

FREE PROGRAMME GUIDE

UPPER/LOWER FOR **MUSCLE**

Every muscle trained twice a week, under an hour a session, with a progression rule you can actually follow. Four days a week.

WHO IT'S FOR

You've been lifting for at least six months, you can train four days a week, and your main goal is to build muscle. If you're a complete beginner, a 3-day full body split will get you further, faster — come back to this once you've got a few months of consistent training behind you.

The week: Upper, Lower, rest, Upper, Lower, rest, rest is the classic layout (Monday/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday works well). Any arrangement works as long as you don't put the two lower days back to back.

HOW TO PROGRESS IT

Every exercise has a rep range. Pick a weight where your first set lands at the bottom of the range with one or two reps in reserve. Each week, try to add reps. When every set hits the top of the range, add weight next session — 2.5kg on upper-body barbell lifts, 5kg on lower body, the smallest jump available on dumbbells and machines — and start again at the bottom of the range.

That's double progression, and it works for years. The part people get wrong is the judgement calls: what to do when you hit the top on set one but not set three, when to take weight off after a bad week, when a missed session means repeating the week rather than moving on. That judgement is exactly the kind of thing worth automating rather than guessing at session to session.

THE PROGRAMME

DAY 1

UPPER A

Barbell bench press — 3 sets of 6–8, rest 3 min
Barbell row — 3 sets of 6–8, rest 3 min
Overhead press — 3 sets of 8–10, rest 2 min
Lat pulldown — 3 sets of 10–12, rest 90 sec
Incline dumbbell press — 2 sets of 10–12, rest 90 sec
Cable curl — 2 sets of 12–15 · Rope pushdown — 2 sets of 12–15

DAY 2

LOWER A

Back squat — 3 sets of 6–8, rest 3 min
Romanian deadlift — 3 sets of 8–10, rest 3 min
Leg press — 3 sets of 10–12, rest 2 min
Leg curl — 3 sets of 10–12, rest 90 sec
Standing calf raise — 4 sets of 10–12, rest 60 sec
Hanging knee raise — 3 sets of 10–15

THE PROGRAMME, CONTINUED

DAY 3

UPPER B

Weighted pull-up (or pulldown) — 3 sets of 6–8, rest 3 min

Dumbbell bench press — 3 sets of 8–10, rest 2 min

Seated cable row — 3 sets of 10–12, rest 90 sec

Dumbbell lateral raise — 3 sets of 12–15, rest 60 sec

Chest-supported row — 2 sets of 10–12, rest 90 sec

Hammer curl — 2 sets of 10–12 · Overhead triceps extension — 2 sets of 10–12

DAY 4

LOWER B

Deadlift — 3 sets of 4–6, rest 3–4 min

Front squat or hack squat — 3 sets of 8–10, rest 2–3 min

Walking lunge — 2 sets of 10 each leg, rest 90 sec

Leg extension — 3 sets of 12–15, rest 60 sec

Seated calf raise — 4 sets of 12–15, rest 60 sec

Cable crunch — 3 sets of 12–15

HOW LONG TO RUN IT

Eight to twelve weeks, then take a lighter week (same exercises, two sets each, weights 10% down) and go again. Swap an exercise only when it stops progressing for three weeks in a row, and swap it for something that hits the same muscle.

LIKE HAVING THIS DONE FOR YOU?

ADAPTIVE STRENGTH COACH DOES THIS AUTOMATICALLY

This guide gets you started. The app logs your sets, tracks the double progression for you, and tells you exactly when to add weight, hold, or back off — no spreadsheet, no guessing. 14 days free, then a flat monthly or annual price.

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