

Calisthenics Programs - Remedial Through Advanced Training tactics included



Written by: Owen Johnston
<http://www.strengthcalisthenics.com>

30 Workouts In Total!

Owen Johnston - www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Legal & Author Information

Copyright Information:

Johnston, Owen

Calisthenics Programs - Remedial Through Advanced

Fitness Instruction, 2nd Edition

Copyright 2015/6

All Rights Reserved. This book may be freely printed, distributed, or copied for personal or classroom use, but may not be modified or used for profit. It may also be posted on any reputable website as long as you do not offer the book for sale.

Short URL to this book (free download) - <http://tiny.cc/workoutpdf>

Author & Publisher - Owen Johnston

Author's Home Page - <http://www.owenjohnston.net>

Owen Johnston – www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Calisthenics Programs – Remedial Through Advanced Training tactics included

Thank you for your interest! This guide contains workout programs for beginners, as well as for intermediate and advanced athletes. There are various types of programs covered, including skill work, strength training, bodybuilding, and weighted calisthenics. There are 30 separate workouts in total.

If you would like to view free videos, visit the site below, where you will see links in the top menu titled “Bodyweight training videos” and “Calisthenics progression videos”, respectively. The top menu also has a link to a calisthenics progression PDF, which lists of all the progressions and exercises. If you are visiting the mobile version of the site, tap “Site Menu” in the first post.

<http://www.strengthcalisthenics.com>

Short URLs

Calisthenics progression videos - <http://tiny.cc/progressionvideo>

Bodyweight training videos - <http://tiny.cc/trainingvideo>

Calisthenics progression PDF - <http://tiny.cc/progressions>

My downloads page - <http://tiny.cc/freedownloads>

View and/or download this guide as a free PDF - <http://tiny.cc/workoutpdf>

Classes

If you would like to get feedback on your technique, and additional instruction, get in touch with me to set up a class! I always offer a FREE initial consultation. E-mail me at - owen@strengthcalisthenics.com

Order Prints

You can order beautiful, professionally printed editions of my books on demand through Simple Print Service, the “easy way to create beautiful prints from digital content!” Simply visit the site below, upload a PDF, and begin the ordering process. You may choose to have a PDF file printed as a magazine, softcover book, or hardcover book.

<http://www.simpleprintservice.com>

The PDF editions of my books may be read and/or downloaded for free! Simply point your browser to the below short URL to a Dropbox folder. If you decide you would like to order a print, download one or more of the books and use the service at the site above. Short URL - <http://tiny.cc/books>

I don’t make a single cent from prints of my books made through the Simple Print Service, nor do I ask for one. I am satisfied knowing that people are reading my stuff, and that there is an eco-friendly print on demand service available!

Disclaimer

This book is intended for people of good health and physical condition. The training methods and advice in this book may not be for everyone. Always consult your physician before starting a new exercise program. I am not a physician, and as such, nothing in this book should in any way be taken as medical advice or a substitute for medical advice. Also, this book should not be used to replace advice from your personal physician.

Physical activity always carries with it a risk of injury. When you practice the training methods in this book, always practice proper safety precaution, use proper technique, and apply common sense. The author can not assume any responsibility for any injury, illness, loss or damage that may result from following the training methods in this book.

Lastly, this book is not a replacement for formal instruction. Be sure to seek out a competent, qualified instructor who may carefully observe your progress and provide feedback. This book is intended primarily to be a supplement to, not a replacement for, formal training.

Table of contents

<u>Introduction:</u>		
Ditch the gym!	-	7
<u>Training programs:</u>		
Remedial program	-	8
Strength training programs	-	13
Bodybuilding programs	-	17
Bodyweight skill training programs	-	22
Convict Conditioning inspired programs	-	25
Bodyweight + sandbag programs	-	29
Weighted calisthenics programs	-	48
<u>Additional Information:</u>		
Example workouts	-	62
Recommended training frequencies	-	65
Training tactics	-	69
(For bodybuilding, strength, and skill)		
Calibrating exercises and workouts	-	71
(Tougheners, regressions, drop sets, equipment)		
<u>Appendix:</u>		
Author profile	-	72
Resources	-	73
Appreciation	-	74

Owen Johnston - www.strengthcalisthenics.com

“Getting your ass away from the gym is probably the number one thing you can do to start kicking your gains up a notch.”

— Paul Wade, *Convict Conditioning 2: Advanced Prison Training Tactics for Muscle Gain, Fat Loss and Bulletproof Joints*

Owen Johnston – www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Ditch the gym – build strength and muscle with your own bodyweight!

Owen Johnston

owen@strengthcalisthenics.com

Before joining a gym or buying expensive exercise equipment, look at what you already have available to you in your neighborhood. With creativity, just your own bodyweight, and the right training progressions, you can get in a challenging workout any place. You can train in your own home, yard, or a local park.

Bodyweight training ranges from very easy to very challenging, depending on how you change the leverage and position of the exercise. There is potentially an endless number of exercises you can perform, without needing any specialized equipment. Calisthenics, also known as bodyweight training, is very minimalist. You need nothing beyond a bar, a wall, a walkway or porch, and a table, which can be readily found in your environment. If a pullup bar isn't readily available to you, think outside the box. Playground equipment, low sturdy tree branches, hand rails on walkways, and even a door may suffice.

Progression with weight training is simple; add weight to the bar as you get stronger. With bodyweight training, you have to change the exercise itself to make it easier or harder. A well designed bodyweight training progression will gradually go from easy exercises to very hard.

Take a deload week when needed to allow your body to recover and rebuild. You can use one or more deload protocols or just take an “active rest” week. In either case, focus on mobility work and therapeutic modalities.

Deload protocols include but are not necessarily limited to:

Less volume (sets / reps), less frequency (training days per week), less intensity (regressions of any kind), less variety (less exercises)

Active rest:

Ideas include but are not limited to pickup games of your favorite athletic sport, taking a Yoga class, getting in some light walking, and yard work or household chores.

Bodyweight only workouts begin in the next section. If you want to learn the progressions and exercises, e-mail me to set up a class!

owen@strengthcalisthenics.com

Other contact methods, as well as information on my qualifications, may be found at my home page -

<http://www.owenjohnston.net>

Progression videos and a progression PDF are available at the site below -
www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Remedial program

This program is intended for athletes coming in from a sedentary lifestyle, coming back from an injury, or who are beginners to calisthenics. Perform one workout per day. Take a day off between workouts if needed. It is recommended to do at least some light walking and/or stretching on off days.

Beginner training cycle

Week 1:

Monday – Lower body workout

Tuesday – off

Wednesday – off

Thursday – Pushup workout

Friday – off

Saturday – light activity of choice (yoga, pickup game of basketball, etc)

Sunday – off

Week 2:

Monday – Abdominal workout

Tuesday – off

Wednesday – off

Thursday – Pullup workout

Friday – off

Saturday – light activity of choice (yoga, pickup game of basketball, etc)

Sunday – off

Recommended training cycle

Perform each week:

Monday – Lower body workout

Tuesday – Pushup workout

Wednesday – off

Thursday – Abdominal workout

Friday – Pullup workout

Saturday – light activity of choice (yoga, pickup game of basketball, etc)

Sunday – off

When you are able to meet the progression standards for all four workouts, you are ready for the beginner strength program.

Short URLs

Calisthenics progression videos - <http://tiny.cc/progressionvideo>

Bodyweight training videos - <http://tiny.cc/trainingvideo>

Calisthenics progression PDF - <http://tiny.cc/progressions>

My downloads page - <http://tiny.cc/freedownloads>

Remedial lower body workout

Don't rush through your reps or cheat - use good form! Use a "2-1-2" cadence in pushups - 2 seconds down, 1 second pause in the bottom position, and 2 seconds up. Take an active rest of 1 to 3 minutes between sets. Don't simply sit down - shake your legs out, walk around, get a cold drink, whatever - keep moving.

If you are new to the wall sit and/or the squat progression, start with the beginner standard, and add a set the next time you perform the workout. Try to add at least 2 repetitions to each set, each week. Once you meet the intermediate standard, add a third set the next time you perform the workout. Once you meet the progression standard for jackknife squats, you are ready for the next exercise in the squat progression.

Description of the candle stick drill - sit and roll to candle stick with arms supporting, and hold for 2 seconds, then tuck knees in and roll forward to sitting.

- 1.) Walking or low intensity interval training – 5 to 10 minutes
- 2.) Stretches for hamstrings, thighs, ankles, and hip flexors – 5 to 10 minutes
- 3.) Candle stick drill –

Build up to performing 10 repetitions with good form

4a.) Wall sit -

Beginner standard: get into and out of position 3-5 times

Intermediate standard: hold for 30 seconds

Progression standard: hold for 1 minute

4b.) When you are able to meet the progression standard for wall sit, replace the exercise with jackknife squats.

Standards for jackknife squats -

Beginner standard: 1 set of 10 repetitions

Intermediate standard: 2 sets of 25 repetitions

Progression standard: 3 sets of 40 repetitions

5.) Lower body mobility work with deep breathing for 2-3 minutes (emphasis on hip flexors, ankles, hamstrings)

Remedial pushup workout

Don't rush through your reps or cheat - use good form! Use a "2-1-2" cadence in pushups - 2 seconds down, 1 second pause in the bottom position, and 2 seconds up. Take an active rest of 1 to 3 minutes between sets. Don't simply sit down - shake your arms out, walk around, get a cold drink, whatever - keep moving.

If you are new to the pushup progression, start with the beginner standard, and add a set the next time you perform the workout. Try to add at least 2 repetitions to each set, each week. Once you meet the intermediate standard, add a third set the next time you perform the workout. Once you meet the progression standard for wall pushups, you are ready for the next exercise in the pushup progression.

- 1.) Warmup – 5-10 minutes of walking or low intensity interval training
- 2.) Shoulder circling, shoulder stretches, wrist stretches – 5 minutes
- 3.) Wall pushups –
Beginner standard: 1 set of 10 repetitions
Intermediate standard: 2 sets of 30 repetitions
Progression standard: 3 sets of 50 repetitions
- 4.) Upper body mobility work with deep breathing 2-3 minutes, and an emphasis on the shoulders

Remedial abdominal workout

Don't rush through your reps or cheat - use good form! Use a "2-1-2" cadence when performing seated knee tucks - 2 seconds in, 1 second pause in the top position, and 2 seconds down. Take an active rest of 1 to 3 minutes between sets. Don't simply sit down - stretch, walk around, get a cold drink, whatever - keep moving.

If you are new to planks, start with at least the beginner standard for incline plank, and add at least a few seconds each time you perform the workout. Once you meet the intermediate standard, add a second set to this exercise the next time you perform the workout. Once you meet the progression standard for incline planks, you are ready for the press lever progression.

If you are new to the leg raise progression, start with the beginner standard, and add a set the next time you perform the workout. Try to add at least 2 repetitions to each set, each week. Once you meet the intermediate standard, add a third set the next time you perform the workout. Once you meet the progression standard for seated knee tucks, you are ready for the next exercise in the leg raise progression.

- 1.) Warmup – 5-10 minutes of walking or low intensity interval training
- 2.) Abdominal stretches with deep breathing for 5 minutes - twists; seal stretch; forward, back, and side bends
- 3.) Incline plank –
Beginner standard: 10 seconds
Intermediate standard: 30 seconds
Progression standard: 2 sets of 30 second holds
- 4.) Seated knee tucks –
Beginner standard: 1 set of 10 repetitions
Intermediate standard: 2 sets of 30 repetitions
Progression standard: 3 sets of 40 repetitions
- 5.) Abdominal stretches with deep breathing for 2-3 minutes

Remedial pullup workout

Don't rush through your reps or cheat - use good form! Use a "2-1-2" cadence - 2 seconds pull, 1 second pause in the bottom position, and 2 seconds back. Take an active rest of 1 to 3 minutes between sets. Don't simply sit down - shake your arms out, walk around, get a cold drink, whatever - keep moving.

If you are new to the pullup progression, start with the beginner standard, and add a set the next time you perform the workout. Try to add at least 2 repetitions to each set, each week. Once you meet the intermediate standard, add a third set the next time you perform the workout. Once you meet the progression standard for standing pulls, you are ready for the next exercise in the pullup progression.

- 1.) Warmup - 5-10 minutes of walking or low intensity interval training
- 2.) Shoulder circling, shoulder stretches, wrist stretches (all with deep breathing) - 5-10 minutes
- 3.) Standing pulls -
Beginner standard: 1 set of 10 repetitions
Intermediate standard: 2 sets of 30 repetitions
Progression standard: 3 sets of 40 repetitions
- 4.) Upper body mobility work with deep breathing for 5-10 minutes, with an emphasis on the shoulders and biceps

Owen Johnston - www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Bodyweight strength training programs

Programs begin on the next page

Short URLs

Calisthenics progression videos - <http://tiny.cc/progressionvideo>

Bodyweight training videos - <http://tiny.cc/trainingvideo>

Calisthenics progression PDF - <http://tiny.cc/progressions>

My downloads page - <http://tiny.cc/freedownloads>

Beginner bodyweight strength training program

Start with early exercises from each progression. When you can perform an exercise with good form for the rep or time range listed, move up to a harder exercise in the progression. Continue working with this exercise until you are able to perform it for the rep or time range listed. You will be ready to move on to the intermediate bodyweight strength training program when you are working with intermediate exercises in each progression. Perform the workout one or two days a week at first and build up to three times.

<u>Workout</u>	<u>Build up to</u>
Warm up and stretch:	5 to 10 minutes
Squat progression:	2-3 sets of 6-10 reps
Vertical pullup progression:	2-3 sets of 4-8 reps
Pushup progression:	2-3 sets of 6-10 reps
Bridge hold progression:	2-3 sets of 10-15 seconds
Midsection hold progression:	2-3 sets of 10-15 seconds

Intermediate bodyweight strength training program

Warm up and stretch for at least 5 minutes before a workout.

<u>Day 1</u>	<u>Build up to</u>
Squat progression:	3-4 sets of 3-5 reps
Vertical pullup progression:	3-4 sets of 3-5 reps
Handstand pushup progression:	3-4 sets of 3-5 reps
Midsection hold progression:	3-5 sets of 10-15 seconds

<u>Day 2</u>	<u>Build up to</u>
Pushup progression:	3-4 sets of 4-6 reps
Horizontal pullup progression:	3-4 sets of 4-8 reps
Bridge hold progression:	3-5 sets of 10-15
Lower body plyometrics:	5 sets of 3-5

Owen Johnston – www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Advanced bodyweight strength training program

Warm up and stretch for at least 5 minutes before a workout.

Day 1

Back lever progression:

Pushup progression:

Vertical pullup progression:

Midsection hold progression:

Build up to

4-5 sets of 3-5 short holds

4-5 sets of 3-5 reps

4-5 sets of 3-5 reps

5 sets of 5-10 seconds

Day 2

Handstand pushup progression:

Horizontal pullup progression:

Front lever progression:

Upper body mobility work:

Build up to

4-5 sets of 2-4 reps

4-5 sets of 6-8 reps

4-5 sets of 8-10 short holds

5-10 minutes

Day 3

Squat progression:

Muscleups or dips:

Lower body plyometrics:

Mobility work:

Build up to

4-5 sets of 3-5

4-5 sets (various)

4-5 sets of 3-5

5-10 minutes

Owen Johnston - www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Bodyweight bodybuilding programs

Programs begin on the next page

Short URLs

Calisthenics progression videos - <http://tiny.cc/progressionvideo>

Bodyweight training videos - <http://tiny.cc/trainingvideo>

Calisthenics progression PDF - <http://tiny.cc/progressions>

My downloads page - <http://tiny.cc/freedownloads>

Beginner bodyweight bodybuilding program

Start with early exercises from each progression. When you can perform an exercise with good form for the set and rep range listed, move up to a harder exercise in the progression. Continue working with this exercise until you are able to perform it for the rep and set range listed. You will be ready to move on to the intermediate bodyweight bodybuilding program when you are working with intermediate exercises in each progression. Warm up and stretch for at least 5 minutes before a workout.

<u>Day 1</u>	<u>Build up to</u>
Handstand pushup progression:	3 sets of 8-10 reps
Horizontal pullup progression:	3 sets of 8-10 reps
Pushup progression:	3 sets of 8-10 reps

<u>Day 2</u>	<u>Build up to</u>
Bridge progression (dynamic):	3 sets of 10 reps
Leg raise progression:	3 sets of 10 reps
Total body mobility work:	10-15 minutes

Intermediate bodyweight bodybuilding program

Warm up and stretch for at least 5 minutes before a workout.

<u>Day 1</u>	<u>Build up to</u>
Horizontal pullup progression:	3-4 sets of 8-12 reps
Pushup progression:	3-4 sets of 8-12 reps
Leg raise progression:	3-4 sets of 8-12 reps
Upper body mobility work:	10 minutes

<u>Day 2</u>	<u>Build up to</u>
Squat progression:	3-4 sets of 10-15 reps
Lower body flexibility work:	10 minutes
Lower body exhaustion work:	10-15 minutes
Calf work:	3-5 sets (various)

<u>Day 3</u>	<u>Build up to</u>
Handstand pushup progression:	3-4 sets of 6-8 reps
Vertical pullup progression:	3-4 sets of 6-8 reps
Bridge progression (dynamic):	3-4 sets of 8-12 reps

Advanced bodyweight bodybuilding program

This program is for experienced athletes. Choose exercises that are difficult enough for you that you will have to work up to the set and rep goals. When you can perform more than the goal for an exercise, add tougheners or move on to a harder exercise.

Where (various) is listed instead of a number of reps to aim for, this means there are varying rep ranges depending on which exercise from the progression you choose and/or how intense you can make that exercise. Where (max) is listed instead of reps, this means to perform a maximal effort for the chosen exercise.

Notes on the bridge progression: stick with early exercises, to emphasize the glutes and hamstrings. Tougheners for short bridges include elevating the feet, and using one leg. Notes on the forearm exercises: Convict Conditioning 2 has wonderful progressions for hang grip and finger extensor work. I also recommend practicing rock climbing exercises and finger pullups. Wrist strengthening exercises also work the forearms. I have also developed a wrist specialization progression that is listed in my Calisthenics Progressions PDF.

Workouts on next page

Day 1 – Chest, shoulders, biceps

Cardio and mobility work

Pushup progression:

Pullup progression (biceps emphasis):

Jowett pushups:

Horizontal pullup progression (biceps emphasis):

Handstand pushups (any variation):

Leg-elevated or jackknife pushups:

Horizontal pullup progression:

Korean dips:

Upper body mobility work:

Build up to

At least 5 minutes each

3-4 sets of 6-8 reps

3-4 sets of 6-8 reps

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets (various)

2-3 sets (various)

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

10 minutes

Day 2 – Legs and waist

Cardio and mobility work

Squat progression:

Early bridge progression (dynamic) or hip thrusts:

Sissy squats:

Calf raise progression:

Dynamic back levers:

Leg raise progression:

Lower body mobility work:

Build up to

At least 5 minutes each

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets (various)

2-3 sets (max)

3-4 sets (various)

3-4 sets of 4-6 reps

3-4 sets of 10-20 reps

10 minutes

Day 3 – Back, triceps, forearms

Cardio and mobility work

Pullup progression:

Dip progression:

Horizontal pullups:

Triceps extensions / “roll-unders”:

Hang grip work progression:

Finger extensor work:

(shake hands out after)

Wrist progression:

(shake hands out after)

Lower body mobility work:

Build up to

At least 5 minutes each

3-4 sets of 6-8 reps

2-3 sets (max)

3-4 sets of 6-8 reps

2-3 sets of 8-10 reps

2-3 sets (max)

2-3 sets of 3-7 reps or

8-12 second holds

2-3 sets of 3-7 reps or

8-12 second holds

10 minutes

Abbreviated advanced bodyweight bodybuilding program

Warm up and stretch for at least 5 minutes before a workout. Choose exercises that are difficult enough for you personally that you will have to work up to the set and rep goals. When you can perform more than the goal for an exercise, you are ready to move to the next one.

Where (various) is listed instead of a number of reps to aim for, this means there are varying rep ranges depending on which exercise from the progression you choose and/or how intense you can make that exercise. Tougheners for dynamic short bridges include elevating the feet, elevating both the feet and shoulders, and using one leg.

Day 1

Horizontal pullup progression:

Handstand pushup progression:

Biceps work:

Finger extensor or wrist progression:

Build up to

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 6-8 reps

2-3 sets (various)

Day 2

Pushup progression:

Pullup progression:

Triceps work:

Hanging grip work progression:

Build up to

3-4 sets of 6-8 reps

3-4 sets of 6-8 reps

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets (various)

Day 3

Squat progression:

Dynamic short bridge:

Calf raise progression:

Leg raise progression:

Build up to

3-4 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

3-4 sets (various)

3-4 sets of 8-12

Bodyweight Bodybuilding Program – Daily Double Split

This program is for advanced athletes. Where (various) is listed, the reps range will depend on the exercise and tougheners. Where (max) is listed, perform a maximal effort for the chosen exercise. Back exercises include hyperextensions, back levers, and bridges.

Exercises - days 1, 3, 5

Morning – chest and back

1A. Pushup progression	Build up to 3-4 sets of 8-12
1B. Pullup progression	3-4 sets of 6-8
2A. Jowett pushups	2-3 sets of 8-12
2B. Back exercise	2-3 sets of 8-12
3A. Dip progression	2-3 sets (various)
3B. Pullup isometrics and negatives (pronated grip)	2-3 sets (various)

Afternoon or evening - lower body

1A. Squat progression	Build up to 2-3 sets of 8-12
1B. Dynamic short bridges or hip thrusts	2-3 sets (various)
2A. Pistol squats	2-3 sets of 8-12
2B. Step-ups	2-3 sets of 6-8
3A. Sissy squats	2-3 sets (max)
3B. One leg deadlifts	2-3 sets of 8-12
4A. Calf raise progression	3-4 sets (various)
4B. Calf isometric holds	3-4 sets (various)

Exercises - days 2, 4, 6

Morning - shoulders, triceps, biceps, forearms

1A. Handstand pushup progression	Build up to 2-3 sets (various)
1B. Biceps emphasis – pullups or horizontal pullups	2-3 sets (max)
2A. Handstand progression (up to wall supported)	2-3 sets of 30-60 seconds
2B. Horizontal pullup progression	2-3 sets of 6-13
3A. Biceps isometrics and negatives	2-3 sets (various)
3B. Hang grip work progression	2-3 sets (max)
3C. Bodyweight triceps extensions	2-3 sets of 8-12 reps
4A. Finger extensor work: (shake hands out after)	2-3 sets of 3-7 reps or 8-12 second holds
4B. Wrist progression: (shake hands out after)	2-3 sets of 3-7 reps or 8-12 second holds

Afternoon or evening - abdominals

Leg raise progression	Build up to 2-3 sets of 8-12
Midsection hold progression	2-3 sets of 10-20 seconds
Planks and/or side planks	2-3 sets of 10-20 seconds
Dragon flag progression	2-3 sets (various)

Owen Johnston - www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Bodyweight skill training programs

Programs begin on the next page

Short URLs

Calisthenics progression videos - <http://tiny.cc/progressionvideo>

Bodyweight training videos - <http://tiny.cc/trainingvideo>

Calisthenics progression PDF - <http://tiny.cc/progressions>

My downloads page - <http://tiny.cc/freedownloads>

Beginner bodyweight skill training program

Warm up and stretch properly before each workout

Day 1

Early pushup progression:

Planks:

Early squat progression:

Hanging kips or swings:

Build up to

4 sets of 4-6 reps

4 sets (sub-maximal)

3 sets of 8-10 reps

3 sets (sub-maximal)

Day 2

Early vertical pullup progression:

Early elbow lever progression:

Midsection hold progression:

Wall sit:

Build up to

4 sets of 4-6 reps

4 sets (sub-maximal)

3 sets (sub-maximal)

3 sets (sub-maximal)

Day 3

Basic hand balancing skills:

Leg raise progression:

Horizontal pullup progression:

Early bridging skills:

Build up to

4 sets of 4-6 reps

3 sets of 8-10 reps

3 sets of 4-6 reps

3 sets (sub-maximal)

Intermediate bodyweight skill training program

Warm up and stretch properly before each workout

Day 1

Hand balancing practice:

Lever practice:

Midsection hold progression:

Squat progression:

Build up to

5-6 sets of 3-4 reps

5-6 sets (sub-maximal)

5-6 sets (sub-maximal)

5-6 sets of 3-4 reps

Day 2

Elbow lever progression:

Press flag progression:

Muscleup, kip, or dip progression:

Early to intermediate pushups:

Build up to

5-6 sets of 3-4 reps

5-6 sets (sub-maximal)

5-6 sets of 3-4 reps

5-6 sets of 4-6 reps

Advanced bodyweight skill training program

Warm up and stretch properly before each workout

Day 1

Muscle-up progression:

Back lever progression:

Midsection hold progression:

Build up to

8-10 sets of 1-3 reps

8-10 sets (sub-maximal)

8-10 sets (sub-maximal)

Day 2

Hand balancing / transitions:

Front lever progression:

Dragon flag or press flag progression:

Build up to

8-10 sets (sub-maximal)

8-10 sets (sub-maximal)

8-10 sets (sub-maximal)

Day 3

Advanced pistols:

Elbow levers or planches:

Tumbling skills:

Build up to

8-10 sets of 1-3 reps

8-10 sets (sub-maximal)

At least 3-5 short sets per skill

Gymnastics style skill training program

Uneven bars

Pullup progression:

Leg raise progression:

Chinup pullover progression:

Kips or muscle-up progression:

Build up to

4 sets of 4-6 reps

4 sets of 4-6 reps

8-10 sets of 1-3 reps

8-10 sets of 1-3 reps

Floor conditioning

Pushups:

Midsection holds (focus on hollow body):

Squat or jump progression:

Tension-flexibility exercises:

Build up to

4 sets of 4-6 reps

4 sets of short holds

(various)

5-10 minutes

Tumbling

Bridging progression:

Front tuck progression:

Back tuck progression:

Hand balancing and transitions:

Build up to

4-6 sets of short holds

4-6 sets of 3-6 repetitions

4-6 sets of 3-6 repetitions

(various)

Owen Johnston – www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Convict Conditioning inspired workouts

Workouts begin on the next page

The first and second Convict Conditioning books have progression standards (repetition goal) for each exercise. Work up to the progression standard for an exercise before moving on to the next exercise in the progression.

Below is a short URL to a blog post with wall charts based on Convict Conditioning. I encourage you to download the charts and print at least one copy to post up in your own training area, or save the charts to your mobile device of choice.

<http://tiny.cc/wallcharts>

Of course, please purchase the books to get full instruction on the approach, exercises, and “hidden steps”. Paul “Coach” Wade, author of the books, would really appreciate it, as well! He's trying keep making an honest living, like the rest of us. Visit the site below and search for Convict Conditioning.

<http://www.dragondoor.com/>

These programs focus on simple, straightforward workouts, linear progression, and a relatively small selection of compound movements. The simple nature of the workouts makes them useful for beginners. Athletes of any experience could also experience gains with these workouts, as they focus on maximum intensity and minimal training time.

Short URLs

Calisthenics progression videos - <http://tiny.cc/progressionvideo>

Bodyweight training videos - <http://tiny.cc/trainingvideo>

Calisthenics progression PDF - <http://tiny.cc/progressions>

My downloads page - <http://tiny.cc/freedownloads>

Owen Johnston - www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Convict Conditioning Beginner Program

Warm up and stretch properly before each workout

Start by performing the workouts on non-consecutive days. After at least 6 weeks of training, start performing this program twice a week.

Day 1

Pushup progression

Pullup progression

Day 2

Handstand pushup progression

Squat progression

Day 3

Leg raise progression

Bridge progression

Owen Johnston - www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Convict Conditioning Intermediate Program

Warm up and stretch properly before each workout

Day 1

Pushup progression

Pullup progression

Dipping progression

Day 2

Squat progression

Bridge progression

Leg raise progression

Day 3

Handstand pushup progression

Horizontal pullup progression

The first and second Convict Conditioning books have progression standards (repetition goal) for each exercise. Work up to the progression standard for an exercise before moving on to the next exercise in the progression. To purchase the books, visit the site below and search for Convict Conditioning.

<http://www.dragondoor.com/>

View my own progressions guide for progression standards for -

Dipping progression

Horizontal pullup progression

Calisthenics progression PDF - <http://tiny.cc/progressions>

Owen Johnston - www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Convict Conditioning Advanced Program
Warm up and stretch properly before each workout

Day 1

Pushup progression

Pullup progression

Dipping progression

Neck work (Convict Conditioning 2 progressions)

Day 2

Squat progression

Bridge progression

Leg raise progression

Calf raise progression

Day 3

Handstand pushup progression

Horizontal pullup progression

Hang grip progression

Fingertip pushup progression

The first and second Convict Conditioning books have progression standards (repetition goal) for each exercise. Work up to the progression standard for an exercise before moving on to the next exercise in the progression. To purchase the books, visit the site below and search for Convict Conditioning.

<http://www.dragondoor.com/>

View my own progressions guide for progression standards for -

Dipping progression

Horizontal pullup progression

Calisthenics progression PDF - <http://tiny.cc/progressions>

Bodyweight + Sandbag Workouts

Sand may be obtained cheaply at most hardware stores. I recommend sturdy backpacks and army surplus duffle bags to pour sand in, as they tend to hold up very well under rigorous training. Fill at least two backpacks with 30 to 40 pounds of sand. Build up to performing certain exercises (such as dips, squats, pullups, and calf raises) while wearing them (one on your front and one on your back). You should also use at least two different duffle bags. Start with a moderate amount in each bag, with one weighing more than the other. As you progress, add more sand to one or both. While it is indeed important to use enough weight to provide a meaningful resistance to you personally, do not use so much weight that you cannot perform an exercise with good form for reps. Focus on technique and safety at all times.

In conventional strength training, the pattern of movement is fixed, whereas the load given by odd objects, such as sandbags, will cause adjustments during the movement. Basically, the fact that the sand shifts around forces you to stabilize the bags, which recruits more muscles and makes the exercise more intense. Sandbag training is very useful for firefighters and combat athletes, such as cage fighters and wrestlers. You can perform almost any type of lift with sandbags that you can perform with dumbbells or bars, as well.

Don't stick rigidly to the workouts I have designed. Feel free to add or replace exercises depending on your level of strength, conditioning, and experience. I also highly recommend checking out “Chalk and Sweat” by Brooks Kubik and “The Encyclopedia of Underground Strength and Conditioning” by Zach Even-Esh for many, many more sandbag exercises and some amazing training routines.

<http://www.brookskubik.com>

<http://www.dragondoor.com/b76/>

<http://www.dragondoor.com/eb76/>

I have put together a YouTube playlist with many sandbag training videos. Point your browser to my blog below and click on “Heavy sandbag training videos”, which will take you to the post with the embedded YouTube playlist. If you are on the mobile version of the site, tap on “Site Menu” and then on “Heavy sandbag training videos.”

<http://www.oddojecttraining.com>

Short URLs

Calisthenics progression videos - <http://tiny.cc/progressionvideo>

Bodyweight training videos - <http://tiny.cc/trainingvideo>

Calisthenics progression PDF - <http://tiny.cc/progressions>

My downloads page - <http://tiny.cc/freedownloads>

Bodyweight + Sandbag Workouts – Training Tactics and Advice

When choosing exercises from a progression listed in the warmups, select an exercise at least two levels down in the progression from the most difficult exercise you can perform. You should be able to perform the selected exercise with good form for the sets and reps listed. As you improve at the progression, add tougheners (such as going slower or adding drop sets), add more weight, or move on to a harder exercise.

The working exercises are to be performed back to back in one long “giant set”. When you first perform this program, perform two giant sets, with a break of 2 to 5 minutes between sets. Add a set every two weeks.

Use caution when selecting exercises from the progressions listed in the work set. Err on the side of safety. Only add weight to exercises that you have spent considerable time with, and can perform with more or less “perfect” technique for reps. Basically, choose an exercise that is deeply ingrained into your nervous system.

Don't rush to performing one handed pushups, one arm squats, or one arm pullups with a sandbag! Take enough time to allow your joints and muscles to adapt to the additional weight. Start with two arm pushups, pullups, and squats.

Gradually build up reps in the movements. Try to add a little to each set each week. Once you can perform the listed rep range in each set, make the exercise more difficult the next time you perform the workout. Add tougheners, and/or more weight. For the progressions, you could also move up to the next exercise and use an additional weight that will allow you to perform the exercise with good technique for reps.

So, what's better? Do I try to work through each of those progressions with light sandbags, or do I work up to performing two arm pushups, pullups, and squats with heavy amounts of sand? Neither one is better – both are excellent strength goals! Again, however, don't rush. Take a deload week every 4-6 weeks to allow your body to recuperate.

Workouts begin on the next page

Beginner bodyweight + sandbag program

This program is for intermediate athletes who have worked with at least one of the previous intermediate programs for 8 weeks or more. Perform the workout twice per week on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

The working exercises are to be performed back to back in one long “giant set”. When you first perform this program, perform two giant sets, with a break of 2 to 5 minutes between sets. Add a set every two weeks.

Taking a 5 minute rest between giant sets is fine if you are not accustomed to the program. Aim to take shorter rests as you improve. At least 2 to 3 minutes is recommended.

For added difficulty and motivation, add a 10 pushup penalty every time you drop the bag(s) during the farmer's walk or carry. Instead of using sandbags to add resistance to pullups, you could use a dip belt and at least one weight plate. For the sandbag squats, you could wear a sandbag on your back, hold one in each hand, or hold a sandbag in Zercher position. Hold a sandbag or weight plate to add intensity to wrestler's bridges.

Workout on the next page

Beginner bodyweight + sandbag program

Workout

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching
Pushup progression (no weight)
Pullup progression (no weight)
Sandbag overhead press (light)
Back extensions
Squat progression (no weight)

Perform

5 minutes each
2 sets of 8-12 reps
2 sets of 5-8 reps
2 sets of 6-10 reps
2 sets of 10-15 reps
2 sets of 8-12 reps

Working exercises – performed as one giant set

Pushup progression (sandbag on back)
Pullup progression (weighted)
Dipping progression (weighted)
Sandbag overhead press
Sandbag bent over rows
Sandbag squats
Wrestler's bridge
Leg raise progression
Farmer's walk
Sandbag bear hug carry
Hang grip work progression

Perform

6-10 reps
3-5 reps
6-10 reps
6-10 reps
6-10 reps
8-12 reps
5-8 reps
8-12 reps
300-500 feet
200-300 feet
(Various)

Intermediate bodyweight + sandbag program

This program is for intermediate lifters who have worked with the previous program for 8 weeks or more. Perform the workouts on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

The working exercises are to be performed back to back in one long “giant set”. When you first perform this program, perform two giant sets, with a break of 2 to 5 minutes between sets. Add a set every two weeks.

Where (various) is listed, the rep range will depend on the chosen exercise and tougheners. Where (max) is listed, perform a maximal effort for the chosen exercise. Taking a 5 minute rest between giant sets is fine if you are not accustomed to the program. Aim to take shorter rests as you improve. At least 2 to 3 minutes is recommended.

For added difficulty and motivation, add a 10 pushup penalty every time you drop the bag(s) during the farmer's walk or lunges. Instead of using sandbags to add resistance to pullups and dips, you could use a dip belt. For the sandbag squats, you could wear a sandbag on your back, hold one in each hand, or hold a sandbag in Zercher position. Hold a sandbag or weight plate to add intensity to wrestler's bridges or short bridges. Perform wrist roller work after or in place of hang grip work when you have a wrist roller available.

Workouts start on the next page

Intermediate bodyweight + sandbag program

Day 1

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching
Pushup progression (no weight)
Pullup progression (no weight)
Sandbag overhead press (light)

Perform

5 minutes each
2 sets of 10-20 reps
2 sets of 6-10 reps
2 sets of 6-10 reps

Working exercises - performed as one giant set

Pushup progression (sandbag on back)
Pullup progression (weighted)
Dipping progression (weighted)
Sandbag deadlifts, sandbag good mornings, or
Back hyperextensions
Sandbag overhead press
Sandbag curls
Shoulder carry (switch shoulders every 50 feet)
Sandbag bear hug carry

Perform

6-10 reps
3-5 reps
6-10 reps
6-10 reps
8-12 reps
6-10 reps
200-300 feet
200-300 feet

Day 2

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching
Squat progression (no weight)
Lunges (no weight)

5 minutes each
2 sets of 8-12
2 sets of 5-8 each side

Working exercises - performed as one giant set

Sandbag squats
Farmer's walk
Sandbag Zercher lunges
Wrestler's bridge
Leg raise progression
Hang grip work progression
Wrist roller work

Perform

8-12 reps
300-500 feet
200-300 feet
5-8 reps
10-15 reps
(various)
(max)

Advanced bodyweight + sandbag program

This program is for advanced lifters who have worked with the previous program for 8 weeks or more. Perform the workouts on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

The working exercises are to be performed back to back in one long “giant set”. When you first perform this program, perform two giant sets, with a break of 2 to 5 minutes between sets. Add a set every two weeks.

Where (various) is listed, the rep range will depend on the chosen exercise and tougheners. Where (max) is listed, perform a maximal effort for the chosen exercise. Taking a 5 minute rest between giant sets is fine if you are not accustomed to the program. Aim to take shorter rests as you improve. At least 2 to 3 minutes is recommended.

For added difficulty and motivation, add a 10 pushup penalty every time you drop the bag(s) during the farmer's walk or carry. Instead of using sandbags to add resistance to pullups and dips, you could use a dip belt. For the sandbag squats, you could wear a sandbag on your back, hold one in each hand, or hold a sandbag in Zercher position. Hold a sandbag or weight plate to add intensity to wrestler's bridges. Hold a weight plate or sandbag during back hyperextensions for added resistance.

Workouts start on the next page

Advanced bodyweight + sandbag program

Day 1 - Upper body

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching	Perform 5 minutes each
Pushup progression (no weight)	2 sets of 10-20
Pullup progression (no weight)	2 sets of 6-10
Back extensions (no weight)	2 sets of 10-20
Sandbag overhead press (light)	2 sets of 5-8

Working exercises - performed as one giant set

Pushup progression (sandbag on back)	Perform 6-10 reps
Pullup progression (weighted)	3-5 reps
Back exercise	8-12 reps or 15 to 20 second holds
Sandbag overhead press	8-12 reps
Sandbag curls	6-10 reps
Sandbag front raises	6-10 reps
Sandbag shouldering	5-8 each side
Sandbag bent over rows	5-8 reps
Dipping progression (weighted)	6-10 reps
Shoulder carry (switch shoulders every 50 feet)	200-300 feet
Sandbag deadlifts or sandbag good mornings	6-10 reps
Jowett pushups (sandbag on back)	6-10 reps

Day 2 on the next page

Advanced bodyweight + sandbag program

Day 2

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching	5 minutes each
Squat progression (no weight)	2 sets of 8-12
Lunges (no weight)	2 sets of 5-8 each side

Working exercises - performed as one giant set

Perform

Sandbag squats	8-12 reps
One leg box squats (sandbag in Zercher position)	8-12 reps / side
Farmer's walk	300-500 feet
Sandbag lunges	200-300 feet
Wrestler's bridge	5-8 reps
Hang grip work progression	(various)
Leg raise progression	10-15 reps
Wrist roller work	(max)

Bodyweight + sandbag bodybuilding program – weekly split

This program is for advanced lifters who have worked with the previous program for 8 weeks or more. Perform the workouts on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

Where (various) is listed, the rep range will depend on the chosen exercise and tougheners. Where (max) is listed, perform a maximal effort for the chosen exercise. Take a 1 to 2 minute rest between supersets.

For added difficulty and motivation, add a 10 pushup penalty every time you drop the bag(s) during the farmer's walk or carry. Instead of using sandbags to add resistance to pullups, biceps curls, and dips, you could use a dip belt. For the sandbag squats, you could wear a sandbag on your back, hold one in each hand, or hold a sandbag in Zercher position. Hold a sandbag or weight plate during wrestler's bridges, short bridges, hip thrusts, or hyperextensions to add resistance. A Roman chair is used for back hyperextensions.

Workouts start on the next page

Bodyweight + sandbag bodybuilding program – weekly split

Day 1 – Chest and back

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching
Pushup progression (no weight)
Pullup progression (no weight)
Back extensions (no weight)
Sandbag deadlift (light to medium)

Perform

5 minutes each
2 sets of 10-20 reps
2 sets of 5-8 reps
2 sets of 6-10 reps
2 sets of 5-8 reps

Supersets

1A. Pushups (sandbag on back)
 or pushup progression without weight
1B. Pullup progression (weighted)
2A. Parallel dips (weighted)
 (Lean forward slightly to target chest)
2B. Sandbag good mornings, sandbag deadlift, or
 Back hyperextensions
3A. Jowett pushups (sandbag on back)
3B. Sandbag bear hug carry
4A. Finger extensor work
 (shake hands out after)
4B. Wrist progression
 (shake hands out after)

Perform

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps
2-3 sets of 4-6 reps
2-3 sets of 6-10 reps
2-3 sets of 6-10 reps
2-3 sets (max)
200-300 feet
2-3 sets of 3-7 reps or
8-12 second holds
2-3 sets of 3-7 reps or
8-12 second holds

Day 2 on the next page

Bodyweight + sandbag bodybuilding program – weekly split

Day 2 – Shoulders, neck, abs, arms

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Early handstand pushups progression

Horizontal pullup progression (no weight)

Sandbag clean and press (light)

Or sandbag overhead press

Perform

5 minutes each

2 sets of 8-12 reps, or

2-3 sets of short holds

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2 sets of 6-10 reps

Supersets

1A. Handstand pushup progression

1B. Horizontal pullup progression (weighted)

2A. Sandbag clean and press

2B. Sandbag bent over rows

3A. Hang grip work

3B. Bodyweight triceps extensions

4A. Farmer's walk

4B. Sandbag triceps curls

5A. Leg raise progression

5B. Wrestler's bridge

6A. Early handstand pushup progression

(Beginner and novice exercises)

6B. Wrist roller work

Perform

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2-3 sets of 20-60

second holds

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

1/4th-1/2 mile

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

2-3 sets of 15-20 reps

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

2-3 sets of 10-60

second holds

2-3 sets (max)

Day 3 on the next page

Bodyweight + sandbag bodybuilding program - weekly split

Day 3

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Squats (no weight)

Deep lunges (no weight)

Perform

5 minutes each

2 sets of 6-10 reps

2 sets of 6-10 / side

Supersets

1A. Sandbag squats

1B. Dynamic short bridges or hip thrusts

2A. One leg box squats

(sandbag in Zercher position)

2B. Step-ups

(sandbag in Zercher position)

3A. Sissy squats (no weight)

3B. One leg deadlifts (no weight)

4A. Calf raise progression (with or without weight)

4B. Calf isometric holds

Perform

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets (various)

2-3 sets of 8-12 / side

2-3 sets of 6-8

2-3 sets (max)

2-3 sets of 8-12

3-4 sets (various)

3-4 sets (various)

Bodyweight + sandbag bodybuilding program – daily double split

This program is for advanced lifters who have worked with the previous program for 8 weeks or more and at least one of the previous advanced programs for 8 weeks or more. Perform the workouts on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

Where (various) is listed, the rep range will depend on the chosen exercise and tougheners. Where (max) is listed, perform a maximal effort for the chosen exercise. Take a 1 to 2 minute rest between supersets.

Instead of using sandbags to add resistance to pullups and dips, you could use a dip belt and at least one weight plate. For the sandbag squats, you could wear a sandbag on your back, hold one in each hand, or hold a sandbag in Zercher position. Hold a sandbag or weight plate during wrestler's bridges, short bridges, hip thrusts, or hyperextensions to add resistance. A Roman chair is used for back hyperextensions. Perform wrist roller work after or in place of hang grip work, when a wrist roller is available.

Workouts start on the next page

Bodyweight + sandbag bodybuilding program - daily double split

Exercises - days 1, 3, 5

Morning or early afternoon - chest and back

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Pushup progression (no weight)

Pullup progression (no weight)

Back extensions (no weight)

Sandbag deadlift (light to medium)

Perform

5 minutes each

2 sets of 10-20 reps

2 sets of 5-8 reps

2 sets of 6-10 reps

2 sets of 5-8 reps

Supersets

1A. Pushups (sandbag on back)

1B. Pullup progression (weighted)

2A. Parallel dips (weighted)

(Lean forward slightly to target chest)

2B. Sandbag deadlifts, sandbag good mornings, or 2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

Back hyperextensions

3A. Jowett pushups (weighted)

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

3B. Sandbag bear hug carry

200-300 feet

4A. Finger extensor work

2-3 sets of 3-7 reps or

(shake hands out after)

8-12 second holds

4B. Wrist specialization

2-3 sets of 3-7 reps or

(shake hands out after)

8-12 second holds

Afternoon / evening workout on next page

Bodyweight + sandbag bodybuilding program - daily double split

Exercises - days 1, 3, 5

Afternoon or evening - lower body

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching
Squats (no weight)
Deep lunges (no weight)

Perform

5 minutes each
2 sets of 6-10 reps
2 sets of 6-10 / side

Supersets

1A. Sandbag squats
1B. Dynamic short bridges or hip thrusts
2A. One leg box squats
 (sandbag in Zercher position)
2B. Step-ups
 (sandbag in Zercher position)
2A. Pistol squats (no weight)
2B. Step-ups
3A. Sissy squats (no weight)
3B. One leg deadlifts
4A. Calf raise progression (with or without weight)
4B. Calf isometric holds

Perform

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps
2-3 sets (various)
2-3 sets of 8-12 / side

2-3 sets of 6-8

2-3 sets of 8-12
2-3 sets of 6-8
2-3 sets (max)
2-3 sets of 8-12
3-4 sets (various)
3-4 sets (various)

Workouts for days 2, 4, and 6 on the next page

Bodyweight + sandbag bodybuilding program - daily double split

Exercises - days 2, 4, 6

Morning or early afternoon - shoulders, triceps, biceps, forearms

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Early handstand pushups progression

Horizontal pullup progression (no weight)

Perform

5 minutes each

2 sets of 8-12 reps, or

2-3 sets of short holds

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

Supersets

1A. Foot elevated pushups (weighted)

1B. Horizontal pullup progression (weighted)

2A. Sandbag clean and press

2B. Sandbag bent over rows

3A. Handstand pushup progression

3B. Bodyweight biceps curls (weighted)

4A. Hang grip work progression

4B. Bodyweight triceps extensions

5A. Farmer's walk

5B. Sandbag triceps curls

6A. Leg raise progression

6B. Wrestler's bridge

Perform

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps, or

10-60 second holds

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

2-3 sets (various)

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

1/4th-1/2 mile

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

2-3 sets of 15-20 reps

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

Afternoon or evening - abdominals

Warmups

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Perform

5 minutes each

Supersets

1A. Leg raise progression

1B Planks and/or side planks

1B. Midsection hold progression

2B. Sandbag getups

3A. Dragon flag progression

3B. Bridge hold (to stretch the abdominals)

Perform

2-3 sets of 8-12

2-3 sets of 10-20 second holds

2-3 sets of 10-20 second holds

2-3 sets (various)

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps, or

5-10 second holds

2-3 sets of 15-30 second holds

Abbreviated advanced bodybuilding + sandbag bodybuilding program

This program is for advanced lifters who have worked with the intermediate bodybuilding + sandbag program for 8 weeks or more. Perform the workouts on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

Take a 1 to 2 minute rest between supersets.

Instead of using sandbags to add resistance to pullups and dips, you could use a dip belt and at least one weight plate. For the sandbag squats, you could wear a sandbag on your back, hold one in each hand, or hold a sandbag in Zercher position. Hold a sandbag or weight plate during wrestler's bridges, short bridges, hip thrusts, or hyperextensions to add resistance. A Roman chair is used for back hyperextensions. Wear iron boots or ankle weights during leg raises for added resistance. Perform wrist roller work after or in place of hang grip work, when a wrist roller is available.

Workout on next page

Abbreviated advanced bodybuilding + sandbag bodybuilding program

Day 1

- 1A. Horizontal pullup progression
- 1B. Handstand pushup progression
- 2A. Sandbag curls
- 2B. Sandbag clean and press
- 3A. Bodyweight triceps extensions
- 3B. Hang grip work progression
- 4A. Leg raises
- 4B. Wrestler's bridge

Perform

- 2-3 sets of 8-12 reps
- 2-3 sets of 8-12 reps
- 2-3 sets of 6-8 reps
- 2-3 sets of 6-8 reps
- 2-3 sets of 8-12 reps
- 2-3 sets (various)
- 2-3 sets of 7-10
- 2-3 sets of 6-8 reps

Day 2

- 1A. Pushups (sandbag on back)
- 1B. Pullup progression (weighted)
- 2A. Parallel dips (weighted)
- 2B. Sandbag deadlifts, sandbag good mornings, or
Back hyperextensions
- 3A. Finger extensor work
(shake hands out after)
- 3B. Wrist specialization
(shake hands out after)

Perform

- 2-3 sets of 8-12 reps
- 2-3 sets of 4-6 reps
- 2-3 sets of 6-10 reps
- 2-3 sets of 6-10 reps
- 2-3 sets of 3-7 reps or
2-3 sets of 8-12 second holds
- 2-3 sets of 3-7 reps or
2-3 sets of 8-12 second holds

Day 3

- 1A. Pistol squats (no weight)
- 1B. Zercher sandbag lunges
- 2A. Sandbag squats
- 2B. Dynamic short bridges or hip thrusts
- 3A. Calf raise progression (with or without weight)
- 3B. Calf isometric holds

Perform

- 2-3 sets of 6-8 / side
- 2-3 sets of 6-8 / side
- 2-3 sets of 8-12 reps
- 2-3 sets (various)
- 3-4 sets (various)
- 3-4 sets (various)

Weighted calisthenics programs

These workouts call for sandbags and/or dipping belts. Sand may be obtained cheaply at most hardware stores. I recommend sturdy backpacks to pour sand in. Fill at least two backpacks with 30 to 40 pounds of sand. Build up to performing certain exercises (such as dips, squats, pullups, and calf raises) while wearing them (one on your front and one on your back). While it is indeed important to use enough weight to provide a meaningful resistance to you personally, do not use so much weight that you cannot perform an exercise with good form for reps. Focus on technique and safety at all times.

Don't stick rigidly to the workouts I have designed. Feel free to add or replace exercises depending on your level of strength, conditioning, and experience. I also highly recommend checking out “Chalk and Sweat” by Brooks Kubik and “The Encyclopedia of Underground Strength and Conditioning” by Zach Even-Esh for many, many more sandbag exercises and some amazing training routines.

<http://www.brookskubik.com>

<http://www.dragondoor.com/b76/>

<http://www.dragondoor.com/eb76/>

I have put together a YouTube playlist with many sandbag training videos. Point your browser to my blog below and click on “Heavy sandbag training videos”, which will take you to the post with the embedded YouTube playlist. If you are on the mobile version of the site, tap on “Site Menu” and then on “Heavy sandbag training videos.”

<http://www.oddojecttraining.com>

Short URLs

Calisthenics progression videos - <http://tiny.cc/progressionvideo>

Bodyweight training videos - <http://tiny.cc/trainingvideo>

Calisthenics progression PDF - <http://tiny.cc/progressions>

My downloads page - <http://tiny.cc/freedownloads>

Weighted Calisthenics Workouts – Training Tactics and Advice

When choosing exercises from a progression listed in the warmups, select an exercise at least two levels down in the progression from the most difficult exercise you can perform. You should be able to perform the selected exercise with good form for the sets and reps listed. As you improve at the progression, add tougheners (such as going slower or adding drop sets), add more weight, or move on to a harder exercise.

The working exercises are to be performed back to back in one long “giant set”. When you first perform this program, perform two giant sets, with a break of 2 to 5 minutes between sets. Add a set every two weeks.

Use caution when selecting exercises from the progressions listed in the work set. Err on the side of safety. Only add weight to exercises that you have spent considerable time with, and can perform with more or less “perfect” technique for reps. Basically, choose an exercise that is deeply ingrained into your nervous system.

Don't rush to performing one handed pushups, one arm squats, or one arm pullups with a sandbag! Take enough time to allow your joints and muscles to adapt to the additional weight. Start with two arm pushups, pullups, and squats.

Gradually build up reps in the movements. Try to add a little to each set each week. Once you can perform the listed rep range in each set, make the exercise more difficult the next time you perform the workout. Add tougheners, and/or more weight. For the progressions, you could also move up to the next exercise and use an additional weight that will allow you to perform the exercise with good technique for reps.

So, what's better? Do I try to work through each of those progressions with light sandbags, or do I work up to performing two arm pushups, pullups, and squats with heavy amounts of sand? Neither one is better – both are excellent strength goals! Again, however, don't rush. Take a deload week every 4-6 weeks to allow your body to recuperate.

Workouts begin on the next page

Beginner weighted calisthenics workout

This program is for intermediate athletes who have worked with at least one of the previous intermediate programs for 8 weeks or more. Perform the workout twice per week on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

Taking a 5 minute rest between giant sets is fine if you are not accustomed to the program. Aim to take shorter rests as you improve. At least 2 to 3 minutes is recommended.

Instead of using sandbags to add resistance to pullups, you could use a dip belt. For the squats, you could wear a sandbag on your back, hold one in each hand, or hold a sandbag in Zercher position. Wear iron boots or ankle weights during leg raises or midsection holds to add resistance. Hold a sandbag or weight plate during wrestler's bridges, short bridges, or hip thrusts to add resistance.

Workout

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching
Pushup progression (no weight)
Pullup progression (no weight)
Back extensions (no weight)
Squat progression (no weight)

Perform

5 minutes each
2 sets of 8-12 reps
2 sets of 5-8 reps
2 sets of 10-15 reps
2 sets of 8-12 reps

Working exercises – performed as one giant set

Pushup progression (sandbag on back)
Pullup progression (weighted)
Leg raise progression
Sandbag squats
Wrestler's bridge
Midsection holds progression

Perform

6-10 reps
3-5 reps
15-20 reps
8-12 reps
20-30 second holds
10-20 second holds

Intermediate weighted calisthenics strength program

This program is for intermediate athletes who have worked with at least one of the previous intermediate programs for 8 weeks or more. Perform the workout twice per week on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

Taking a 5 minute rest between giant sets is fine if you are not accustomed to the program. Aim to take shorter rests as you improve. At least 2 to 3 minutes is recommended.

Instead of using sandbags to add resistance to pullups and dips, you could use a dip belt and at least one weight plate. Back exercises include back levers, bridges, and hyperextensions (when a Roman chair is available). Hold a sandbag or weight plate during wrestler's bridges or hyperextensions to add resistance. For sandbag squats, you could wear a sandbag on your back, hold one in each hand, or hold a sandbag in Zercher position. Wear iron boots or ankle weights during leg raises or midsection holds to add resistance. Perform wrist roller work after or in place of hang grip work when a wrist roller is available.

Workouts on the next page

Intermediate weighted calisthenics strength program

Day 1

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Pushup progression (no weight)

Pullup progression (no weight)

Back extensions (no weight)

Perform

5 minutes each

2 sets of 10-20 reps

2 sets of 6-10 reps

2 sets of 10-15 reps

Working exercises – performed as one giant set

Pushup progression (sandbag on back)

Pullup progression (weighted)

Dipping progression (weighted)

Back exercise

Perform

6-10 reps

3-5 reps

6-10 reps

8-12 reps

Day 2

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Squat progression (no weight)

Lunges (no weight)

5 minutes each

2 sets of 8-12

2 sets of 5-8 each side

Working exercises – performed as one giant set

Sandbag squats

Wrestler's bridge

Leg raise progression

Hang grip work progression

Midsection holds progression

Zercher sandbag lunges

Perform

8-12 reps

5-8 reps or

30 to 40 second holds

10-15 reps

(Various)

10-20 second holds

5-8 reps each side

Advanced weighted calisthenics strength program

This program is for advanced lifters who have worked with the previous program for 8 weeks or more. Perform the workouts on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

Taking a 5 minute rest between giant sets is fine if you are not accustomed to the program. Aim to take shorter rests as you improve. At least 2 to 3 minutes is recommended.

Instead of using sandbags to add resistance to pullups and dips, you could use a dip belt. Back exercises include back levers, bridges, and hyperextensions (when a Roman chair is available). Hold a sandbag or weight plate during wrestler's bridges or hyperextensions to add resistance. For sandbag squats, you could wear a sandbag on your back, hold one in each hand, or hold a sandbag in Zercher position. Wear iron boots or ankle weights during leg raises or midsection holds to add resistance. Perform wrist roller work after or in place of hang grip work when a wrist roller is available.

Workouts on the next page

Advanced weighted calisthenics strength program

Day 1

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching
Pushup progression (no weight)
Pullup progression (no weight)
Back extensions

Perform

5 minutes each
2 sets of 10-20 reps
2 sets of 6-10 reps
2 sets of 10-15 reps

Working exercises – performed as one giant set

Pushup progression (sandbag on back)
Pullup progression (weighted)
Dipping progression (weighted)
Korean dips (no weight)
Back exercise

Perform

6-10 reps
3-5 reps
6-10 reps
5-8 reps
8-12 reps

Day 2

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching
Squat progression (no weight)
Lunges (no weight)

5 minutes each
2 sets of 8-12
2 sets of 5-8 each side

Working exercises – performed as one giant set

Sandbag squats
Wrestler's bridge
Leg raise progression
Midsection holds progression
Hang grip work progression
Finger extensor work
(shake hands out after)
Wrist specialization
(shake hands out after)
Zercher sandbag lunges

Perform

8-12 reps
5-8 reps
10-15 reps
10-20 second holds
(Various)
3-5 reps or
7-10 second holds
3-5 reps or
7-10 second holds
5-8 reps each side, or
50-100 feet

Weighted calisthenics bodybuilding program – weekly split

This program is for advanced lifters who have worked with the previous program for 8 weeks or more. Perform the workouts on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

Take a 1 to 2 minute rest between supersets.

Instead of using sandbags to add resistance to pullups and dips, you could use a dip belt. Back exercises include back levers, bridges, and hyperextensions (when a Roman chair is available). Hold a sandbag or weight plate during wrestler's bridges, short bridges, hip thrusts, or hyperextensions to add resistance. For sandbag squats, you could wear a sandbag on your back, hold one in each hand, or hold a sandbag in Zercher position. Wear iron boots or ankle weights during leg raises to add resistance. Perform wrist roller work after or in place of work when a wrist roller is available.

Workouts start on the next page

Weighted calisthenics bodybuilding program - weekly split

Day 1 - Chest and back

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Pushup progression (no weight)

Pullup progression (no weight)

Perform

5 minutes each

2 sets of 10-20 reps

2 sets of 5-8 reps

Supersets

1A. Pushup progression (sandbag on back)

1B. Pullup progression (weighted)

2A. Dipping progression (weighted)

2B. Back exercise

3A. Jowett pushups (sandbag on back)

3B. Pullup progression (no weight)

Build up to

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 4-6 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps or

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

Day 2 on the next page

Weighted calisthenics bodybuilding program – weekly split

Day 2 – Shoulders, neck, abs, arms

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Early handstand pushups progression

Horizontal pullup progression (no weight)

Sandbag clean and press (light)

Or sandbag overhead press

Perform

5 minutes each

2 sets of 8-12 reps, or

2-3 sets of short holds

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2 sets of 6-10 reps

Supersets

3A. Korean dips (no weight)

1B. Horizontal pullup progression (weighted)

2A. Handstand pushup progression

2B. Bodyweight biceps curls (weighted)

3A. Wrestler's bridge

3B. Leg raise progression

4A. Hang grip work

4B. Bodyweight triceps extensions

Perform

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps, or

10-60 second holds

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 20-60

second holds

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

Day 3 on the next page

Weighted calisthenics bodybuilding program – weekly split

Day 3

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Squats (no weight)

Deep lunges (no weight)

Perform

5 minutes each

2 sets of 6-10 reps

2 sets of 6-10 / side

Supersets

1A. Sandbag squats

1B. Dynamic short bridges or hip thrusts

2A. One leg box squats

(sandbag in Zercher position)

2B. Step-ups

(sandbag in Zercher position)

3A. Sissy squats (no weight)

3B. One leg deadlifts (no weight)

3A. Calf raise progression (with or without weight)

3B. Calf isometric holds

Perform

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets (various)

2-3 sets of 8-12 / side

2-3 sets of 6-8

2-3 sets (max)

2-3 sets of 8-12 / side

3-4 sets (various)

3-4 sets (various)

Weighted calisthenics bodybuilding program - daily double split

This program is for advanced athletes who have worked with the previous program for 8 weeks or more. Perform the workouts on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

Where (various) is listed, the rep range will depend on the chosen exercise and tougheners. Where (max) is listed, perform a maximal effort for the chosen exercise. Take a 1 to 2 minute rest between supersets.

Instead of using sandbags to add resistance to pullups and dips, you could use a dip belt. Back exercises include back levers, bridges, and hyperextensions (when a hyperextension bench is available). Hold a sandbag or weight plate during wrestler's bridges, short bridges, hip thrusts, or during hyperextensions for added resistance. For sandbag squats, you could wear a sandbag on your back, hold one in each hand, or hold a sandbag in Zercher position. Wear iron boots or ankle weights during leg raises and midsection holds for added intensity. Perform wrist roller work after or in place of work when a wrist roller is available.

Workouts start on the next page

Weighted calisthenics bodybuilding program - daily double split

Exercises - days 1, 3, 5

Morning or early afternoon – chest and back

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Pushup progression (no weight)

Pullup progression (no weight)

Perform

5 minutes each

2 sets of 10-20 reps

2 sets of 5-8 reps

Supersets

1A. Pushups (weighted)

1B. Pullup progression (weighted)

2A. Parallel dips (weighted)

(Lean forward slightly to target chest)

2B. Back exercise

3A. Jowett pushups (weighted)

3B. Pullup progression (no weight)

Build up to

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 4-6 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps or

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

Afternoon or evening - lower body

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Squats (no weight)

Deep lunges (no weight)

Perform

5 minutes each

2 sets of 6-10 reps

2 sets of 6-10 / side

Supersets

1A. Sandbag squats

1B. Dynamic short bridges or hip thrusts

2A. One leg box squats

(sandbag in Zercher position)

2B. Step-ups

(sandbag in Zercher position)

2A. Pistol squats (no weight)

2B. Step-ups

3A. Sissy squats

3B. One leg deadlifts

4A. Calf raise progression (with or without weight)

4B. Calf isometric holds

Perform

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets (various)

2-3 sets of 8-12 / side

2-3 sets of 6-8

2-3 sets of 8-12

2-3 sets of 6-8

2-3 sets (max)

2-3 sets of 8-12

3-4 sets (various)

3-4 sets (various)

Days 2, 4, and 6 on the next page

Weighted calisthenics bodybuilding program - daily double split

Exercises - days 2, 4, 6

Morning or early afternoon - shoulders, triceps, biceps, forearms

Warmup sets

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Early handstand pushup progression

Horizontal pullup progression (no weight)

Perform

5 minutes each

2 sets of 8-12 reps, or

2-3 sets of short holds

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

Supersets

1A. Handstand pushup progression

1B. Horizontal pullup progression

2A. Korean dips (no weight)

2B. Bodyweight biceps curls

3A. Foot elevated pushups (weighted)

3B. Chinups (hands close, underhand grip)

4A. Hang grip work progression

4B. Bodyweight triceps extensions

5A. Wrestler's bridge

5B. Hand specialization progression
(wrists or fingers)

Perform

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps, or

10-60 second holds

2-3 sets of 6-10 reps

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

2-3 sets of 20-60 second holds

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

2-3 sets of 5-8 reps

Afternoon or evening - abdominals

Warmups

Cardio and general mobility / stretching

Perform

5 minutes each

Supersets

1A. Leg raise progression

1B. Planks

2A. Midsection hold progression

2B. Side planks

3A. Dragon flag progression

3B. Bridge holds (to stretch the abdominals)

Perform

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps

2-3 sets of 10-20 second holds

2-3 sets of 10-20 second holds

2-3 sets of 8-12 reps, or

5-10 second holds

2-3 sets of 10-20 second holds

Owen Johnston - www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Example workouts

Workouts begin on the next page

An example skill training session

The below workout is an example of the kind of skill session I perform. Don't just follow my routine; it's simply an example that you can borrow ideas from. Remember that the key concepts are to train consistently towards difficult skills, and to gradually “prime” the nervous system for the work sets by performing warmup sets and skill work.

Cardio, stretches for wrists, shoulders, and hamstrings
Frog stand or tripod headstand, 2-3 sets of 20-30 seconds
T lever to handstand and back to T lever, 3-5 short sets
Forward rolls, 3-5 short sets
Bridge holds, 2-3 sets of 20-30 seconds
Backbends with recovery (aka stand to stand bridges), 3-5 short sets

An example advanced abdominal workout

The abdominals are involved in many lifts and calisthenics movements, so you may or may not need to emphasize them. Still, it is highly recommended to target your abdominals if your activity or sport demands it. The below workout is an example of the kind of advanced abdominal program I perform. Don't just follow my routine; it's simply an example that you can borrow ideas from. Remember that the key concepts are to train consistently towards difficult skills, and to gradually “prime” the nervous system for the work sets by performing warmup sets and skill work.

Cardio, light stretching, prehab

Hanging knee raises, moderate repetitions

Dead hang pullovers, low repetitions

Flat straight leg raises, low sets of moderate repetitions

Midsection hold or front lever progression for a few minutes

Stretch / water break

Dragon flags with slow straight leg negatives, goal of 3x5

An example abbreviated bodybuilding workout

This is an upper body workout based on my own routines. The focus is on chest, biceps, triceps, and shoulders. You don't have to focus on the same muscles, perform the same exercises, work with them in the same order, or work with the same repetition goals. This is simply an example routine. Perform the workout as one long superset. One superset takes 5 to 11 minutes, depending on cadence. Build up to 3 supersets.

20-30 incline pushups

10-15 pike handstand pushups

8-12 deep bodyweight triceps extensions

10-15 horizontal pullups with close underhand grip, done with a curling motion and hard isometric contraction at top of each rep

Drop set of 5-10 horizontal pullups with shoulder width overhand grip

Drop set of 3-5 bent leg horizontal pullups

10-15 hanging leg raises or parallel bar leg raises

10-15 horizontal bar dips or tucked knee parallel dips

8-12 tuck planche pushups

Recommended training frequencies for each program

On each “day off” you could take the day completely off from training or perform an activity of choice. Schedule a deload week after every 4-6 weeks. If you're in good physical condition and accustomed to a high workload, you can build up to training 6 days per week while still engaging in an athletic sport. Of course, in this case, it is even more important to pay attention to your body – get plenty of sleep and quality nutrition.

Beginner strength program -

Build up to performing this program 3 non-consecutive days a week or as a 2 day cycle (1 day on and 1 day off/another activity).

Intermediate strength program-

Build up to performing this program as a 2 day cycle (Day 1, day off, Day 2, 1 day off), or as a 3 day cycle (2 days on, and 1 off).

Advanced strength program-

Build up to performing this program as a 4 day cycle (3 days on, 1 day off), or performing the program twice per week - Day 1 on Monday, Day 2 on Tuesday, Day 3 on Wednesday, Day 1 on Thursday, Day 2 on Friday, and Day 3 on Saturday.

Beginner bodybuilding program -

Perform day 1 on Monday, day 2 on Wednesday, and Day 1 on Friday. Perform this each week until you are ready for a 4 day cycle (1 day on and 1 day off).

Intermediate bodybuilding program -

Perform day 1 on Monday, Day 2 on Wednesday, and Day 3 on Friday until you are ready for a 4 day cycle (3 days on and 1 day off).

Advanced bodybuilding program-

Perform day 1 on Monday, Day 2 on Wednesday, and Day 3 on Friday until you are ready for a 4 day cycle (3 days on and 1 day off).

Recommended training frequencies for each program continued

Beginner bodyweight skill training program -

Perform Day 1 on Monday, Day 2 on Wednesday, and Day 3 on Friday.

Intermediate bodyweight skill training program -

Perform Day 1 on Monday, Day 2 on Tuesday, Day 1 on Thursday, and Day 2 on Friday, or alternate the 2 sessions with a day off in-between.

Build up to performing the workouts every other day as part of a 6 day cycle. (Day 1, day off, Day 2, day off, Day 3, Day off.)

Advanced bodyweight skill training program -

Perform this program twice each week. Day 1 on Monday, Day 2 on Tuesday, Day 3 on Wednesday, Day 1 on Thursday, Day 2 on Friday, and Day 3 on Saturday.

Gymnastics style skill training program -

Perform one session per day on non-consecutive days until you can meet the training goals, then start performing all 3 sessions on the same day.

Beginner Convict Conditioning based program

Start with a 3 day training week by performing the workouts on non-consecutive days. The other days may be used for rest, a physical activity of choice, or for practice of your sport. Take one day completely off each week.

Once you are accustomed to the program, start performing it as a 6 day cycle (1 day on, 1 day off), or start performing the program twice per week (Days 1-3 performed twice each week, with a day off for rest). Allow 6-8 weeks of regular training, at a minimum, before you begin a 6 day training week.

Intermediate and advanced Convict Conditioning based programs -

Start with a 3 day training week by performing the workouts on non-consecutive days. The other days may be used for rest, a physical activity of choice, or for practice of your sport. Take one day completely off each week.

Once you are accustomed to a program, start performing it as a 4 day cycle (3 days of training, 1 day off), or start performing the program twice per week (Days 1-3 performed twice each week, with a day off for rest).

Recommended training frequencies for each program continued

Beginner and intermediate bodyweight + sandbag training programs -

Start by performing each workout once each week on non-consecutive days - for example, Monday and Thursday. Take at least 1 day off each week for rest. Other days could be devoted to an activity of choice or practice for your sport. If you make consistent progress after 4-8 weeks of training, perform each workout two or three times each week. Continue performing the workouts on non-consecutive days. Move on to the next program after you have become accustomed to this frequency and have made consistent progress after 8 weeks of following the program.

Bodyweight + sandbag bodybuilding program and abbreviated advanced bodybuilding + sandbag bodybuilding program -

Perform each workout once each week on non-consecutive days. Take at least 1 day off each week for rest. Other days could be devoted to an activity of choice or practice for your sport.

Beginner weighted calisthenics strength program -

Start by performing the workout twice each week on non-consecutive days - for example, Monday and Thursday. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

Intermediate and advanced weighted calisthenics strength program -

Perform the workouts on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

Weighted calisthenics bodybuilding programs -

Perform the workouts on non-consecutive days. Take at least one rest day each week. The other days may be used for calisthenics only, sports practice, or an activity of choice.

Training Tactics

“Bodybuilding” tactics - hypertrophy with a focus on the muscles:

The goal is to exhaust the muscles with high reps of simple to moderate complexity exercises that allow you to perform a moderate to full range of motion, and generate intense muscle contractions. While the intensity should be kept high, it should also allow you to perform enough sets and reps to exhaust the muscle(s). The sets you perform each exercise for should be kept low to moderate, while the reps should be kept high, and the rest periods between sets (inter-set rest) should be kept relatively short.

If you are a beginner, perform 1 or 2 beginner bodybuilding workouts on non-consecutive days, and build up to 3 non-consecutive training days. This allows your muscles time to recover and become accustomed to training. Experienced bodybuilders may train up to 6 days per week with a well designed program that targets different muscles each day.

Useful tactics:

Ladders - sets of increasing reps.

Supersets - perform two exercises that work opposing muscle groups without stopping. in a row without stopping. It is possible and often recommended to create one long superset with multiple pairs of exercises.

Burner sets - do all of your work sets back to back with no rest.

Extended sets - use one or more of the following: eccentrics/negatives, isometric holds, rest-pause sets, partial reps, forced reps, change of positioning (grip style, grip width, stance change, etc) and/or drop sets.

Even higher reps than recommended in the bodybuilding workouts - use ladders, drop sets, or other tactics as needed.

Very slow reps - up to 10 seconds up and 10 seconds down

Muscular exhaustion work - perform at the end of a workout, such as performing lunges or duck walks after a leg workout

Emphasis on a muscle or muscle group - add specialization exercises

Going through a strength training cycle - stronger muscles can use higher loads and generate more intense contractions.

Strength training tactics-
Hypertrophy with a focus on the nervous system:

The goal is to perform slightly high sets of low to moderate reps of the most difficult compound (multi-joint) movements that you can do with good form in each rep. The rest periods between sets should be just long enough to allow you to practice “fresh”. An example number of sets and reps for strength training – 2-5 sets of 1-6. Training frequency can be built up to a moderate amount. Multiple weekly sessions are viable since the muscles aren't being worked to complete exhaustion.

As a rule, you are focusing on ingraining these intense movements into your nervous system. Gradually tighten up form. Of course, it's still important to utilize high rep sets for warmups to gradually prepare the mind, muscles, and nervous system for the hard work to come.

Useful tactics: Pyramids (sets of decreasing reps), grease the groove, high intensity interval training, skill work

Technique: Tension, bracing, breathing methods, laser focus, muscle synergy

Skill training tactics:

Aim for neuromuscular efficiency. Don't think of it as working out your muscles, but working on technique. Take slightly longer rest periods between sets than you would during strength training or bodybuilding, so that you can practice fresh. Aim for technical perfection each rep. Remember that strength is a skill! Do not train to failure. Instead, train to improve your neuromuscular efficiency.

Very useful tactic - “Grease the groove” (synaptic facilitation):

“Specificity + frequent practice = success”- Pavel Tsatsouline

The “grease the groove” approach involves frequent, fresh practice of an exercise or skill for sub-maximal repetitions or intensity. Aim for multiple sets spaced out throughout the day. Use this approach for one or two skills or exercises, at most, in the same training cycle (1 or 2 weeks).

Calibrating exercises and workouts
Tougheners, regressions, and more

Tougheners include, but are not limited to:

Bodyweight triceps extensions – low incline, deeper range of motion, build up to performing with one arm, hold the bottom position for time each rep
Horizontal pullups – asymmetry, lower bar, biceps emphasis, one leg
Hanging leg raises – full ROM (range of motion), combinations with front lever, lateral movement
Pike handstand pushups – full ROM, feet elevated, alternate sides each rep
Handstand pushups – full ROM, alternate sides each rep, transitional work (working towards one arm handstand pushups), freestanding handstand pushups
Dips – “L position” with legs, harder exercise in the progression
Pushups – hands closer together, transitional work (working towards one arm pushups), performing pushups in a declined position, performing slow reps, harder exercise in the progression
Pullups – hands closer together, transitional work (working towards one arm pullups), performing slow reps, harder exercise in the progression

Regressions include, but are not limited to:

Bodyweight triceps extensions – higher incline, partial range of motion, perform an easier triceps exercise (such as tiger bend pushups)
Incline pushups – higher incline, partial range of motion
Horizontal pullups – higher bar, get closer to standing, bent legs
Hanging leg raises – partial range of motion, perform “frog leg raises”, raise one leg at a time (“swimming” the legs), easier exercise in the progression
Pike handstand pushups – partial range of motion, perform divebomber pushups, perform Hindu pushups (aka Dands), hold top position for time, easier exercise in the progression
Dips – less range of motion, easier exercise in the progression
Pushups – less range of motion, easier exercise in the progression, perform pushups with hands on a safe, sturdy object (higher objects are easier, lower objects are harder)

Drop set ideas include, but are not limited to:

Bodyweight triceps extensions - perform the exercise at a higher incline, perform bench dips, and perform multiple drop sets of pushups. Progressions – drop at least 1 level in the progression and perform that exercise until form starts to break down.

Equipment:

To elevate the hands and/or feet, you could use a walkway, park benches, a step or rung, a wall, a tree – experiment! For parallel dips, you could use two sturdy objects at a height that will allow you to perform the exercise at a sufficient range of motion, or you could use park benches.

Author Profile

I am a calisthenics instructor with over 10 years of experience in martial arts and fitness. My passion for fitness started at about the same time I began my martial arts journey. I trained with many types of athletes over the years and learned about many types of strength and conditioning, but calisthenics became my primary passion. I eventually became certified as a personal trainer in March 2013. I became a PCC instructor in 2014, after attending the PCC workshop in Alexandria, VA. I have also served as a strength & conditioning coach at an established gymnastics club.

Why do I love what I do? I suppose I could say that I'm almost religious about body weight training in general, especially progressive calisthenics and gymnastics. It's very Zen when you focus on a movement, become one with it, and your body is just smoothly transforming into the technique you're practicing – whether a gymnastics pullover or a kata! Definitely an art, and poetry in motion, like skating or surfing! I can understand why skaters and surfers are often almost religious about what they do. I'm always looking for that “transcendent rep” near the end of the set, that I pour my heart and soul into, all of my focus, like finding my way down the rabbit hole and through the other side, only to find myself transformed. Sweating and squeezing out all of my emotions, pouring them onto the bar, floor, mat, wall, or pavement! That is living and definitely a spiritual experience :)

If you would like to view full info on my qualifications, schedule a class or free initial consultation, or contact me for any other reason, please visit my page below.

<http://www.owenjohnston.net>

Owen Johnston - www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Resources

I maintain a Google+ Collection dedicated to calisthenics. I updated it regularly with links to useful resources. Point your browser to the page below to check it out:

<https://plus.google.com/collection/ccfpm>

My calisthenics and odd object training blogs are home to plenty of YouTube playlists, free articles, and more.

<http://www.strengthcalisthenics.com>

<http://www.oddobjecttraining.com>

Short URL to my free downloads page - <http://tiny.cc/freedownloads>

Owen Johnston - www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Appreciation

Thank you so much for reading the book! I hope you enjoyed it and that you gained some benefit from it. Please let me know what you think by getting in touch with me through the page below. A link to contact methods is in the top menu. If you are visiting the mobile version of the site, click on the second blog post from the top titled "Site Menu" for links.

<http://www.strengthcalisthenics.com>

Or send an email to - owen@strengthcalisthenics.com

Owen Johnston - www.strengthcalisthenics.com

Calisthenics Programs – Remedial Through Advanced Training tactics included

Thank you for your interest! This guide contains remedial workout programs and routines for beginners through advanced athletes. If you would like to view videos of many of the exercises, visit the site below and click on the link in the top menu that says “Calisthenics progression videos”, which will take you to a post with various playlists. The top menu also has a link to a calisthenics progression PDF with a list of all the progressions and exercises.

<http://www.strengthcalisthenics.com>

Short URLs

Calisthenics progression videos - <http://tiny.cc/progressionvideo>

Bodyweight training videos - <http://tiny.cc/trainingvideo>

Calisthenics progression PDF - <http://tiny.cc/progressions>

My downloads page - <http://tiny.cc/freedownloads>

You can order beautiful, professionally printed editions of my books on demand through Simple Print Service, the “easy way to create beautiful prints from digital content!” Simply visit the site below, upload a PDF, and begin the ordering process. You may choose to have a PDF file printed as a magazine, softcover book, or hardcover book.

<http://www.simpleprintservice.com>

The PDF editions of my books may be read and/or downloaded for free! Simply point your browser to the below short URL to a Dropbox folder. If you decide you would like to order a print, download one or more of the books and use the service at the site above. Short URL - <http://tiny.cc/books>

I don’t make a single cent from prints of my books made through the Simple Print Service, nor do I ask for one. I am satisfied knowing that people are reading my stuff, and that there is an eco-friendly print on demand service available!