

Basic Program Guidelines: Please read this before your first workout

Start Slow, Life is a Marathon: You should consult a doctor if you have any underlying health issues or you haven't worked out in a long time. If you need to start-out on a reduce workout schedule, please do so. Life is a marathon, not a sprint. It took time to get out of shape; it will take time to get back into shape. The great news is that the body responds fairly quickly to regular exercise, so stay positive.

Always Warm-up: If you don't have time to warm-up, you don't have time to work out. Nothing will set your progress back more than an injury. Always begin your workout with a 5 to 10 minute warm-up. Warming-up the muscles and tendons makes them more flexible and less likely to tear. Your muscles and tendons are similar to rubber bands. If you place a rubber band in warm water it becomes more pliable. If you place it in cold water, it becomes brittle and more likely to snap when stretch. You always want to begin your workout with warm muscles. When I am training upper body muscles, my preferred warm-up is rowing. Cycling works well for leg training. If you are working out at home, you can perform some jumping jacks, jog in place, climb stairs, shadow box, or do a combination of all of these for 5 to 10 minutes to get warmed-up. Always perform one or two low intensity warm-up sets for the first compound exercise for each body part. I recommend you start with 50% of your working weight, for the first set, and 70% for your second. Keep the repetitions in the same range as your working sets. These sets should be easy efforts, priming the muscles, not taxing them.

Alternative Exercises: I left a space for Remarks in the workout program because I know that not everyone will have access to the same equipment, and some people have injuries that preclude certain exercises. Whenever possible, stay with the recommended exercises. If you must substitute, ensure you substitute correctly. For example, leg extensions are not an appropriate substitute for squats because leg extensions are an isolation movement, and squats are a compound movement. Compound movements, like the bench press, work several muscles at a time and allow you to lift heavier weights than isolation movements, like the fly, which only targets one muscle, the chest.

Workout Circuits: Each workout consists of workout circuits. These exercises are performed back to back with minimal rest in between. Performing exercises for unrelated muscle groups in a circuit allows you to perform more sets during a workout without shortening rest intervals, which would degrade performance. It also improves cardiorespiratory fitness; keeps the muscles warm, and burns more calories. Make sure that you catch your breath before each set, so your performance doesn't suffer. I know this type of training can be a challenge in a crowded gym, but it's possible, especially if you are using primarily free weights. You will have to be a little assertive and ask strangers, "Can I work in?" I typically explain to them that I am working a few exercises in a circuit, so I will not be back for about 4 minutes. I have never had anyone refuse to let me work in. After all, it's as much your gym as theirs.

Keep 1 or 2 Reps in the Tank: Make sure you stop most sets one or two repetitions short of failure. Going to failure on your first set will cause a decline in performance. We want to maximize our performance during each workout. We do this by stopping short of failure on all but the last set of each exercise. Your maximum effort should be given to the last set of the last exercise for any given body part. Our goal is to lift as much as possible during each workout. And to increase that overload from week to week, month to month. You accomplish this by keeping a repetition or two in the tank, until the very end of your workout. As soon as you take a set to failure, your performance on succeeding sets will degrade substantially.

Cardio Training: Your strength training workouts are going to burn calories and improve heart health, so don't overdo the cardio. Cardio training by its very nature is antagonistic to muscle and strength gains.

Extra Cardio: You have the option to do additional cardio. I would recommend no more than five 40-minute cardio sessions per week. I would perform 30 second sprints every two to five minutes during your cardio sessions to spike your metabolism and improve your cardiovascular fitness. Ideally these sessions would be in the morning, separate from your strength training or after your strength training workouts. Never do cardio before strength training unless your primary focus is preparing for an endurance event. If you're really motivated and want to perform additional exercise to accelerate your fat loss, I recommend you do it in the form of active recovery exercise. Active recovery exercise is typically low intensity cardio exercise like walking. The intensity of the exercise shouldn't exceed 60% of your maximum training heartrate (MTR). Besides burning additional calories, active recovery exercise can reduce muscle soreness and promote quicker recovery. It promotes recovery by removing the metabolic by-product of intense exercise, lactic acid, and shuttling nutrients, such as oxygen and glucose to the muscle. The active recovery exercise should use the same muscles involved in intense training. For example, after training legs, cooling down on a recumbent bike for 15 minutes would be ideal for preventing muscle soreness and promoting quicker recovery. I recommend you keep these sessions between 15 and 45 minutes and suggest you use this time for personal growth by listening to audiobooks, reflecting on your day, and brain storming.

Basic Training Program: Progressive overload is the key to building muscle. On the last set of each exercise marked with an asterisk, perform as many good quality repetitions as possible. Once you can meet or exceed the prescribed repetition limit, add weight during your next workout. Make small incremental weight increases, better to succeed with 1-pound more than to fail with 5-pounds. [Fractional plates](#) allow you to add as little as 1-pound to the bar. Most gyms don't have [fractional plates](#), but my gym does. That is because I purchased them. I didn't want to carry the plates to and from the gym, so I decided to risk the 33 dollars I paid for the plates and leave them at the gym.

BASIC PROGRAM	Date:
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	Day 1 (Upper Body)	Remarks	Weight x Reps		
Circuit	Overhead Press: 2x5, 1x5-7*		x	x	x
	Weighted Pull-up: 2x5, 1x5-7*		x	x	x
	Calf Raise: 1x15-20*, 1x10-12*, 1x8-10*		x	x	x
	V-Up: 3x20				
	10-20 Minutes HIIT Cardio	Duration		Remarks	

	Day 2 (Lower Body)	Remarks	Weight x Reps		
Circuit	Bulgarian Squat : 2x6, 1x6-8*		x	x	x
	Leg Curl: 2x8, 1x8-10*		x	x	x
	Weighted Back Raise (holding dumbbells): 3x8-12		x	x	x
	Leg Press: 1x15-20*		x		
	10-20 Minutes HIIT Cardio	Duration		Remarks	

Day 3 Cardio (30-40 Minutes) HIIT	Remarks	Duration	Remarks
30-40 Minutes HIIT Cardio			

	Day 4 (Upper Body)	Remarks	Weight x Reps		
Circuit	Incline Dumbbell Press: 2x6, 1x6-8*		x	x	x
	One-Arm Dumbbell Row: 2x6, 1x6-8*		x	x	x
	Calf Raise: 1x12-15*, 1x10-12*, 1x8-10*		x	x	x
	Weighted Crunch: 3x20		x	x	x
	10-20 Minutes HIIT Cardio	Duration		Remarks	

	Day 5 (Lower Body)	Remarks	Weight x Reps		
Circuit	Bulgarian Squat: 2x6, 1x6-8*		x	x	x
	Leg Curl: 2x8, 1x8-10*		x	x	x
	Weighted Back Raise (holding dumbbells): 3x8-12		x	x	x
	Leg Press: 1x15-20*		x		
	10-20 Minutes HIIT Cardio	Duration		Remarks	

Notes

* As Many Repetitions As Possible (AMRAP). Once you can achieve or exceed the upper repetition range, increase the weight by approximately 1 to 2% next workout.

If you aren't familiar with an exercise visit: <https://www.bodybuilding.com/exercises/detail/view>

BASIC PROGRAM	Date:
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	Day 1 (Upper Body)	Remarks	Weight x Reps		
Circuit	Dumbbell Press: 2x6, 1x6-8*		x	x	x
	Weighted Pull-up: 2x6, 1x6-8*		x	x	x
	Calf Raise: 1x15-20*, 1x10-12*, 1x8-10*		x	x	x
	V-Up: 3x20				
	10-20 Minutes HIIT Cardio	Duration		Remarks	

	Day 2 (Lower Body)	Remarks	Weight x Reps		
Circuit	Bulgarian Squat : 2x6, 1x6-8*		x	x	x
	Leg Curl: 2x8, 1x8-10*		x	x	x
	Weighted Back Raise (holding dumbbells): 3x8-12		x	x	x
	Leg Press: 1x15-20*		x		
	10-20 Minutes HIIT Cardio	Duration		Remarks	

Day 3 Cardio (30-40 Minutes) HIIT	Remarks	Duration	Remarks
30-40 Minutes HIIT Cardio			

	Day 4 (Upper Body)	Remarks	Weight x Reps		
Circuit	Bench Press: 2x5, 1x5-7*		x	x	x
	Yates Row Reverse Grip : 2x5, 1x5-7*		x	x	x
	Calf Raise: 1x12-15*, 1x10-12*, 1x8-10*		x	x	x
	Weighted Crunch: 3x20		x	x	x
	10-20 Minutes HIIT Cardio	Duration		Remarks	

	Day 5 (Lower Body)	Remarks	Weight x Reps		
Circuit	Bulgarian Squat: 2x6, 1x6-8*		x	x	x
	Leg Curl: 2x8, 1x8-10*		x	x	x
	Weighted Back Raise (holding dumbbells): 3x8-12		x	x	x
	Leg Press: 1x15-20*		x		
	10-20 Minutes HIIT Cardio	Duration		Remarks	

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