

3X/WEEK

THE ESSENTIALS PROGRAM

Intense and efficient 45-min workouts



JEFF NIPPARD

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The author advises you to take full responsibility for your safety and to know your limits. Before practicing the skills described in this book, be sure that your equipment is well maintained and do not take risks beyond your level of experience, aptitude, training, and comfort level.

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A black and white photograph of a man in a gym setting. He is wearing a black tank top and dark pants, and is performing a deadlift with a barbell. The background shows gym equipment and a window with a view of the outdoors.

ABOUT ME

Jeff is a professional natural bodybuilder and powerlifter.

Through his science-based Youtube channel which has gathered a fan-base of millions of subscribers, Jeff shares the knowledge he has gathered through university education and field experience with others who are passionate about the science behind building muscle, losing fat and gaining strength.

He earned the title of Mr. Junior Canada for natural bodybuilding in 2012 and as a powerlifter, Jeff held the Canadian national record for the bench press in 2014. As a powerlifter, Jeff has claimed a 502 lb squat, 336 lb bench press and a 518 lb deadlift with an all time best Wilks score of 446.

With a Bachelor of Science degree in biochemistry, Jeff has gathered the requisite scientific knowledge to complement his practical experience acquired through training and coaching. Jeff has coached women's bikini and men's bodybuilding national and provincial champions, professional natural bodybuilders and nationally and IPF Worlds qualified raw powerlifters. He has presented seminars on Block Periodization, concurrent training and nutrition and training for natural bodybuilding in academic settings including the 2019 Ultimate Evidence Based Conference (UEBC), Lehman College and the University of Iowa. He has aspirations of completing a PhD in exercise science or a related field.

Jeff currently lives in Ontario, Canada, where he is producing YouTube videos and programs for people around the world.



A black and white photograph of a man in a gym performing a bench press. He is lying on a bench, holding a barbell with both hands above his chest. The background shows gym equipment like a weight rack and a dumbbell. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and shadows.

ABOUT THIS PROGRAM

Who is the Essentials Program for?

"Lack of time" is one of the most commonly cited barriers to resistance training [1-3]. While many people would love to be able to dedicate 1-2 hours to resistance training 4-6 days per week, this is often impractical. To correct this, the Essentials Program was designed to offer the most optimized, yet time-efficient, hypertrophy plan possible. Every workout is structured in a way to ensure that you can get in and out of the gym in under 45 minutes. The Essentials Program contains only the essentials for building muscle, with no fluff. These workouts pack a big training stimulus into a small time frame.

A minimalistic style of training has a long track record, often being associated with six-time Mr. Olympia, Dorian Yates, who would typically perform just one set to failure for 3-6 exercises for each muscle group per week. Myriad examples of high level bodybuilders, both natural and enhanced, using a low-volume, high-intensity training style over decades of competing gives such an approach field-tested viability.

This program is perfect for anyone who wants to make the most of their time in the gym, but not spend half their day there. In these workouts we'll be using high levels of effort and advanced time-saving techniques to make each workout as efficient as possible.

What this program is

The primary goal of this program is to maximize hypertrophy for those that only have 45 minutes to train, 2-5x per week. This will mean placing a heavy emphasis on increased intensity, rather than training volume. There simply won't be enough time to have 3-4 sets of each exercise, so most compound exercises will have 2-3 hard sets, while most isolation exercises will be limited to just 1-2 hard sets per exercise. This offers the unique opportunity to focus much more on the quality, rather than quantity, of the sets you perform. The reduction in set quantity will ensure that set quality is maximized for each and every set you do.

In my coaching experience, a lower volume high intensity approach almost always leads to better focus and execution on individual sets. Rather than just "going through the motions" for the first few sets of an exercise, most people find that they get a better per-set stimulus when they know they only have 1-2 sets to get the job done. In turn, this can help to reduce junk volume, as there is no chance of doing "wasted" extra sets or sets that are not sufficiently stimulating the target muscle.

Furthermore, rather than being able to rely on increasing the volume from week to week, this program places a heavy emphasis on strength progression or “beating the logbook.” This means that tracking the weights and reps you hit for each exercise will be a key part of ensuring optimal results. You can log your workouts using the excel spreadsheet, by printing out the PDF and writing on the paper, using a workout journal, utilizing the notes app in your phone, or using a tracking app of your choice.

This program is split up into three distinct training blocks, each lasting four weeks. This means you will progress with the same exercises for four weeks before they are swapped out for some new ones. Of course, if you’d rather stick with an exercise from a previous block for longer so that you can continue progressing with it, that is totally fine. The program varies only to avoid monotony and increase enjoyment through periodic novelty. You will find exercise substitutions next to each exercise that you can use according to your own preferences and availability.

This program is designed to be appropriate across a wide range of experience levels. There is no need to have prior experience with any of my other programs.

What this program isn't

This is not a maximalist program. These workouts are short and effective. If you are someone who prefers to train with more volume and is happy to spend 60-90 minutes in the gym per session, I'd recommend checking out my Fundamentals Program (if you have less than 1-2 years of lifting experience) or my Upper/Lower or PPL Program if you are more advanced. From there, you could move on to the High Frequency Program or the Powerbuilding Programs.

This program is not intended to be an all-inclusive resource for all things training related. For more background and information on my general training philosophy, I encourage you to watch my Fundamentals Series on YouTube.

With that said, there is still plenty of information within these pages, including a full blown functional anatomy section, a description of the programming principles at play (progression, exercise selection, etc.), video links for technique demonstration for each exercise, exercise substitutions for each exercise, and 21 unique scientific references.

A man is performing a burpee exercise on a dark mat. He is in a deep squat position, with his arms extended forward. The background is dark, and the lighting highlights the contours of his muscles.

FAQ

Q: Is 1 or 2 sets per exercise really enough to build muscle? Are you sure this is enough?

A: Yes. As long as you are pushing your sets close enough to failure, and following the progression outlined, you should reach a sufficient level of tension to trigger new muscle growth. A 2017 meta-analysis found that even just 1-4 sets per muscle per week was enough to stimulate measurable hypertrophy [4]. Two meta-analyses from 2019 also found that trained lifters were able to make significant strength gains with just 1 set per exercise, taken to failure 2-3x per week [5,6]. All of this data shows that not only can a minimalistic approach to training be effective, it can even be effective for more experienced lifters. Of course, at a certain point in your development you may need to increase volume to continue maximizing your gains, but there is no question that measurable gains can occur from short, intense workouts.

Q: I can't do "X" exercise. What should I replace it with?

A: Every exercise includes two substitution options, which are listed in order of preference. This means that if you can't perform the original exercise, you should go with Substitution Option 1 first, and then Substitution Option 2, if you can't perform Option 1.

Q: Can I choose to do a Substitution Option even if I can perform the original exercise?

A: Yes. Whether you just prefer the other exercise or it's one you have easier access to, feel free to go with either of the Substitution Options over the original exercise. The program was designed so that all substitution options will elicit a very similar training effect.

Q: How long should each workout take?

A: Each workout will take you under approximately 45 minutes from start to finish, including the warm-up, if you adhere to the rest periods given. If you take your time with the warm up and are more flexible with rest times between sets, your workouts may take ~45-60 minutes.



Q: Is there a way for me to make these workouts even shorter?

A: Yes, to further reduce the time commitment of each session, you can try supersetting antagonist muscle groups (or exercises that would not fatigue one another). For example, Seated DB Shoulder Press could be supersetted with Seated Cable Rows. In this instance, you would perform your set of Seated DB Shoulder Press, rest approximately 0.5-1 min, then perform Seated Cable Rows, rest ~0.5-1 min, and then go back to Seated DB Shoulder Press to repeat this process. The goal is to still get ~1-2 minutes of rest before returning to each exercise while the act of supersetting allows one muscle to rest while the other works. An example of a superset that you wouldn't want to perform would be DB Bench Press and Seated DB Shoulder Press, as these are both pushing exercises and both involve your front deltoids to a high degree. The DB Bench Press would be better paired with Lat Pulldowns or a DB Row.

Q: My gym is crowded. Can I switch up the exercise order?

A: Yes, but try your best to keep compound movements at the beginning of the workout and save isolation movements for the end. This is to prevent the isolation exercises from interfering with your strength on the compound lifts.

Q: How do I know if I am progressing?

A: Bodybuilding is a marathon, not a sprint. It can be difficult to accurately determine if you are making visual progress day-to-day or even week-to-week. Taking physique progress photos every 4-6 weeks and comparing them side by side is a good way to detect visual differences that you simply wouldn't notice in the mirror. But ultimately, because of the relationship between strength gain and muscle gain, the main metric I want you to use for tracking your progress is strength. If you're getting stronger, you're progressing. It is strongly recommended to log every workout either in writing (print the program out or use a separate notebook) or in an app, so you don't have to rely on memory to keep track of personal strength records. Taking body measurements a few times a year can also be helpful (arms, thigh, waist, neck) but simply focusing on steady strength progression will be your best proxy for determining muscular progress.

Q: How much muscle can I expect to gain?

A: How you respond to training will be largely determined by genetic factors and your specific training history (i.e. how close you are to your genetic limit). As a rough ballpark estimate for untrained male individuals, 1-2 lbs of muscle gain per month is reasonable (12-24 lbs of muscle gained in your first year). For early intermediates with about 1 year of lifting experience, progress will likely slow down to roughly 0.5-1 lbs of muscle gain per month (6-12 lbs of muscle gained in your second year). For practical purposes, women can divide muscle gain estimates in half.

Q: I have a belt. When should I wear it?

A: For this program, a belt is not necessary for any of the exercises.

Q: I am not getting sore from my workouts. Is the program not working?

A: Muscle soreness is largely attributed to eccentric contractions [7] and long muscle length contractions [8]. Delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS) isn't required for hypertrophy to occur, but the associated muscle damage might play a role in hypertrophy [9]. With that said, the main goal of the program is to establish a strength foundation, not to get you feeling sore. In fact, reduced soreness over time indicates that your body is adapting and recovering, which is actually a good thing for continued progress.

Q: I am getting very sore from my workouts. Should I skip the gym until I am not sore?

A: You may experience increased soreness when you first begin the program because it is presenting a new stress to your body. Foam rolling can help reduce DOMS [10] and increase ROM [11], so if you are consistently getting sore week after week, consider adding a short 3-5 minute foam rolling routine at the end of the workouts. Otherwise, training while sore is not inherently problematic for muscle growth unless it puts you at an increased risk of injury. If you're having a difficult time getting into position for any of the planned exercises, or finding it difficult to complete a full ROM due to pain, it would be wise to skip that exercise until you feel properly recovered. Otherwise, in the case of mild soreness, perform a slightly longer warm-up for each exercise and use your own discretion with avoiding injury being a top priority. One extra rest day will not set you back very far, but a serious injury will.

Q: Should I eat in a caloric deficit, maintenance, or surplus while running this program?

A: Eating in a slight (10-20%) caloric surplus will yield the best results and best recovery. However, if your main goal is fat loss, eating in a caloric deficit will be necessary. As a beginner to intermediate lifter, you can continue to make strength and size progress while in a moderate caloric deficit and achieve body recomposition (lose fat and build muscle at the same time) if protein intake is sufficient (0.8-1g/lb bodyweight as a ballpark).

Q: The warm-up isn't enough for me. Can I add to it?

A: You can add warm-up exercises to the protocol, but this will of course add to the length of each session. Your warm-up shouldn't take any longer than ~10-15 minutes. It is important to stay injury-free, so don't rush into your workout.

Q: Why is there such little exercise variation from week to week?

A: Changing exercises from week to week is more likely to flatten out the strength progression curve. Within each 4 week block, exercises are kept constant to ensure both progression (by adding volume incrementally to these specific movements) and mastery of exercise form and technique.

Q: What do I do after I finish the program?

A: You have the option of running back through the same program again for another 12 weeks, trying out one of the other training splits available on my website, or you could move on to an entirely new program. Feel free to contact my coaching team if you would like some suggestions or guidance moving forward.

Q: What are the blank boxes in the middle of each program for?

A: They are for you to track your weights each week, enabling you to focus on strength progression. You can print out the program itself, pencil in your lifts into a notebook, or use a tracking app. Keeping up with this habit of tracking is going to be an extremely important part of your success with this program.

Q: Should I add cardio to this program?

A: The main point of cardio from a bodybuilding standpoint is to create or increase a caloric deficit for fat loss. I would recommend prioritizing the deficit from your diet first, rather than relying heavily on cardio immediately for fat loss.

As a general rule, I recommend keeping cardio to an effective minimum on this program. If you wish to do cardio to achieve your fat loss goals or for general health and fitness, try to keep it to a maximum of four low intensity sessions per week, around 20-30 minutes in duration. High intensity cardio should be used more sparingly, up to once or twice weekly at your own discretion.

Please direct all other questions to my coaching team through the contact form on my website. Please avoid directing questions about this program to my social media, as it is not a reliable means of making contact with me.



WARM UP

Before we look at exactly how you should warm-up, it's important to consider what the warm-up portion of your training session serves to accomplish. Warming up should function to increase your core body temperature, which improves performance [12, 13]. Your circadian rhythm also helps determine your core body temperature at any given point in time. When you wake up, your core body temperature is at its lowest, and it increases throughout the day. There seems to be a "sweet spot" for core body temperature, so doing 5-10 minutes of low-moderate intensity cardio is especially prudent if you exercise early in the morning [14].

Secondly, warm-ups serve as a way to increase muscle activation. Doing dynamic warm-ups (exercises and drills which take you through a range of motion) can improve performance and force output [15]. Don't view your warm-up as just "going through the motions." The goal is to always be very mindful about the muscles you are contracting and the bodily movements you're doing. A proper and complete warm up helps strengthen this mindfulness.

Lastly, foam rolling has been shown to reduce DOMS (delayed onset muscle soreness) [11]. Brief foam rolling with a specific focus on "tight areas" before a session can improve range of motion [16] and prevent injury [17]. Light foam rolling for 2-3 minutes prior to lifting is recommended.

Below is a general warm-up that should be completed prior to every workout:

Exercise	Sets	Reps/Time	Notes
Low Intensity Cardio	N/A	N/A	Pick any machine which elevates your heart rate to 100-135 BPM
Front/Back Leg Swing <i>(leg days only)</i>	1	12	12 each leg
Side/Side Leg Swing <i>(leg days only)</i>	1	12	12 each leg
Arm Swings	1	12	Swing your arms out to the sides
Cable External Rotation	1	15	15 each leg
Foam Rolling <i>(optional)</i>	1	0-3 min	Foam roll large muscle groups: quads, lats, calves

Exercise-Specific Warm-Up

After your general warm-up, some exercises will require that you do an exercise-specific warm-up. This part of the warm-up is simply intended to get you used to performing the exercise and get a feel for what the weights feel like on that given training day. In the program, there is a distinction between warm-up sets and working sets. The warm-up sets are meant to be light and easy. The working sets are meant to be more challenging and should be taken much closer to failure.

Most exercises are listed as needing 0-3 warm-up sets. Here are some examples of how to go about warming up for those, depending on how many warm-up sets are listed.

For exercises that list 1 warm-up set:

- Use ~60% of the weight you'll be using for the working sets for your warm-up set (do the same number of reps as listed for the working sets)
- For example, if you're planning on using 50 lbs for 8 reps, your warm-up set would be ~30 lbs for 8 reps
- Then begin your working sets

For exercises that list 2 warm-up sets:

- Perform a mini-pyramid
- For your first warm-up set, use ~50% of the weight you plan to use for the working sets (for the same reps as the working sets)
- For your second warm-up set, use ~70% (for a few less reps than the working sets)
- For example, if you were planning on using 50 lbs for 12 reps, I would use ~25 lbs for 12 reps as my first warm-up set and then ~35 lbs for 8 reps as my second warm-up set.
- Then, begin your working sets

Lastly, for an exercise that lists 3 warm-up sets:

- Perform a full warm-up pyramid
- For your first warm-up set, use ~45% of the weight you plan to use for the working sets (for the same reps as the working sets)
- For your second warm-up set, use ~65% (for a few less reps than the working sets)
- For your third warm-up set, finish with ~85% (for a few less reps still)
- For example, if you were warming up to 100 lbs for 10 reps, go from 45 lbs for 10 reps to 65 lbs for 7 reps to 85 lbs for 5 reps.
- Then begin your working sets.

Keep in mind, there is no exact formula for performing warm-up sets. It really is just a matter of finding a balance between feeling "primed" for the working sets, while not needlessly fatiguing yourself with something that is just meant to be a warm-up. You can feel free to adjust the above guidelines as needed. The goal with a warm-up is to get the blood flowing to the target muscle and get you ready to train hard for the working sets. Warm-up sets are not building muscle. No need to overdo or over-think them.

A dark, moody photograph of a man from the waist up. He is wearing a black tank top and black headphones. He is looking down at a small device, likely a smartphone, which is held in his hands. The background is dark and out of focus.

EXERCISE SUBSTITUTIONS

This program gives you the flexibility to switch out exercises freely. Every exercise in the program has two substitution options to choose from, listed in order of preference. Feel free to switch out the original exercise for either of these substitutions. Doing an exercise substitution could be because:



You want to continue to work on progressing a movement that got swapped out when going into a new training block.

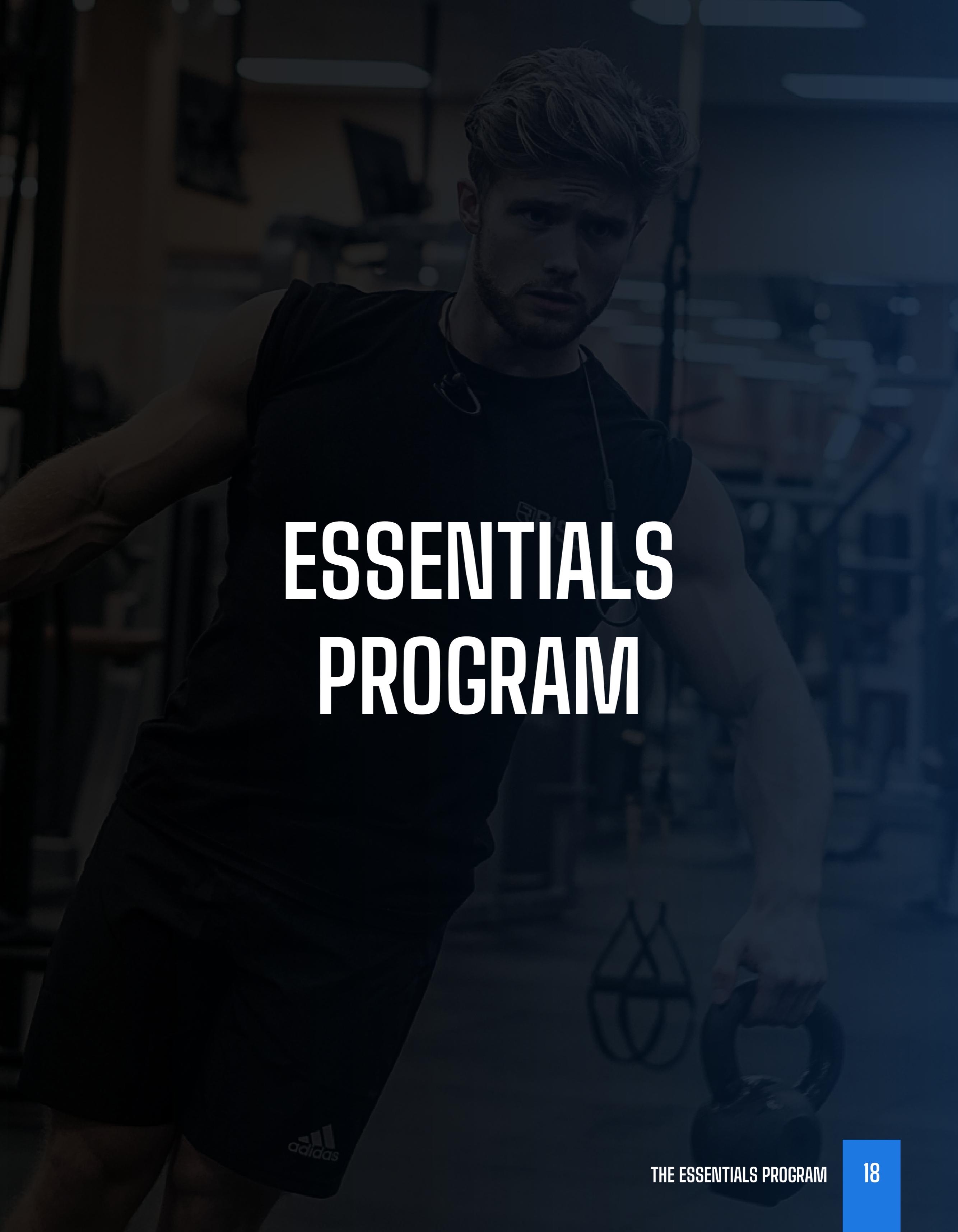


Your gym doesn't have the equipment to perform the prescribed exercise.



You simply prefer one of the other substitution exercises.

For all of the substitutions, exercises have been chosen that work the same muscle groups and a similar movement pattern, so none of the sets, reps, RPE, or rest need to be adjusted. Simply perform the substitution exercise in place of the original exercise.

A black and white photograph of a man with light-colored hair, wearing a dark zip-up hoodie. He is looking down at a device in his hands, possibly a smartphone. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting like a gym or studio.

ESSENTIALS PROGRAM

WEEK 1	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
FULL BODY	Hack Squat (Heavy)	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Machine Squat	Leg Press	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.
	Hack Squat (Back off)	0	1	8-10		8-9	~3 min	Machine Squat	Leg Press	Drop the weight back and focus on controlling the negative. Smooth and consistent rep tempo.
	Incline DB Press	2	2	8-10		8-9	~2 min	Incline Machine Press	Incline Smith Machine Press	Sink the dumbbells as low as you comfortably can.
	Seated Hamstring Curl	1	1	10-12		10	~1.5 min	Nordic Ham Curl	Lying Leg Curl	Do seated if available. Otherwise do Lying Leg Curl or Nordic Ham Curl.
	T-Bar Row	1	2	10-12		9-10	~1.5 min	Helms DB Row	Chest-Supported Machine Row	Squeeze your shoulder blades at the top, control the weight.
	DB Bicep Curl	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	EZ-Bar Curl	Cable EZ-Curl	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Palms start neutral at the bottom and supinate (palms up) as you curl. Do both arms at the same time.
	DB Lateral Raise	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Cable Lateral Raise	Machine Lateral Raise	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Raise the dumbbells "out" not "up", mind muscle connection with middle fibers.
	Cable Crunch	0	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Machine Crunch	Plate-weighted Crunch	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Round your back as you crunch.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 1	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
UPPER	<u>Flat DB Press (Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Weighted Dip</u>	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.
	<u>Flat DB Press (Back off)</u>	0	1	8-10		9-10	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Weighted Dip</u>	Focus on mind-muscle connection with pecs. Drop the weight back and focus on stretch and squeeze!
	<u>2-Grip Lat Pulldown</u>	2	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	<u>2-Grip Pull-up</u>	<u>Machine Pulldown</u>	Do first set wide overhand (1.5x shoulder width), second set underhand (1x shoulder width).
	<u>Seated DB Shoulder Press</u>	1	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	<u>Machine Shoulder Press</u>	<u>Standing DB Arnold Press</u>	Bring the dumbbells all the way down, keep your torso upright.
	<u>Seated Cable Row</u>	1	2	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	<u>Incline Chest-supported DB Row</u>	<u>Chest-Supported T-Bar Row</u>	Focus on squeezing your shoulder blades together, drive your elbows down and back. Last set only do a dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps.
	<u>A1: EZ Bar Skull Crusher</u>	1	2	12-15		10	0 min	<u>Overhead Cable Triceps Extension</u>	<u>DB French Press</u>	Arc the bar behind your head, constant tension on triceps.
	<u>A2: EZ Bar Curl</u>	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>DB Curl</u>	<u>Cable EZ Curl</u>	Arc the bar "out" not "up", focus on squeezing your biceps.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 1	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
LOWER	<u>Romanian Deadlift</u>	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	<u>DB Romanian Deadlift</u>	<u>45° Hyperextension</u>	Maintain a neutral lower back, set your hips back, don't allow your spine to round.
	<u>Leg Press</u>	2	3	10-12		8-9	~2 min	<u>Goblet Squat</u>	<u>DB Walking Lunge</u>	Medium width feet placement on the platform, don't allow your lower back to round.
	<u>Leg Extension</u>	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~1.5 min	<u>DB Step-Up</u>	<u>Goblet Squat</u>	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Focus on squeezing your quads to make the weight move.
	<u>A1: Seated Calf Raise</u>	1	2	12-15		10	0 min	<u>Standing Calf Raise</u>	<u>Leg Press Toe Press</u>	Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
	<u>A2: Cable Crunch</u>	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>Machine Crunch</u>	<u>Plate-Weighted Crunch</u>	Round your back as you crunch.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 2	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
FULL BODY	Hack Squat (Heavy)	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Machine Squat	Leg Press	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.
	Hack Squat (Back off)	0	1	8-10		8-9	~3 min	Machine Squat	Leg Press	Drop the weight back and focus on controlling the negative. Smooth and consistent rep tempo.
	Incline DB Press	2	2	8-10		8-9	~2 min	Incline Machine Press	Incline Smith Machine Press	Sink the dumbbells as low as you comfortably can.
	Seated Hamstring Curl	1	1	10-12		10	~1.5 min	Nordic Ham Curl	Lying Leg Curl	Do seated if available. Otherwise do Lying Leg Curl or Nordic Ham Curl.
	T-Bar Row	1	2	10-12		9-10	~1.5 min	Helms DB Row	Chest-Supported Machine Row	Squeeze your shoulder blades at the top, control the weight.
	DB Bicep Curl	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	EZ-Bar Curl	Cable EZ-Curl	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Palms start neutral at the bottom and supinate (palms up) as you curl. Do both arms at the same time.
	DB Lateral Raise	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Cable Lateral Raise	Machine Lateral Raise	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Raise the dumbbells "out" not "up", mind muscle connection with middle fibers.
	Cable Crunch	0	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Machine Crunch	Plate-weighted Crunch	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Round your back as you crunch.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 2	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
UPPER	<u>Flat DB Press (Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Weighted Dip</u>	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.
	<u>Flat DB Press (Back off)</u>	0	1	8-10		9-10	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Weighted Dip</u>	Focus on mind-muscle connection with pecs. Drop the weight back and focus on stretch and squeeze!
	<u>2-Grip Lat Pulldown</u>	2	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	<u>2-Grip Pull-up</u>	<u>Machine Pulldown</u>	Do first set wide overhand (1.5x shoulder width), second set underhand (1x shoulder width).
	<u>Seated DB Shoulder Press</u>	1	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	<u>Machine Shoulder Press</u>	<u>Standing DB Arnold Press</u>	Bring the dumbbells all the way down, keep your torso upright.
	<u>Seated Cable Row</u>	1	2	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	<u>Incline Chest-supported DB Row</u>	<u>Chest-Supported T-Bar Row</u>	Focus on squeezing your shoulder blades together, drive your elbows down and back. Last set only do a dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps.
	<u>A1: EZ Bar Skull Crusher</u>	1	2	12-15		10	0 min	<u>Overhead Cable Triceps Extension</u>	<u>DB French Press</u>	Arc the bar behind your head, constant tension on triceps.
	<u>A2: EZ Bar Curl</u>	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>DB Curl</u>	<u>Cable EZ Curl</u>	Arc the bar "out" not "up", focus on squeezing your biceps.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 2	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
LOWER	<u>Romanian Deadlift</u>	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	<u>DB Romanian Deadlift</u>	<u>45° Hyperextension</u>	Maintain a neutral lower back, set your hips back, don't allow your spine to round.
	<u>Leg Press</u>	2	3	10-12		8-9	~2 min	<u>Goblet Squat</u>	<u>DB Walking Lunge</u>	Medium width feet placement on the platform, don't allow your lower back to round.
	<u>Leg Extension</u>	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~1.5 min	<u>DB Step-Up</u>	<u>Goblet Squat</u>	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Focus on squeezing your quads to make the weight move.
	<u>A1: Seated Calf Raise</u>	1	2	12-15		10	0 min	<u>Standing Calf Raise</u>	<u>Leg Press Toe Press</u>	Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
	<u>A2: Cable Crunch</u>	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>Machine Crunch</u>	<u>Plate-Weighted Crunch</u>	Round your back as you crunch.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 3	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
FULL BODY	Hack Squat (Heavy)	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Machine Squat	Leg Press	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.
	Hack Squat (Back off)	0	1	8-10		8-9	~3 min	Machine Squat	Leg Press	Drop the weight back and focus on controlling the negative. Smooth and consistent rep tempo.
	Incline DB Press	2	2	8-10		8-9	~2 min	Incline Machine Press	Incline Smith Machine Press	Sink the dumbbells as low as you comfortably can.
	Seated Hamstring Curl	1	1	10-12		10	~1.5 min	Nordic Ham Curl	Lying Leg Curl	Do seated if available. Otherwise do Lying Leg Curl or Nordic Ham Curl.
	T-Bar Row	1	2	10-12		9-10	~1.5 min	Helms DB Row	Chest-Supported Machine Row	Squeeze your shoulder blades at the top, control the weight.
	DB Bicep Curl	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	EZ-Bar Curl	Cable EZ-Curl	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Palms start neutral at the bottom and supinate (palms up) as you curl. Do both arms at the same time.
	DB Lateral Raise	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Cable Lateral Raise	Machine Lateral Raise	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Raise the dumbbells "out" not "up", mind muscle connection with middle fibers.
	Cable Crunch	0	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Machine Crunch	Plate-weighted Crunch	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Round your back as you crunch.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 3	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
UPPER	<u>Flat DB Press (Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Weighted Dip</u>	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.
	<u>Flat DB Press (Back off)</u>	0	1	8-10		9-10	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Weighted Dip</u>	Focus on mind-muscle connection with pecs. Drop the weight back and focus on stretch and squeeze!
	<u>2-Grip Lat Pulldown</u>	2	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	<u>2-Grip Pull-up</u>	<u>Machine Pulldown</u>	Do first set wide overhand (1.5x shoulder width), second set underhand (1x shoulder width).
	<u>Seated DB Shoulder Press</u>	1	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	<u>Machine Shoulder Press</u>	<u>Standing DB Arnold Press</u>	Bring the dumbbells all the way down, keep your torso upright.
	<u>Seated Cable Row</u>	1	2	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	<u>Incline Chest-supported DB Row</u>	<u>Chest-Supported T-Bar Row</u>	Focus on squeezing your shoulder blades together, drive your elbows down and back. Last set only do a dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps.
	<u>A1: EZ Bar Skull Crusher</u>	1	2	12-15		10	0 min	<u>Overhead Cable Triceps Extension</u>	<u>DB French Press</u>	Arc the bar behind your head, constant tension on triceps.
	<u>A2: EZ Bar Curl</u>	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>DB Curl</u>	<u>Cable EZ Curl</u>	Arc the bar "out" not "up", focus on squeezing your biceps.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 3	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
LOWER	<u>Romanian Deadlift</u>	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	<u>DB Romanian Deadlift</u>	<u>45° Hyperextension</u>	Maintain a neutral lower back, set your hips back, don't allow your spine to round.
	<u>Leg Press</u>	2	3	10-12		8-9	~2 min	<u>Goblet Squat</u>	<u>DB Walking Lunge</u>	Medium width feet placement on the platform, don't allow your lower back to round.
	<u>Leg Extension</u>	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~1.5 min	<u>DB Step-Up</u>	<u>Goblet Squat</u>	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Focus on squeezing your quads to make the weight move.
	<u>A1: Seated Calf Raise</u>	1	2	12-15		10	0 min	<u>Standing Calf Raise</u>	<u>Leg Press Toe Press</u>	Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
	<u>A2: Cable Crunch</u>	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>Machine Crunch</u>	<u>Plate-Weighted Crunch</u>	Round your back as you crunch.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 4	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
FULL BODY	Hack Squat (Heavy)	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Machine Squat	Leg Press	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.
	Hack Squat (Back off)	0	1	8-10		8-9	~3 min	Machine Squat	Leg Press	Drop the weight back and focus on controlling the negative. Smooth and consistent rep tempo.
	Incline DB Press	2	2	8-10		8-9	~2 min	Incline Machine Press	Incline Smith Machine Press	Sink the dumbbells as low as you comfortably can.
	Seated Hamstring Curl	1	1	10-12		10	~1.5 min	Nordic Ham Curl	Lying Leg Curl	Do seated if available. Otherwise do Lying Leg Curl or Nordic Ham Curl.
	T-Bar Row	1	2	10-12		9-10	~1.5 min	Helms DB Row	Chest-Supported Machine Row	Squeeze your shoulder blades at the top, control the weight.
	DB Bicep Curl	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	EZ-Bar Curl	Cable EZ-Curl	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Palms start neutral at the bottom and supinate (palms up) as you curl. Do both arms at the same time.
	DB Lateral Raise	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Cable Lateral Raise	Machine Lateral Raise	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Raise the dumbbells "out" not "up", mind muscle connection with middle fibers.
	Cable Crunch	0	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Machine Crunch	Plate-weighted Crunch	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Round your back as you crunch.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 4	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
UPPER	<u>Flat DB Press (Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Weighted Dip</u>	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.
	<u>Flat DB Press (Back off)</u>	0	1	8-10		9-10	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Weighted Dip</u>	Focus on mind-muscle connection with pecs. Drop the weight back and focus on stretch and squeeze!
	<u>2-Grip Lat Pulldown</u>	2	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	<u>2-Grip Pull-up</u>	<u>Machine Pulldown</u>	Do first set wide overhand (1.5x shoulder width), second set underhand (1x shoulder width).
	<u>Seated DB Shoulder Press</u>	1	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	<u>Machine Shoulder Press</u>	<u>Standing DB Arnold Press</u>	Bring the dumbbells all the way down, keep your torso upright.
	<u>Seated Cable Row</u>	1	2	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	<u>Incline Chest-supported DB Row</u>	<u>Chest-Supported T-Bar Row</u>	Focus on squeezing your shoulder blades together, drive your elbows down and back. Last set only do a dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps.
	<u>A1: EZ Bar Skull Crusher</u>	1	2	12-15		10	0 min	<u>Overhead Cable Triceps Extension</u>	<u>DB French Press</u>	Arc the bar behind your head, constant tension on triceps.
	<u>A2: EZ Bar Curl</u>	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>DB Curl</u>	<u>Cable EZ Curl</u>	Arc the bar "out" not "up", focus on squeezing your biceps.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 4	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
LOWER	<u>Romanian Deadlift</u>	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	<u>DB Romanian Deadlift</u>	<u>45° Hyperextension</u>	Maintain a neutral lower back, set your hips back, don't allow your spine to round.
	<u>Leg Press</u>	2	3	10-12		8-9	~2 min	<u>Goblet Squat</u>	<u>DB Walking Lunge</u>	Medium width feet placement on the platform, don't allow your lower back to round.
	<u>Leg Extension</u>	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~1.5 min	<u>DB Step-Up</u>	<u>Goblet Squat</u>	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Focus on squeezing your quads to make the weight move.
	<u>A1: Seated Calf Raise</u>	1	2	12-15		10	0 min	<u>Standing Calf Raise</u>	<u>Leg Press Toe Press</u>	Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
	<u>A2: Cable Crunch</u>	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>Machine Crunch</u>	<u>Plate-Weighted Crunch</u>	Round your back as you crunch.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 5	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
FULL BODY	<u>Incline Machine Press</u>	1-2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Incline Smith Machine Press</u>	<u>Incline DB Press</u>	45° incline, focus on squeezing your chest.
	<u>Single-Leg Leg Press (Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	6-8 per leg		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Squat</u>	<u>Hack Squat</u>	High and wide foot positioning, start with weaker leg.
	<u>Single-Leg Leg Press (Back off)</u>	0	1	10-12 per leg		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Squat</u>	<u>Hack Squat</u>	High and wide foot positioning, start with weaker leg.
	<u>Pendlay Row</u>	2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>T-Bar Row</u>	<u>Seated Cable Row</u>	Initiate the movement by squeezing your shoulder blades together, pull to your lower chest, avoid using momentum.
	<u>Glute-Ham Raise</u>	1	1	10-12		10	~1.5 min	<u>Nordic Ham Curl</u>	<u>Lying Leg Curl</u>	Keep your hips straight, do Nordic ham curls if no GHR machine.
	<u>Spider Curl</u>	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	<u>DB Preacher Curl</u>	<u>Bayesian Cable Curl</u>	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Brace your chest against an incline bench, curl with your elbows slightly in front of you.
	<u>Cable Lateral Raise</u>	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	<u>Machine Lateral Raise</u>	<u>DB Lateral Raise</u>	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Lean away from the cable. Focus on squeezing your delts.
	<u>Hanging Leg Raise</u>	0	1	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>Roman Chair Crunch</u>	<u>Reverse Crunch</u>	Knees to chest, controlled reps, straighten legs more to increase difficulty.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 5	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
UPPER	<u>2-Grip Pullup</u>	1-2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Machine Pulldown</u>	<u>2-Grip Lat Pulldown</u>	First set 1.5x shoulder width grip. Second set 1.0x shoulder width grip.
	<u>Weighted Dip (Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	6-8		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Flat DB Press</u>	Tuck your elbows at 45°, lean your torso forward 15°, shoulder width or slightly wider grip.
	<u>Weighted Dip (Back off)</u>	0	1	10-12		9-10	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Flat DB Press</u>	Tuck your elbows at 45°, lean your torso forward 15°, shoulder width or slightly wider grip.
	<u>Incline Chest-Supported DB Row</u>	1	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Chest-Supported T-Bar Row</u>	<u>Seated Cable Row</u>	Keep elbows at ~30° angle from torso. Pull the weight towards your navel.
	<u>Standing DB Arnold Press</u>	1	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Machine Shoulder Press</u>	<u>Seated DB Shoulder Press</u>	Start with your elbows in front of you and palms facing in. Rotate the dumbbells so that your palms face forward as you press.
	<u>A1: DB Incline Curl</u>	1	2	15-20		10	0 min	<u>Cable EZ Curl</u>	<u>EZ Bar Curl</u>	Brace upper back against bench, 45 degree incline, keep shoulders back as you curl.
	<u>A2: DB French Press</u>	1	2	15-20		10	~1.5 min	<u>Overhead Cable Triceps Extension</u>	<u>EZ Bar Skull Crusher</u>	Can perform seated or standing. Press the dumbbell straight up and down behind your head.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 5	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
LOWER	DB Bulgarian Split Squat	2	3	10-12		8-9	~2 min	Goblet Squat	Leg Press	Start with your weaker leg. Squat deep.
	DB Romanian Deadlift	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	Romanian Deadlift	45° Hyperextension	Emphasize the stretch in your hamstrings, prevent your lower back from rounding.
	Goblet Squat	1	1	12-15		9-10	~1.5 min	Leg Extension	Step-Up	Hold the dumbbell underneath your chin, sit back and down, push your knees out laterally.
	A1: Leg Press Toe Press	1	2	15-20		10	0 min	Standing Calf Raise	Seated Calf Raise	Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
	A2: Machine Crunch	1	2	10-12		1-9	~1.5 min	Plate-Weighted Crunch	Cable Crunch	Squeeze your abs to move the weight, don't use your arms to help.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 6	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
FULL BODY	Incline Machine Press	1-2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	Incline Smith Machine Press	Incline DB Press	45° incline, focus on squeezing your chest.
	Single-Leg Leg Press (Heavy)	2-3	1	6-8 per leg		8-9	~3 min	Machine Squat	Hack Squat	High and wide foot positioning, start with weaker leg.
	Single-Leg Leg Press (Back off)	0	1	10-12 per leg		8-9	~3 min	Machine Squat	Hack Squat	High and wide foot positioning, start with weaker leg.
	Pendlay Row	2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	T-Bar Row	Seated Cable Row	Initiate the movement by squeezing your shoulder blades together, pull to your lower chest, avoid using momentum.
	Glute-Ham Raise	1	1	10-12		10	~1.5 min	Nordic Ham Curl	Lying Leg Curl	Keep your hips straight, do Nordic ham curls if no GHR machine.
	Spider Curl	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	DB Preacher Curl	Bayesian Cable Curl	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Brace your chest against an incline bench, curl with your elbows slightly in front of you.
	Cable Lateral Raise	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Machine Lateral Raise	DB Lateral Raise	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Lean away from the cable. Focus on squeezing your delts.
	Hanging Leg Raise	0	1	12-15		10	~1.5 min	Roman Chair Crunch	Reverse Crunch	Knees to chest, controlled reps, straighten legs more to increase difficulty.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 6	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
UPPER	<u>2-Grip Pullup</u>	1-2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Machine Pulldown</u>	<u>2-Grip Lat Pulldown</u>	First set 1.5x shoulder width grip. Second set 1.0x shoulder width grip.
	<u>Weighted Dip (Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	6-8		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Flat DB Press</u>	Tuck your elbows at 45°, lean your torso forward 15°, shoulder width or slightly wider grip.
	<u>Weighted Dip (Back off)</u>	0	1	10-12		9-10	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Flat DB Press</u>	Tuck your elbows at 45°, lean your torso forward 15°, shoulder width or slightly wider grip.
	<u>Incline Chest-Supported DB Row</u>	1	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Chest-Supported T-Bar Row</u>	<u>Seated Cable Row</u>	Keep elbows at ~30° angle from torso. Pull the weight towards your navel.
	<u>Standing DB Arnold Press</u>	1	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Machine Shoulder Press</u>	<u>Seated DB Shoulder Press</u>	Start with your elbows in front of you and palms facing in. Rotate the dumbbells so that your palms face forward as you press.
	<u>A1: DB Incline Curl</u>	1	2	15-20		10	0 min	<u>Cable EZ Curl</u>	<u>EZ Bar Curl</u>	Brace upper back against bench, 45 degree incline, keep shoulders back as you curl.
	<u>A2: DB French Press</u>	1	2	15-20		10	~1.5 min	<u>Overhead Cable Triceps Extension</u>	<u>EZ Bar Skull Crusher</u>	Can perform seated or standing. Press the dumbbell straight up and down behind your head.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 6	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
LOWER	DB Bulgarian Split Squat	2	3	10-12		8-9	~2 min	Goblet Squat	Leg Press	Start with your weaker leg. Squat deep.
	DB Romanian Deadlift	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	Romanian Deadlift	45° Hyperextension	Emphasize the stretch in your hamstrings, prevent your lower back from rounding.
	Goblet Squat	1	1	12-15		9-10	~1.5 min	Leg Extension	Step-Up	Hold the dumbbell underneath your chin, sit back and down, push your knees out laterally.
	A1: Leg Press Toe Press	1	2	15-20		10	0 min	Standing Calf Raise	Seated Calf Raise	Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
	A2: Machine Crunch	1	2	10-12		1-9	~1.5 min	Plate-Weighted Crunch	Cable Crunch	Squeeze your abs to move the weight, don't use your arms to help.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 7	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
FULL BODY	<u>Incline Machine Press</u>	1-2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Incline Smith Machine Press</u>	<u>Incline DB Press</u>	45° incline, focus on squeezing your chest.
	<u>Single-Leg Leg Press (Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	6-8 per leg		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Squat</u>	<u>Hack Squat</u>	High and wide foot positioning, start with weaker leg.
	<u>Single-Leg Leg Press (Back off)</u>	0	1	10-12 per leg		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Squat</u>	<u>Hack Squat</u>	High and wide foot positioning, start with weaker leg.
	<u>Pendlay Row</u>	2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>T-Bar Row</u>	<u>Seated Cable Row</u>	Initiate the movement by squeezing your shoulder blades together, pull to your lower chest, avoid using momentum.
	<u>Glute-Ham Raise</u>	1	1	10-12		10	~1.5 min	<u>Nordic Ham Curl</u>	<u>Lying Leg Curl</u>	Keep your hips straight, do Nordic ham curls if no GHR machine.
	<u>Spider Curl</u>	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	<u>DB Preacher Curl</u>	<u>Bayesian Cable Curl</u>	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Brace your chest against an incline bench, curl with your elbows slightly in front of you.
	<u>Cable Lateral Raise</u>	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	<u>Machine Lateral Raise</u>	<u>DB Lateral Raise</u>	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Lean away from the cable. Focus on squeezing your delts.
	<u>Hanging Leg Raise</u>	0	1	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>Roman Chair Crunch</u>	<u>Reverse Crunch</u>	Knees to chest, controlled reps, straighten legs more to increase difficulty.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 7	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
UPPER	<u>2-Grip Pullup</u>	1-2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Machine Pulldown</u>	<u>2-Grip Lat Pulldown</u>	First set 1.5x shoulder width grip. Second set 1.0x shoulder width grip.
	<u>Weighted Dip (Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	6-8		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Flat DB Press</u>	Tuck your elbows at 45°, lean your torso forward 15°, shoulder width or slightly wider grip.
	<u>Weighted Dip (Back off)</u>	0	1	10-12		9-10	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Flat DB Press</u>	Tuck your elbows at 45°, lean your torso forward 15°, shoulder width or slightly wider grip.
	<u>Incline Chest-Supported DB Row</u>	1	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Chest-Supported T-Bar Row</u>	<u>Seated Cable Row</u>	Keep elbows at ~30° angle from torso. Pull the weight towards your navel.
	<u>Standing DB Arnold Press</u>	1	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Machine Shoulder Press</u>	<u>Seated DB Shoulder Press</u>	Start with your elbows in front of you and palms facing in. Rotate the dumbbells so that your palms face forward as you press.
	<u>A1: DB Incline Curl</u>	1	2	15-20		10	0 min	<u>Cable EZ Curl</u>	<u>EZ Bar Curl</u>	Brace upper back against bench, 45 degree incline, keep shoulders back as you curl.
	<u>A2: DB French Press</u>	1	2	15-20		10	~1.5 min	<u>Overhead Cable Triceps Extension</u>	<u>EZ Bar Skull Crusher</u>	Can perform seated or standing. Press the dumbbell straight up and down behind your head.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 7	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
LOWER	DB Bulgarian Split Squat	2	3	10-12		8-9	~2 min	Goblet Squat	Leg Press	Start with your weaker leg. Squat deep.
	DB Romanian Deadlift	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	Romanian Deadlift	45° Hyperextension	Emphasize the stretch in your hamstrings, prevent your lower back from rounding.
	Goblet Squat	1	1	12-15		9-10	~1.5 min	Leg Extension	Step-Up	Hold the dumbbell underneath your chin, sit back and down, push your knees out laterally.
	A1: Leg Press Toe Press	1	2	15-20		10	0 min	Standing Calf Raise	Seated Calf Raise	Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
	A2: Machine Crunch	1	2	10-12		1-9	~1.5 min	Plate-Weighted Crunch	Cable Crunch	Squeeze your abs to move the weight, don't use your arms to help.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 8	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
FULL BODY	<u>Incline Machine Press</u>	1-2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Incline Smith Machine Press</u>	<u>Incline DB Press</u>	45° incline, focus on squeezing your chest.
	<u>Single-Leg Leg Press (Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	6-8 per leg		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Squat</u>	<u>Hack Squat</u>	High and wide foot positioning, start with weaker leg.
	<u>Single-Leg Leg Press (Back off)</u>	0	1	10-12 per leg		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Squat</u>	<u>Hack Squat</u>	High and wide foot positioning, start with weaker leg.
	<u>Pendlay Row</u>	2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>T-Bar Row</u>	<u>Seated Cable Row</u>	Initiate the movement by squeezing your shoulder blades together, pull to your lower chest, avoid using momentum.
	<u>Glute-Ham Raise</u>	1	1	10-12		10	~1.5 min	<u>Nordic Ham Curl</u>	<u>Lying Leg Curl</u>	Keep your hips straight, do Nordic ham curls if no GHR machine.
	<u>Spider Curl</u>	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	<u>DB Preacher Curl</u>	<u>Bayesian Cable Curl</u>	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Brace your chest against an incline bench, curl with your elbows slightly in front of you.
	<u>Cable Lateral Raise</u>	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	<u>Machine Lateral Raise</u>	<u>DB Lateral Raise</u>	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Lean away from the cable. Focus on squeezing your delts.
	<u>Hanging Leg Raise</u>	0	1	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>Roman Chair Crunch</u>	<u>Reverse Crunch</u>	Knees to chest, controlled reps, straighten legs more to increase difficulty.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 8	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
UPPER	<u>2-Grip Pullup</u>	1-2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Machine Pulldown</u>	<u>2-Grip Lat Pulldown</u>	First set 1.5x shoulder width grip. Second set 1.0x shoulder width grip.
	<u>Weighted Dip (Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	6-8		8-9	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Flat DB Press</u>	Tuck your elbows at 45°, lean your torso forward 15°, shoulder width or slightly wider grip.
	<u>Weighted Dip (Back off)</u>	0	1	10-12		9-10	~3 min	<u>Machine Chest Press</u>	<u>Flat DB Press</u>	Tuck your elbows at 45°, lean your torso forward 15°, shoulder width or slightly wider grip.
	<u>Incline Chest-Supported DB Row</u>	1	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Chest-Supported T-Bar Row</u>	<u>Seated Cable Row</u>	Keep elbows at ~30° angle from torso. Pull the weight towards your navel.
	<u>Standing DB Arnold Press</u>	1	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	<u>Machine Shoulder Press</u>	<u>Seated DB Shoulder Press</u>	Start with your elbows in front of you and palms facing in. Rotate the dumbbells so that your palms face forward as you press.
	<u>A1: DB Incline Curl</u>	1	2	15-20		10	0 min	<u>Cable EZ Curl</u>	<u>EZ Bar Curl</u>	Brace upper back against bench, 45 degree incline, keep shoulders back as you curl.
	<u>A2: DB French Press</u>	1	2	15-20		10	~1.5 min	<u>Overhead Cable Triceps Extension</u>	<u>EZ Bar Skull Crusher</u>	Can perform seated or standing. Press the dumbbell straight up and down behind your head.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 8	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
LOWER	DB Bulgarian Split Squat	2	3	10-12		8-9	~2 min	Goblet Squat	Leg Press	Start with your weaker leg. Squat deep.
	DB Romanian Deadlift	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	Romanian Deadlift	45° Hyperextension	Emphasize the stretch in your hamstrings, prevent your lower back from rounding.
	Goblet Squat	1	1	12-15		9-10	~1.5 min	Leg Extension	Step-Up	Hold the dumbbell underneath your chin, sit back and down, push your knees out laterally.
	A1: Leg Press Toe Press	1	2	15-20		10	0 min	Standing Calf Raise	Seated Calf Raise	Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
	A2: Machine Crunch	1	2	10-12		1-9	~1.5 min	Plate-Weighted Crunch	Cable Crunch	Squeeze your abs to move the weight, don't use your arms to help.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 9	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
FULL BODY	Machine Squat (Heavy)	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Hack Squat	Leg Press	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.
	Machine Squat (Back off)	0	1	8-10		8-9	~3 min	Hack Squat	Leg Press	Drop the weight back and focus on controlling the negative. Smooth and consistent rep tempo.
	Standing DB Arnold Press	2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	Seated DB Shoulder Press	Machine Shoulder Press	Start with your elbows in front of you and palms facing in. Rotate the dumbbells so that your palms face forward as you press.
	Nordic Ham Curl	1	1	8-10		10	~1.5 min	Lying Leg Curl	Glute-Ham Raise	Keep your hips as straight as you can, can sub for lying leg curl.
	Meadows Row	2	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	Single-Arm DB Row	Pendlay Row	Brace with your non-working hand against your knee, stay light, emphasize form.
	Inverse Zottman Curl	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Hammer Curl	DB Curl	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Hammer curl on concentric, supinated curl (palms up) on the eccentric.
	Machine Lateral Raise	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	DB Lateral Raise	Cable Lateral Raise	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Focus on squeezing your lateral delt to move the weight.
	Pec Deck	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Cable Flye	DB Flye	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Focus on bringing your inner elbows together - not your hands.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 9	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
UPPER	Machine Chest Press (Heavy)	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Flat DB Press	Weighted Dip	Focus on squeezing your chest.
	Machine Chest Press (Back off)	0	1	8-10		9-10	~3 min	Flat DB Press	Weighted Dip	Focus on squeezing your chest.
	Machine Pulldown	2	2	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	2-Grip Lat Pulldown	Weighted Pullup	Think about pulling your elbows "down" and "in". Last set only do a dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps.
	Cable Shoulder Press	1	2	12-15 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	Machine Shoulder Press	Seated DB Shoulder Press	Bring cables all the way down to shoulder height, keep torso upright. Last set only do a dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps.
	Helms DB Row	1	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	Chest-Supported T-Bar Row	Machine Row	Be ultra strict with form, drive elbows out and back at 45 degree angle.
	A1: Overhead Cable Triceps Extension	1	2	12-15		10	0 min	EZ Bar Skull Crusher	DB French Press	Do both arms at once, resist the negative.
	A2: Cable EZ Curl	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	EZ Bar Curl	DB Curl	Focus on squeezing your biceps. Control the negative.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 9	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
LOWER	<u>Romanian Deadlift</u>	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	<u>Romanian Deadlift</u>	<u>45° Hyperextension</u>	Maintain a neutral lower back, set your hips back, don't allow your spine to round.
	<u>DB Walking Lunge</u>	2	3	8-10		8-9	~2 min	<u>DB Step-Up</u>	<u>DB Bulgarian Split Squat</u>	Take medium strides, minimize the amount you push off your rear leg.
	<u>Leg Extension</u>	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		9-10	~1.5 min	<u>Goblet Squat</u>	<u>DB Step-Up</u>	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Focus on squeezing your quads to make the weight move.
	<u>A1: Standing Calf Raise</u>	1	2	15-20		10	0 min	<u>Seated Calf Raise</u>	<u>Leg Press Toe Press</u>	Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
	<u>A2: Plate-Weighted Crunch</u>	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>Cable Crunch</u>	<u>Machine Crunch</u>	Hold a plate or DB to your chest and crunch hard!

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 10	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
FULL BODY	Machine Squat (Heavy)	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Hack Squat	Leg Press	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.
	Machine Squat (Back off)	0	1	8-10		8-9	~3 min	Hack Squat	Leg Press	Drop the weight back and focus on controlling the negative. Smooth and consistent rep tempo.
	Standing DB Arnold Press	2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	Seated DB Shoulder Press	Machine Shoulder Press	Start with your elbows in front of you and palms facing in. Rotate the dumbbells so that your palms face forward as you press.
	Nordic Ham Curl	1	1	8-10		10	~1.5 min	Lying Leg Curl	Glute-Ham Raise	Keep your hips as straight as you can, can sub for lying leg curl.
	Meadows Row	2	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	Single-Arm DB Row	Pendlay Row	Brace with your non-working hand against your knee, stay light, emphasize form.
	Inverse Zottman Curl	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Hammer Curl	DB Curl	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Hammer curl on concentric, supinated curl (palms up) on the eccentric.
	Machine Lateral Raise	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	DB Lateral Raise	Cable Lateral Raise	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Focus on squeezing your lateral delt to move the weight.
	Pec Deck	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Cable Flye	DB Flye	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Focus on bringing your inner elbows together - not your hands.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 10	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
UPPER	Machine Chest Press <u>(Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Flat DB Press	Weighted Dip	Focus on squeezing your chest.
	Machine Chest Press <u>(Back off)</u>	0	1	8-10		9-10	~3 min	Flat DB Press	Weighted Dip	Focus on squeezing your chest.
	Machine Pulldown	2	2	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	2-Grip Lat Pulldown	Weighted Pullup	Think about pulling your elbows "down" and "in". Last set only do a dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps.
	Cable Shoulder Press	1	2	12-15 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	Machine Shoulder Press	Seated DB Shoulder Press	Bring cables all the way down to shoulder height, keep torso upright. Last set only do a dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps.
	Helms DB Row	1	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	Chest-Supported T-Bar Row	Machine Row	Be ultra strict with form, drive elbows out and back at 45 degree angle.
	A1: Overhead Cable Triceps Extension	1	2	12-15		10	0 min	EZ Bar Skull Crusher	DB French Press	Do both arms at once, resist the negative.
	A2: Cable EZ Curl	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	EZ Bar Curl	DB Curl	Focus on squeezing your biceps. Control the negative.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 10	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
LOWER	<u>Romanian Deadlift</u>	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	<u>Romanian Deadlift</u>	<u>45° Hyperextension</u>	Maintain a neutral lower back, set your hips back, don't allow your spine to round.
	<u>DB Walking Lunge</u>	2	3	8-10		8-9	~2 min	<u>DB Step-Up</u>	<u>DB Bulgarian Split Squat</u>	Take medium strides, minimize the amount you push off your rear leg.
	<u>Leg Extension</u>	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		9-10	~1.5 min	<u>Goblet Squat</u>	<u>DB Step-Up</u>	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Focus on squeezing your quads to make the weight move.
	<u>A1: Standing Calf Raise</u>	1	2	15-20		10	0 min	<u>Seated Calf Raise</u>	<u>Leg Press Toe Press</u>	Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
	<u>A2: Plate-Weighted Crunch</u>	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>Cable Crunch</u>	<u>Machine Crunch</u>	Hold a plate or DB to your chest and crunch hard!

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 11	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
FULL BODY	Machine Squat (Heavy)	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Hack Squat	Leg Press	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.
	Machine Squat (Back off)	0	1	8-10		8-9	~3 min	Hack Squat	Leg Press	Drop the weight back and focus on controlling the negative. Smooth and consistent rep tempo.
	Standing DB Arnold Press	2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	Seated DB Shoulder Press	Machine Shoulder Press	Start with your elbows in front of you and palms facing in. Rotate the dumbbells so that your palms face forward as you press.
	Nordic Ham Curl	1	1	8-10		10	~1.5 min	Lying Leg Curl	Glute-Ham Raise	Keep your hips as straight as you can, can sub for lying leg curl.
	Meadows Row	2	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	Single-Arm DB Row	Pendlay Row	Brace with your non-working hand against your knee, stay light, emphasize form.
	Inverse Zottman Curl	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Hammer Curl	DB Curl	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Hammer curl on concentric, supinated curl (palms up) on the eccentric.
	Machine Lateral Raise	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	DB Lateral Raise	Cable Lateral Raise	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Focus on squeezing your lateral delt to move the weight.
	Pec Deck	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Cable Flye	DB Flye	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Focus on bringing your inner elbows together - not your hands.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 11	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
UPPER	Machine Chest Press <u>(Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Flat DB Press	Weighted Dip	Focus on squeezing your chest.
	Machine Chest Press <u>(Back off)</u>	0	1	8-10		9-10	~3 min	Flat DB Press	Weighted Dip	Focus on squeezing your chest.
	Machine Pulldown	2	2	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	2-Grip Lat Pulldown	Weighted Pullup	Think about pulling your elbows "down" and "in". Last set only do a dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps.
	Cable Shoulder Press	1	2	12-15 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	Machine Shoulder Press	Seated DB Shoulder Press	Bring cables all the way down to shoulder height, keep torso upright. Last set only do a dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps.
	Helms DB Row	1	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	Chest-Supported T-Bar Row	Machine Row	Be ultra strict with form, drive elbows out and back at 45 degree angle.
	A1: Overhead Cable Triceps Extension	1	2	12-15		10	0 min	EZ Bar Skull Crusher	DB French Press	Do both arms at once, resist the negative.
	A2: Cable EZ Curl	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	EZ Bar Curl	DB Curl	Focus on squeezing your biceps. Control the negative.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 11	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
LOWER	<u>Romanian Deadlift</u>	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	<u>Romanian Deadlift</u>	<u>45° Hyperextension</u>	Maintain a neutral lower back, set your hips back, don't allow your spine to round.
	<u>DB Walking Lunge</u>	2	3	8-10		8-9	~2 min	<u>DB Step-Up</u>	<u>DB Bulgarian Split Squat</u>	Take medium strides, minimize the amount you push off your rear leg.
	<u>Leg Extension</u>	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		9-10	~1.5 min	<u>Goblet Squat</u>	<u>DB Step-Up</u>	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Focus on squeezing your quads to make the weight move.
	<u>A1: Standing Calf Raise</u>	1	2	15-20		10	0 min	<u>Seated Calf Raise</u>	<u>Leg Press Toe Press</u>	Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
	<u>A2: Plate-Weighted Crunch</u>	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>Cable Crunch</u>	<u>Machine Crunch</u>	Hold a plate or DB to your chest and crunch hard!

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 12	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
FULL BODY	Machine Squat (Heavy)	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Hack Squat	Leg Press	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.
	Machine Squat (Back off)	0	1	8-10		8-9	~3 min	Hack Squat	Leg Press	Drop the weight back and focus on controlling the negative. Smooth and consistent rep tempo.
	Standing DB Arnold Press	2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	Seated DB Shoulder Press	Machine Shoulder Press	Start with your elbows in front of you and palms facing in. Rotate the dumbbells so that your palms face forward as you press.
	Nordic Ham Curl	1	1	8-10		10	~1.5 min	Lying Leg Curl	Glute-Ham Raise	Keep your hips as straight as you can, can sub for lying leg curl.
	Meadows Row	2	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	Single-Arm DB Row	Pendlay Row	Brace with your non-working hand against your knee, stay light, emphasize form.
	Inverse Zottman Curl	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Hammer Curl	DB Curl	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Hammer curl on concentric, supinated curl (palms up) on the eccentric.
	Machine Lateral Raise	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	DB Lateral Raise	Cable Lateral Raise	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Focus on squeezing your lateral delt to move the weight.
	Pec Deck	1	1	10-12 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Cable Flye	DB Flye	Dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps. Focus on bringing your inner elbows together - not your hands.

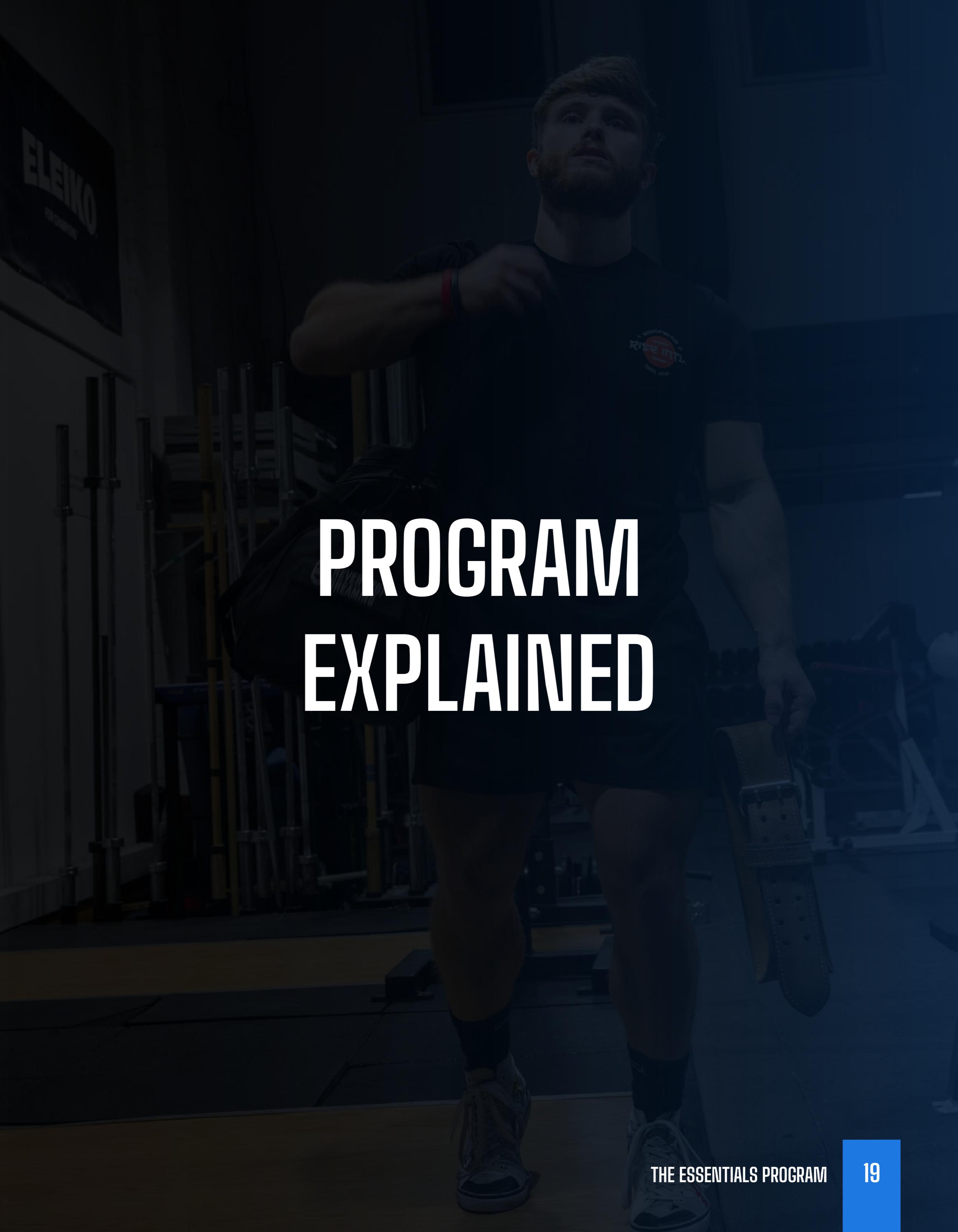
SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 12	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
UPPER	Machine Chest Press <u>(Heavy)</u>	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Flat DB Press	Weighted Dip	Focus on squeezing your chest.
	Machine Chest Press <u>(Back off)</u>	0	1	8-10		9-10	~3 min	Flat DB Press	Weighted Dip	Focus on squeezing your chest.
	Machine Pulldown	2	2	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	2-Grip Lat Pulldown	Weighted Pullup	Think about pulling your elbows "down" and "in". Last set only do a dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps.
	Cable Shoulder Press	1	2	12-15 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	Machine Shoulder Press	Seated DB Shoulder Press	Bring cables all the way down to shoulder height, keep torso upright. Last set only do a dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps.
	Helms DB Row	1	2	10-12		9-10	~2 min	Chest-Supported T-Bar Row	Machine Row	Be ultra strict with form, drive elbows out and back at 45 degree angle.
	A1: Overhead Cable Triceps Extension	1	2	12-15		10	0 min	EZ Bar Skull Crusher	DB French Press	Do both arms at once, resist the negative.
	A2: Cable EZ Curl	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	EZ Bar Curl	DB Curl	Focus on squeezing your biceps. Control the negative.

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS

WEEK 12	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
LOWER	<u>Romanian Deadlift</u>	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	<u>Romanian Deadlift</u>	<u>45° Hyperextension</u>	Maintain a neutral lower back, set your hips back, don't allow your spine to round.
	<u>DB Walking Lunge</u>	2	3	8-10		8-9	~2 min	<u>DB Step-Up</u>	<u>DB Bulgarian Split Squat</u>	Take medium strides, minimize the amount you push off your rear leg.
	<u>Leg Extension</u>	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		9-10	~1.5 min	<u>Goblet Squat</u>	<u>DB Step-Up</u>	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Focus on squeezing your quads to make the weight move.
	<u>A1: Standing Calf Raise</u>	1	2	15-20		10	0 min	<u>Seated Calf Raise</u>	<u>Leg Press Toe Press</u>	Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
	<u>A2: Plate-Weighted Crunch</u>	1	2	12-15		10	~1.5 min	<u>Cable Crunch</u>	<u>Machine Crunch</u>	Hold a plate or DB to your chest and crunch hard!

SUGGESTED 1-2 REST DAYS



PROGRAM EXPLAINED

KEY TERMS

CONCENTRIC	The contracting (“positive”) aspect of the lift.
DB	Dumbbell
DOMS	Delayed onset muscle soreness
ECCENTRIC	The lowering (“negative”) aspect of the lift.
EFFORT	How hard you are pushing the set relative to failure. Measured with RPE and/or %1RM.
FREQUENCY	How often you directly train a given muscle or lift every seven days.
HARD SET	A set taken within 0-3 reps of failure (a “working set” and not a warm-up set)
HYPERTROPHY	The growth of (muscle) tissue.
INTENSITY	Effort and load.
LOAD	The weight of the external resistance.
LSRPE	Last set RPE
PERIODIZATION	The organization of training over time.
PROGRESSIVE OVERLOAD	The gradual increase of stress placed upon the body during exercise training. In training contexts, this generally involves progressively increasing some lifting parameter over time (usually increasing weight/reps or improving technique/mind-muscle connection).
ROM	Range of motion.
RPE	Rate of perceived exertion. A measure of how difficult a set was on a 1-10 scale, with 10 meaning muscular failure was achieved. An RPE of 9 means you could have gotten one more rep, an RPE of 8 means you could have gotten two more reps, etc.
TEMPO	The speed at which the lift occurs.
VOLUME	Total amount of work performed. Usually approximated as tough working sets.

ANATOMY

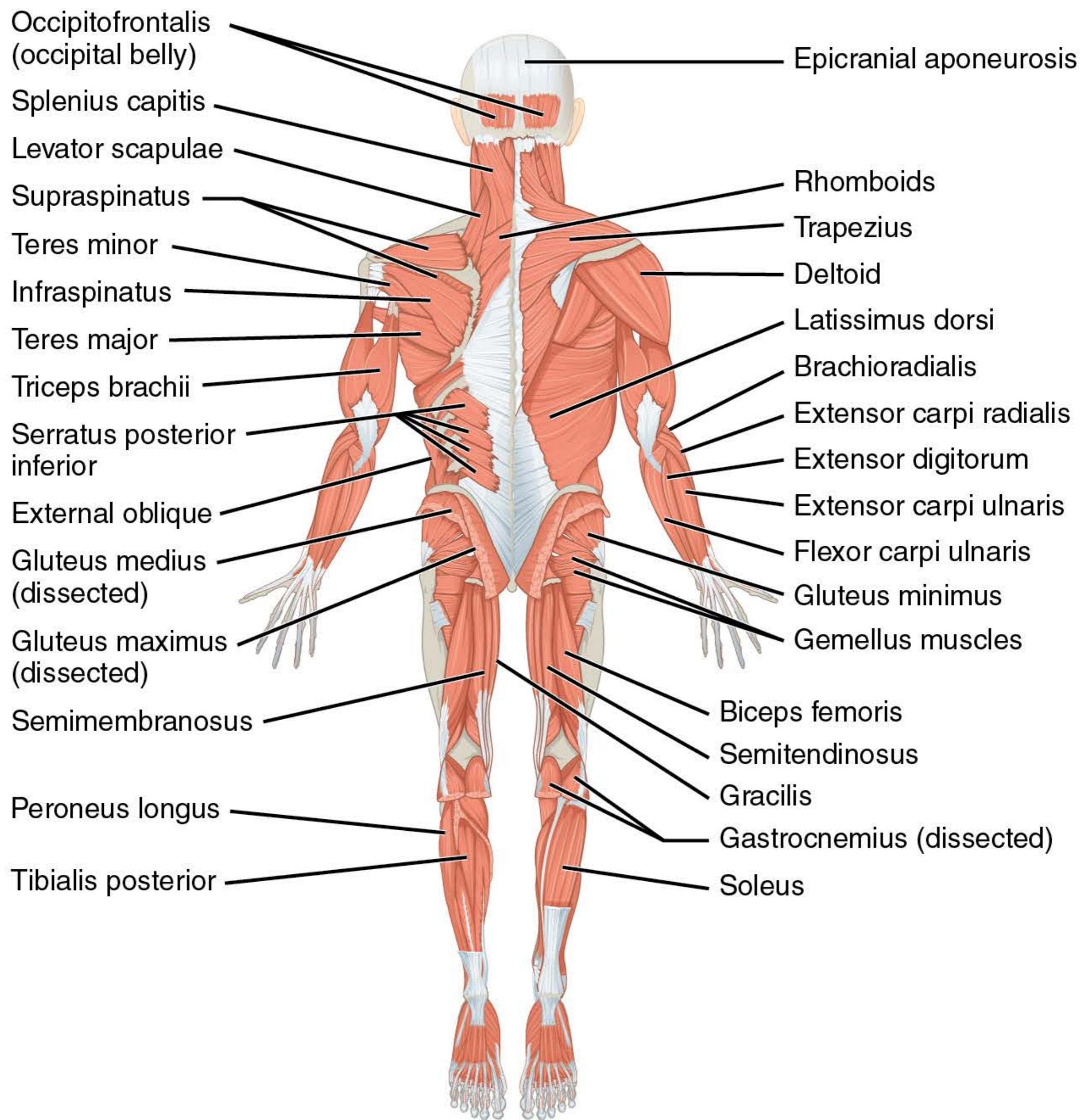


Figure 1: The Main Posterior Muscles

Major muscles of the body.
Right side: superficial; Left side: deep (posterior view)

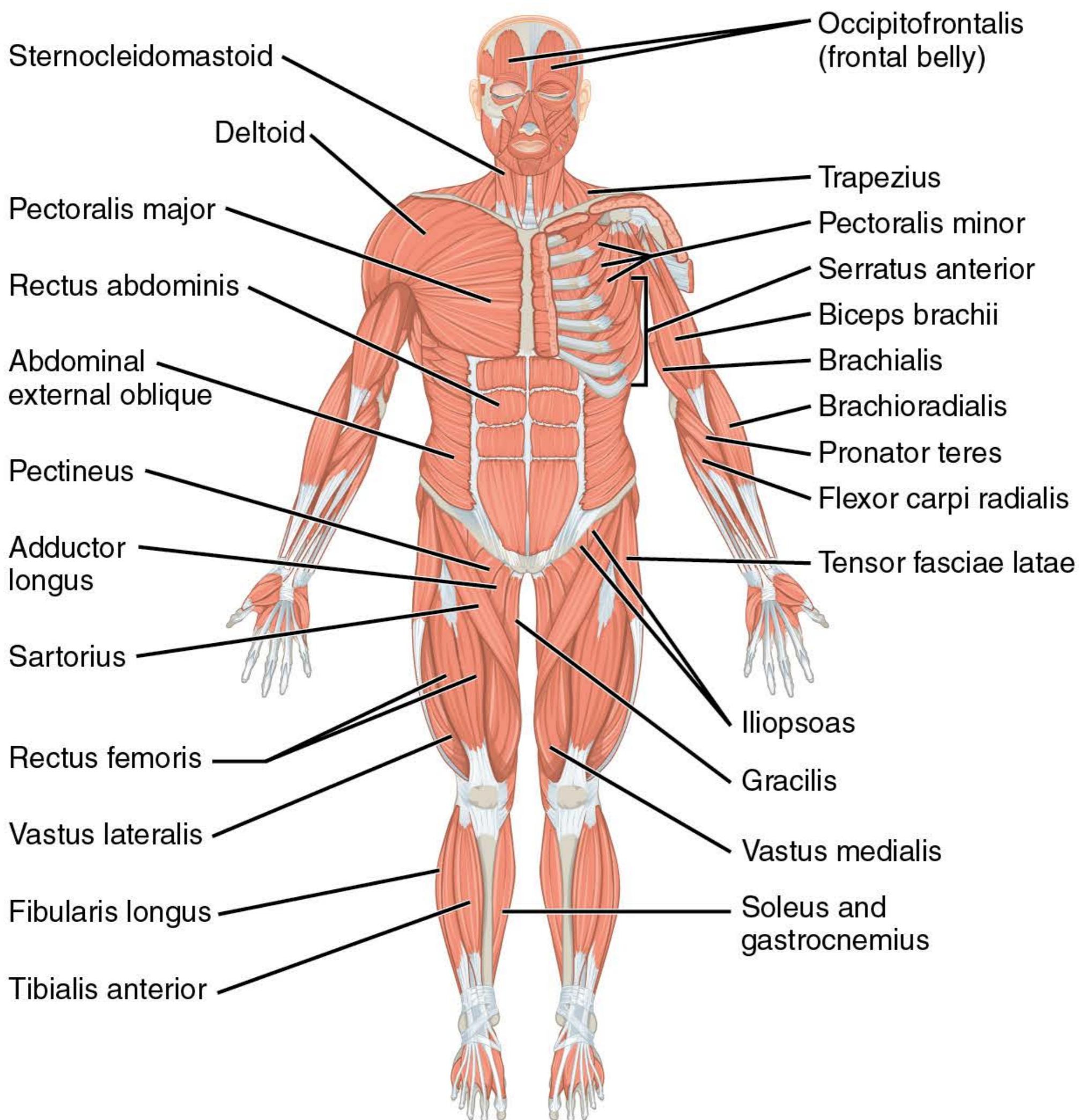
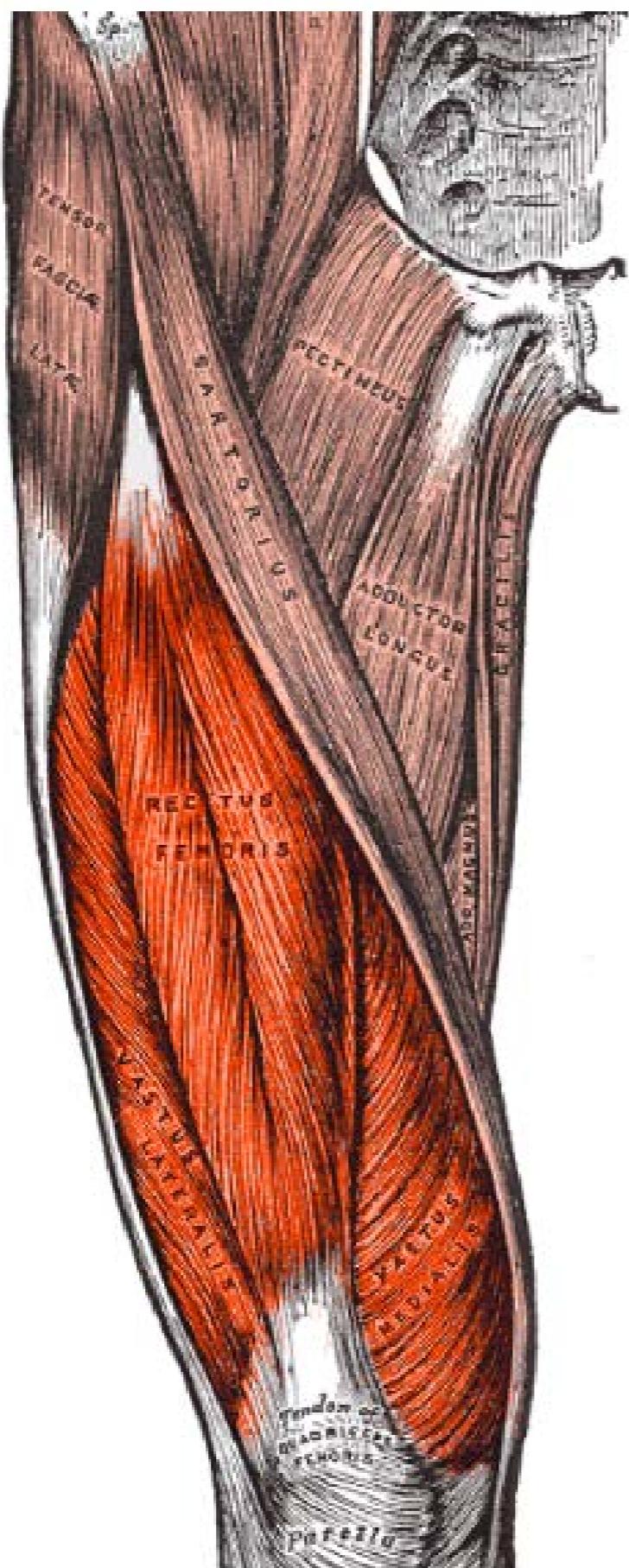


Figure 2: The Main Anterior Muscles

Major muscles of the body.
Right side: superficial; Left side: deep (anterior view)

FUNCTIONAL ANATOMY

It is important to understand the functional anatomy and biomechanics of the main muscles we'll be targeting before we can understand how to best train them. Functional anatomy determines what muscles can do. There are two things to consider when looking at a muscle's functional anatomy – its origin and insertion. Muscles attach to bone by tendons from at least two points. The origin is the fixed attachment which does not move and the insertion is the attachment which moves closer to the origin when a muscle contracts. This is the contracting phase, referred to as the concentric phase (also known as the "positive" phase), which is normally followed by the eccentric phase (lowering the weight – also known as the "negative" phase).



QUADRICEPS

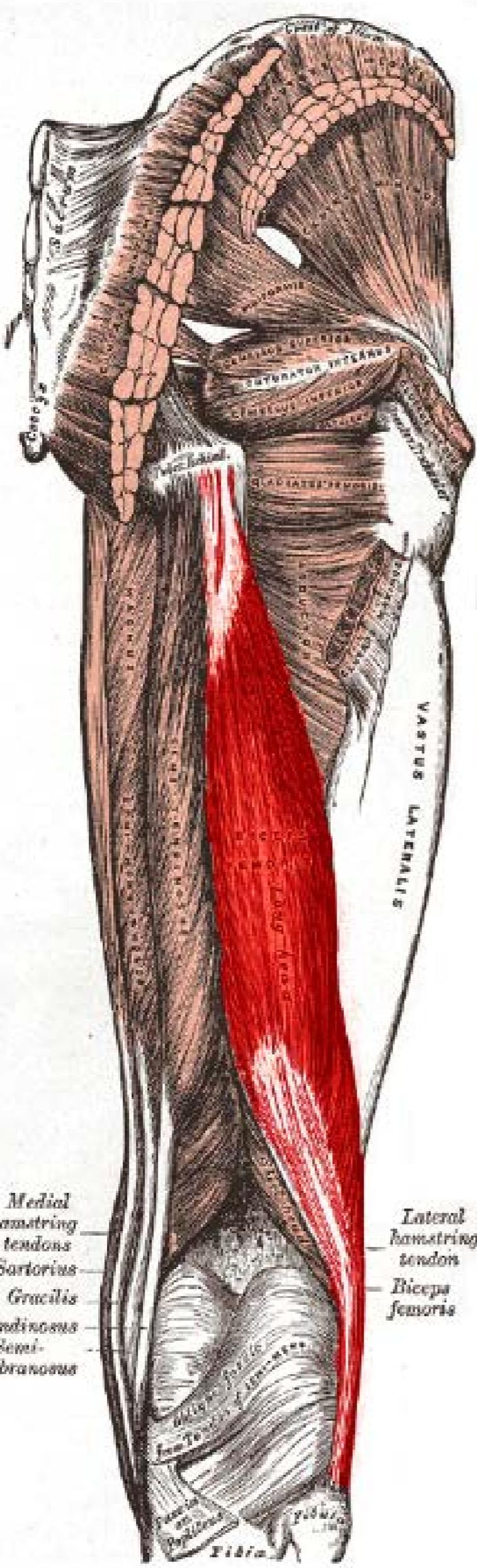
The quadriceps ("quads" for short) are comprised of four muscles, often referred to as "heads": the vastus lateralis ("quad sweep"), vastus medialis ("tear drop"), rectus femoris (the middle portion of your upper thigh), and vastus intermedius (which runs underneath the rectus femoris). The quads act to extend the knee, taking the leg from a bent position to a straight position. Each muscle of the quad has its own unique insertion which we won't worry about too much here. Just remember that the main action of the quads is to extend (straighten) the knee.

ORIGIN: The vasti muscles originate on the body of femur ("thigh bone"). The rectus femoris originates on the ilium of the "hip bone"

INSERTION: Tibial tuberosity

EXERCISES: Squat, walking lunge, leg extension

Figure 3: Quadriceps Anatomy



HAMSTRINGS

The hamstrings are actually a complex of four muscles: semimembranosus, semitendinosus, and biceps femoris (which consists of a long head and a short head). The hamstrings collectively act to both flex the knee (take the leg from a straightened position to a bent position, as in a leg curl) and extend the hip (pushing your hips forward, as in a deadlift).

ORIGIN: The semitendinosus, semimembranosus, and long head of the biceps femoris originate on the ischial tuberosity. The short head of the biceps femoris originates on the linea aspera.

INSERTION: The semitendinosus and semimembranosus both insert on the tibia, while both the long and short heads of the biceps femoris insert at the fibula.

EXERCISES: Deadlift, romanian deadlift, leg curl

Figure 4: Hamstrings Anatomy

GLUTEALS

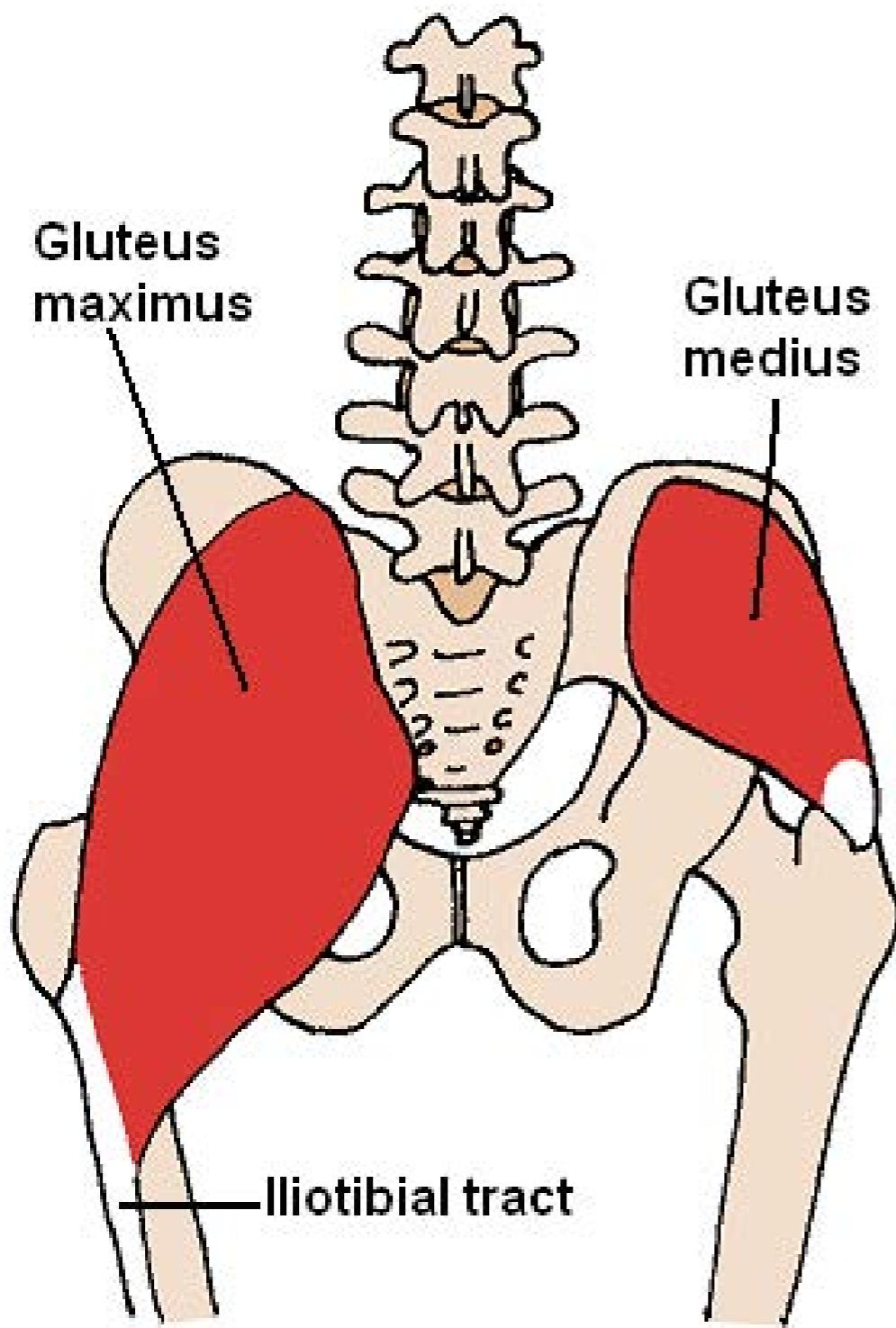


Figure 5: Gluteals Anatomy

The gluteals (or “glutes”) are also a complex of muscles consisting of the gluteus maximus, gluteus medius, and gluteus minimus. As the name suggests, the gluteus maximus is the largest of the three, followed by the gluteus medius, and the smallest gluteus minimus. The gluteus maximus has multiple origins including the pelvis, sacrum, coccyx, and thoracolumbar fascia and multiple insertions including the upper femur and IT band. Because of this, it is able to perform a wide variety of functions, but primarily:

- Hip extension (push your hips forward)
- Hip abduction (move your thigh away from the midline)
- Hip external rotation (rotating your thigh bone outwards)
- Posterior pelvic tilt (tucking your butt “in”)

The smaller glute medius still occupies a hefty portion of the rear hip musculature and functions primarily as a stabilizer during dynamic movement and as a hip abductor. It originates on the pelvis and inserts on the femur. It is most effectively trained with exercises that require a high degree of stability, especially unilateral movements such as walking lunges, and exercises that train hip abduction, such as machine hip abductions.

ORIGIN: The semitendinosus, semimembranosus, and long head of the biceps femoris originate on the ischial tuberosity. The short head of the biceps femoris originates on the linea aspera.

INSERTION: The semitendinosus and semimembranosus both insert on the tibia, while both the long and short heads of the biceps femoris insert at the fibula.

EXERCISES: Deadlift, romanian deadlift, leg curl

PECTORALIS

There are two pectoralis muscles (pecs for short) located on your chest: the pectoralis major and the pectoralis minor. The pectoralis major can be divided into two heads: the clavicular head or “upper chest” (which originates at the clavicle) and the sternal head or “lower chest” (which originates at the sternum). The pecs act to adduct the upper arm (bring the upper arm across the body), and to internally rotate the shoulder joint. The clavicular fibers also aid in shoulder flexion (raising your upper arm up), but the sternal fibers do not.



Figure 6: Pectoral Anatomy

ORIGIN: : The pectoralis major originates on the sternum and clavicle. The pectoralis minor originates on the 3rd-5th ribs.

INSERTION: The pectoralis major inserts on the humerus. The pectoralis minor inserts to the coracoid process (front of your shoulder).

EXERCISES: Bench press, dumbbell incline press, cable flies, dips, military press

BACK

The back is comprised of a massive web of muscles, so for the sake of simplicity we will only look at the largest back muscles. The latissimus dorsi (lats for short) is a big muscle which runs from just underneath your arm pit all the way down to the bottom of your back. The lats primarily act to extend the shoulder (bring your upper arm downward) and adduct the shoulder (moving your elbows towards your mid back).

The trapezius (traps for short), is another large muscle running from the base of the skull down to the middle of your inner back. When people think about the traps, they tend to only think of the upper fibers, but the middle and lower fibers take up a very large surface area as well. The traps act to elevate the scapulae (shrugging your shoulders), retract the scapulae (pull the shoulder blades back), and extend the shoulder (pull your arms backward when your elbows are raised).

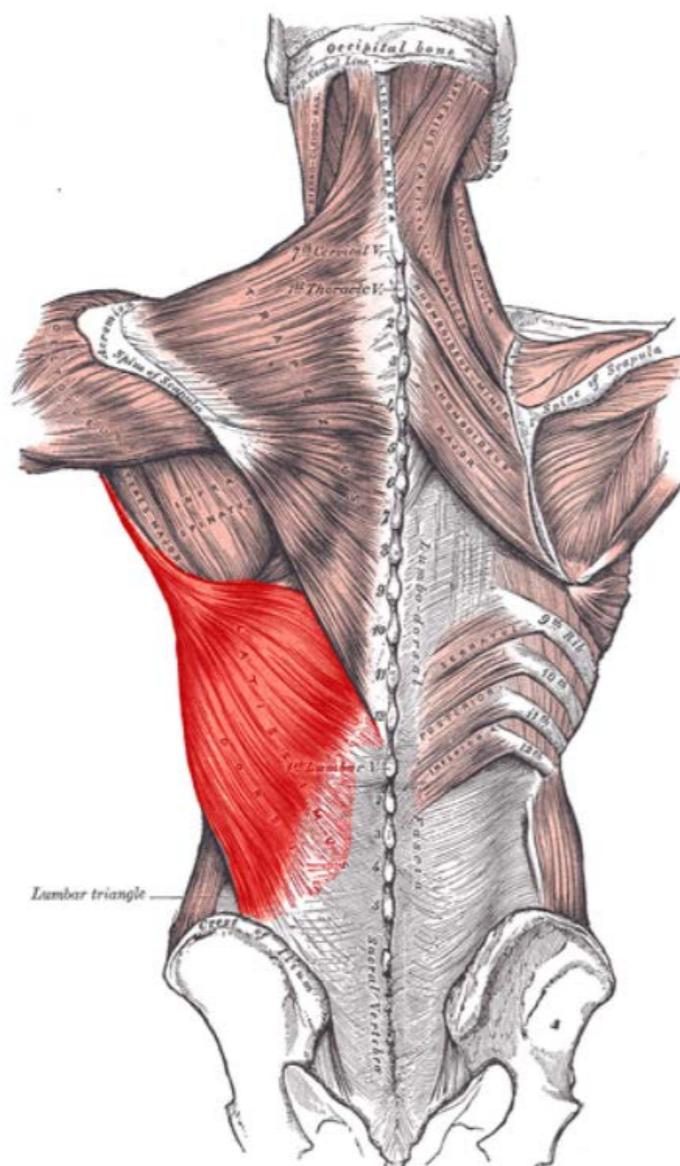


Figure 7: Latissimus Dorsi Anatomy

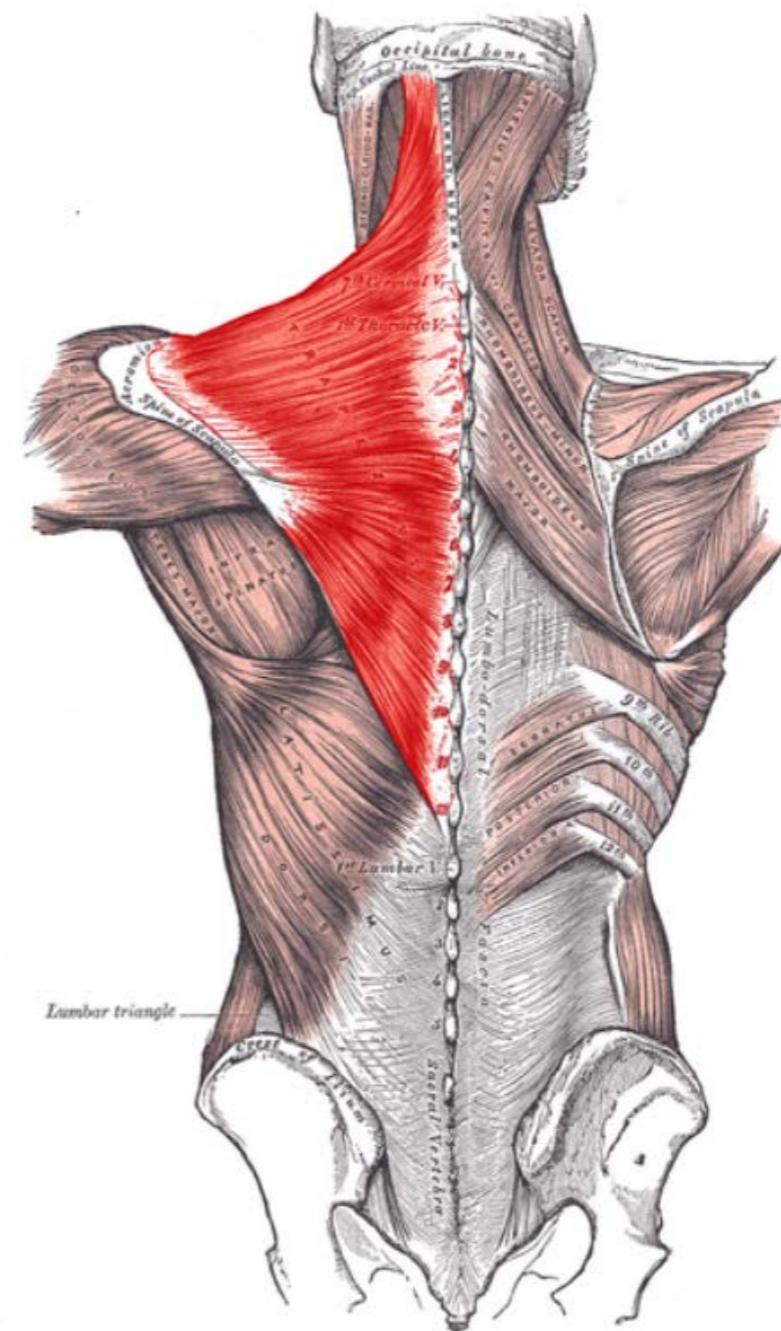


Figure 8: Trapezius Anatomy

LATS

ORIGIN: Iliac crest and thoracolumbar fascia

INSERTION: Humerus

EXERCISES: Supinated pulldowns, chest-supported T-bar row, seated face pull, deadlift (isometric contraction to prevent shoulder flexion)

TRAPS

ORIGIN: Occipital bone (upper traps), corresponding supraspinous ligaments for the mid and lower traps

INSERTION: Nuchal ligament

EXERCISES: Chest-supported T-bar row, cable seated row, seated face pull, deadlift (isometric contraction to prevent scapular depression)

BICEPS

The biceps brachii are a two-headed muscle containing a long head and a short head. They collectively act to flex the elbows (bring the elbow from a straightened position to a bent position), and supinate the wrist (twist the pinky upwards). The brachialis, which runs underneath the biceps brachii, is also a strong elbow flexor.

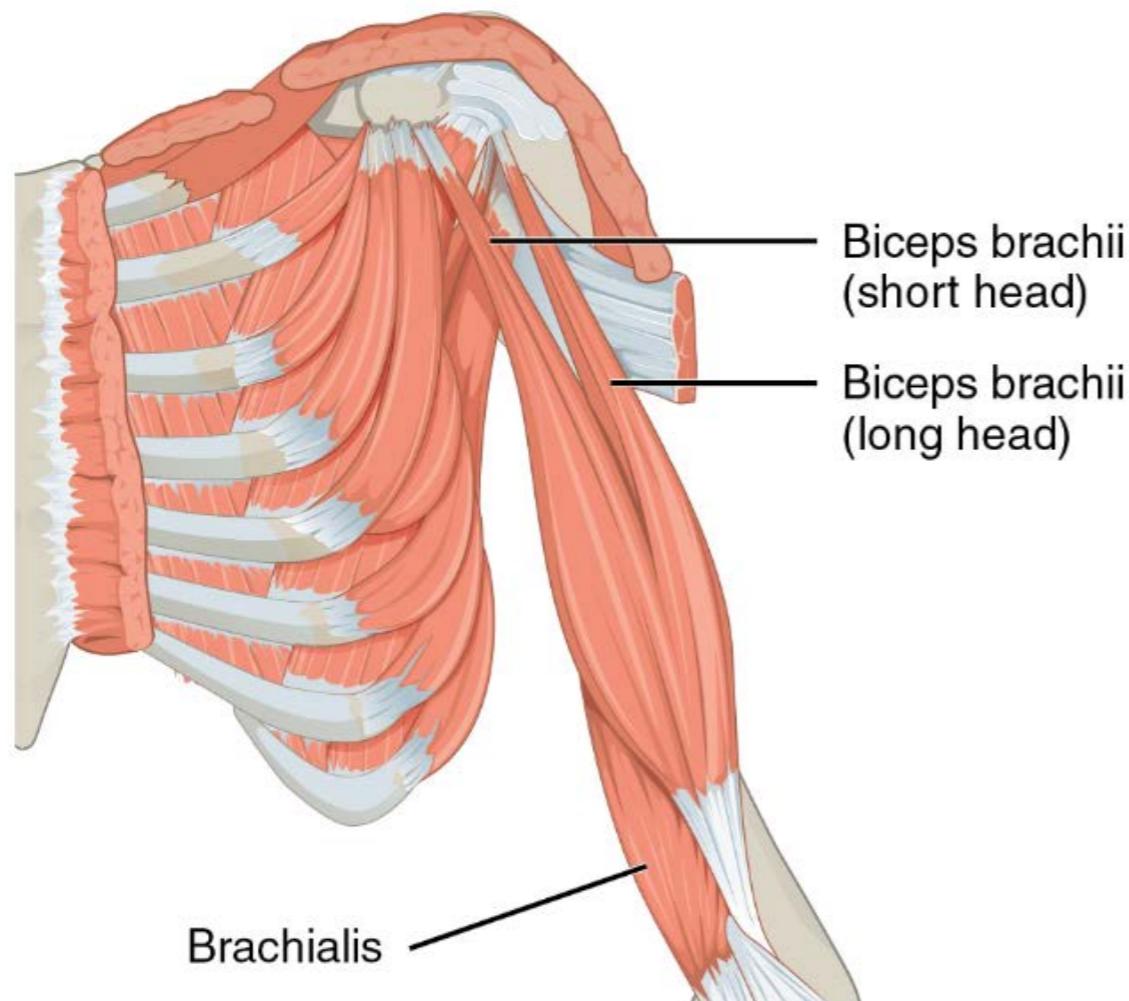


Figure 9: Biceps Anatomy

TRICEPS

The triceps lie on the back of your upper arm and are made up of three heads: a long head, a medial head, and a lateral head. The triceps collectively act to extend the elbow (bring the elbows from a bent position to a straightened position).

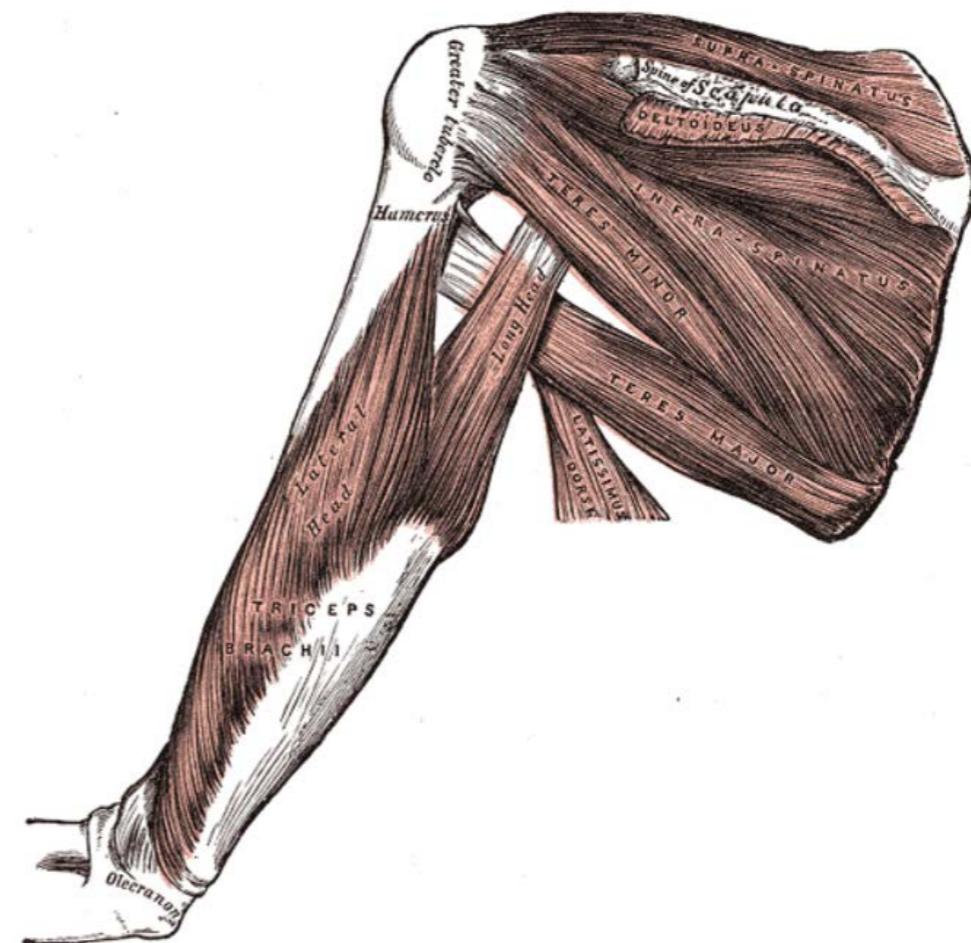


Figure 10: Triceps Anatomy

ORIGIN: Coracoid process, supraglenoid tubercle

INSERTION: Radial tuberosity

EXERCISES: Supinated pulldowns, dumbbell supinated curl, single-arm cable curl

ORIGIN: Infraglenoid tubercle, radial groove

INSERTION: Olecranon process on ulna

EXERCISES: Rope triceps extension, dips, dumbbell skull crusher, bench press, military press, dumbbell incline press

DELTOIDS

The deltoids (or delts for short) are comprised of 3 different heads, the anterior deltoid (the “front” delt), the lateral deltoid (also known as the “middle” delt), and often mistakenly called the “medial delt”), and the posterior delt (also known as the “rear” delt). The anterior delt acts to flex the shoulder (raise the arm up), the lateral delt acts to abduct the upper arm (raise your upper arm out directly to your sides), and the posterior delt acts to abduct the shoulder (pull the shoulder back when the elbows are raised).

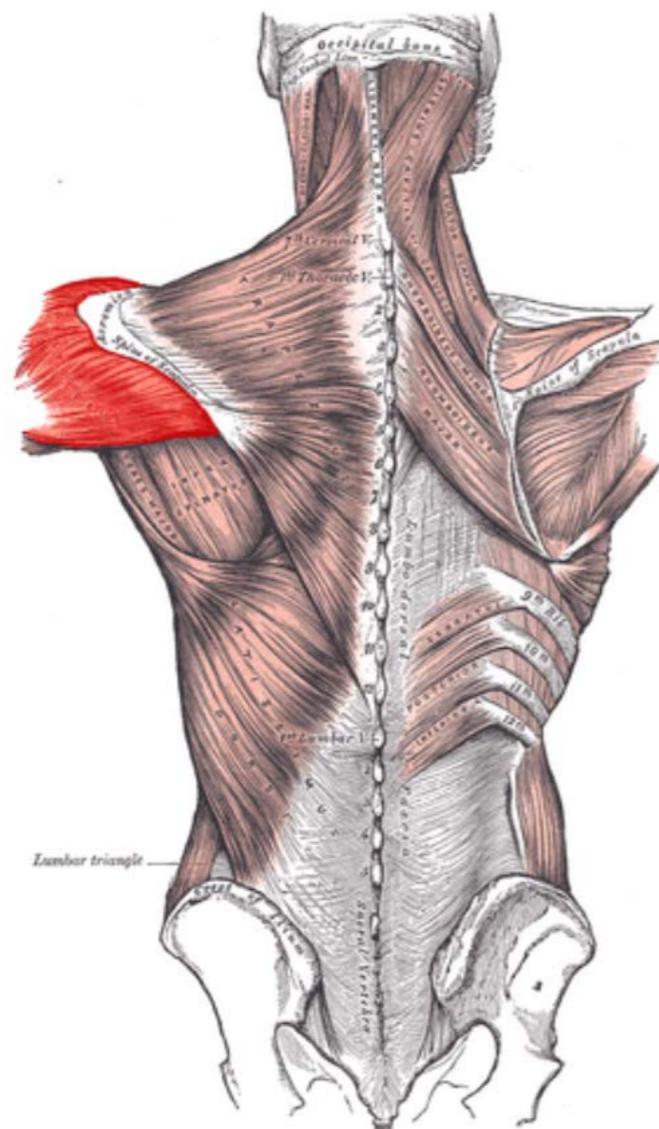


Figure 11: Deltoid Anatomy

ABS

The abs are a huge web containing many muscles which all have a similar function. When talking about the abs, we are typically referring to the rectus abdominis – which is the muscle that makes the “6-pack”. The rectus abdominis acts to flex the spine, rotate the torso, and resist spinal extension (prevent your lower back from arching inwards).

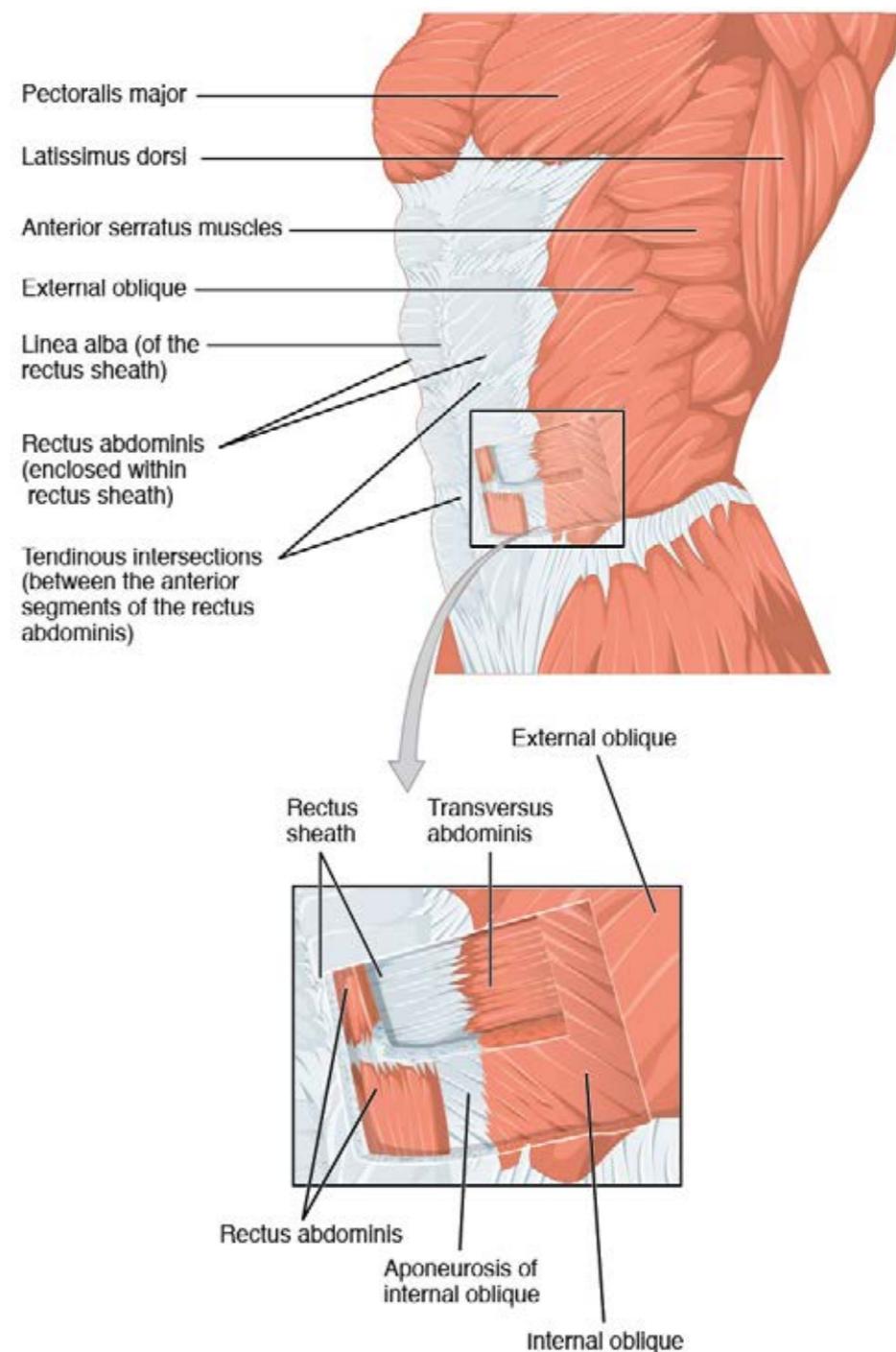


Figure 12: Abdominal Anatomy

ORIGIN: Clavicle, acromion process, spine of scapula

INSERTION: Deltoid tuberosity of humerus

EXERCISES: Military press, dumbbell incline press, barbell bench press, lateral raise, seated face pull

ORIGIN: Crest of pubis

INSERTION: Xiphoid process

EXERCISES: Crunches, planks



CALVES

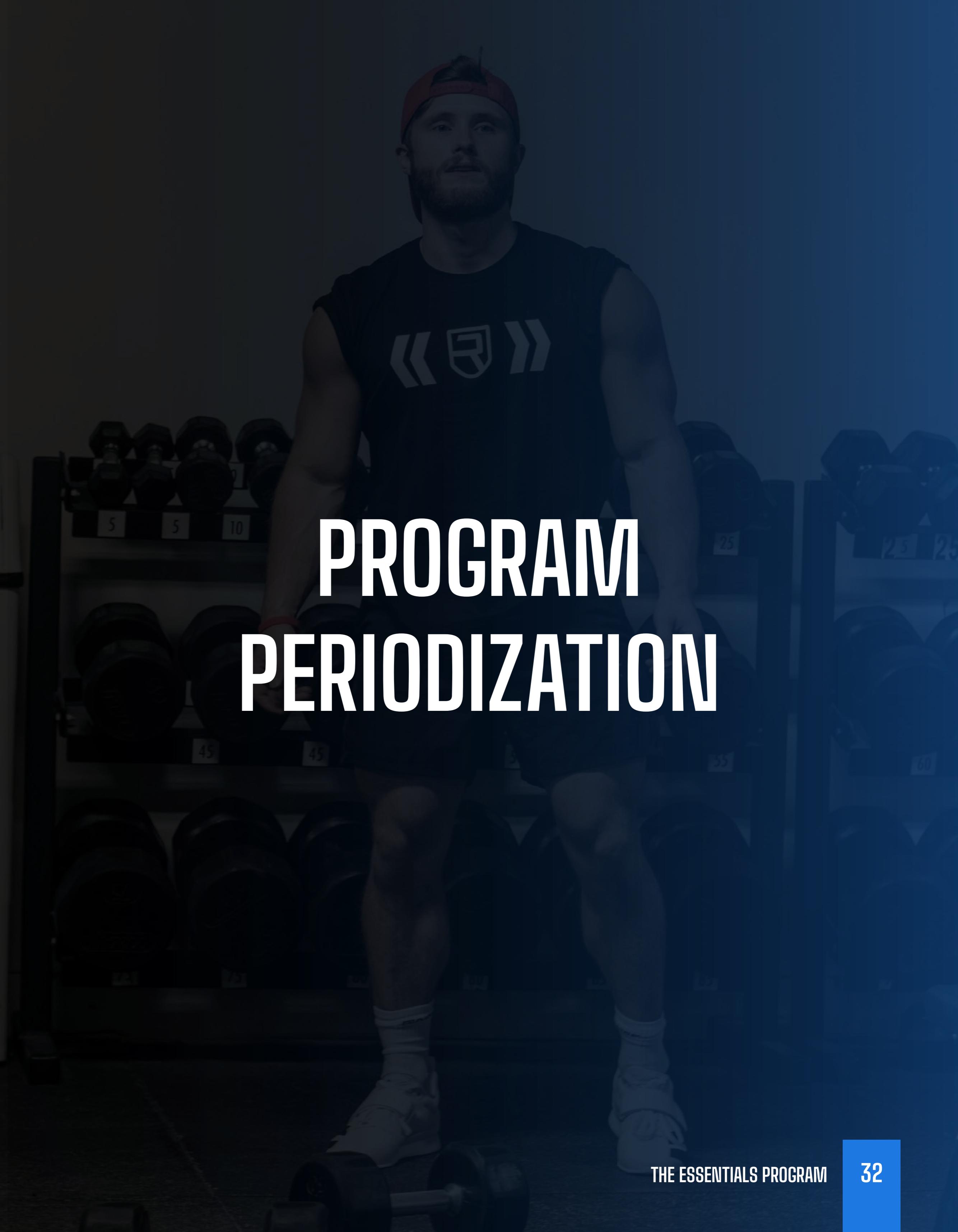
The calves are a complex consisting of two muscles – the gastrocnemius (or gastroc for short) and the soleus. The gastrocnemius is the big muscle underneath the back of your knee and the soleus is a smaller, flatter muscle which runs underneath the gastroc down to your ankle. Both the gastroc and soleus act to plantarflex the ankle (point your toes down).

ORIGIN: Lateral and medial condyle of femur

INSERTION: Tendo calcaneus

EXERCISES: Standing calf raise

Figure 13: Anatomy of the Calf Muscles

A man with a beard and a red baseball cap stands in a gym. He is wearing a black t-shirt with a white 'R' logo. Behind him is a row of dumbbells of various sizes. The background is dark.

PROGRAM PERIODIZATION

In this section, I will outline how the program is set up in terms of the split, autoregulation, progression, and exercise selection.

THE SPLIT

The objective of each program is to provide an effective, hypertrophy-focused program with sessions that can be completed within ~45 minutes. There are 5x/week, 4x/week, 3x/week, and 2x/week versions of this program available. Depending on how many times per week you are available to train, the split will be slightly different. The 5x/week version uses a Upper/Lower/Push/Pull/Legs split, the 4x/week uses an Upper/Lower split, the 3x uses a Full Body/Upper/Lower split, and the 2x uses a Full Body split.

Since this is a time-efficient hypertrophy program, the barbell squat, barbell bench press, and deadlift are not the focus here. Instead, to keep workouts shorter, a greater emphasis has been placed on dumbbell and machine-based exercises. There is also much more built-in flexibility that allows exercises to be easily swapped out, depending on your own goals, preferences, and available equipment.

Each split is broken up into three 4-week blocks, with the vast majority of exercises being replaced each block. This is intended to help keep workouts fresh, while still allowing enough time to progress each movement. That said, you are more than welcome to continue with a particular exercise from one block to the next, if you prefer it.

Finally, since the sessions are intended to take roughly half the time of my other main programs, volume is lower across the board. In order to make up for this, intensity/effort has been increased for all exercises. This means you'll be pushing most exercises very close to failure, if not all the way to failure.



THE AUTOREGULATION

Autoregulation is when you make some choices about your training during your workout, rather than having everything locked into place before your workout. If you're new to autoregulation, it may sound like a technical concept, but it's actually very simple. If you've ever done a few extra reps because you were feeling good or took an extra minute of rest to recover after a tough set, then you've already used autoregulation in your training. It essentially just means "adjusting on the fly."

Autoregulation doesn't mean you get to completely go by feel and suddenly have an excuse to totally sandbag your workouts on bad days. Instead, it can be seen as leveraging the fact that performance will differ from day to day.

When running a fixed program, on a day that you're feeling extremely strong and performing extremely well, you might be confined to doing work that is well below your potential for that day. That's wasted potential. On an autoregulated program, however, if you're feeling particularly strong on one day, you have the freedom to go heavier than usual. The same thing applies for days that you're not feeling as strong, you have the permission to use weights that match your abilities on that specific day.

This isn't just something I do because it seems intuitively appealing. Research consistently shows that an autoregulated approach results in better strength gains [18-20]. Remember, autoregulation does not mean just tossing in the towel when you're having a bad day. Instead, these studies use techniques, such as tracking bar velocity loss, to allow more informed and structured adjustments to be made. And while most of us don't have access to a bar velocity tracker, luckily there are several other methods that don't require any equipment and still offer better results than a fixed program [18, 19]. That brings us to the main way that autoregulation will be used in this program: RPE.

1 RPE

RPE stands for Rating of Perceived Exertion and ranks how hard a set was on a scale of 1-10. This table, adapted from the MASS Research Review should help clarify what each RPE value means.

Adapted from Zourdos et al (2016)
RPE = Rating of Perceived Exertion
RIR = Repetitions in Reserve
Source: MASS Research Review,
Volume 3, Issue 9

TABLE 1: RESISTANCE TRAINING-SPECIFIC RIR-BASED SCALE

RPE SCORE	RIR/DESCRIPTION
10	Maximal Effort
9.5	No RIR, but could increase load
9	1 RIR
8.5	Definitely 1, maybe 2 RIR
8	2 RIR
7.5	Definitely 1, maybe 3 RIR
7	3 RIR
5-6	4-6 RIR
3-4	Light Effort
1-2	Light to no Effort

The goal is to select a weight that you can use for all of the working sets that will have you hitting the prescribed RPE on the last set. This means that it is very likely that your first couple sets will be easier than the target RPE. For example, if you're performing 3 sets and the prescribed RPE is 8, it is normal and expected that your first set will be closer to a ~6 RPE, since the sets will get harder as you go. Of course, if the weight you've selected is clearly too light or too heavy, feel free to adjust the weight for the next set.

WEEK 1	EXERCISE	WARM-UP SETS (see page 15 for details)	WORKING SETS	REPS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES	
						8-9					
FULL BODY A	Flat DB Press (Heavy)	2-3	1	4-6		9-10	~3 min	Machine Chest Press	Weighted Dip	Focus on strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Keep form consistent.	
	Flat DB Press (Back off)	0	1	8-10		8-9	~3 min	Machine Chest Press	Weighted Dip	Focus on mind-muscle connection with pecs. Drop the weight back and focus on stretch and squeeze!	
	Romanian Deadlift	2	2	8-10		9-10	~2 min	DB Romanian Deadlift	45° Hyperextension	Maintain a neutral lower back, set your hips back, squeeze your hamstrings to move the weight.	
	2-Grip Lat Pulldown	1	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	2-Grip Pull-up	Machine Pulldown	Do first set wide overhand (1.5x shoulder width), second set underhand (1x shoulder width).	
	DB Walking Lunge	1	1	8-10 per leg		9-10	~1.5 min	Smith Machine Lunge	DB Step Up	Take medium strides, let your torso lean forward.	
	DB Skull Crusher	1	1	12-15		10	~1.5 min	Overhead Cable Tricep Extension	DB French Press	Arc the dumbbells behind your head, constant tension on triceps.	
	DB Lateral Raise	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Cable Lateral Raise	Machine Lateral Raise	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Raise the dumbbells "out" not "up", mind muscle connection with middle fibers.	
	Seated Calf Raise	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		10	~1.5 min	Standing Calf Raise	Leg Press Toe Press	Dropset: perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 12-15 reps. Press all the way up to your toes, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.	
SUMMARY						-3 REST DAYS					
						10					

Due to the subjectiveness of the RPE scale, and to allow for built-in wiggle-room for prescribed effort levels, this program features RPE ranges for most lifts, rather than concrete values. The purpose of this is to provide more constructive feedback on if you are using an appropriate weight for these lifts. Similar to other lifts, the goal for these will be to select a weight that puts you within this range on the last set. This means that if the prescribed RPE is 7-8 and you hit failure on the last set, you will want to adjust the weight for that lift down. On the other hand, if you reach a 7, 7.5, or 8 RPE on the last set, you can be confident that you selected an appropriate weight.

Using RPE, on days that you are performing well, you can push heavier than normal. On days that you are not feeling as strong, you can train lighter but still reach the appropriate effort threshold. Obviously, RPE is not intended to be used as an excuse to train light all the time, and it is still important to keep yourself accountable and progressing overall.

Remember, for autoregulation to be effective, you need to actually autoregulate. This means you need to pay attention to how you're feeling that day, notice how the warmups move and then make an educated decision about what weight you should load for your top set. Again, there is no shame in using a lighter load on days where your performance is clearly not at 100 percent. As long as you're honest with yourself, a day will come when you feel at 100 percent again very soon, and because you had the wherewithal to hold back when appropriate, you will be recovered and ready for when the timing feels right for a push.

THE PROGRESSION

Because this is a time-efficient, lower volume program, progression is essential. A recent study even found that as little as one set per muscle group per week, taken to failure, was able to keep beginners improving in strength for ~1-2 years prior to reaching a plateau [21]. Looking at the hypertrophy side of things, a 2017 meta-analysis found that <5 sets per week per muscle group was still able to significantly increase muscle size [4]. This should give you confidence that you can still make great progress, even with 45-minute workouts. Now, let's jump into how to go about ensuring progression actually occurs.

All exercises within the program have a rep range, rather than a fixed number of reps that you have to aim for each week. Ideally, you would progress by adding reps with the same weight until you reach the top end of the rep range. Once you reach the top end of the range, you would add some minimum amount of weight and start back at the bottom of the range again. On some exercises, it will be impossible to add reps and/or weight every week because it will be impossible to maintain good form by the end of the program. Therefore, the main goal of these exercises is simply to make an effort to do something better from week to week. This can be any of the following:

- Increasing either rep(s) or weight;
- Improving technique (such as by controlling the tempo better than last time); or
- Improving the mind-muscle connection (such as by “squeezing” the target muscle harder than last time)

THE EXERCISE SELECTION

PS	LOAD	RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES
6		8-9	~3 min	Machine Chest Press	Weighted Dip	Build strength here. Each week add weight or reps. Consistency is key.
10		9-10	~3 min	Machine Chest Press	Weighted Dip	Focus on mind-muscle connection with pecs. Drop the weight and focus on stretch and squeeze!
10		8-9	~2 min	DB Romanian Deadlift	45° Hyperextension	Keep a neutral lower back, set your hips back, squeeze the glutes and hamstrings to move the weight.
12		9-10	~2 min	2-Grip Pull-up	Machine Pulldown	Set wide overhand (1.5x shoulder width), second hand (1x shoulder width).
10 (leg)		9-10	~1.5 min			Perform medium strides, let your torso lean forward.
15		10	~1.5 min	Smith Machine Lunge	DB Step Up	Stand with dumbbells behind your head, constant tension on the lats.
(15 sets)		10	~1.5 min	Overhead Cable Tricep Extension	DB French Press	Perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, then immediately perform an additional 12-15 reps. Raise the dumbbells "up", mind muscle connection with middle fibers.
(15 sets)		10	~1.5 min	Cable Lateral Raise	Machine Lateral Raise	Perform 12-15 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, then immediately perform an additional 12-15 reps. Press all the way up to the top, stretch your calves at the bottom, don't bounce.
SUGGESTED 2-3 RESTS				Standing Calf Raise	Leg Press Toe Press	

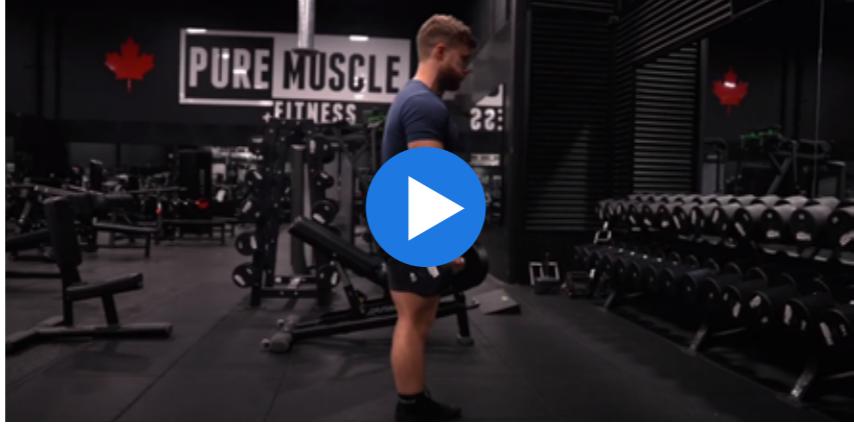
Since this is a hypertrophy program, and because the Barbell Squat, Barbell Bench Press, Deadlift, and Barbell Overhead Press take up so much time within a workout, these exercises are not featured in this program. Instead, you will find that most compound movements are either dumbbell or machine-based, as this should save a significant amount of time without sacrificing gains in hypertrophy. In addition, almost all exercises are swapped out every block, as this will help to keep things fresh, while still allowing a full 4 weeks to progress within the given rep range for each movement. That having been said, this brings us to exercise substitutions.

As explained previously, this program places a heavy emphasis on having the flexibility to switch out exercises. For all of the substitutions, exercises have been chosen that work the same muscle groups and a similar movement pattern, so none of the sets, reps, RPE, or rest need to be adjusted. Simply perform the substitution exercise in place of the original exercise.

A shirtless man with short brown hair is performing a deadlift exercise in a gym. He is wearing dark shorts and black weightlifting shoes. His feet are positioned shoulder-width apart, and he is leaning forward at the waist with his back straight. He is holding a pair of heavy dumbbells, one in each hand, with his arms fully extended. The background shows various gym equipment, including a bench press and weight racks. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and highlights on his muscular physique.

EXERCISE VIDEO DEMONSTRATIONS

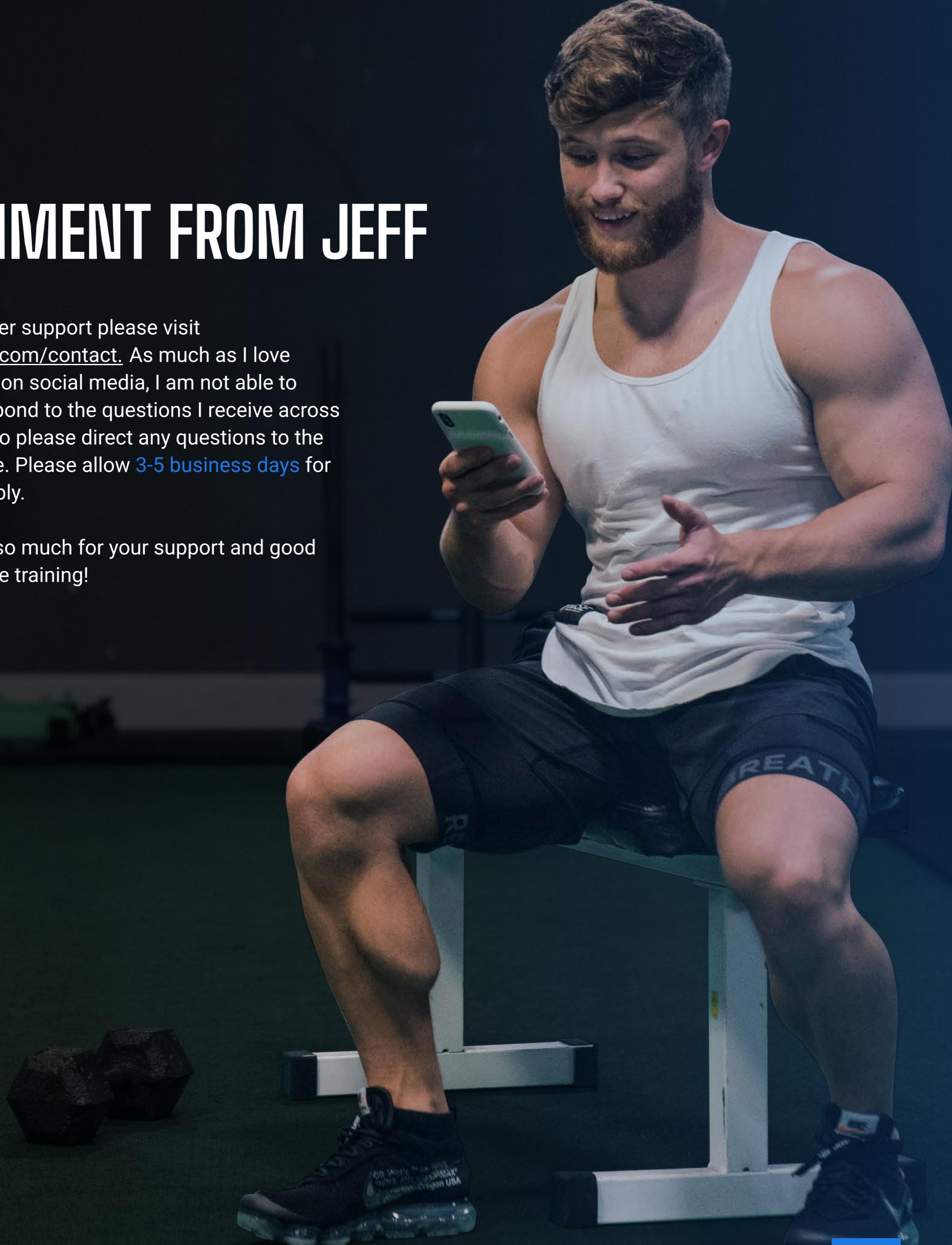
Rather than having a list of exercise videos in this program, every exercise is a clickable link to allow for a more seamless experience. This means that all of the exercise videos are on the program pages themselves and all you have to do is click on the exercise name to open them.

WEEK 9		EXERCISE	LOAD		RPE	REST	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 1	SUBSTITUTION OPTION 2	NOTES		
		Slight Incline DB Press (heavy)	2-3	1	4-6		8-9	~3 min	Flat DB Press	Weighted Dip	15° bench angle. Tuck your elbows slightly.
		Slight Incline DB Press (back off)	0	1	8-10		9-10	~3 min	Flat DB Press	Weighted Dip	15° bench angle. Tuck your elbows slightly.
FULL BODY		Romanian Deadlift	2	2	10-12		8-9	~2 min	DB Romanian Deadlift	45° Hyperextension	Maintain a neutral lower back, set your hips back, don't allow your spine to round.
		Machine Pulldown	2	2	10-12 (dropset)		9-10	~2 min	Grip Lat Pulldown	Weighted Pullup	Think about pulling your elbows "down" and "in". Last set only counts if dropset: perform 10-12 reps, drop the weight by ~50%, perform an additional 10-12 reps.
		DB Bulgarian Split Squat	1	1	8-10 per leg		8-9	~1.5 min	DB Walking Lunge	DB Step Up	Start with a low weight and focus on form.
		Triceps Pressdown	1	1	12-15 (dropset)		9-10	~1.5 min	Cable Triceps Kickback	DB Triceps Kickback	Dropset: perform a dropset to failure. If you can't do 12-15 reps, perform a dropset to failure.
		Machine Lateral Raise							Cable Lateral Raise	Cable Lateral Raise	Dropset: perform a dropset to failure.
		Standing Calf Raise							Leg Press Toe Press	Leg Press Toe Press	Press all the way down, then press all the way up. Don't bounce.
<h3>DB ROMANIAN DEADLIFT</h3> 										45° HYPEREXTENSION	

COMMENT FROM JEFF

For customer support please visit jeffnippard.com/contact. As much as I love connecting on social media, I am not able to reliably respond to the questions I receive across platforms so please direct any questions to the email above. Please allow 3-5 business days for an email reply.

Thank you so much for your support and good luck with the training!



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