

MAX MUSCLE AT 50

Muscle up to your sixth decade with
this four-week plan for size and strength.

BY BRYAN KRAHN, C.S.C.S.

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BUILDING MUSCLE has never been easy. And building it after age 50? That's even harder.

If you've reached your sixth decade, you know this whole narrative by heart. Your body is older; your testosterone levels are dropping. You're more prone to injury, have more aches and pains, and can't train as hard or as long as you once did. And because of all of this, your days of being in the best shape of your life are over.

Except none of that is true. And I'm proof. At age 51, I'm in the best shape of my life, and I've helped plenty of guys in their 40s and 50s and beyond become the best versions of themselves, too. In the process, I've learned that we can still train hard and make major muscle gains – as long as we use a smart approach. This 4-week plan is that smart approach: a gym-based workout program designed specifically for guys in their 50s. You'll train four to five days a week on this program, relying on the key training tenets below, which have been critical in my own over-50 training journey.

- **Always come back tomorrow.** After 50, avoiding injury replaces progressive overload as your top workout priority. That means never working through pain: If something hurts, stop it immediately. And more than that, it means avoiding exercises that present extra injury risk. That's why we'll do very few barbell pressing exercises in this routine, instead gravitating towards dumbbells for our presses. And that's why you won't find yourself training super-heavy either. Studies show that loads in the 30-rep range build muscle just as well as those in the 6-rep range, as long as you're working hard.

- **Back work above all.** Few body parts need as much work as our backs. Building mid-back muscle isn't just about aesthetics, either. Strengthening your back muscles helps bulletproof your spine against injuries, and it safeguards your shoulders, too. That's why you'll train your back nearly every day in this program. Sometimes that back work will come in small ways (Romanian deadlift work). Other days, it'll come in more noticeable ways (plank rows). But you'll always stimulate the muscles that protect your shoulders and spine.
- **Train more, not less.** The idea that older lifters need to work out less is a myth. Truth is, after age 50, you need to use your strength and muscle with regularity in order to maintain it. And that means doing more training than less. No, you don't need to crush yourself in every workout, but aim to be active at least five days a week, while still listening to your body. That's why you'll get four days of workouts and an optional fifth day in this program.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

How often will I train?

You'll train four days a week on this routine. There's also an optional fifth workout day. Aim to do this whenever possible (remember: Train more, not less as you age!). If you are feeling especially run down, skip the fifth workout, but aim to take a 20-minute walk on that day, or work through some light stretching or mobility (think of doing Spiderman lunges and cat-cow stretches).

What do I do on rest days?

Overtraining won't help your gains. But that doesn't mean you should sit still on rest days. Aim to take a 20-minute walk or run on those days, or work through stretches. The more movement your body gets, the better in the long term.

What equipment will I need?

You'll want either gym access or a solid home gym. You'll need dumbbells and a bench, and you'll want access to several basic gym tools, such as a pulldown station and a seated row station.

How do I choose my weights?

Overall, your goal is to lift a challenging weight with good form. If you're not sure where to start, especially in Week 1, take on as many as 3 "warmup" sets for each exercise. For these warmup sets, start with a light weight and do exactly 5 reps. If it feels ultra-easy, add 10 pounds, and repeat. Do this until you reach a weight that feels like it would be challenging if you were doing 15 reps. Record that weight and use it as your starting weight for Week 2.

How hard should I work during each set?

You won't push until fatigue until the final set of each exercise. During your first two sets of each move, you should feel the target muscles working on the final 2 to 3 reps. During the final set, the final rep of the set should be ultra-challenging. Aim for technical failure.

What is technical failure?

Technical failure occurs when you can no longer do an exercise with good form. So if you find yourself, say, rocking at the hips during a biceps curl because your biceps are that fatigued, you've reached technical failure. Similarly, if your hips rise off the bench during a dumbbell press, you've reached technical failure.

What if I fall short on my reps?

If this happens on a set that requires you to do 8 reps or fewer, let that be the end of your set. The next time you do that exercise (in your next workout, or during your next set), lower the weight by 5 pounds. If this happens on a set that requires you to do 10 or more reps, rest for 5 deep breaths, pick up the weights again, and do some more reps. Repeat this until you've completed the required reps.

How long should I rest between sets?

During the first two exercises of every workout, aim to rest for 90 seconds between each set. During every exercise after that, rest for 60 to 90 seconds. If you're doing a superset (a pair of exercises done back-to-back), rest for 90 seconds. Whatever you do, don't rush back to do a set. Rest time is key to setting you up to lift heavy.

What do I do when I finish this program?

Your fitness journey doesn't need to be over when you've completed this four-week program. If you enjoyed the workouts, you can continue to make gains with them. Just take a light "deload" week, doing all your exercises with weights you can easily handle and focusing on form. Then repeat the entire program. Expect to feel stronger the second time around. You can also explore other MH programs, like our [4-Week Muscle-Building Fundamentals](#) program.

Weekly Schedule

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
UPPER BODY	LOWER BODY	REST	TOTAL BODY, PUSH FOCUS	TOTAL BODY, PULL FOCUS	ARM SUPERSETS (OPTIONAL)	REST

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

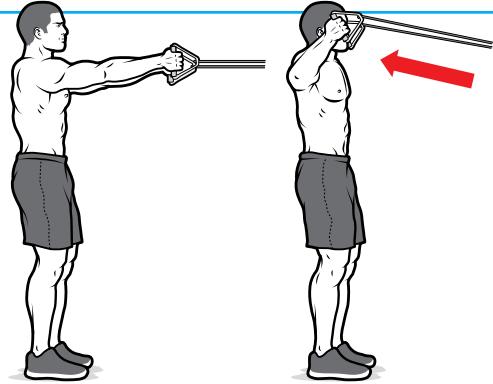
CLICK
TAB
TO
JUMP
TO
WEEK

WEEK 1: Focus on form this week, and on working up to a challenging weight on every exercise. Keep your first working set comfortable but challenging. On the second set, push a little bit harder. On the third set of every exercise, aim to push to technical failure.

MONDAY: Upper Body

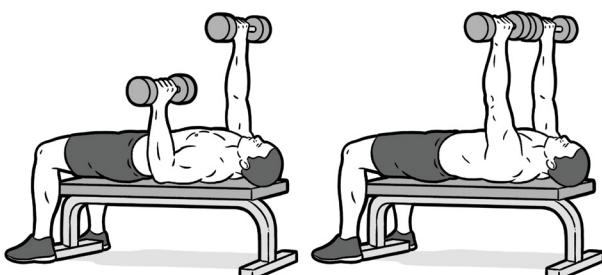
Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Warmup

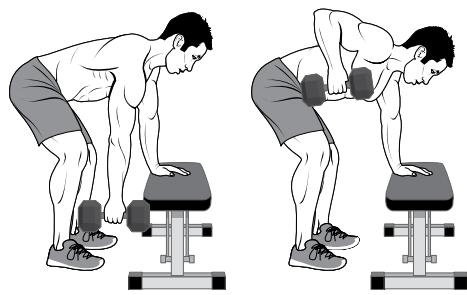


Banded Face Pull: Secure a resistance band to a rack at eye level. Grasp it in both hands with an overhand shoulder-width grip and extend your arms. Keep the band taut, bend your elbows, and pull it toward your forehead; keep your upper arms parallel to the floor. Reverse. That's 1 rep. Do 2 sets of 10 to 12.

Superset 1 (3 Sets)



Alternating Dumbbell Press: Lie on a bench, dumbbells held directly above your shoulders, abs and glutes tight. Lower the right dumbbell to your chest, then press it back up. Repeat on the other side. That's 1 rep. Do 15 reps in the first set, 10 in the second, and 8 in the third.



3-Point Dumbbell Row: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, a dumbbell in your right hand. Hinge forward, keeping your core tight, and place your left hand on a bench, box, or chair for support. Keeping your hips and shoulders square to the floor, pull the dumbbell upward toward the right side of your rib cage. Pause, then lower. That's 1 rep. Do 15 reps in the first set, 10 in the second, and 8 in the third.

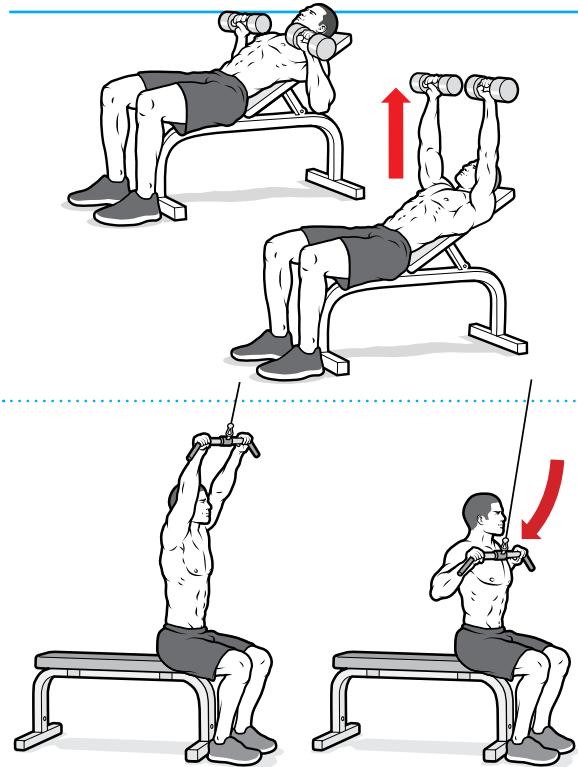
MONDAY (CONT)

Week 1

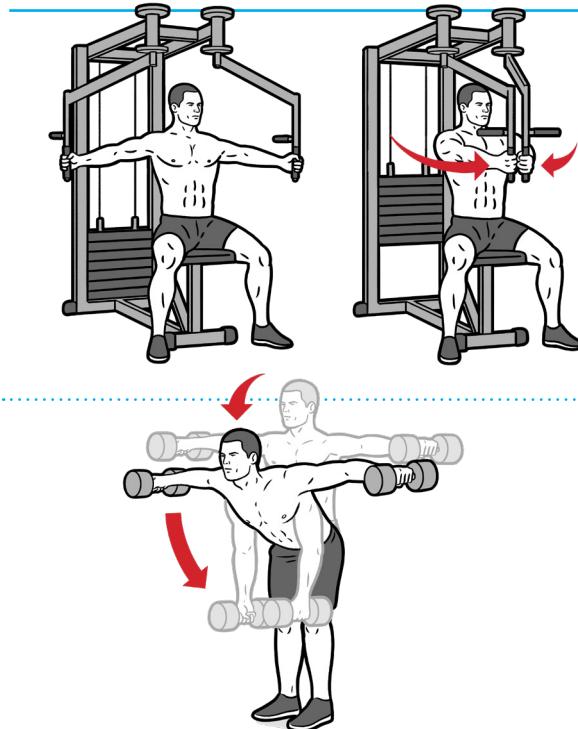
Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Superset 2 (3 Sets)

Incline Dumbbell Press: Lie on a bench set at 30 degrees, holding a dumbbell in each hand directly above your shoulders, arms extended. Lower both dumbbells to your chest. Press back up. That's 1 rep. Do 15 reps in the first set, 10 in the second, and 8 in the third.

Superset 3 (3 Sets)

Machine Fly: Sit in a pec deck machine, feet flat on the floor, back pressed against the machine. Grasp the handles, keeping just a slight bend at your elbow. Squeeze your shoulder blades and arch your back, then pull the handles close together. Lower with control. That's 1 rep. Do 3 sets of 10 to 12.

Rear Delt Fly: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, a dumbbell in each hand. Hinge at the hips, allowing your arms to hang in front of you. Raise your arms out to your sides up to shoulder level. Pause for 1 count, then return to the starting position. That's 1 rep. Do 3 sets of 10 to 12.

MONDAY (CONT)

Monday Workout

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BANDED FACE PULL	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED
SUPerset 1	ALTERNATING DUMBBELL PRESS	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	3-POINT DUMBBELL ROW	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
Superset 2	INCLINE DUMBBELL PRESS	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	MEDIUM-GRIP LAT PULLDOWN	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
Superset 3	MACHINE FLY	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	REAR DELT FLY	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT

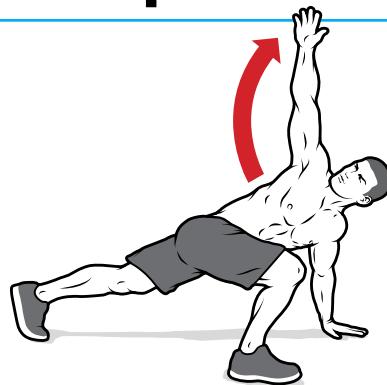


KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART
(ALL BOXES CAN BE EDITED!)

TUESDAY: Lower Body

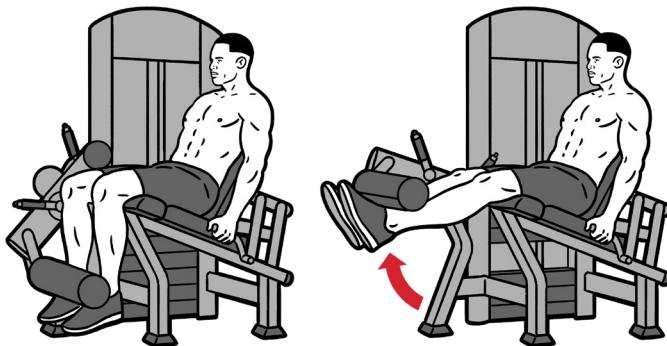
Directions: Do the exercises in order. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Warmup

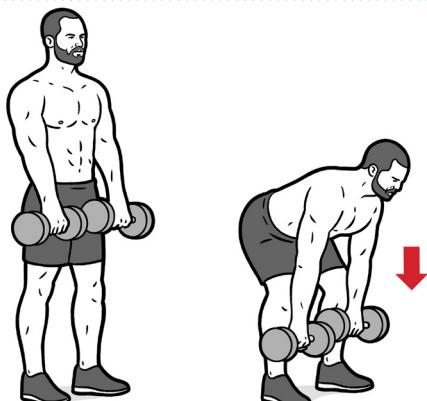


Spiderman Lunge: Get into the push-up position, abs and glutes tight, then shift your right leg just outside your right hand. Once stable, lift your right hand off the floor and turn your upper body so that your hand reaches directly toward the ceiling as you straighten your arm. Keep your eyes on your hand while turning your body. Slowly rotate your body so your hand returns to the floor and your foot returns to the pushup position. Repeat this move on the left side; that's 1 rep. Do 2 sets of 5 to 7 per side.

Superset 1 (3 Sets)



Leg Extension: Sit in a leg extension machine, your shins on the pad, butt glued to the bench. Grasp the seat handles tightly so your butt can't rise off the machine. Moving only at the knee, straighten your legs. Lower with control. That's 1 rep. Do 3 sets. Do 15 reps in the first set, 10 in the second, and 8 in the third.



Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift: Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, abs engaged. Hold a pair of dumbbells in front of your thighs. Hinge forward, pushing your hips back and lowering your torso. Stop when your torso is parallel to the floor or your hamstrings are at full tension. Pause, then return to start. That's 1 rep. Do 3 sets. Do 15 reps in the first set, 10 in the second, and 8 in the third.

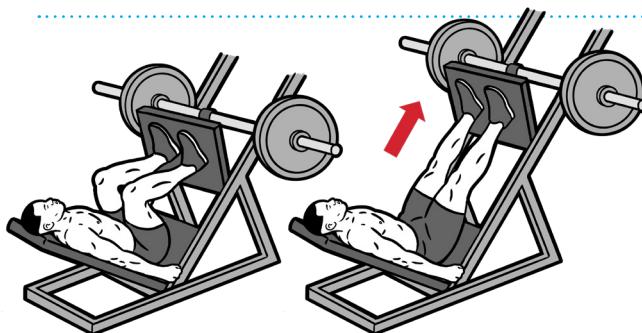
TUESDAY (CONT)

Week 1

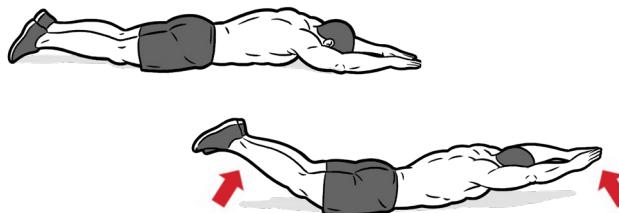
Week 2

Week 3

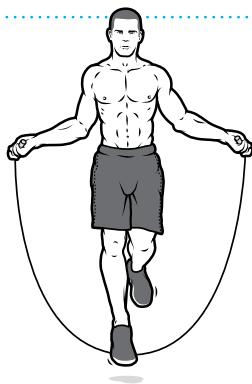
Week 4



Leg Press: Set up in a leg press machine, butt glued to the seat, back arched slightly, feet on the plate of the machine, as far back as possible. Bend at the knees and hips, letting the weight lower as much as possible without losing the arch in your back. Press back up. That's 1 rep. Do 3 sets. Do 15 reps in the first set, 10 in the second, and 8 in the third.



Prone Superman: Lie on your belly with your legs and arms fully extended, like Superman in flight. Your palms and the tops of your feet should be flat on the floor. Engage your glutes and back extensors to lift your legs and upper body (shoulders and pecs) off the floor. Hold for 3 seconds, then gently lower back to the floor. That's 1 rep. Do 3 sets of 12 to 15 reps.



Jump Rope: Grasp jump rope handles in both hands and jump rope. Do this for 40 seconds. (If you trip up, that's OK; just begin jumping rope again). Rest 20 seconds. Do 4 sets.

TUESDAY (CONT)

Tuesday Workout

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	SPIDERMAN LUNGE	5 to 7 reps	REPS COMPLETED		
SUPERSET 1	LEG EXTENSION	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	DUMBBELL ROMANIAN DEADLIFT	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	LEG PRESS	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	PRONE SUPERMAN	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED
	JUMP ROPE	40 seconds	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED

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KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

WEDNESDAY:

Rest

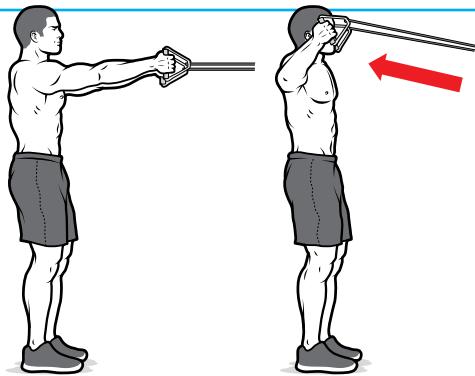
Directions: You've gone hard two days in a row. Now, let your body recover. Aim for light activity, such as a walk or run, or some stretching. This is also a great day to take a yoga class.

THURSDAY:

Total Body, Push

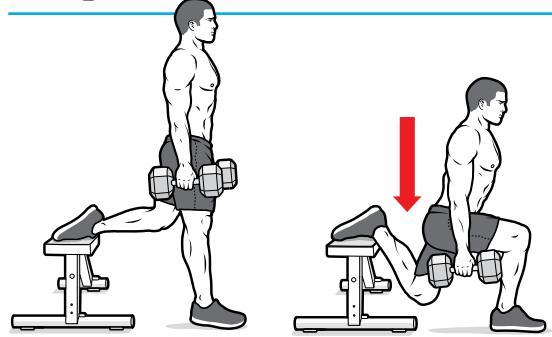
Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Warmup

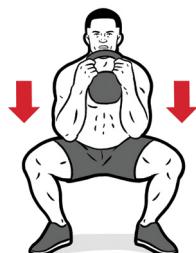


Banded Face Pull: Secure a resistance band to a rack at eye level. Grasp it in both hands with an overhand shoulder-width grip and extend your arms. Keep the band taut, bend your elbows, and pull it toward your forehead; keep your upper arms parallel to the floor. Reverse. That's 1 rep. Do 2 sets of 10 to 12.

Superset 1 (3 Sets)



Dumbbell Bulgarian Split Squat: Hold a pair of dumbbells at your sides, right foot behind you on a bench or box and left leg almost straight. Bend your left knee; your right knee will bend as you do. When your left thigh is parallel to the floor, pause, then stand. That's 1 rep. Do 6 to 8 reps per side.



Goblet Squat: Stand with a dumbbell held at your chest, feet shoulder-width apart. Push your butt back slightly, then bend at the knees, lowering your torso until your thighs are parallel to the ground. Stand back up. That's 1 rep. Do 12 to 15.

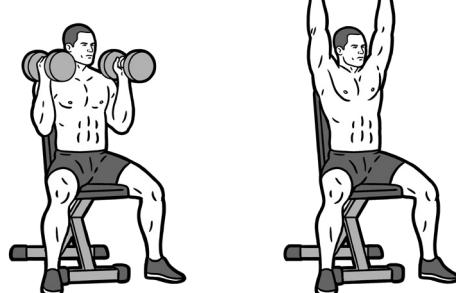
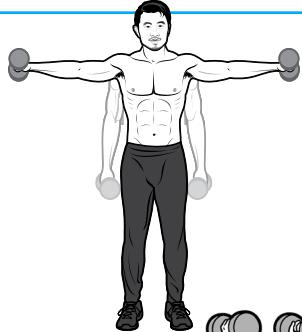
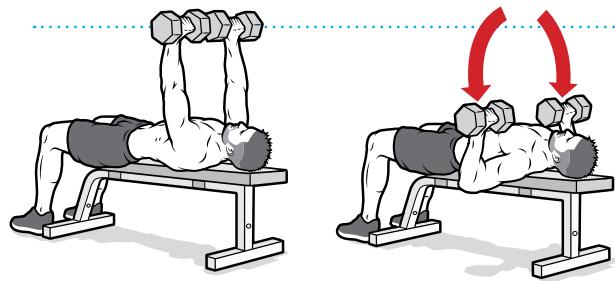
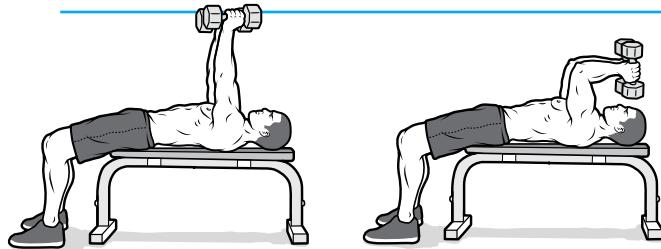
THURSDAY (CONT)

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Superset 2 (3 Sets)**Superset 3 (2 Sets)**

Lateral Raise: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, dumbbells held at your sides. Turn your arms so that your palms face slightly forward and your elbows are slightly bent. Raise your arms out to your sides up to shoulder level. Pause for 1 second; then slowly return to the starting position. That's 1 rep. Do 8 to 10.

Seated Overhead Press: Sit on a bench set to a 75-degree incline, dumbbells held at your shoulders, palms facing each other. Press the dumbbells directly overhead, then lower with control. That's 1 rep. Do 10 to 12.

Dumbbell Skullcrusher: Lie on your back on a bench, holding dumbbells directly over your shoulders. This is the start. Bend at the elbows, lowering the dumbbells toward your head without moving your upper arms. Return to the start. That's 1 rep. Do 8 to 10.

Dumbbell Press: Lie with your back on a bench, dumbbells held directly over your shoulders, abs and glutes tight. Lower the dumbbells to within an inch of your chest. Press back up. That's 1 rep; do 10 to 12.

Hollow Hold: Lie on the floor with your arms and legs extended so your body forms a straight line. Press your lower back down into the floor. Contracting your abs and keeping your knees together, lift your shoulders, arms, and legs a few inches. Hold for 30 seconds, then rest for 30 seconds. Do 4 sets.

THURSDAY (CONT)

Thursday Workout

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

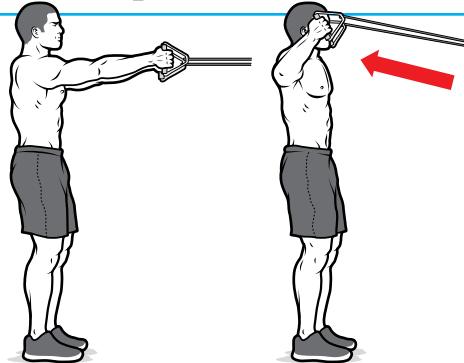
	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BANDED FACE PULL	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	
SUPERSET 1	DUMBBELL BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUAT	6 to 8 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	GOBLET SQUAT	12 to 15 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	LATERAL RAISE	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	SEATED OVERHEAD PRESS	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 3	DUMBBELL SKULL-CRUSHER	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	DUMBBELL PRESS	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	HOLLOW HOLD	30 seconds	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

FRIDAY: Total Body, Pull

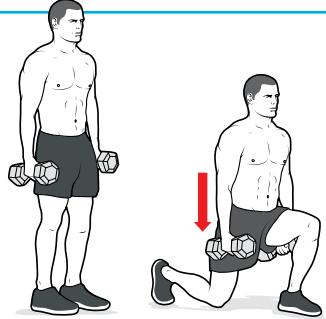
Directions: Warm up, then do the exercises in order. Have extra time today? Take a 10- or 15-minute walk for light cardio.

Warmup

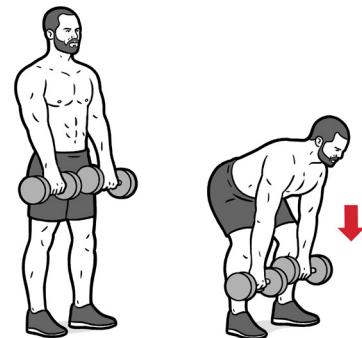


Banded Face Pull: Secure a resistance band to a rack at eye level. Grasp it in both hands with an overhand shoulder-width grip and extend your arms. Keep the band taut, bend your elbows, and pull it toward your forehead; keep your upper arms parallel to the floor. Reverse. That's 1 rep. Do 2 sets of 10 to 12.

Superset 1 (3 Sets)



Dumbbell Goblet Reverse Lunge: Hold a dumbbell at your chest with both hands, core tight. Step back with your right leg, lowering into a lunge until your left thigh is parallel to the floor. Explosively stand back up. Repeat on the other side. That's 1 rep; do 6 to 8.



Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift: Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, abs engaged. Hold a pair of dumbbells in front of your thighs. Hinge forward, pushing your hips back and lowering your torso. Stop when your torso is parallel to the floor or your hamstrings are at full tension. Pause, then return to start. That's 1 rep. Do 12 to 15.

FRIDAY (CONT)

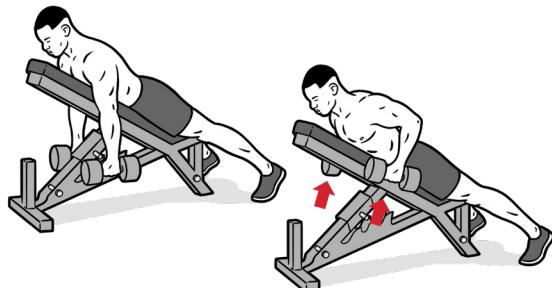
Superset 2 (3 sets)

Week 1

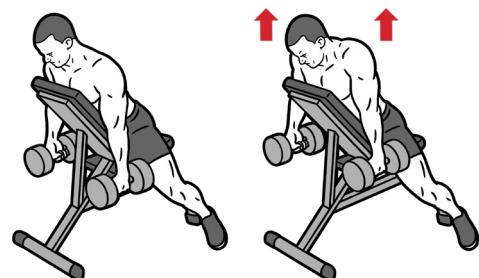
Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

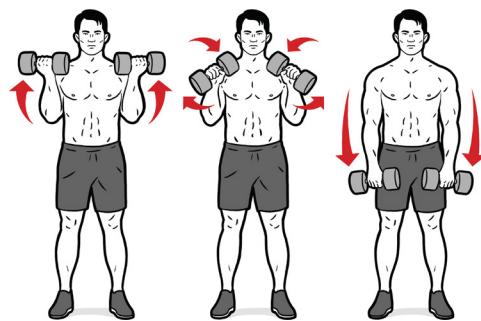


Incline Row: Lie with your chest on a bench set to a 30-degree incline, abs tight, dumbbells hanging naturally. Squeeze your shoulder blades. Keeping your elbows at a 45-degree angle with your torso, row the dumbbells toward your chest. Hold, then lower. That's 1 rep; do 8 to 10.

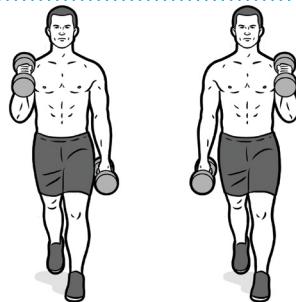


Incline Dumbbell Shrug: Lie with your chest on a bench set to a 30-degree angle, abs tight, dumbbells hanging naturally. Squeeze your shoulder blades. Now drive your shoulders toward the ceiling while keeping your elbows straight, drive your shoulders toward the ceiling. (This will not be a big motion.) Lower. That's 1 rep; do 10 to 12.

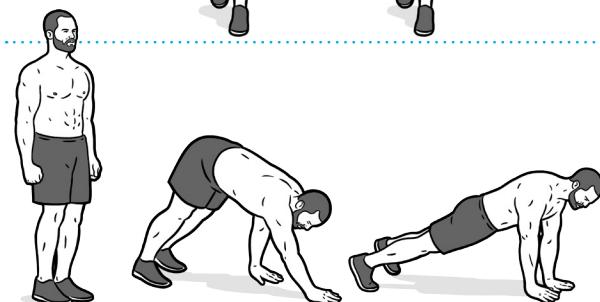
Superset 3 (3 sets)



Zottman Curl: Stand holding dumbbells at your sides, core and glutes tight. Without moving your upper arms and with your palms facing your torso, curl the weights toward your shoulders. At the top of the curl, rotate your wrists outward so your palms face forward. Keep them in this position and slowly lower the weights to the starting position. That's 1 rep. Do 8 to 10.



Alternating Hammer Curl: Stand holding dumbbells at your sides, palms facing your body. Engage your abs, back extensors, and rotator cuffs. Keeping your upper arms still, curl the dumbbells to your shoulders. Pause, then lower to the starting position. That's 1 rep. Do 10 to 12.



Plank Walkout: Stand with your arms at your sides, then fold forward and place your hands on the floor. Keeping your core tight, walk your hands forward until you're in plank position. Pause. Walk your hands back to your feet and stand up. That's 1 rep. Do 2 sets of 8 to 10.

FRIDAY (CONT)

Friday Workout

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

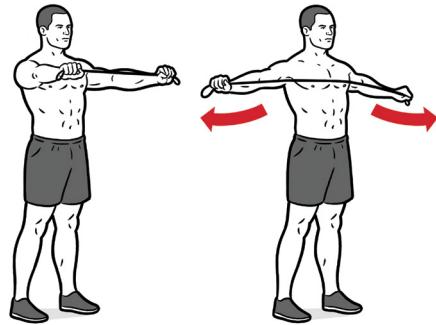
	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BANDED FACE PULL	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	
SUPERSET 1	DUMBBELL GOBLET REVERSE LUNGE	6 to 8 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	DUMBBELL ROMANIAN DEADLIFT	12 to 15 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	INCLINE ROW	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	INCLINE DUMBBELL SHRUG	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 3	ZOTTMAN CURL	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	ALTERNATING HAMMER CURL	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	PLANK WALKOUT	8 to 10 reps	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

SATURDAY: Arm Supersets (optional)

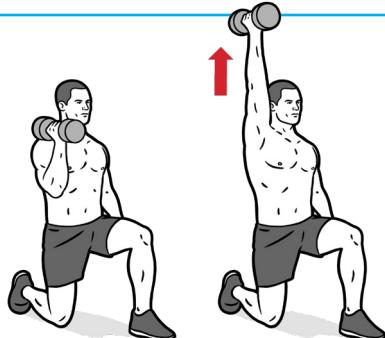
Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Warmup

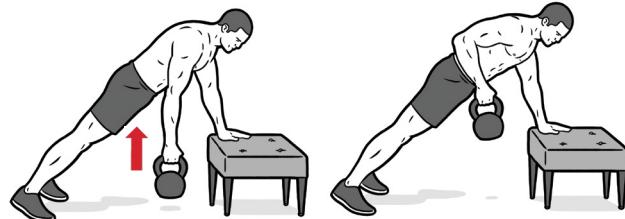


Band Pull-Apart: Using an overhand, shoulder-width grip, hold both ends of the middle section of a light resistance band. Keeping your arms straight, pull your hands away from each other, stretching the band taut and pulling your shoulder blades together until your arms and torso form a straight line. The band should touch your chest. Return to the starting position. That's 1 rep. Do 2 sets of 10 to 12.

Superset 1 (3 sets)



Half-Kneeling Single-Arm Overhead Press: Kneel on your right knee, a dumbbell held in your left hand at your shoulder, abs and glutes tight. Without arching your back, press the dumbbell overhead. Lower back to your shoulders. That's 1 rep. Do 6 to 8 per side



Elevated Plank Row: Get in plank position, left elbow on a bench, a dumbbell held in your right hand, right arm straight. Keeping your hips level, row the dumbbell toward your right rib cage. Hold for a moment, then lower. That's 1 rep. Do 8 to 10 per side.

SATURDAY (CONT)

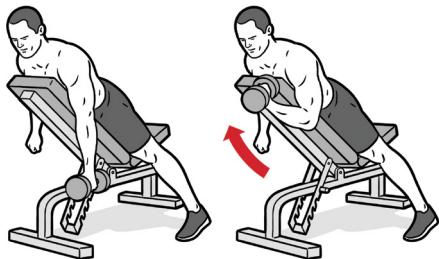
Superset 2 (3 sets)

Week 1

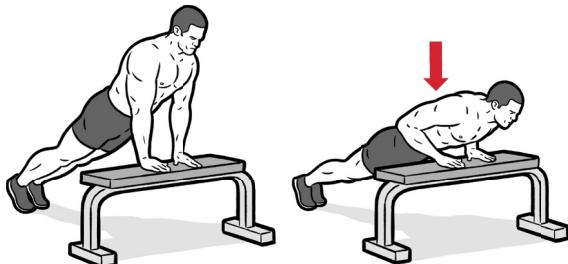
Week 2

Week 3

Week 4



Spider Curl: Set an adjustable bench to a 45-degree incline. Lie facedown on the bench with your back and core engaged; your chest should almost hover above the bench. Hold a dumbbell in your right hand, arm straight, palm facing left. Curl it to your chest, then lower it. That's 1 rep. Do 8 to 10 per side.



Hands-Elevated Close-Grip

Pushup: Get in pushup position, abs and glutes tight, hands about shoulder-width apart on a bench. Keeping your elbows close to your torso, bend at the elbows and shoulders and lower your chest to within an inch of the bench. Press back up, squeezing your triceps. That's 1 rep. Do 12 to 15.

SATURDAY (CONT)

Saturday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BAND PULL-APART	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	
SUPerset 1	HALF-KNEELING SINGLE-ARM OVERHEAD PRESS	6 to 8 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	ELEVATED PLANK ROW	8 to 10 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
Superset 2	SPIDER CURL	8 to 10 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	HANDS-ELEVATED CLOSE-GRIP PUSHUP	10 to 15 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

SUNDAY: Rest

Directions: You've gone hard two days in a row. Now, let your body recover. Aim for light activity, such as a walk or run, or some stretching. This is also a great day to take a yoga class.

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

WEEK 2



WEEK 2: Focus on dialing in and perfecting your form this week. You know all the movements, but the more you cut out little form breaks, the more you'll be pushing toward gains. This is also an underrated form of progressive overload: By improving your form on an exercise, you're forcing more work from the targeted muscle without having to increase the loads.

MONDAY: Upper Body

Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Monday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BANDED FACE PULL	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED
SUPerset 1	ALTERNATING DUMBBELL PRESS	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	3-POINT DUMBBELL ROW	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPerset 2	INCLINE DUMBBELL PRESS	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	MEDIUM-GRIP LAT PULLDOWN	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPerset 3	MACHINE FLY	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	REAR DELT FLY	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT

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KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART
(ALL BOXES CAN BE EDITED!)

TUESDAY: Lower Body

Directions: Do the exercises in order. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Tuesday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	SPIDERMAN LUNGE	5 to 7 reps	REPS COMPLETED		
SUPerset 1	LEG EXTENSION	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	DUMBBELL ROMANIAN DEADLIFT	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	LEG PRESS	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	PRONE SUPERMAN	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED
	JUMP ROPE	40 seconds	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

WEDNESDAY: Rest

Directions: You've gone hard two days in a row. Now, let your body recover. Aim for light activity, such as a walk or run, or some stretching. This is also a great day to take a yoga class.

THURSDAY: Total Body, Push

Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Thursday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BANDED FACE PULL	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	
SUPerset 1	DUMBBELL BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUAT	6 to 8 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	GOBLET SQUAT	12 to 15 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
Superset 2	LATERAL RAISE	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	SEATED OVERHEAD PRESS	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
Superset 3	DUMBBELL SKULL-CRUSHER	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	DUMBBELL PRESS	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	HOLLOW HOLD	30 seconds	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

FRIDAY:

Total Body, Pull

Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Friday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BANDED FACE PULL	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	
SUPERSET 1	DUMBBELL GOBLET REVERSE LUNGE	6 to 8 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	DUMBBELL ROMANIAN DEADLIFT	12 to 15 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	INCLINE ROW	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	INCLINE DUMBBELL SHRUG	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 3	ZOTTMAN CURL	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 3	ALTERNATING HAMMER CURL	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 3	PLANK WALKOUT	8 to 10 reps	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	

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KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

SATURDAY: Arm Supersets (optional)

Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Saturday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BAND PULL-APART	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	
SUPERSET 1	HALF-KNEELING SINGLE-ARM OVERHEAD PRESS	6 to 8 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	ELEVATED PLANK ROW	8 to 10 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	SPIDER CURL	8 to 10 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	HANDS-ELEVATED CLOSE-GRIP PUSHUP	10 to 15 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED

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KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

SUNDAY: Rest

Directions: You've gone hard two days in a row. Now, let your body recover. Aim for light activity, such as a walk or run, or some stretching. This is also a great day to take a yoga class.



WEEK 3

WEEK 3: You spent last week locking down your form and execution. If you're feeling good, aim to add a bit more weight this week, especially on your final set of each exercise. Push yourself hard on those final sets.

MONDAY: Upper Body

Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Monday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BANDED FACE PULL	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED
SUPERSET 1	ALTERNATING DUMBBELL PRESS	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	3-POINT DUMBBELL ROW	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	INCLINE DUMBBELL PRESS	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	MEDIUM-GRIP LAT PULLDOWN	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 3	MACHINE FLY	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	REAR DELT FLY	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT

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KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART
(ALL BOXES CAN BE EDITED!)

TUESDAY: Lower Body

Directions: Do the exercises in order. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Tuesday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	SPIDERMAN LUNGE	5 to 7 reps	REPS COMPLETED		
SUPerset 1	LEG EXTENSION	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	DUMBBELL ROMANIAN DEADLIFT	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	LEG PRESS	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	PRONE SUPERMAN	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED
	JUMP ROPE	40 seconds	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

WEDNESDAY: Rest

Directions: You've gone hard two days in a row. Now, let your body recover. Aim for light activity, such as a walk or run, or some stretching. This is also a great day to take a yoga class.

THURSDAY: Total Body, Push

Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Thursday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BANDED FACE PULL	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	
SUPerset 1	DUMBBELL BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUAT	6 to 8 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	GOBLET SQUAT	12 to 15 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
Superset 2	LATERAL RAISE	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	SEATED OVERHEAD PRESS	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
Superset 3	DUMBBELL SKULL-CRUSHER	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	DUMBBELL PRESS	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	HOLLOW HOLD	30 seconds	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

FRIDAY: Total Body, Pull

Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Friday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BANDED FACE PULL	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	
SUPERSET 1	DUMBBELL GOBLET REVERSE LUNGE	6 to 8 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	DUMBBELL ROMANIAN DEADLIFT	12 to 15 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	INCLINE ROW	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	INCLINE DUMBBELL SHRUG	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 3	ZOTTMAN CURL	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 3	ALTERNATING HAMMER CURL	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 3	PLANK WALKOUT	8 to 10 reps	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	

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KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

SATURDAY: Arm Supersets (optional)

Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Saturday Workout

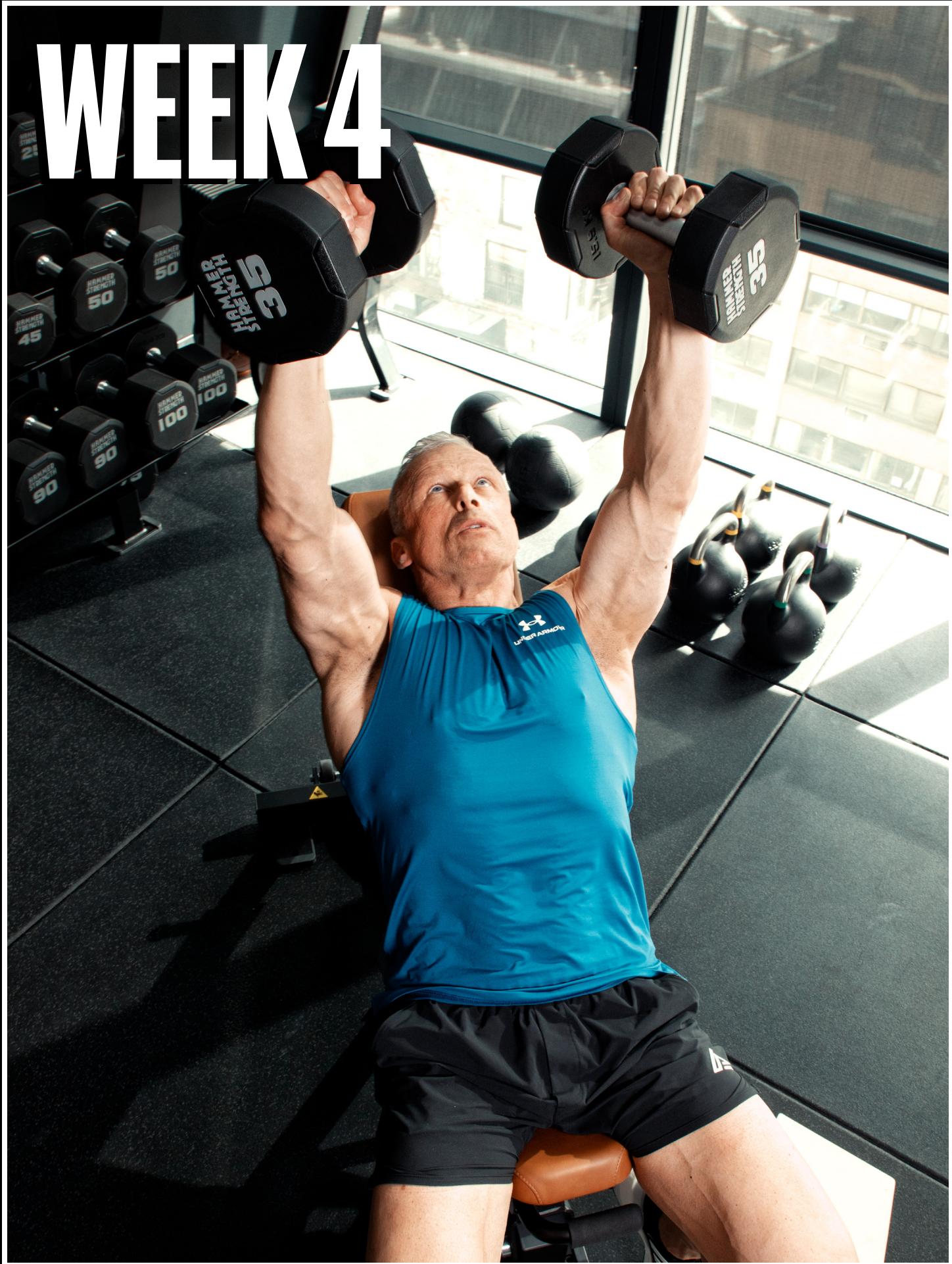
	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BAND PULL-APART	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	
SUPERSET 1	HALF-KNEELING SINGLE-ARM OVERHEAD PRESS	6 to 8 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	ELEVATED PLANK ROW	8 to 10 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	SPIDER CURL	8 to 10 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	HANDS-ELEVATED CLOSE-GRIP PUSHUP	10 to 15 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED

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KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

SUNDAY: Rest

Directions: You've gone hard two days in a row. Now, let your body recover. Aim for light activity, such as a walk or run, or some stretching. This is also a great day to take a yoga class.

WEEK 4



WEEK 4: Home stretch here! You're in the final week of the program, and now it's time to push your hardest. Make sure to take your final set on every exercise to technical failure, and don't be afraid to add 5 pounds to an exercise, especially if it's early in the workout. Late in each workout, instead of increasing weight, focus on squeezing the muscle you're aiming to train extra-hard.

MONDAY: Upper Body

Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Monday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARM UP	BANDED FACE PULL	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED
SUPerset 1	ALTERNATING DUMBBELL PRESS	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	3-POINT DUMBBELL ROW	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPerset 2	INCLINE DUMBBELL PRESS	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	MEDIUM-GRIP LAT PULLDOWN	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPerset 3	MACHINE FLY	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	REAR DELT FLY	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT

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KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART
(ALL BOXES CAN BE EDITED!)

TUESDAY: Lower Body

Directions: Do the exercises in order. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Tuesday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	SPIDERMAN LUNGE	5 to 7 reps	REPS COMPLETED		
SUPerset 1	LEG EXTENSION	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	DUMBBELL ROMANIAN DEADLIFT	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	LEG PRESS	15 reps, then 10, then 8	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	PRONE SUPERMAN	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED
	JUMP ROPE	40 seconds	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

WEDNESDAY: Rest

Directions: You've gone hard two days in a row. Now, let your body recover. Aim for light activity, such as a walk or run, or some stretching. This is also a great day to take a yoga class.

THURSDAY: Total Body, Push

Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Thursday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BANDED FACE PULL	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	
SUPERSET 1	DUMBBELL BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUAT	6 to 8 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	GOBLET SQUAT	12 to 15 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	LATERAL RAISE	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	SEATED OVERHEAD PRESS	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 3	DUMBBELL SKULL-CRUSHER	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	DUMBBELL PRESS	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	HOLLOW HOLD	30 seconds	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

FRIDAY:

Total Body, Pull

Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Friday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BANDED FACE PULL	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	
SUPERSET 1	DUMBBELL GOBLET REVERSE LUNGE	6 to 8 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	DUMBBELL ROMANIAN DEADLIFT	12 to 15 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	INCLINE ROW	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	INCLINE DUMBBELL SHRUG	10 to 12 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 3	ZOTTMAN CURL	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	ALTERNATING HAMMER CURL	8 to 10 reps	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	PLANK WALKOUT	8 to 10 reps	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	

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KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

SATURDAY: Arm Supersets (optional)

Directions: Do the exercises in order. For all supersets, complete one set of the first exercise, then immediately do a set of the second. Rest 60 to 90 seconds, then repeat the superset until you've done the required number of sets.

Saturday Workout

	EXERCISE	WORK	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
WARMUP	BAND PULL-APART	10 to 12 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	
SUPERSET 1	HALF-KNEELING SINGLE-ARM OVERHEAD PRESS	6 to 8 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	ELEVATED PLANK ROW	8 to 10 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
SUPERSET 2	SPIDER CURL	8 to 10 reps per side	WEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEIGHT
	HANDS-ELEVATED CLOSE-GRIP PUSHUP	10 to 15 reps	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED	REPS COMPLETED

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KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THE CHART

SUNDAY: Rest

Directions: You've gone hard two days in a row. Now, let your body recover. Aim for light activity, such as a walk or run, or some stretching. This is also a great day to take a yoga class.

What do I do when I finish this program?

Congratulations! You've reached the end. Except with all things fitness, it's never the end! You can easily take on **Max Muscle at 50** again; just take a deload week. During this deload week, you can do light workouts of your own, or do the same workouts you've been doing with half the weight. This will allow you to focus on form while still training the same movement pattern that you used to build muscle and strength. After that deload, jump back into action with Week 1. Expect to feel stronger and use slightly heavier weights your second time through the program; those bigger weights will set the stage for more muscle and strength development.

You can also jump into another **Men's Health MVP Premium** workout program in our **Men's Health MVP Training Lab**. Just scan the QR code below. Max Muscle at 50 has primed you for several workout plans, including our **4-Week Muscle-Building Fundamentals** program.



ILLUSTRATION CREDITS: **+ISM:** 6 (BANDED FACE PULL); **KYLE HILTON:** 6 (ALTERNATING DUMBBELL PRESS), 7 (MEDIUM-GRIP LAT PULLDOWN, REAR DELT FLY, MACHINE FLY), 9 (DUMBBELL ROMANIAN DEADLIFT, LEG EXTENSION), 10 (PRONE SUPERMAN, LEG PRESS), 12 (GOBLET SQUAT), 13 (HOLLOW HOLD, DUMBBELL SKULLCRUSHER, SEATED OVERHEAD PRESS), 16 (INCLINE ROW, ZOTTMAN CURL, ALTERNATING HAMMER CURL, PLANK WALKOUT, INCLINE DUMBBELL SHRUG), 18 (HALF-KNEELING SINGLE-ARM OVERHEAD PRESS, BAND PULL-APART, Elevated PLANK ROW), 19 (HANDS-ELEVATED CLOSE-GRIP PUSHUP, SPIDER CURL); **MATIUS GRIECK:** 7 (INCLINE DUMBBELL PRESS), 10 (JUMP ROPE), 13 (DUMBBELL PRESS); **MATIUS GRIECK AND +ISM:** 9 (SPIDERMAN LUNGE), 12 (DUMBBELL BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUAT); **PETER SUCHESKI:** 6 (3-POINT DUMBBELL ROW), 13 (LATERAL RAISE), 15 (DUMBBELL GOBLET REVERSE LUNGE)