

Novice Program 1 - "The Triad" - Week 7 & 8

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

DB Incline Bench Press - sets of 8 to form loss - Standard dumbbell incline bench press. Start with a low weight and work your way up in weight until your form starts to break down towards the end of the set. **I do not want total failure.** Rest up to 2 minutes between sets.

Example:

55lbs x8

75lbs x8 - begin to feel the weight

80lbs x8 - feel it more

85lbs x8 - got all 8 reps with good form

90lbs x8 - form breaks down at rep 6, shut it down.

Week 8 - You guesses it. Increase the weight over what you ended with in week 7, or increase the reps what you manage in the final set.

3 total work sets

Smith Machine Bent Over Rows - 3x10 - Get that belt on. You're going to do these deadstop style this time around. Set the stops in the smith machine so that the bar stops below the knee. If it doesn't go that low, you can stand on an aerobic step. Grab a bar and row it into the area between the navel and waistline. Lower the bar until it comes to a complete, or "dead," stop. Do this for every rep. It's also important at this moment to recognize what a "deadstop" actually is. It is NOT a bounce. So I don't want any bouncing. It's a barbell not a basketball. **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 8 - Use the same weight as week 7, 3x12.

3 total work sets

Seated DB Cleans - 3x15 - Grab a pair of dumbbells and sit on the end of a bench. This movement is intended to work the rear deltoids and the upper back. Initiate the movement by **pulling your shoulder blades up and back** and bringing your elbows out to the sides at 90 degrees, then **bring the dumbbells to head level** while keeping your elbows at 90 degrees. **This movement is done somewhat explosively**, but remember to keep good control of the weight. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 8 - Reduce the rest period from 60 seconds to 30 seconds.

3 total work sets

Seated Cable Row - 3x12 - Use a fairly wide grip bar for these, palms down. You're going to row the bar high to your chest/sternum to hit your upper middle back. Keep your back arched and your torso static. Don't use your torso to row the weight by leaning forward and then back. Pull through your elbows and keep them up high. Squeeze for a split second at the top of the movement. Pause for a split second at the bottom. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 8 - Use the same weight from week 7, increase to 3x15.

3 total work sets

6 Ways - 3x12 - I know what you're thinking. "Oh great, THESE again." 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). Keep a fire extinguisher handy to put out those fires. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 8 - Reduce the rest period from 60 seconds to 30 seconds.

3 total work sets

Palms Up DB Curl - 3x10 - Today's dumbbell curls will be done with your **palms up through the entirety of the movement**. So at the start position, your palms will be facing straight ahead. Keep the form crisp and deliberate, and **control the descent**. Remember to **squeeze at the top** and **keep your shoulders squared**. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 8 - Increase the weight over what you used in week 7.

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 2 - 12 work sets

5 Minute HIT Warm up - Do a 5 minutes high intensity interval session to get your legs warmed up and get blood flowing. Use a 10 second sprint/50 second recovery interval.

Hack Squat 3x10 - 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 8 - Use the same weight as week 7, but for 3x12 this time.

3 total work sets

BB Squat - 3x8 - Put your belt on. More squats. Do a few feeder sets to find a good working weight, then stick with that weight for 3 sets of 8 reps. Take the depth to parallel or just above. **Keep the descent controlled**, no "dive bombing" allowed. Form is of maximal importance, **do not use a working weight that prevents you from keeping good form** for all 8 reps. Rest up to 2 minutes between sets.

Week 8 - Increase the working weight over week 7.

3 total work sets

Standing Leg Curl - 3x8 - If you don't have a standing leg curl machine, you can do these one leg at a time on the laying leg curl, or you can adapt the leg extension to mimic the standing leg curl. **Keep your body married to the pad throughout the set.** I want your **hips and pelvis pressed hard against the pad at all times. Do not allow your pelvis to rotate to lift the weight.** Keep it straight. Curl the weight up with your hamstring. Hold for a split second at the top, and then lower it. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 8 - Use the same weight as week 7 for 3x10.

3 total work sets

BB Stiff Leg Deadlift - 3x10 - Get your belt back on. We're doing these romanian style again today. I want you to stick your glutes as far back as possible. So when you start the movement, you're going to push your hips back, bend the knees slightly, and continue pushing the glutes back to the end of your range of motion. **Keep your back straight and your shoulders squared.** Stretch at the bottom for a split second, then squeeze and come back up. **Squeeze your glutes as hard as you can at the top of the lift.** Rest 90 seconds between sets.

Week 8 - Use the same weight as week 7, but for 3x12 this time.

3 total work sets

Donkey/Leg Press Calf Raises - 4x20 - If you don't have a donkey calf machine, do these in the leg press. 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 - 3x10 - Do a few feeder sets until you come to a solid working weight, then knock out 3 sets of ten reps with that weight. As usual, feet on the floor and shoulders squared. Rest up to 2 minutes in between work sets.

Week 8 - Use more weight for your working sets here than in week 7.

3 total work sets

One Arm Barbell Row - 3x10 - Round 2 with these for this program. Try to use the same weight you did for your sets of 8 in week 1. Brace one end of a barbell in a corner. Now, stand beside the other end of the barbell, bend down and grab the bar just below the loading sleeve with one hand. **Keeping your back straight and shoulders squared, row the bar upwards driving the elbow up and back and keeping it in tight to the body.** Load the bar with 25lb plates or smaller to keep from artificially shortening the range of motion by colliding plates to chest. You can also **experiment with your foot placement**, and find what works best for you. Just remember to **keep your back**

straight and don't let the shoulder of the working arm roll forwards. Rest up to 60 seconds between work sets after completing both sides.

Week 8 - Use the same working weight as week 7, increase to 3x12.

3 total work sets

Incline DB Cleans - 3x10 - These are identical to seated DB cleans, you just lay face down on an incline bench instead of sitting. The incline will increase the tension in the muscles at the end range of motion, so **squeeze hard at the top**. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 8 - Use the same working weight as week 7, increase to 3x12.

3 total work sets

DB Pull Overs - 3x12 - 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 8 - Increase the working weight over week 7.

3 total work sets

DB Lateral Raises - 3x8 - Now the medial deltoids. **Keep your head back** during these to minimize trap recruitment, we want the lateral delts doing the work. **Keep your arms as straight as possible** and just raise the dumbbells straight out to side to around ear level. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 8 - Use the same working weight, increase to 3x10.

3 total work sets

Rope Pushdowns - 3x10 - Keep your **hands close to your body** on this one, with **elbows out to the sides**. Your **palms should be facing your body through the entire movement**. Squeeze hard and flex at the bottom of the movement. Don't lean into the weight excessively or allow your shoulders or chest to enter into the kinetic chain. Keep it all tricep. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 8 - Use the same working weight as week 7, increase to 3x12.

3 total work sets

Abdominals - Standard decline sit ups, 4 sets of 15-25 reps. If you can handle more than 25 reps at bodyweight, hold a plate to your chest.

Lower Body Day 2 - 12 work sets

Leg Press - 3x8 - We're going to use your strongest foot position for this. Do a few warm up sets to find a good position and to establish a working weight. The rest of the leg press rules apply as normal. **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 8 - Use the same weight as week 7, increase to 3x10.

3 total work sets

Rack Deadlift - sets of 5 to form loss - Wear your belt. Set the pins in the rack just below the knee. Start with a lower weight to get your form dialed in and to get warm. Work your way up taking conservative jumps until you get to a weight where you cannot complete all 5 reps with good form. All the same form cues from the deadlift apply here. Back straight. No significant rounding of the upper or lower back. Remember to allow the bar to come to a complete stop on the pins. No bouncing. Rest up to 3 minutes between sets.

Week 8 - increase the weight that you finish with over week 7.

3 total work sets

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 8 - Reduce the rest period from up to 2 minutes, to 60 seconds.

3 total work sets

DB Stiff Legged Deadlift - 3x8 - Put your belt back on. 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 8 - Use the same weight as week 7, increase the volume to 3x10.

3 total work sets

One Leg Standing calve raises - 4x20 - 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.