

ADVANCED VOLUME

8-Week Intermediate 4-Day Program

4 Days Per Week • High Volume • Advanced Techniques

Built for:

- Intermediate lifters with 12+ months of consistent training
- Those ready to increase training frequency and volume
- Lifters seeking advanced techniques for breaking plateaus
- Anyone committed to 4 focused training sessions per week

Program Overview

This 8-week program takes your training to the next level through increased frequency, higher volume, and strategic implementation of advanced techniques. By training 4 days per week with focused upper/lower splits, you'll maximize both muscle growth and strength development while managing fatigue through intelligent programming.

Why 4-Day Training?

The jump from 3 to 4 training days offers several key advantages:

- Hit each muscle group twice per week (optimal frequency for intermediates)
- More focused sessions - shorter workouts with higher intensity
- Greater total weekly volume without excessive session length
- Better fatigue management through upper/lower split
- Opportunity to implement multiple training techniques per session

Program Structure

8 weeks divided into two 4-week phases:

- Phase 1 (Weeks 1-4): Volume Emphasis with Technique Integration
- Phase 2 (Weeks 5-8): Intensity Focus with Peak Techniques

Training Split

Upper/Lower split across 4 weekly sessions:

- Day 1: Upper Body - Strength Focus
- Day 2: Lower Body - Squat Emphasis
- Day 3: Upper Body - Hypertrophy Focus
- Day 4: Lower Body - Deadlift Emphasis

Recommended Schedule:

- Mon/Tue/Thu/Fri (2 on, 1 off, 2 on, 2 off)
- Mon/Wed/Fri/Sat (allows weekend training)
- Tue/Wed/Fri/Sat (Monday recovery)

Advanced Training Techniques

This program strategically implements proven intensity techniques to push beyond normal training plateaus. Each technique has specific applications and should be used as prescribed.

Drop Sets

Perform a set to near-failure, immediately reduce weight by 20-30%, continue to failure again. Can repeat 2-3 times.

- Purpose: Extend time under tension, recruit more muscle fibers
- Best for: Isolation exercises, machines, dumbbells
- Frequency: 1-2 exercises per session maximum

Rest-Pause Sets

Perform set to failure, rest 15-20 seconds, continue for 2-4 more reps. Repeat 2-3 times.

- Purpose: Accumulate volume at heavy loads
- Best for: Compound movements with 6-10 rep range
- Frequency: Final set of primary exercise only

Tempo Training

Controlled rep speed - typically 3-4 second eccentric, 1 second pause, explosive concentric.

- Purpose: Increase time under tension, improve mind-muscle connection
- Best for: Hypertrophy-focused exercises
- Notation: (3-1-1-0) = 3 sec down, 1 sec pause, 1 sec up, 0 sec top

Cluster Sets

Break one set into mini-sets with brief rest. Example: 10 reps becomes 4+3+2+1 with 15 seconds rest.

- Purpose: Maintain higher intensity throughout set
- Best for: Strength-focused compounds
- Frequency: Primary lift variations

Supersets

Pair two exercises back-to-back with minimal rest between. Types: antagonist, agonist, or unrelated.

- Antagonist: Push/pull pairing (bench + row)
- Agonist: Same muscle group (two chest exercises)
- Best for: Time efficiency and metabolic stress

Phase 1: Volume Emphasis (Weeks 1-4)

Focus on building work capacity and introducing advanced techniques progressively. Higher rep ranges (8-12) with controlled tempos. Strategic use of drop sets and tempo work.

Day 1: Upper Body - Strength Focus

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Technique / Notes
Barbell Bench Press	4	6-8	Straight sets, RPE 8, rest 3-4 min
Weighted Pull-Ups	4	6-8	Superset with bench (rest after pull-ups)
Incline DB Press	3	10-12	Tempo: 3-1-1-0, final set drop set
Cable Row	3	10-12	Tempo: 3-1-1-0, squeeze contraction
Lateral Raise	3	12-15	Final set: double drop set
Barbell Curl	3	10-12	Superset with tricep pushdowns
Tricep Pushdown	3	10-12	Superset with curls, final set drop set

Day 2: Lower Body - Squat Emphasis

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Technique / Notes
Back Squat	5	6-8	Straight sets, RPE 8-9, rest 3-5 min
Romanian Deadlift	4	8-10	Tempo: 3-1-1-0, hamstring stretch
Walking Lunges	3	12/leg	Tempo: 2-0-2-0, constant tension
Leg Curl	3	10-12	Final set: double drop set
Calf Raise	4	15-20	Tempo: 2-2-2-0, full stretch

Day 3: Upper Body - Hypertrophy Focus

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Technique / Notes
Overhead Barbell Press	4	8-10	Tempo: 3-0-1-0, focus on stretch
DB Bench Press	3	10-12	Final set: rest-pause (15s rest × 3)
Barbell Row	4	8-10	Tempo: 2-1-1-1, squeeze at top
Lat Pulldown	3	10-12	Superset with chest-supported row
Chest-Supported Row	3	10-12	Superset, final set: double drop
Face Pulls	3	15-20	Superset with lateral raise
Lateral Raise	3	12-15	Superset, final set: triple drop
Cable Curl + Extension	3	12-15	Superset, constant tension

Day 4: Lower Body - Deadlift Emphasis

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Technique / Notes
Deadlift	5	5-6	Straight sets, RPE 8-9, rest 4-5 min
Front Squat	4	8-10	Tempo: 3-0-1-0, quad focus
Leg Extension	3	12-15	Superset with leg curl
Leg Curl	3	12-15	Superset, both final sets: drop sets
Seated Calf Raise	4	15-20	Tempo: 1-2-1-2, peak contraction

Phase 2: Intensity Focus (Weeks 5-8)

Focus shifts to heavier loads and strength-focused techniques. Lower rep ranges (6-8) on primary lifts with strategic use of cluster sets and rest-pause. Continued use of drop sets and tempo work on hypertrophy movements.

Key Changes from Phase 1

- Primary lifts: 5-6 reps (vs 6-8 in Phase 1)
- Introduce cluster sets on main compounds
- Increased rest periods: 4-5 minutes on heavy sets
- More aggressive rest-pause implementation
- Target RPE 9 on top sets

Phase 2 Technique Emphasis

- Week 5: Introduction to cluster sets on squat and deadlift
- Week 6: Peak volume week - maximum use of intensity techniques
- Week 7: Strength peak - heaviest loads of program
- Week 8: Deload - 60% intensity, technique refinement

Progression Strategy

This program uses undulating periodization with strategic implementation of advanced techniques to drive continuous adaptation.

Phase 1 Weekly Progression

1. Week 1: Establish baselines at RPE 7-8, learn technique protocols
2. Week 2: Add 5-10 lbs to main lifts, increase to RPE 8
3. Week 3: Peak volume week - add weight, maximize techniques
4. Week 4: Deload - 65% of Week 3 weights, active recovery

Phase 2 Weekly Progression

5. Week 5: Start 10% above Week 3, introduce cluster sets
6. Week 6: Peak volume with intensity techniques
7. Week 7: Strength peak - push for PRs on main lifts
8. Week 8: Strategic deload - 60% intensity, prepare for next cycle

Progressive Technique Application

Week	Primary Technique	Application
1-2	Tempo + Supersets	Build work capacity, learn controlled eccentrics
3	Drop Sets Added	Maximum volume accumulation
4	Deload	Recovery and supercompensation
5-6	Cluster + Rest-Pause	Heavy load maintenance, strength focus
7	Peak Intensity	Maximum strength expression, PR attempts
8	Deload	Recovery, prepare for next training block

Recovery Requirements

4-day training with advanced techniques creates significant recovery demands. These factors are non-negotiable for progress.

Sleep Protocols

- **Minimum: 8 hours nightly (9 hours optimal)**
- Consistent schedule - same sleep/wake times daily
- Sleep quality markers: HRV, resting heart rate
- If sleep is compromised, reduce intensity techniques

Nutrition Targets

Calories:

- Bulking: 200 calories above maintenance
- Recomp: At maintenance
- Track weekly weight trends, adjust as needed

Macros:

- Protein: 1.0-1.2g per pound bodyweight
- Carbs: 3-5g per pound (fuel for high volume)
- Fats: 0.4-0.6g per pound

Intra-Week Recovery

- Day 1 and 3 (upper): Most demanding - prioritize sleep
- Active recovery on off days: walking
- Avoid intense cardio - interferes with adaptation

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I add more training days or exercises?

No. This program is already high volume with advanced techniques. Adding more will compromise recovery and stall progress. If you feel under-stimulated, increase intensity of existing techniques rather than adding volume.

What if I can't complete all the prescribed techniques?

Reduce the number of technique applications, not the base training volume. For example, if drop sets are too fatiguing, use them on 1 exercise instead of 2. Maintain straight sets on all primary movements.

How do I know if I'm ready for this program?

You should have 12+ months of consistent training, be able to perform all exercises with excellent form, and have completed at least one structured intermediate program successfully. If you're still making rapid progress on simpler programs, stay there.

Can I use this while cutting?

Not recommended for aggressive cuts. At maintenance or small deficits (200-300 calories), it's manageable but you may need to reduce intensity technique frequency. For larger deficits, choose a lower-volume program.

What comes after 8 weeks?

Options: (1) Repeat with 10% higher starting weights, (2) Switch to strength-focused program like 5/3/1, (3) Try specialized bodybuilding split, (4) Take a deload week then start a different 4-day program.

Final Thoughts

This program represents a significant step up in training sophistication. The combination of increased frequency, higher volume, and advanced techniques will produce exceptional results - but only if you commit fully to execution and recovery.

Keys to Success

- **Master the Techniques**

Don't rush into advanced techniques. Week 1-2 are learning weeks. Perfect the execution before adding load.

- **Respect Recovery**

Sleep 8-9 hours. Hit your calories and protein. Skip training if genuinely under-recovered. One missed session beats injury or burnout.

- **Progressive Overload**

Track everything. The goal is adding weight or reps week to week. Advanced techniques amplify progression, they don't replace it.

- **Honor the Deloads**

Week 4 and 8 are mandatory. They enable the supercompensation that drives your best gains. Skipping deloads guarantees plateau.

This is advanced training. Respect the process.

Now shut up and lift.