

HYPER-STRENGTH
PUSH/PULL/LEGS

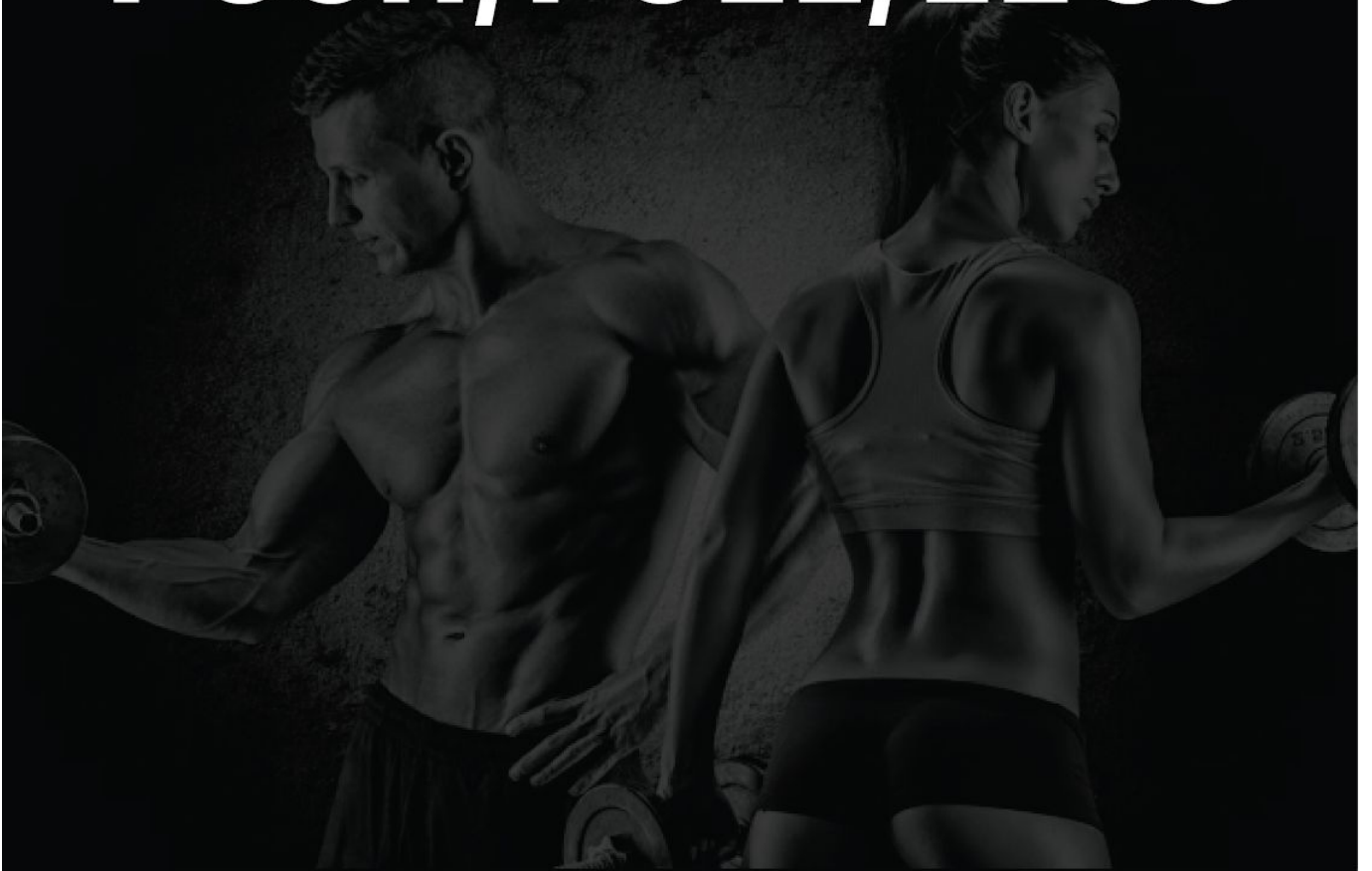


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PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

The Hyper-Strength PPL program is my take on the popular Push/Pull/Legs training split, and as the name implies, trains both strength and hypertrophy. While the traditional PPL program has you training six days per week (push/pull/legs/rest/push/pull/legs), my version has you training five days per week.

Note: I've discussed the PPL program in detail on the members' site. If you're not a member, you can become one [here](#).

The Hyper-Strength PPL is a 5-day program that splits your weekly training between pushing movements, pulling movements, and movements that train the lower body (legs).

It follows a 3 days on/1 day off /2 days on/1 day off pattern and works well for most people (both from a scheduling perspective and physiological perspective – providing adequate volume and frequency).

The first three days of the week, you follow a standard Push/Pull/Legs routine and then on the Friday and Saturday you train the push/pull movements paired with legs (you'll split legs into quads on push day and hamstrings on pull day). Like so:

Monday	Push
Tuesday	Pull
Wednesday	Legs
Thursday	Rest
Friday	Push+legs (quad focus)
Saturday	Pull+legs (hamstring/glute focus)
Sunday	Rest

On Push days you'll train:

- Chest
- Shoulders
- Triceps

On Pull days you'll train:

- Back
- Rear delts
- Biceps

On Leg days, you'll train:

- Quads
- Hamstrings
- Glutes
- Calves
- Abs

On 'Combo' days (push+quads/pull+hamstrings), you'll train a combination of pushing movements and quad-focused movements or pulling movements and hamstring/glute-focused movements.

THE PROGRAMS

I've designed two different programs, one for men and one for women. The only difference is the women's program has more of a focus on the lower body, namely the glutes.

Click to download:

- [H-S PPL: MEN'S PROGRAM](#)
 - [H-S PPL: WOMEN'S PROGRAM](#)
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NOTES ON EXERCISE SELECTION, SETS, REPS, AND REST TIMES.

• Exercise Selection

Each workout consists of 1-2 compound movements and 1-2 accessory and isolation movements.

x Compound Movements: To utilise mechanical tension in your programming, you should be focusing on the compound lifts – think bench press, chin ups, rows, squats, deadlifts, etc. The compound lifts are multi-joint movements (work multiple muscles) and will allow you to lift the most amount of weight, which in turn gives you the most ‘bang for your buck’ when it comes to muscle growth, safety, and progression.

x Accessory and isolation Movements: Think of these movements as a ‘top up’ to the compound movements. For example, you might squat (compound) and then complement that with Bulgarian split squats or single-leg leg press (accessory). They target smaller body parts that may not be sufficiently worked by the compound movements. For example, while a rowing movement will stimulate the biceps, the stimulus isn’t enough for you to see significant muscle growth if you’re not also targeting the biceps directly.

• Sets and reps

The sets have been prescribed based on [the current literature](#) on training volume and muscle growth. I’ve erred on the lower end as I don’t know your starting point, and how much volume your body can tolerate.

Note: I’ve gone into detail on volume in the *Upper/Lower Training Split Explained* article in the membership site, so I’m not going to detail all of that here. [Become a member](#) and read that article if you want to learn more.

As for rep ranges: I’ve programmed the compound movements in a lower rep range with heavier weights. And the accessory/isolation movements in a slightly higher rep range with slightly lighter weights. This allows you to train both the mechanical tension and metabolic stress tenets of hypertrophy.

You'll also note that the first half of the week has you training in a lower rep range with heavier weights and the second half of the week has you training in a higher rep range with lighter weights—for the same reason listed above.

- **Rest times**

The big compound movements take more out of you and for you to be able to perform at your best and decrease the risk of injury, you should rest longer to ensure you're fully recovered before going into your next set. Conversely, the accessory/isolation movements aren't as taxing so you can afford shorter rest periods without impeding progress or risking injury.

THE KEY TRAINING PRINCIPLES

When it comes to training and building muscle, the first thing you need to learn and understand are the key principles. These are:

1. Progressive overload

If calories are the key factor to your nutrition, then progressive overload is the key factor to your training. In order for muscles to grow and get stronger the stress placed on the body has to gradually increase. This stress has to be above and beyond what your body is currently use to so that it sees a reason to adapt – in our case, build muscle and strength.

This means, if you keep lifting the same amount of weight for the same number of sets and reps for the next year – your body will not change. While there are a plethora of ways to progressively overload the muscle, the simplest way is to either increase the weight you're lifting or lifting the same amount of weight for more reps. (More on this later)

2. Good Form

Every exercise should be executed with good form. This means:

- **Lifting the weight through a full range of motion.** All exercises (unless I state otherwise in the program) should be performed with a full range of motion. No half-reps, cheat-reps, or quarter-reps. If you can't lift a weight with the full range of motion—lower the weight. There's no room for ego;

leave that for people who wish to get injured and/or make zero progress.

- **No swinging or jerking.** You should be controlling the weight through the full range of motion. No swinging or jerking the weight up or down. Not only will this reduce the effectiveness of the exercise (and your results) but it also leaves you open to injury.

(Watch the videos I've linked to each exercise to get an understanding of how to perform the exercises with proper form.)

3. Rest and Recovery

Your muscles don't grow when you're training, they grow outside the gym when you're resting and recovering. This means:

- **Get enough sleep.**
- **Reduce stress.**
- **Eat well.** Yes, calories are the most important, but food quality matters. Eating plenty of whole foods like fruits and vegetables will ensure you're providing the body with all it needs to recover and rebuild.

PICKING A STARTING WEIGHT

A common question I'm asked by clients is how can they determine what weight they should start lifting with? It's a great question, let's answer it. Take a look at the image below:

RPE	Reps Left in Reserve
10	Could not perform any additional reps
9.5	Could have MAYBE performed one more rep
9	1 rep left in tank
8.5	Definitely one rep left in tank, possibly 2
8	2 reps left in tank
7.5	Definitely 2 reps left in tank, possibly 3
7	3 reps left in tank
1-6	Too light to estimate, 4+ reps left in tank

The image represents the RPE scale. The *Rate of Perceived Exertion* scale is a numbered scale from 1-10 that you can use to gauge how hard a set felt. 1 being not hard at all and you could probably do this all day long; and 10 being I THINK I'M DEAD.

Generally, you want to stay between ~7.5-8.5 on the scale—meaning, the weight was heavy enough for you to complete the desired reps and stress the muscle enough for it to grow, but not so heavy you went to complete failure. Or, not so light that there wasn't enough of a stimulus for the muscle to grow.

Here's an example of how to use the RPE scale to pick a weight: Let's say your program calls for you to do 3 sets of 10 reps on the DB chest press.

- You pick the 20kg DB and perform the movement.
- You manage to only get 4 reps. That's 6 short of the 10 you were aiming for. You don't need the RPE scale to know that the weight was too heavy. So on the second set you'll need to decrease the weight.
- On the second set, you decide to be conservative and pick the 14kg DB. This time you manage to complete 10 reps but the weight felt too light. You gauge that this was an RPE of 6. This weight was a bit too light and you could go heavier.
- On the last set, you pick the 16kg DB and manage to get exactly 10 reps. You gauge that this was an 8 on the RPE scale. Perfect. This would be the weight you would use going forward.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN TO INCREASE THE WEIGHT?

Sticking with the previous example of the DB chest press – if your plan calls for you to do 3 sets of 10 reps. This is how you would approach progression.

- **You aim to do the total number of sets and reps for that exercise with a given weight.** So, in this case you'll aim to complete the entire 3 sets for the 10 reps.
- **Once you can do all the sets and reps at a given weight, increase the weight you're lifting** and then aim to hit the same number of sets and reps prescribed in your program

– Rinse and repeat

Here's an example: Your program calls for 3 sets x 10 reps on DB chest press:

Week 1: 16 kg DB

Set 1 – 10 reps

Set 2 – 8 reps

Set 3 – 7 reps

Week 2: 16 kg DB

Set 1 – 10 reps

Set 2 – 10 reps

Set 3 – 9 reps

Week 3: 16 kg DB

Set 1 – 10 reps

Set 2 – 10 reps

Set 3 – 10 reps

At this point you've hit the top end of all three sets, so next week you'll be increasing the weight.

Week 4: 18 kg DB (+2kg increase)

Set 1 – 10 reps

Set 2 – 8 reps

Set 3 – 8 reps

And you'll simply continue doing this.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I INCREASE THE WEIGHT BY?

You want to increase the weight by the smallest increment possible: ~1-2 kg on upper body lifts and ~2-5 kg on lower body lifts.

Of course, you can increase the weight by more if you find that the RPE is too low, but I've found the above guidelines to work well as a general rule.

A few notes:

- There will be occasions when you fall short of hitting the target rep range and lowering the weight makes the exercise too easy. In this case, just stick with that weight until you can hit the top end rep range.

So, If your plan calls for you to hit 10 reps but you only manage to hit 7 reps with whatever weight you picked – just stick with that weight until you can hit 10 reps on all three sets before increasing the weight.

- You won't always be able to add more reps or weight. This is totally normal, especially the more advanced you become. Just do the best you can and over time you'll see yourself getting stronger. Remember: Building the body you want takes time.

TRAINING TO FAILURE

You shouldn't be training to failure unless stated otherwise. Stop **1-2 reps shy of failure**. This may seem counterintuitive but it will help you maintain greater overall power and volume during the workout.

Allow me to illustrate. Let's assume we have two lifters: Person A and Person B. Person A lifts 100 lbs and takes every set to failure.

Set 1: 10 reps → failure

Set 2: 6 reps → failure

Set 3: 3 reps → failure

That's a total volume of: 1900 lbs

Person B lifts 100 lbs and stops 1-2 reps shy of failure:

Set 1: 8 reps → Stops 1-2 reps before failing

Set 2: 8 reps → Stops 1-2 reps before failing

Set 3: 8 reps → Stops 1-2 reps before failing

That's a total volume of: 2400 lbs. Person B has done more total "work"/volume than person A, even though they were both lifting the same amount of weight.

If you're going all out in your first set, you're zapping energy from your latter sets. Which means you'll either do fewer reps and/or have to reduce the weight, which means you'll be lifting a lower amount of total volume.

Constantly training to failure also increases your injury risk: The more fatigued you are because you went to failure on your first set, the more chances of you getting sloppy on your latter sets and risking bad form which could lead to injury.

There's this notion that any set not taken to failure is a wasted set, but that's complete nonsense that has been perpetuated over the years by people who have not read the research. Research has shown that sets taken near, but not to failure are almost, if not as effective as sets taken to failure on inducing growth with the added benefit that they don't overtax your nervous system to the point where it reduces your strength, power, and volume output.

WHAT ABOUT WARMING UP?

People get far too carried away with warming up. My recommendations are:

- **5 minutes of light cardio on an exercise machine of your choosing.** Note that I said 'light'. This means a brisk walk or cycling at a low resistance. Don't start running miles or doing Tabata HIIT before you get into your workout.
- **Light foam rolling on any areas that feel particularly tight.**
- **And 1-2 mobility exercises for the upper or lower body** depending on what workout it is. (See [this](#) and [this](#) for exercises I recommend.)

Warm up sets

Before you get into your main working sets, it's a good idea to do a few warm up sets.

But, don't waste all your energy warming up. Do enough to warm up your muscles and get your head in the game, then get to your workout.

Here's what I recommend:

- **Do 10-12 reps with just the bar or very light dumbbells.** If you're working set has you lifting 30kg DBs, then this first warm up set should be done with

a 10-12 kg DB.

- **Then, do one more warm up set with 50-60% of your main working set for 8-10 reps.** So, if your main set calls for you to lift 100 kg on the barbell bench press, this would mean 50-60kg. Alternatively, if you're lifting 30kg DBs for your main set, this would mean your second warm up set would be done with 15-18 kg DBs.
- **At this point, if you feel warmed up and ready, go into your main set. If you feel you need it, you can add an additional warm up set here with 70-80% of your main working set.**
- **Then start your main set.**

Note: You don't need to do this *for every* exercise. Do the protocol prescribed above is for the main exercise of the day. Then just go with how you feel.

For example: If your first workout was the bench press, you'd warm up as prescribed above. Then, if your second workout is the bent over row, you may only need to do one warm up set.

THE FAQ

1. Who is this program for?

Pretty much everyone—both men and women. Whether you're looking to gain size or lose body fat.

2. What should my diet be like?

If your goal is to build muscle, then you should be eating in a calorie surplus ([see this](#)) and if your goal is to lose body fat, then you should be eating in a calorie deficit ([see this](#)).

3. I don't have access to a gym, can I still do this program?

Mm, depends. If you have access to dumbbells and barbells at home, sure. If you don't have *any* gym equipment, what the hell are you doing reading this? But, also, I would highly encourage you to join a gym. If you're serious about changing your body and making progress, it's the best way to do so.

4. I've been doing this program for a few weeks now and my strength has plateaued, what should I do?

I would first suggest you take a deload week. If, after taking a week to deload, you're still not progressing: **reduce the weight you're lifting by 10%** and build back up.

If you're dieting, strength plateaus – and even slight strength losses – are common so don't stress it. Just focus on maintaining your strength until the diet is over, alternatively, [consider a diet break](#).

5. Should I be taking any supplements?

Meh, not really. But the supplements I recommend are [listed here](#).