

100 PUSHUPS

The Foundation Training Plan



The Foundation training plan has you train towards completing the 100 Pushups Foundation Challenge, which is completing 100 pushups in a 24 hour period. Choose this training plan if you can currently do between one and twelve pushups on the [maximum pushups test](#).

Foundation Training Plan

Here is the Foundation training plan. The full explanation of the table is below.

Day	Sets	Circuit	
1	4-10	50% Standard pushup	50% Pushup Plank
2	4-10	50%+1 Standard pushup	50%+1 Pushup Plank
3	4-10	50%+2 Standard pushup	50%+2 Pushup Plank
4	4-10	50%+3 Standard pushup	50%+3 Pushup Plank
5	4-10	50%+4 Standard pushup	50%+4 Pushup Plank
6	4-10	50%+5 Standard pushup	50%+5 Pushup Plank
7	4-10	50%+6 Standard pushup	50%+6 Pushup Plank
8	4-10	50%+7 Standard pushup	50%+7 Pushup Plank
9	4-10	50%+8 Standard pushup	50%+8 Pushup Plank
etc...			

A pushup plank is holding the top position of a pushup for a set amount of time. We prefer to measure it in the number of breaths you take, rather than in seconds/minutes.

Percentage Notation

Where the table refers to a percentage, e.g. 50%, this means 50% of the maximum number of reps you can do for that particular exercise. In the case of the standard pushup, it is based on your score in the [max pushups test](#).

e.g. If you can do 12 pushups:

50% = 6 reps

50%+1 = 7 reps

50%+2 = 8 reps, and so on...

Round up when necessary.

The Circuit

Perform the pushup plank immediately after finishing the pushups. You can roll straight into the pushup plank by simply holding your position at the top. This counts as one set.

The Sets

Start out doing four sets spaced throughout the day. You do not do all your sets in one session. The idea is to be as fresh as possible for each set.

In practice, leave a minimum of one hour between 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).

When you do a re-set (explained below), you can add one set to your daily training volume, up to an eventual maximum of ten sets a day.

Preparation

Before you start this training plan, make sure you have done the max pushups test. Do a similar test for pushup planks – count the number of breaths you take before collapsing in a pile on the floor, or when you can no longer hold the position with good technique (you'll feel your butt pop up or your back will start to arch).

Intensity

This bit is real important. 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

- the 'up' part of the pushup becomes forced and slows down

These are all signs that your sets are too intense.

Since the training plan adds one rep per day, you WILL INEVITABLY get to the point where a set becomes too intense.

Here is what you need to do when this happens...

1. Re-do the [max pushups test](#) and max pushup plank test.
2. If everything has gone to plan, you should have increased both from your initial assessment. Do not worry if you haven't, it does not affect the next bit.
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.

It is really important not to venture into high intensity training. Greasing the groove is the most effective training methodology for improving pushups, and it does not rely on going close to your maximum pushup capacity on any sets. If you combine training too close to failure with training every day, you are not training optimally and your progress will stall out.

Completion

Repeat the progression cycles until you can do twelve pushups in the max pushups test.

At that point, mark off a day to attempt the 100 Pushups Foundation Challenge, which is 100 pushups in a 24-hour period. Most prefer to attempt it at the weekend, where you have more control over spacing your sets out over the course of a day. Tip: avoid doing more than 8 reps in a set, and space all the sets out as equally as possible throughout the day.

Once you have completed the Foundation Challenge, move on to the [Intermediate Training Plan](#).

[Go To The Intermediate Training Plan »](#)

If you aren't able to complete the Foundation Challenge on the first attempt, ask yourself whether you think you'd be able to complete it with better spacing of sets/reps throughout the day, or whether you still lack a bit of overall strength. If

it is the latter, continue with the training plan until you can do 15 reps, and try again.

Essential Reading

[Greasing The Groove](#)

This Soviet training technique is at the heart of the 100 pushups training programs. You should familiarize yourself with greasing the groove before diving in to the Foundation Training Plan. Knowing the underlying training philosophy will clarify a lot of potential questions you have about your training program.

Frequently Asked Questions

“At the moment I can only do one pushup. Adding one rep a day is asking too much of me. It is progressing too quickly. What do I do?”

You are right, you will not be able to add one rep a day in the early stages of the training plan. This is why the resets are so important. They are a built-in release valve. You may find you are performing resets every day to begin with. That is ok, that is what the plan is designed to do. Meanwhile, your pushup planks should progress more quickly than your standard pushups, and you have the option of adding a set of standard pushups every reset, so your training plan naturally progresses incrementally by itself.

“I’m in an office environment that makes it impossible to do any sets during the day. What should I do?”

Push your sets towards the beginning and the end of the day. Do 1-2 sets before you leave in the morning, doing the remainder when you get back in the evening. In practice, you only need to leave one hour between sets. At a push, reduce this to 45 minutes if it means getting in that last set of the day, but don’t make it a habit.

“I’ve read that I should only be training a maximum of 3-4 times a week. Is doing pushups every day too much?”

Doing pushups every day is optimal, provided the intensity of your sets is low-to-moderate. This is why the training plan prevents you from getting too close to your maximum pushups capacity. The advice of training 3-4 times a week is applicable to weight training where you perform sets much closer to muscular failure, which is more taxing on the neuromuscular system and requires more time to recover from.

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[Intermediate Training Plan »](#)

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