calories in!



EATING ENOUGH PROTEIN

The importance of this advice can't be overstated.

Since protein is the main building block of our cells, you can say goodbye to building muscle if you're not consuming enough of it.

The current recommendation is to get around 0.7 to 1 gram of protein per pound of body mass or 1.6 to 2.2 grams per kilogram.



JOINTS RECOVER SLOWER THAN MUSCLE

Muscle tissue is highly regenerative, meaning it recovers quickly, while joints take much longer to adapt to the stress we place them under. This is especially important for advanced athletes as they get stronger and start using heavier weights.

Muscles are highly vascularized, meaning they have a rich blood supply that can deliver oxygen, nutrients, and other essential factors for tissue repair and regeneration.

On the other hand, joints don't have a blood supply, meaning they get their nutrients through different mechanisms.

Keep this in mind when recovering between sessions, especially if your joints feel achy.



CONSIDER SUPPLEMENTS

As an advanced lifter, you might find great use of some proven supplements, such as protein powder, creatine, and caffeine.

Protein powders are a convenient way to increase your daily protein intake, particularly for those who cannot get enough protein from whole foods alone. They are perfectly safe and well-researched.

Creatine is shown to increase muscle strength, power, and recovery, along with potentially having some cognitive benefits. You don't need to do a loading phase, although you will reach creatine saturation quicker that way. Also, there's no need to take breaks from creatine supplementation, as research hasn't shown any negative side effects of long-term use. Most people do perfectly fine on 5-8 grams daily.

Caffeine is a great option for anyone looking for a boost during their workout session. It can increase focus and energy, improve endurance, and reduce muscle soreness. Taking pure caffeine supplements can be a much better option than regular pre-workouts since they are usually overloaded with caffeine and other substances. This way, you can choose your own dose.



The recommended safe dose of caffeine for most people is up to 400 milligrams per day. This equates to about 4 cups of coffee.

Many studies have used caffeine doses ranging from 3 to 6 milligrams per kilogram of body weight for pre-workout use, taken 30 to 60 minutes before exercise. This means that at 150 lbs., or 68 kg of body weight, an individual will consume roughly 200 to 400 milligrams of caffeine.

It is important you consult your doctor before supplementing with caffeine since it can interact with certain medications.

TRACK YOUR DIET

Although really boring, tracking your daily macros is incredibly important if you want sure and steady progress. Tracking the things you eat will keep you accountable and allow you to make any tweaks if needed along the way.

You can use an app since that's the most convenient way of food tracking. The most popular ones include MyFitnessPal and MyPlate Calorie Calculator.



A full-page background image of a muscular man in a gym. He is shirtless, showing his well-defined chest, abdominal, and arm muscles. He is wearing light grey shorts, white socks, and black athletic shoes. He is standing on a dark, tiled floor. A blue banner with the text "THE PROGRAM" is superimposed over his chest. A yellow kettlebell is visible on the floor in the lower foreground.

THE PROGRAM

THE PROGRAM

Here it is, the program!

Decide whether you want to work out 3 or 4 times a week.

The 4 times a week Upper/Lower split is the more advanced option of the two. It's initially written to place a bit more emphasis on the legs, but if you want to focus on your upper body, you can switch the days around, so the 1st and 3rd days always be upper body days.

The 3 times a week Full Body split is a great option, too, if you want to spend a bit less time in the gym.

Before every training session, get on a treadmill or bike for about 5 minutes, then go into some mobility and flexibility stretches to get you loose for the workout ahead.



FULL BODY PROGRAM (3X PER WEEK)

WEEK 1

Monday

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Trapbar Deadlift	2	6	3 min
Step Up	3	10/10	2.5 min
Dips (Assisted)	3	10	2 min
Inverted Row	3	10	2 min
Hanging Knee Raises	3	10-12	1 min

Wednesday

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Front Squat	3	10	3 min
1 & 1/2 Hip Thrust	3	10	2 min
Pullup (Assisted)	3	10	2 min
Landmine Press	3	10	2 min
Suitcase Carry	3	6-8	1 min

Friday			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Trapbar Deadlift	2	6	3 min
Step Up	2	10/10	2 min
Dips (Assisted)	3	10	2 min
Inverted Row	3	12	2 min
Hanging Knee Raises	3	10-12	1 min

WEEK 2			
Monday			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Front Squat	3	10	3 min
1 & 1/2 Hip Thrust	3	12	2 min
Pullup (Assisted)	3	10	2 min
Landmine Press	3	10	2 min
Suitcase Carry	3	6-8	1 min

Wednesday			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Trapbar Deadlift	3	6	3 min
Step Up	2	10/10	2 min
Dips (Assisted)	3	10	2 min
Inverted Row	3	12	2 min
Hanging Knee Raises	3	10-12	1 min

Friday			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Front Squat	3	10	3 min
1 & 1/2 Hip Thrust	3	12	2 min
Pullup (Assisted)	3	10	2 min
Landmine Press	3	10	2 min
Suitcase Carry	3	6-8	1 min

WEEK 3

Monday

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Trapbar Deadlift	3	6	3 min
Step Up	3	8/8	2.5 min
Dips (Assisted)	3	10	2 min
Inverted Row	3	10	2 min
Hanging Knee Raises	3	10-12	1 min

Wednesday

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Front Squat	3	8	3 min
1 & 1/2 Hip Thrust	3	10	2 min
Pullup (Assisted)	3	8	2 min
Landmine Press	3	8/8	2 min
Suitcase Carry	3	6-8	1 min

Friday			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Trapbar Deadlift	3	6	3 min
Step Up	3	8/8	2.5 min
Dips (Assisted)	3	10	2 min
Inverted Row	3	10	2 min
Hanging Knee Raises	3	10-12	1 min

WEEK 4			
Monday			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Front Squat	3	8	3 min
1 & 1/2 Hip Thrust	3	10	2 min
Pullup (Assisted)	3	8	2 min
Landmine Press	3	8/8	2 min
Suitcase Carry	3	6-8	1 min

Wednesday			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Trapbar Deadlift	3	6	3 min
Step Up	3	8/8	2.5 min
Dips (Assisted)	3	8	2 min
Inverted Row	3	10	2 min
Hanging Knee Raises	3	10-12	1 min

Friday			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Front Squat	3	8	3 min
1 & 1/2 Hip Thrust	3	10	2 min
Pullup (Assisted)	3	8	2 min
Landmine Press	3	8/8	2 min
Suitcase Carry	3	6-8	1 min

UPPER/LOWER PROGRAM (4X PER WEEK)

WEEK 1

Monday - Lower Day

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Trapbar Deadlift	3	6	3 min
Step Up	3	8/8	2.5 min
1 & 1/2 Hip Thrust	3	12	2 min
Clamshells	3	12/12	2 min

Tuesday - Upper Day

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Dips (Assisted)	3	10	2.5 min
Inverted Row	3	10	2 min
Landmine Press	3	10	2 min
Biceps Curl	3	10-15	1 min

Thursday - Lower Day			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Front Squat	3	10	3 min
Good Morning	2	10	2.5 min
Step Up	3	10/10	2.5 min
Leg Extension	3	12	1-2 min
Friday - Upper Day			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Pullup (Assisted)	3	10	2.5 min
Pullover	3	10	2 min
Dips (Assisted)	3	10	2 min
Triceps Pushdown	3	10-15	1 min

WEEK 2

Monday - Lower Day

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Front Squat	3	10	3 min
Good Morning	2	10	2.5 min
Step Up	3	10/10	2.5 min
Leg Extension	3	12	1-2 min
Suitcase Carry	3	30 steps per side	1.5 min

Tuesday - Upper Day

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Pullup (Assisted)	3	10	2.5 min
Pullover	3	10	2 min
Dips (Assisted)	3	10	2 min
Triceps Pushdown	3	10-15	1 min
Biceps Curl	3	10-15	1 min

Thursday - Lower Day			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Trapbar Deadlift	3	6	3 min
Step Up	3	8/8	2.5 min
1 & 1/2 Hip Thrust	3	12	2 min
Hamstring Curls	3	12	1-2 min
Hanging Knee Raises	3	10-15	1.5 min
Friday - Upper Day			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Dips (Assisted)	3	10	2.5 min
Inverted Row	3	10	2 min
Landmine Press	3	10	2 min
Biceps Curl	3	10-15	1 min
Triceps Pushdown	3	10-15	1 min

WEEK 3

Monday - Lower Day

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Trapbar Deadlift	3	5	3.5 min
Step Up	3	8/8	2.5 min
1 & 1/2 Hip Thrust	3	10	2 min
Hamstring Curls	3	10	1-2 min
Leg Extension	3	10	1-2 min
Hanging Knee Raises	3	10-15	1.5 min

Tuesday - Upper Day

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Dips (Assisted)	3	8	2.5 min
Inverted Row	3	10	2 min
Landmine Press	3	8	2 min
Biceps Curl	3	10-15	1 min
Triceps Pushdown	3	10-15	1 min

Thursday - Lower Day			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Front Squat	3	10	3 min
Good Morning	3	10	2.5 min
Step Up	3	8/8	2.5 min
Leg Extension	3	10	1-2 min
Hamstring Curls	3	10	1-2 min
Suitcase Carry	3	30 steps per side	1.5 min
Friday - Upper Day			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Pullup (Assisted)	3	8	2.5 min
Pullover	3	8	2 min
Dips (Assisted)	3	10	2 min
Triceps Pushdown	3	10-15	1 min
Biceps Curl	3	10-15	1 min

WEEK 4

Monday - Lower Day

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Front Squat	3	8	3 min
Good Morning	3	10	2.5 min
Step Up	3	10/10	2.5 min
Leg Extension	3	10	1-2 min
Hamstring Curls	3	10	1-2 min
Suitcase Carry	3	30 steps per side	1.5 min

Tuesday - Upper Day

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Pullup (Assisted)	3	8	2.5 min
Pullover	3	8	2 min
Dips (Assisted)	3	10	2 min
Triceps Pushdown	3	10-15	1 min
Biceps Curl	3	10-15	1 min

Thursday - Lower Day			
Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Trapbar Deadlift	3	5	3.5 min
Step Up	3	8/8	2.5 min
1 & 1/2 Hip Thrust	3	10	2 min
Hamstring Curls	3	10	1-2 min
Leg Extension	3	10	1-2 min
Hanging Knee Raises	3	10-15	1.5 min
Friday - Upper Day			
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Biceps Curl	3	10-15	1 min
Triceps Pushdown	3	10-15	1 min