

Novice Program 1 - "The Triad" - Week 9 & 10

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 Bench Press - 3x10 - Standard dumbbell bench press. Use a lighter weight for a few sets until you find a solid weight. Then do 3 sets of 10 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 10 - Increase the working weight over what you used in week 9.

3 total work sets

Chest Supported Row - 3x8 - As usual, do a few sets to get your form dialed in and to find today's working weight. I want a wide grip. Row with your lats on this movement, that means **pull through the elbows** not through the hands. Starting at the bottom, **push your chest out as you begin to draw your elbows back**. Shoulders draw back and down, scapula squeezing together and downward. When you **find the peak contraction in your lats, stop the**

row and start the descent. Get a **light stretch in the lats at the bottom**, but not so much that you end up folded over the pad. **Squeeze the handles hard.** It may be difficult to breathe during the work sets, so find a breathing cadence that works for you. Rest up to two minutes between sets.

Week 10 - Same working weight, 3x10.

3 total work sets

Incline Bench RDR - 3x10 - 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 10 - Again, use the same working weight, 3x12 this time.

3 total work sets

BB Shrugs - 3x10 - Simple and clean barbell shrugs. Hold on to, or strap on to, a barbell and shrug the weight upwards, **pausing for a split second at the top** of the movement before lowering the weight. **Do not engage the arms**, they should stay completely straight. **Pull the weight up and into your body**, as if you're trying to bend the barbell across your thighs rather than just raise it upwards. **Don't bounce the weight.** I want deliberate, controlled shrugs. Shrugs with purpose.

Week 10 - Once more. Same working weight, 3x12.

3 total work sets

BB Lateral Raises - 3x8 - A twist on a classic. Stick a barbell in a corner as you would for Meadows rows or one arm BB rows. Now you're going to hold the free end of the bar by the sleeve with your right hand, while the corner end extends out to your right. Position your body so that your right hand is in front of your left hip. Next up, you're going to raise the bar to the end of your range of motion. It will move in an arc starting out kind of like a front raise and move across your body ending up at head level out to the side. Maintain a controlled descent. Rest 60 seconds between work sets after completing both sides.

Week 10 - Psyche. Last time. Same working weight, 3x10.

3 total work sets

BB Curl - 3x8 - Grab a barbell. Standing upright with your **shoulders squared**, curl the barbell upwards to the end of your range of motion, then **lower it with control**. Remember, **do not let your shoulders round forward**.

Squeeze the barbell as tightly as you can for the duration of the set. **Do not swing the weight.** Whole body curls do not build biceps. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 10 - Reduce the rest period 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 - 3x6 - Put on your belt. Try to beat your weight from week 2. Do a few feeder sets to find a good working weight, then stick with that weight for 3 sets of 6 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 6 reps. Your working weight should be a little heavier than the weight you used last week for 8 reps. Rest up to 2 minutes between sets.

Week 10 - Use the same working weight, increase the volume to 3x8.

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 10 - Increase the weight over what you used in week 9.

3 total work sets

DB Stiff Legged Deadlift - 3x10 - Belt up again for these. 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 10 - Use a bit more weight here than you did in week 9.

3 total work sets

Lying Leg Curls - 3x8 - First we will setup the machine. Ideally, the knee needs to be in the same plane as the hinge of the lever arm, so adjust the ankle pad until this is the case. Now, do a set or two to allow you to find a solid weight, and then knock out the required reps. **Squeeze for a split second at the top**, and allow the stack to settle for a split second at the bottom. **No stack bouncing.** Nobody likes a stack bouncer. **Keep your hips and the front of your thighs and torso grounded to the pad.** If they start coming off, then the weight is too heavy and you are recruiting other groups to lift it. If there are handles, squeeze them hard. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 10 - Use the same working weight, but increase the volume to 3x10.

3 total work sets

Seated calve raises - 5x20 - 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 Incline Bench Press - 3x6 - Take a few feeder sets to get to a weight that feels good for 8 reps. **Maintain control and good form.** Do not work to total failure. Rest up to 2 minutes between sets.

Week 10 - Use the same working weight, increase to 3x8.

3 total work sets

Meadows Rows - sets of 8 to form loss - We're doing these a little different this week. I want you to take small jumps, doing sets of 8, until you cannot get 8 reps with solid form. These are setup similar to the one arm barbell row. The key difference is that you are standing perpendicular to the load end of the bar, instead of parallel. You'll be gripping the end of the loading sleeve instead of the bar itself. Remember that this lift is done strictly, with no excessive body movement. Rest 60 seconds between work sets after completing both sides. Here is a video showing you a few different methods to setup this movement: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrB4QO1E_AU

Week 10 - Increase the weight that you finish with over week 9.

3 total work sets

Rear Delt Machine - 3x15 - We'll be using the palms down handles for this. Set the seat height so that when the handles are in hand the arms are parallel to the ground. Make sure you **sit up straight**, no slouching forward. The **rotation needs to come from the shoulder joint, not from the upper middle back.** Arms need to be as straight as possible. Keep the **shoulders back and the chest up.** Pause for a split second at the top of the movement. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 10 - Reduce the rest period from 60 seconds to 30 seconds.

3 total work sets

Narrow Grip Pulldowns - 3x12 - Do a set or two to find a good working weight. I want **your torso static** the movement, **no excessive leaning backwards** to lift the weight. Keep **your chest up**, your **back arched**, your **head**

back looking at the pulley. Pull the weight down to **below the chin**, hold for a split second and squeeze, then allow the weight to come up. **Keep control when letting the bar come up**, don't just let go. Pull down with **control and authority**, feel the squeeze and the motion in your lats and in your shoulder blades. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 10 - Increase the working weight over week 9.

3 total work set

Cage Press - 3x6 - Put your belt on here. Set the pins at shoulder height in the power rack and put the barbell on top of them. We're going to use a pinkies on the rings grip here. You may find that a thumbless grip improves the feeling in your shoulders, feel free to experiment with that. Push the bar along the pins so that it is touching the upright supports in the rack. Now, you're going to get under the bar in the rack position with enough tension that the bar comes off the pins. Now **drive the bar up and into the uprights**, so that it **maintains contact with them through the entirety of the lift**. At the end of the movement, **push your upper body forward under the bar and really squeeze your shoulders that last inch or two**. Then lower the bar with control back into the rack position. Rinse and repeat. Rest 60 seconds between sets.

Week 10 - Use the same working weight as week 9, increase volume to 3x8.

3 total work sets

Tricep Pushups - 3 sets to failure - These are simply pushups execute with your hands **closer than shoulder width apart**. All normal push up rules apply. Keep your **body straight** and your **shoulders squared**. Push until you can no longer complete full reps. Rest up to 2 minutes between sets.

Week 10 - Reduce the rest period from up to 2 minutes, to 60 seconds.

3 total work sets

Abdominals - Today's ab movement will be pulldown abs. Setup facing away from the stack, grab the rope handle, and use your abdominals to curl your body downward against the weight. Pause for a split second at the bottom, then come back up. 4 sets of 10-15.

Lower Body Day 2 - 12 work sets

DB Split Squats - 3x8 - Holding dumbbells at your sides, position yourself facing away from a bench. Placing one leg behind you on the bench, with the top of the foot contacting the bench surface, squat down as deeply as possible. Remember to **keep your hips square to your torso**, and to **keep your torso upright** as much as possible. The standing leg should be doing the bulk of the work.

Week 10 - Use the same weight as week 9, and increase the volume to 3x10.

3 total work sets

Smith Machine Squats - 3x10 - Wear your belt here. Setup in the Smith machine facing in the same direction as the safety hooks. Do a set or two to find a good working weight, and to dial in your form and foot position. Plant your feet slightly in front of you, slightly wider than shoulder width apart, and toes pointed slightly out. Make adjustments from there. **Push yourself back into the bar**. On the descent, **keep your arch** and **push your hips back into the movement**. Descend as low as you can without tucking your pelvis, pause for a split second at the bottom while staying tight, then drive yourself back up hard. When your form is dialed in right **your body should move up and down like a piston** in an engine. Pump out your reps. Rest up to 2 minutes between sets.

Week 10 - Increase the working weight over what you used in week 9.

3 total work sets

Good Mornings - 3x8 - Keep your belt on. Setup as if you were going to do some barbell squats. Bar on your back? Check? Then you're ready to go. You're going to bend at the waist **by pushing your glutes backwards** and then bending your knees. Keep your **head looking straight ahead** and your **back arched** and **chest up**. Descend until your lower back, which should have a tight arch, is parallel to the ground, then come back up. **Hold your air during the rep**. If you need to breath, only do it at the top of the lift. You should feel the work in your glutes and hamstrings. Rest 2 minutes between work sets.

Week 10 - Use the same working weight, but squeeze out two more reps for 3x10.

3 total work sets

BB Stiff Legged Deadlift - 3x12 - Belt up for these too. 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 11 more reps. Rest for 90 seconds between sets.

Week 10 - Reduce the rest period from 90 seconds to 45 seconds between sets.

3 total work sets

Donkey/Leg press Calf Raises - 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 a split second at the bottom. Rest 60 seconds between sets.