**5/3/1 for Beginners Spreadsheet & Tips**

EXPERIENCE LEVEL: [BEGINNER](https://liftvault.com/experience_level/beginner/)  
WEEKS: [3](https://liftvault.com/week_count/3/)  
PERIODIZATION: [LINEAR PERIODIZATION](https://liftvault.com/periodization/linear/), [UNDULATING PERIODIZATION](https://liftvault.com/periodization/undulating/)  
MEET PREP PROGRAM: [NO](https://liftvault.com/meet_preparation/no/)  
PROGRAM GOAL: [STRENGTH](https://liftvault.com/program_goal/strength/)  
USES RPE: [NO](https://liftvault.com/rpe/no/)  
USES 1RM PERCENTAGE(%): [YES](https://liftvault.com/percentage/yes/)

[5/3/1](https://liftvault.com/programs/powerlifting/jim-wendlers-531-spreadsheet/) is one of the most popular [strength training programs](https://liftvault.com/programs/strength/) ever, influencing other programs like [GZCL](https://liftvault.com/programs/powerlifting/gzcl-template-spreadsheets/) and [nSuns](https://liftvault.com/programs/powerlifting/n-suns-lifting-spreadsheets/) along the way. Its popularity has stemmed from its simplicity, flexibility, and ability to be run over and over for long periods of time. It favors slow, steady, repeatable progression over the long term instead of programs that pile on the weight for a few weeks or months before progress grinds to a halt.

How is 5/3/1 for Beginners Different from 5/3/1?

5/3/1 for beginners (aka 5314b) is just that: a 5/3/1 version developed specifically for novice lifters.

It differs from the “traditional” 5/3/1 in a few key ways that make it better suited for new lifters.

* 3 training days are used, whereas *most*5/3/1 versions utilize 4 training days per week
* Two main lifts (squat, bench press, overhead press, and deadlift) are trained each session using the 5/3/1 and 5×5 FSL rep schemes. Typically only *one*lift is trained in this manner per session.
  + Why? Beginners recover more quickly and can handle more volume because the weights are relatively light.

5/3/1 Beginners Spreadsheet

[531 FOR BEGINNERS | LiftVault.com](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Esl3fko_KkbL4oJ9jOJfOm_leZ0A5UP_BTRyA9Sdzhg/edit?usp=drivesdk)



This is what a normal training week looks like for 5/3/1 for Beginners, according to Jim Wendler’s [blog post](https://thefitness.wiki/routines/5-3-1-for-beginners/). Don’t worry if you don’t know what “First Set Last” is; the spreadsheet calculates all the weights for you. But if you’re curious, First Set Last means taking the weight used during your first set (the weight used for 5 reps in your 5/3/1 set, 65% to 75% of your training max, depending on which week in the 3 week cycle you’re on) and performing 5 sets of 5 reps with it.

**Monday**  
Squat – 5/3/1 sets/reps, 5×5 @ **First Set Last ( or FSL)**  
Bench – 5/3/1 sets/reps, 5×5 @ FSL  
Assistance work

**Wednesday**  
Deadlift – 5/3/1 sets/reps, 5×5 @ FSL  
Press – 5/3/1 sets/reps, 5×5 @ FSL  
Assistance work

**Friday**  
Bench – 5/3/1 sets/reps, 5×5 @ FSL  
Squat – 5/3/1 sets/reps, 5×5 @ FSL  
Assistance work

Progression

After 3 weeks, 10 lbs is added to the training max for the squat and deadlift, while 5 lbs is added to the bench press and overhead press.

After 6 weeks (two cycles), you can use the 7th week as a deload week.

Jim’s philosophy on how to deload has shifted a bit over the years, but the jist is to take it easy – it’s a deload week.

In [Beyond 5/3/1](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00DT5FIYQ?tag=noonta-20) the provided options are:

* Deload with light lifts
* Go for a PR
* Test your training max

If you want strict advice, you can use this

70% x 5 reps

80% x 3-5 reps

90% x 1 rep

100% x 1 rep

All percentages are based on your training max (TM).

Training Max

Your training max is 80% to 90% of your **current**1RM. 90% is most often used, but occasionally lifters might use 85% or even 80%. As a beginner, 90% should be fine.

For example, if your 1RM for the squat is 100 kg, your training max is 100 kg \* 90% = 90 kg.

If you’re unsure of what your 1RM is, you can use a [1RM calculator](https://strengthlevel.com/one-rep-max-calculator).

Assistance Work

Assistance work for 5/3/1 for beginners means performing 50 to 100 reps of **one exercise** from **each category**. This can be done in any rep scheme you want – the most important part is getting the reps done.

If you’d like, you can choose more than one exercise for a given category to help you complete the 50 to 100 reps (e.g. doing 25 dips + 25 push ups = 50 reps from the push category).

**Push**: dips, push-ups, dumbbell bench press (incline or flat), triceps extensions/pushdowns

**Pull:** chin-ups/pull-ups, inverted rows, rows (dumbbell/machine/barbell), face pulls, band pull-aparts, lat pulldown, curls

**Single Leg/Core:** any abdominal work, back raises, reverse hyper extensions, lunges, step-ups, Bulgarian one-leg squats, kettle bell snatches, swings

You can do the same assistance exercises each training session or switch it up. It’s up to you.

Warming Up

Jim Wendler recommends performing 10 to 15 box jumps or medicine ball throws prior to lifting. He also recommends performing [Defrancos Agile 8](https://www.t-nation.com/training/defranco-agile-8" \t "_blank) every day, including before training.