

# 100 PUSHUPS

## How To Train Towards Your First Full Pushup



### Introduction

If you can't yet do one full pushup, this training plan is for you. And you're in good company – zero is by far the most common amount of pushups I see people being able to do. You'll be surprised how quickly that first pushup comes. Follow the training plan and you can't go wrong.

### Training Principle

When you can't yet complete one full pushup, do not train towards it by attempting full pushups. It's the number one mistake I see.

### Training Plan

Here is the training plan. Full explanations are below.

Day	Sets	Circuit		
1	4-8	1 Negative-PU	50% Kneeling-PU	50% PU-Plank
2	4-8	1 Negative-PU	50%+1 Kneeling-PU	50%+1 PU-Plank
3	4-8	1 Negative-PU	50%+2 Kneeling-PU	50%+2 PU-Plank
4	4-8	1 Negative-PU	50%+3 Kneeling-PU	50%+3 PU-Plank
5	4-8	1 Negative-PU	50%+4 Kneeling-PU	50%+4 PU-Plank
6	4-8	1 Negative-PU	50%+5 Kneeling-PU	50%+5 PU-Plank
7	4-8	1 Negative-PU	50%+6 Kneeling-PU	50%+6 PU-Plank
8	4-8	1 Negative-PU	50%+7 Kneeling-PU	50%+7 PU-Plank
9	4-8	1 Negative-PU	50%+8 Kneeling-PU	50%+8 PU-Plank
etc...				

Negative-PU = Negative Pushup

Kneeling-PU = Kneeling Pushup

PU-Plank = Pushup Plank

## The Exercises

- **A negative pushup** is just the first half of a standard pushup, i.e. going from the top with arms straight, to arms bent with your nose touching the floor. Lower yourself as slowly as possible while remaining under control into the bottom position.
- **A kneeling pushup** is the same as a standard pushup, except that you are on your knees instead of on your toes.
- **A pushup plank** is holding the top position of a pushup for a set amount of time.

By themselves, each exercise is a simpler variation of a pushup movement. Together, they provide just the right amount of training and intensity to fast-track your way to a full pushup.

## The Circuit

Perform each of these three exercises one after the other, like a mini-circuit. Do the negative pushup, immediately followed by kneeling pushups, immediately followed by the pushup plank. This counts as one set.

## The Sets

Start out by doing four sets spaced out throughout the day. In other words, perform only one set at a time, and leave a minimum of one hour between each set. The idea is to be as fresh as possible for each set. For example, for four sets, do one set when you wake up, one set in the afternoon, and two sets in the evening (at least one hour apart).

# Percentage Notation

Where the table references a percentage, e.g. 50%, this means to perform 50% of the maximum number of reps you can do for that particular exercise.

For example, if you can do a maximum of 12 kneeling pushups in one go, then you perform 6 kneeling pushups when the table asks for 50%. Likewise,  $50\% + 1$  is 7 reps, and so on. Round up when necessary.

A pushup plank is measured in the number of breaths you are able to take while holding the plank position. Count the number of exhalations during the plank hold. So if you can hold a pushup plank for a maximum of 20 breaths, and the table asks for 50%, you should hold a plank for 10 breaths.

## Preparation

Before you start the training plan, see how many consecutive kneeling pushups you can do, as well as how long you can hold a pushup plank for. Calculate the table percentages based on these values.

## Intensity

Each set should be low-to-moderate intensity, fairly challenging but not too challenging. It is very important that you do not regularly cross into high intensity for any set. You want to train as frequently as possible but stay as fresh as possible. Your freshness will suffer if the intensity is too high.

You can tell when you have crossed the line into high intensity when:

- you begin to make funny faces
- you hold your breath
- your speed slows down
- you feel the burn

These are signs that your sets are too intense.

As you increase the reps by one each day, you will inevitably get to the point where the sets begin to get too difficult for present purposes. Be actively on the lookout for the above signs.

Here's what to do when you see these signs:

1. Instead of continuing with the sets, re-assess your maximum consecutive kneeling pushups and maximum consecutive planks.
2. If everything has gone to plan, you should have increased both from your initial assessment.
3. Take these new values and start from the beginning of the table with them. The intensity should have dropped back down to a manageable level, but

you should also be on a higher level than first time round.

4. Follow the progression until you venture back into that high intensity zone. Reset, rinse and repeat.

Each time you re-set and start from the beginning of the table, you have the option of increasing the number of sets per day by one. This ensures a continuous progression in training volume. Use your judgement about adding an extra set. If the last set of the day is creeping into that high intensity zone, dial it back a bit.

## Example

Let's say I can do 8 consecutive kneeling pushups and hold a pushup plank for 12 breaths.

On Day 1, my circuit involves doing a negative pushup, immediately by 4 kneeling pushups, immediately followed by a 6-breath pushup plank. I do 4 sets throughout the day.

On Day 2, my circuit is a negative pushup, 5 kneeling pushups, and a 7-breath pushup plank. 4 sets throughout the day.

By Day 6, I'm up to 9 kneeling pushups and 11-breath pushup planks. These sets are getting pretty difficult, and I'm starting to hold my breath towards the end of them. I decide to re-assess my max efforts and get 12 kneeling pushups and 16 breaths on the plank.

So on Day 7, I restart at the beginning of the table with 6 kneeling pushups (50% of 12) and 8-breath pushup planks (50% of 16). The intensity is much lower now, so I decide to add a fifth set for the next wave of training days.

## Completion

You graduate from this training plan when you can do one full pushup, under control, with good technique.

For the first five days of this training plan, concentrate on the training and do not attempt a full pushup. Thereafter, you can start each day by seeing how close you get to a full pushup.

The moment you can do a full pushup, move on to the next training program.

**Next Section:** [Pushups Technique 101 →](#)

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