

Novice Program 1 - "The Triad" - Week 11 & 12

Gym equipment

This program is designed with the novice lifter in mind. The goal of this program is to familiarize the lifter with the basic mechanics of the training movements, establishing and reinforcing good form. The exercise form is fundamental to the training process, reinforcing good movement patterns to avoid potential imbalances, and to develop the mind-muscle connection ensuring that the intended target muscles are being stimulated.

The word "triad," means "a group of three closely related persons or things." The theme of this program is the exploration of the foundational trinity of physical training: Intensity, Volume, and Density. Also known as "weight, reps, and rest." During the course of this program you will be trying to improve one of these facets of your training from one training week to the next. You will perform a week of training, then repeat that week making improvements where possible. Like exercise form, this concept of small improvements within the triad is a keystone for continued progress. Remember, progress is not always linear. Sometimes progress towards one goal is best made by pursuing another.

You are encouraged to use a belt where directed. If you do not currently own a belt and would like to purchase one, we recommend the [EliteFTS P2 Premium 6.5mm Belt](#).

What you need to know

Starting with week 1, every other week you will establish a baseline for that week's movements. The following week you will push progression in the same movements using one of these three progression metrics.

(WEIGHT)

Use more weight than the last time. If the goal is straight sets (3x10), then you want to use more weight for your work sets than you did last week. If the goal is "sets of X up," then your goal is to reach a higher end weight before your form breaks down.

(REPS)

Do more reps than you did last week with the same working weight.

(REST)

Rest for a shorter period of time between sets. If you rested 60 seconds between sets last week, shoot for 45 or 30 this week.

The Split

This program is built with flexibility in mind. There is no "right," or "wrong," way to split up these days. You can follow any of the following examples, or you can come up with whatever will best fit your schedule availability.

Leftside Style - Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Sunday

The "I want my weekends" - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

The Corporate Plan - Saturday, Sunday, whichever two other days you can fit, whenever you can fit them.

While this program is intended to run for 12 weeks, for those of you who can only dedicate three days a week or less to training, you can simply run the days in alternating succession as follows:

Week 1

Week 1 Upper 1, Week 1 Lower 1, Week 1 Upper 2

Week 2

Week 1 Lower 2, Week 2 Upper 1, Week 2 Lower 1, ETC

Upper Body Day 1 - 18 work sets

Incline DB Press - 3x6 - Standard dumbbell incline press. Use a lighter weight for a few sets until you find a solid weight. Then do 3 sets of 6 with it. **I want good, clean form.** That means **shoulders stay squared, feet stay on the floor.** Rest up to 2 minutes between sets.

Week 12 - Increase your working weight over week 11.

3 total work sets

BB Bent Over Rows - 3x8 - Put your belt on. Grab a barbell and row it into the area between the navel and waistline. **Remember to keep your back straight.** That means lower back is not rounded and shoulders are squared and tight, nor rounded forward. When you bend, do not bend over completely parallel to the ground. **No excessive hopping, torso flopping, or leg popping to get the weight up.** Rest up to 2 minutes between sets.

Week 12 - Use the same working weight as week 11, for 3x10.

3 total work sets

Bent Over RDR - 3x10 - It's time for some rear delt work. Grab a pair of dumbbells. You're going to bend at the waist while maintaining a **straight back**, no rounding. **Keep your shoulders square**, and don't let them round over either. Now simply raise your arms to the sides to the end of your range of motion. Remember to keep your arms at 90 degrees in relation to your torso, if you're too high or too low you won't be activating the rear deltoid. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 12 - Same working weight as week 11, 3x12.

3 total work sets

DB High Rows - 3x15 - You can wear your belt here if you have problems maintaining an arch. You'll be doing these with both arms at the same time. I want a **45 degree bend at the waist**, and you're going to row the dumbbells up to your upper chest with your **elbows flaring out to your sides** at 90 degrees. This will target the upper back, rhomboids, and lower traps. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 12 - Reduce the rest here from 60 seconds to 30 seconds.

3 total work sets

6 Ways - 3x10 - Last time for these in this program. Hold your celebration until the end of the workout. Just in case you repressed the memory of how to do them, I've copied and pasted it here. Sit on the end of a bench with a pair of dumbbells in hands. The starting position is with your hands hanging down at your sides. Now you're going to raise your arms straight out to your sides (1). From there, bring them, palms down, straight in front of you (2). Now you're going to raise them up over head, palms facing forward (3). Now back down to straight in front of you (4). Now back straight out to the sides (5). Now back down to the starting position (6). Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 12 - We're bumping the reps here to 3x12, use the same working weight.

3 total work sets

Reverse Curls - 3x20 - The only thing reversed about these curls is the grip. Palms down instead of palms up. Curl the weight up as you would any other barbell curl. Give a solid squeeze at the top, and then control the weight on the way down. As always, keep those shoulders squared. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 12 - Reduce the rest from 60 seconds to 30 seconds.

3 total work sets

Abdominals - Pick one exercise from the following to hit lower abs:

- Hanging Leg Raises
- Leg raises with your elbows supported on pad
- Leg raises on a decline board/bench
- V ups

Pick an exercise from the list and do 4 sets of 15-25 reps. Choose a different exercise from the previous week.

Lower Body Day 1 - 12 work sets

BB Squat - sets of 6 to form loss - We're doing the basic barbell squat here. Start at a lighter weight to get your form dialed in and take gradual jumps upwards until your form starts to break down. Take the depth to parallel or just above. **Keep the descent controlled**, no "dive bombing" allowed. Rest up to 3 minutes between sets.

Week 12 - Increase the weight for your final set, or squeeze out more reps if you can;t handle more weight with good form.

3 total work sets

Leg Press - 3x10 - Set your feet up higher than mid line on the foot plate and with a wide stance, toes pointed out a bit to be in line with your knees. This will target your hips, hams, and glutes, with a lesser impact on your quads.

Grip the handles tight, keep your **back and your lats tight** during the movement. **Pull yourself into the seat with the handles**. Bring your knees back to the end of your range of motion and then drive the plate back up until just

before lock out, then back down. **Keep control of the sled**, don't just let off the gas. Keep the movement up and down completely deliberate. **You control the weight, it does not control you.** Rest up to 2 minutes between sets.

Week 12 - Bump the reps to 3x12 here, use the same working weight.

3 total work sets

Leg Extensions - 3x12 - Setup the machine correctly. Adjust the seatback so that your knee is in the same plane as the hinge, and your lower leg moves in the same arc as the lever arm. Adjust the shin pad so that it sits just above your ankle. Do a set or two to find an appropriate working weight. For the work set, **squeeze for a second at the top of the movement.** Again, no stack bouncing. **Let the weight settle for a split second at the bottom.** Kick up hard against the weight, but do not allow your upper legs or body to come unglued from the seat. If there are handles, squeeze them hard. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 12 - Bumping reps again here, to 3x15. Use the same working weight.

3 total work sets

DB Stiff Legged Deadlift - 3x10 - Standard stiff legged deadlifts here, dumbbells instead of a barbell. **Allow your knees to bend some**, do not keep them locked. I want you to **focus on the stretch** at the bottom. **Maintain a solid arch** in your back, do not allow the lower back to round. We want the pressure in the glutes and hamstrings. So **descend with control**, get a good stretch, then come back up and **flex your glutes at the top** of the lift. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 12 - More reps. 3x12. Working weight stays the same. Grind them out.

3 total work sets

Standing calve raises - 4x30 - Do plenty of warm up sets. Use a full range of motion. Squeeze hard for a split second at the top of the movement, and stretch for a split second at the bottom. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Upper Body Day 2 - 18 work sets

BB Bench Press - 3x8 - Do a few feeder sets until you come to a solid working weight, then knock out 3 sets of 8 reps with that weight. As usual, feet on the floor and shoulders squared. Rest up to 2 minutes in between work sets.

Week 12 - Increase your working weight for these over what you used in week 11.

3 total work sets

One Arm DB Rows - 3x10 - Remember these from week 3? Remember the weight you used? Let's get 3 sets with that weight. I don't want any excessive body flopping to get the weight up, **your upper body should stay mostly static** during the row. When executing the row, **pull with your elbow** as opposed to pulling with your hand. Drive that **elbow up and back, keeping it tight to your body.** At the bottom, allow the weight to stretch your lat somewhat, but do not completely let off the gas and allow your shoulder to round forward. Rest up to 2 minutes between sets after completing both sides.

Week 12 - Increase your working weight here again.

3 total work sets

Incline Bench RDR - 3x12 - You're going to lay face down on an incline bench and do dumbbell rear delt raises. Experiment with palms facing in or palms facing down to see which better activates your rear delts. Remember to keep your arms as straight as possible. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 12 - This week we're taking your reps to 3x15. Keep your working weight the same.

3 total work sets

DB Pull Overs - 3x15 - Lay on a bench, not across it. Holding a dumbbell with both hands, by its end and **keeping your arms as straight as possible**, I want you to lower it backwards towards the ground. Make sure to **control the descent** of the dumbbell. Lower it until you reach the end of the range of motion, allow it to **stretch for a moment**, and then raise it back up just until it comes into your field of vision, then lower it again. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 12 - Increase your weight for these this week. Make sure you keep your form solid.

3 total work sets

Seated DB Overhead Press - 3x10 - Grab a pair of dumbbells and sit on a chair or upright bench that has back support. Kick the dumbbells up to head level, and then press them upwards. Lower them to ear level again and repeat. Remember this is a shoulder movement, so I want **no excessive leaning backwards**, as that turns it into an incline chest press. Try to keep your **eyes facing forward** rather than looking upwards, as this will minimize backward lean and keep your shoulders in the game. Rest up to 2 minutes between sets.

Week 12 - Decrease your rest interval here from up to 2 minutes to 60 seconds or less.

3 total work sets

BB Skull Crushers - 3x12 - Laying on a bench, bend your elbows and lower a barbell from full extension down towards the top of your head or slightly behind. Lower with control, we do not desire actual crushed skulls. Allow the weight to **stretch for a split second**, then squeeze the triceps and raise the weight to full extension again. Keep the bar over your face at the top, as opposed to over your chest the way you would a bench press. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 12 - Bump the reps to 3x15 but keep the working weight the same.

3 total work sets

Abdominals - Today's ab movement will be decline situps, but I want you to hold a dumbbell across your upper chest today, 4 sets of 15-25 reps.

Lower Body Day 2 - 12 work sets

5 Minute HIT Warmup - Do a 5 minute high intensity interval session to warm up your legs and get some blood flowing. Use a 10 second sprint/50 second recovery interval.

Hack Squat 3x12 - Setup in the machine facing away from the pad. Plant your feet shoulder width apart or slightly wider, toes in the vicinity of the edge of the platform and pointed slightly out. Do a set or two with a light weight to dial in your form and foot position, and to find a good working weight. **Keep your back arched** into the pad, **don't let your pelvis tuck at the bottom** of the movement. **Do not allow your knees to buckle inward, drive them out on the ascent.** Go down as deep as you can without allowing your pelvis to tuck under. **Keep your head pushed into the pad, and your hands squeezing the handles.** Rest up to 2 minutes between sets.

Week 12 - Take your reps to 3x15 this week, using the same weight as last week. Dig deep.

3 total work sets

Deadlift from Blocks - 3x5 - Strap your belt on here. Start off with a lighter weight to get your form set. Remember that weight you hit in the rack? I want you to try and take that same weight for 3 sets of 5 off blocks today. You're going to setup the bar so that it is at the same level as it was when in the rack. But rather than pulling off the pins, you're going to set the weights up onto blocks or stacked up plates. The usual rules apply as far as **keeping your back straight and disallowing any significant level of rounding over.** Rest up to 3 minutes between sets.

Week 12 - Increase the working weight over what you hit in week 11.

3 total work sets

BB Lunges - 3x8 one leg at a time - Just like DB lunges, only with a bar on your back. It is even more important to **keep your torso as upright as possible** during the movement. **Keep your hips square with your torso**, don't let them rotate with the leg that is lunging backwards. Remember the quads and the glute of the leading leg are doing the work. Do ten reps on one leg, then switch to the other leg. **Keep that chest up!** Rest up to 2 minutes between sets after completing both sides.

Week 12 - Bump the reps to 3x12 this week. Same working weight.

3 total work sets

BB Stiff Legged Deadlift - 3x10 - Wear your belt again here. Standard stiff legged deadlifts here. **Allow your knees to bend some**, do not keep them locked. I want you to **focus on the stretch** at the bottom. **Maintain a solid arch** in your back, do not allow the lower back to round. We want the pressure in the glutes and hamstrings. So **descend with control**, get a good stretch, then come back up and **flex your glutes at the top** of the lift. Then repeat for 9

more reps. Rest for 90 seconds between sets.

Week 12 - Bump the reps by 2, so 3x12. Same working weight.

3 total work sets

Seated Calf Raise - 4x25 - Do plenty of warm up sets. Use a full range of motion. Squeeze hard for four full seconds at the top of the movement, and stretch for four full seconds at the bottom. Rest 60 seconds between sets.