PPL (x6)

In my opinion, Push-Pull-Legs is the most efficient method of training to see the most results. Especially if you are a keen lifter. This is only because PPL provides a good amount of rest coupled with a large amount of volume per week, per muscle group. Even though you are training six times a week, each muscle group is being worked a maximum of twice, with at least 48 hours rest between working days. This is enough time for your muscles to have properly recovered to the point of being receptive to training again. Another good function of this training split is that, because everything is done multiple times, it is easy to focus on weak points or weak muscle groups for maximum progress. For example, if your legs are lagging behind the rest of your body, train legs twice a week instead of one of the other muscle groups. Because body parts are trained so frequently, even in busy weeks you will still manage to target each muscle group at least once. Once again I reiterate that this is probably the most volume you can squeeze into this time period without your body suffering negative consequences. This split is excellent for strength training and hypertrophy training alike, it depends on the rep ranges you choose. Our rep ranges support hypertrophy training more, if you want to gear it more towards strength training, half the reps per set and up the weight.

For this workout you will need:

* **Dumbbells**. Click here for the best dumbbells of 2021 or click here to jump to my favourite one.

Other useful pieces of equipment:

* **Yoga Mat** for a comfortable place to exercise.

and

* **Barbell** to add variety to the workout.

If you do not have any of the equipment check out my Awesome no equipment workout plan

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| --- | --- |
| Day 1 – PULL | Rear Delts, Lats, Biceps |
| Day 2 – PUSH | Chest, Triceps, Side Delts |
| Day 3 – LEGS | Quadriceps, Hamstrings, Calves, Glutes |
| Day 4 – PULL | Rear Delts, Lats, Biceps |
| Day 5 – PUSH | Chest, Triceps, Side Delts |
| Day 6 – LEGS | Quadriceps, Hamstrings, Calves, Glutes |

DAY 1 – PULL

* Rear Delt Flyes – 4x10
* Dumbbell Row – 4x10
* Inverted Row – 4x10
* Bicep Curls – 4x10
* Hammer Curls – 4x10

DAY 2 – PUSH

* Dumbbell Bench Press – 4x10
* Dumbbell Flyes – 4x10
* Triceps Extension – 4x10
* Dips – 3xMAX
* Side Raises – 4x10

DAY 3 – LEGS

* Dumbbell Squat – 4x10
* Dumbbell Lunge – 4x10
* Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift – 4x10
* Calf Raises – 4x10
* Prone Leg Raise – 4x10

DAY 4 – PULL

* Rear Delt Flyes – 4x10
* Dumbbell Row – 4x10
* Inverted Row – 4x10
* Bicep Curls – 4x10
* Hammer Curls – 4x10

DAY 5 – PUSH

* Dumbbell Bench Press – 4x10
* Dumbbell Flyes – 4x10
* Triceps Extension – 4x10
* Dips – 3xMAX
* Side Raises – 4x10

DAY 6 – LEGS

* Dumbbell Squat – 4x10
* Dumbbell Lunge – 4x10
* Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift – 4x10
* Calf Raises – 4x10
* Prone Leg Raise – 4x10

**DAYS 1 & 4 – PULL**

**Rear Delt Flyes 4x10**

The first area of the shoulder to be targeted in this workout. All three delt heads will be targeted, with only side delts being trained twice, as they get the least work in compound movements. Rear delts are used to pull anything towards you, therefore they get a lot of use, not least in back movements. Lean forward with dumbbells out to the front, then pull out to each side, but only move something like 45 degrees out to the side then repeat the movement.

Pro Tip: Rear delt flyes require a really small range of motion to be effective, you want to repeat the small contraction over and over rather than expect any great range of motion.

Increase the difficulty of this exercise by removing the balancing aid. Lean forward, keeping your back straight and mimic the same movement as the isolation, just with both arms at the same time. This dramatically increased the compound nature of the exercise.

**Dumbbell Row 4x10**

This is the best home workout movement for back after pullups. Because more people have dumbbells than a pull up bar, we have gone with this. Try and use as heavy a weight as you can whilst not sacrificing form. Make sure to lean to one side, left or right of the bench with your arm extended out in front of you, then pull the weight up to just under your working lat. Squeeze the muscle here, this will help you learn how to flex your lats.

Pro Tip: When you get to the top of the movement, supinate your wrist a small amount as the movement ends to force more of a contraction from the lat.

Increase the difficulty of this exercise by removing the bench. You will want to lean forward, whilst keeping your back straight. Then pull the weight towards you in a smooth fashion in the same manner as above.

**Inverted Row 4x10**

An exercise from the same neck of the woods as Dumbbell Rows, with the exception being the grip that is used, this changed the contraction slightly, as well as the plane of movement. Basically, we are using the same muscles in a different way. Extend both arms out but twist your wrists around so it is underhand (as if doing a bicep curl), then pull up towards yourself and squeeze at the top of the movement.

Pro Tip: Lean against something raised for the best support. If not, place a knee and an arm on something and pull with one arm at a time. A proper bench allows for both sides to be utilised at the same time, making the exercise more compound in nature.

Further make this exercise tougher and more dynamic by starting in the normal dumbbell row grip position and whilst pulling towards you, rotate your wrists so you finish in the inverted grip position. In the reverse of the movement, rotate your wrists back to the start position.

**Bicep Curl 4x10**

This is the exercise that most people were looking for in the pull section, and here it is. Keep your arms by your sides, holding the weights. Turn your wrists outwards slightly, then curl the weight back towards you. Try to go straight into the next exercise (hammer curls) quickly to maximise fatigue in your biceps. People with high bicep insertions will want to heed the warning to stop at 90 degrees, otherwise the development of your biceps will be hindered.

Pro Tip: Full Range of motion is not required with bicep exercises like it is with basically every other exercise. Not using the full range of motion is not the same as using bad form. Keep your back straight etc. just reduce the distance that your bicep is flexing.

To push this exercise up to the next level, it can be turned into Zottman curls. This is done by rotating the wrists inwards as you perform the bicep curl, meaning your hands will be fully rotated at the top of the curl. This will incorporate much more of your forearms, as well as your biceps.

**Hammer Curl 4x10**

Going straight into these after your bicep curls will maximise your pump and the strain you are putting your biceps under. Make sure to hold the weights by your sides in the hammer grip, then pull up to your sides and stop. You can keep stopping the movement at 90 degrees for people with high bicep insertions, but it is not the end of the world if you go a bit higher. Squeeze at the top of the movement to maximise contraction.

Pro Tip: With Hammer curls, it can be hard for your muscle to understand when to contract naturally, gripping the weight as hard as you can makes this point in the movement more obvious to you as you feel it pinch at the right time.

Make this exercise harder by changing the rep cycle, so make every other rep a half-rep, pull it half the distance of a normal curl. This will force more blood into the muscle at the expense of range of movement. It will fatigue your muscles quicker than a normal rep cycle.

**DAYS 2 & 5 – PUSH**

**Dumbbell Bench Press 4x10**

Barbell bench press is the best compound exercise for chest workouts. By choosing dumbbell bench we are getting as close as we can in the home workout setting. You lie flat on your back on a bench or raised surface, extend both dumbbells upwards in the double overhand grip (as if holding a barbell), then lower the weights until they are just above your chest, then squeeze and push back up to the top. Do not touch the weights at the top.

Pro Tip: Dumbbell bench is excellent for targeting imbalances between your pecs. To work on the imbalance, only match the reps of your weaker side with your strong side. Otherwise, your weak side will never improve, and you are doomed to a lop-sided bench press.

If you want to make this movement harder, you can finish sets with close grip dumbbell bench press. You will want to press the dumbbells together and lower them right down to your chest until they touch it, then, whilst keeping the dumbbells pressed together, perform five extra reps after your set is complete. This will force your inner pectorals to do a lot more work than they are used to, and it targets a different part of the chest.

**Dumbbell Flyes 4x10**

As a general rule, no other exercise is going to be as useful at isolating your pectorals. You should not use any secondary muscles in this movement, at least once you get competent with it. The exercise is best done if you have a bench, or are raised off the floor, but it can be done on the floor. Lie flat with weights suspended above your chest. Lower your weight down to your chest, flaring your elbows outwards and then press back upwards.

Pro Tip: Do not touch the dumbbells together at the top. The best technique for activating the muscles is to go straight into the next rep with little or no pause.

Make this exercise harder by incorporating Hammer flyes. You would adopt a Hammer grip i.e., as if holding a barbell, and perform your reps in that plane of movement. This just forces your pectorals to move under tension in a different way to the one that you are used to, this variation will initially be harder.

**Triceps Extension 4x10**

Arms are used in every compound exercise and about 90% of all gym related activities. Therefore, having strong arms is very useful for any athlete or fitness enthusiast and should be a focus of your training. Your arm should be positioned above your head and the weight should be lowered just behind your head and back up. Feel free to use your free arm to support your working arm, this will ease some pressure on your shoulder.

Pro Tip: Try not to bounce the weight between reps. Try and keep the movement smooth and consistent otherwise you will start to grind your joints and that is not healthy.

If you are interested in making this exercise harder, you can change the way it is performed. Lie on your back, hold your arm and dumbbell out above you, like in DB bench press, then lower the dumbbell down towards your opposite pectoral and then back to the upright position. You must keep your elbow still throughout this movement. Make sure to squeeze at the top.

**Dips 3xMAX**

Dips are a great exercise to end the workout on because they really push your pump to new levels, just because of the tension you are under. You set up leaning on the edge of a surface in a reverse press up position. Best to lean on the palms of your hands and then lower your body down towards the ground and then back up to lockout position. This is quite a compound movement, but the most targeted muscle group is the triceps brachii.

Pro tip: Anywhere can be a dip station. It could be between your bannisters, or between your kitchen worktops. It could even be a garden wall or something of that nature.

Make this exercise harder by elevating your feet off the ground. This increases the deadweight you have to move with each dip and will be much more difficult than the feet-on-the-ground version.

**Side Raises 4x10 or Gauntlet Set.**

This is my favourite exercise. Side delts are the least important delt to work out in terms of strength and also the most important in terms of shape. Side raises are also a movement that you do not do a lot naturally outside of the gym environment, so start with low weights because your shoulders will not be very strong moving weights out to the side. You start in a standing position, dumbbells by your sides. Then raise your arms up at almost full extension, but with a bend in your elbow, stop the movement at roughly parallel to your shoulders and lower the weights.

Pro Tip: Incorporate a set of just flapping your arms in the proper plane of motion just after you finish the exercise, as a means of tiring your muscles out just a bit more.

If you want to push this exercise up to eleven, use the gauntlet set variation. You start with two 10kg dumbbells for example and do max reps, then drop the weight to 8kg and do max reps, then drop the weight to 4kg and do max reps, the second half of the gauntlet would include doing 8kg and 10kg respectively for max reps, ending the set on 10kg for max. You can stop halfway if this is too much initially.

**DAYS 3 & 6 - LEGS**

**Dumbbell Squats 4x10**

Squats are the original leg movement and are very useful for strength gains in your legs and just overall strength gains. Squats also can be used to build a very strong foundation in your legs that will serve you well as your sports career goes on. You want to stand up, feet shoulder-width apart. Hold your dumbbells by your sides and squat down until you reach parallel with the ground. Remember to increase your weights as you will gain strength in this movement quite quickly.

Pro Tip: Be careful of your depth, do not go too deep below parallel or you will not be able to get yourself out without falling over.

If you wish to make this exercise harder for yourself, you can turn it into a box squat. This requires a box, or an object that is flat and roughly the same height off the ground as you would be when you hit parallel on your squat. You would squat down same as normal, just this time onto the box. This forces more activation from your glutes, quads and hamstrings as the movement is more sudden and less comfortable.

**Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift 4x10**

The straight-leg deadlift is probably the most effective hamstring exercise, at least in terms of isolation. If you keep the rep sequence from breaking, it can be very intense to the point of cramping, but if that is not your goal, then stop before that point. Remember to only bend forward as far as you can, you should have feet shoulder-width apart and then lean forward holding the weight in front of you.

Pro Tip: Do not lockout on this movement. It will damage your knees and is totally unnecessary for the muscle engagement.

If you want to make this exercise harder for yourself, like I alluded to earlier, do not break the rep range between reps and push for the whole 10 in one smooth sequence. This will fatigue your hamstrings very quickly.

**Calf Raises 4x10**

This is the often neglected side of leg training. Calf training is an excellent way to build a strong foundation for your overall leg strength and balance. Calves support any leg movement, so then surely it seems foolish to ignore them. People who play lots of sports would really benefit from the extra training of their calves, it helps things like changing direction and the power of your sprint off the line.

Pro Tip: Try to fully extend all the way to your tip toes, this is the full range of motion that lots of people neglect. Going halfway will not stretch your calf muscles far enough.

To push this exercise up another level, do it with one leg at a time. For this you will need something to lean on and help with your balance unless you are an acrobat. Then push off with one leg whilst holding the other off the ground. This puts more intense focus on one muscle-grouping at a time.

**Dumbbell Lunges 4x10**

This is one of the more difficult exercises you will try, purely because of how much weight is put through muscles that normally only have a supporting role. You start in an upright position, dumbbells by your side. Place one foot in front of the other, then lean into the lunge until you hit parallel, then start again. Try not to lean too far forward when performing this movement because this will throw-off your balance.

Pro Tip: Try to keep both sets of toes pointing forwards at all times during the movement, this is purely for balance and it helps your legs stay grounded.

If you want to make this exercise harder, you are a maniac, but here it is. You change the rep structure to alternating lunges. Instead of doing ten on one leg and then ten on the other leg, alternate legs between reps. This keeps the muscles working constantly and keeps both legs around the same level of fatigue.

**Prone Leg Raise 4x10**

This is one of your Yoga inspired exercises, shamelessly admitted. You have to lie face down on the floor or mat with your arms supporting your body, then extend your working leg upwards and out behind you until you reach your comfort limit. This is useful for working on flexibility, as well as being a tough exercise in its own right, this should help your hip-flexors get more flexible, even if that just means less stiff. This exercise is included in our warmup guide as a great means of warming up.

Pro Tip: Raise your hips off the floor a tiny bit if you feel too much pressure on your lower back. Lower back spasms are to be avoided if possible as they put you out for a few weeks.

To make this exercise tougher, you will want to adopt a position on all fours in a crawl position, you will then extend your leg backwards from this position.