

Barbell And Calisthenics

By Kyle Boggeman, MS, CSCS, TSAC-F

The Training Template

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Squat: 10 reps 50% Training Load 10 reps at 75% Training Load 5 reps at 100% Training Load Optional: Back-off set: 1-3x10 at 75% Training Load Push Up- 3 sets at 90% (1 max set on first week of new cycle) Pull Up- 3 sets at 90% (1 max set on first week of new cycle)	Press: 10 reps 50% Training Load 10 reps at 75% Training Load 5 reps at 100% Training Load Optional: Back-off set: 1-3x10 at 75% Training Load Push Up- 5 sets at 70% Pull Up- 5 sets at 70%	Deadlift: 10 reps 50% Training Load 10 reps at 75% Training Load 5 reps at 100% Training Load Optional: Back-off set: 1-3x10 at 75% Training Load Push Up- 4 sets at 80% Pull Up- 4 sets at 80%

Barbell Progression

Training Week	Top Set Progression
Week 1	5 reps at 100% Training Load
Week 2	6 reps at 100% Training Load
Week 3	7 reps at 100% Training Load
Week 4	8 reps at 100% Training Load
Week 5	9 reps at 100% Training Load
Week 6	10 reps at 100% Training Load
Week 7	Add 5 lbs to upper body training load, 10 lbs to lower body training load, and repeat the cycle Test max calisthenics (on day 1) and repeat the training cycle with the new max

About The Program

Barbell And Calisthenics was developed during my time as a gym owner. I used it to train and prepare military and first responders for their academies, selection processes, and on-the-job performance. This program is best suited for intermediate level lifters who want a simple, hassle-free, and time efficient approach to training. It has a lower frequency of barbell work, so beginners are probably better served by using a program that allows for more frequent practice to build up proficiency in the basic barbell movements. However, once that foundation has been established, this progression, albeit slow, can work very well. Congruent with my general approach to training, the power of this comes from doing high quality work, consistently, for a

long time. It's about making incremental improvements and not letting the "progression at any cost" approach interfere with your longterm improvement. Be patient. Take your time. Enjoy the process. Solidify your gains and own the movements down to the core of your physiology. Training is a practice, and this is simply one approach that you can use along the way. Enjoy!

Before Starting

Before you begin the program, you will need to determine your 10RM for your squat, deadlift and press variations that you will use during this cycle. You will also need to know your current maxes for the push up and pull up variations that you want to train, all performed with the excellent, standardized technique that you will be using throughout your training cycles.

How To Use The "Barbell And Calisthenics" Program

This program is designed to be performed on 3 non-consecutive training days per week. It is very important that your training loads and calisthenics maxes are accurately selected at the start of the cycle. This is a long term training approach and is intended to be cycled multiple times. Only barbell movements and upper body calisthenics are programmed, so if you wish to add in additional calisthenics for leg training, core work, or cardio, feel free to do so, but do so carefully and intelligently so as to not impede your recovery. When I used this program professionally, clients would perform academy or assessment specific abdominal work after upper body calisthenics, and performed cardio on rest days or after ab work.

In general, start with basic variations and plan on using the same variations of barbell and calisthenics for multiple training cycles, and only change a variation when you become stagnant, are no longer making progress, or decide to change your goals and build another movement.

Finding Your Training Load-

In order for this program to work successfully, you will need to determine your 10RM for your barbell exercises as accurately as possible. If you overestimate your 10RM, you run the risk of stalling out before accumulating the benefit of the program. After the completion of the training cycle, simply add 10 LBS to the squat and deadlift training load, and 5 LBS to the press training load.

As for selecting variations, use the same variations throughout the program and for as many cycles as you can until you no longer make progress. At this point, you can introduce a new variation to replace the stalled exercise.

Performing The Workouts-

Each training day will consist of 1 barbell movement and 2 calisthenics movements. The daily barbell movement should be performed first, and is done for 3 ascending sets with a prescribed percentage of your training load. The first set is performed for 10 repetitions at 50% of your training load (remember that your training load starts with your 10RM). The second set is performed at 75% of your training load for 10 reps. The third set is performed at 100% of your training load for the prescribed number of reps as determined by your progression level,

which starts at 5 reps and adds a single repetition each week until 10 reps is achieved. After you complete the 6 week progression and perform 3 ascending sets, finishing with 10 reps with your training load, add 10 LBS to the previous training loads for the squat and the deadlift, and 5 LBS to the training load for the press, then repeat the cycle.

For those looking for a little bit more training volume with the barbell movements, feel free to add in 1-3 backoff sets of 10 reps with 75% of the training load. This load will stay constant for the entire cycle. Keep in mind though, recovery demands need to be balanced. If you have decided to add in additional cardio or calisthenics leg training, performing the backoff sets may negatively impact recovery. For those who are sticking to more of a barbell centric program, the backoff sets are a reasonable addition. Some very strong lifters might find the backoff work to be too much and ultimately counterproductive. If you decide to perform the backoff sets, keep in mind they do not need to be performed every week, though they can, and they do not need to be performed on every exercise, though that is fine too. They are simply an option to explore. If you decide to do them, treat them with respect and use them as an opportunity to practice perfect repetitions.

Calisthenics-

After the barbell lift has been completed, you can begin your calisthenics training. The calisthenics are performed as a percentage of your “max”. As with selecting the barbell training load, it is important that your calisthenics max used for the training cycle accurately reflects a perfect set performed without compensations, kipping, reduced ROM, or poor technique.

As for selecting variations of calisthenics, use the same variation through the entire cycle and only switch variations when cycle-to-cycle progress stalls. Your goal is to accumulate a large number of high quality, sub-maximal, and peri-maximal sets of the same variation across the training block. Progression comes over time, where ideally each cycle ends in a new “max”, which will increase the rep count in the subsequent training cycle. The goal is not to add reps *during* the cycle, but after. Since there is no repetition progression from week to week, it provides an opportunity to work on refining technique, building more control, and using more power and precision. The 6 week cycle is about PRACTICING your calisthenics. The TESTING opportunity comes at the end of the cycle.

Rest Times-

For long term progress, movement quality should take priority in the training process. Rest times need to be long enough to ensure that each set is of the highest quality. Rest as long as you need to in order to put forth your best effort with each set. This might be 3-5+ minutes on high effort sets. Don't be tempted to rush the rest times between the sub-maximal calisthenics sets. These are not cardio or conditioning, but are opportunities to groove the motor pattern, reinforce perfect technique, develop power with the movements, and build movement mastery, all of which rely on executing your reps with a “form first” intention.

Variations-

It is important to stick with the same variations for as many cycles as possible. Only change barbell variations when you have stalled mid-cycle on the barbell progression, and only change calisthenics variations when you fail to set a new max at the end of the cycle. Below are a few variations to consider. Additionally, tempo can be modified to offer even more variety.

Squat	Press	Deadlift	Pull Up	Push Up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Bar • Low Bar • Front Squat • Wide Stance • Close Stance • Zercher • Box Squat • Split Squat • Safety Bar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bench Press • Close Grip • Incline • Decline • Overhead Press • Seated OHP • Dbell OHP • Dumbbell Bench • 1 Arm OHP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventional • Sumo • Snatch Grip • Stiff Leg • Deficit • Rack Pull • Block Pull • Trap Bar • RDL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Grip • Close Grip • Wide Grip • Chin Up • Ring Chin • Ring Pull Up • Neutral Chin • Hollow Body • Aussie Pull Up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard grip • Close grip • Wide grip • Neutral grip • Decline • Knuckle • Parallette • Reverse grip • Pike Push Up

Modifying Frequency-

For those who prefer to train more frequently, the calisthenics and barbell exercises can be split across 2 days, where only the barbell exercise is performed one day, and the calisthenics portion is performed the day after, creating a 6 day per week program. This is a great option for those who prefer faster and more frequent daily workouts.

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
Squat: 10 reps 50% Training Load 10 reps at 75% Training Load X reps at 100% Training Load Optional: Back-off set: 1-3x10 at 75% Training Load	Push Up- 3 sets at 90% (1 max set on first week of new cycle) Pull Up- 3 sets at 90% (1 max set on first week of new cycle)	Press: 10 reps 50% Training Load 10 reps at 75% Training Load X reps at 100% Training Load Optional: Back-off set: 1-3x10 at 75% Training Load	Push Up- 5 sets at 70% Pull Up- 5 sets at 70%	Deadlift: 10 reps 50% Training Load 10 reps at 75% Training Load X reps at 100% Training Load Optional: Back-off set: 1-3x10 at 75% Training Load	Push Up- 4 sets at 80% Pull Up- 4 sets at 80%