



12-WEEK BEGINNER FOUNDATION

3 days / week · Full-Body · Compound · Beginner

— Overview

A twelve-week starting program for the first year of training. Three full-body sessions a week rotate the fundamental compound lifts, teaching solid technique while adding a little weight almost every session, the fastest way to build a base.

12

Weeks

3×

Sessions per week

5–10

Working rep range

A / B

Alternating sessions

— How to run it

- Alternate Session A and Session B across your three weekly days. Week one is A / B / A, week two is B / A / B, and so on.
- **Add a small amount of weight every session you hit all your reps**, 2.5–5 lb on upper-body lifts, 5–10 lb on lower-body lifts. This is your main progression.
- Leave 1–2 reps in the tank on every set while you learn. Technique first, load second.
- Rest 2–3 minutes on the big lifts, 60–90 seconds on the rest. Do not rush the compounds.

— The Two Sessions

Two full-body sessions alternated three times a week. Simple, hard, and effective for a first year of lifting.

SESSION A SQUAT + PRESS · Push emphasis

EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	REST
Back Squat	3 × 5	3 min
Bench Press	3 × 5	2–3 min
Bent-Over Row	3 × 8	2 min
Dumbbell Shoulder Press	2 × 10	90 sec
Plank	3 × 30 sec	60 sec



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SESSION B HINGE + PULL · Pull emphasis

EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	REST
Deadlift	2 × 5	3 min
Overhead Press	3 × 5	2–3 min
Lat Pulldown (or assisted pull-up)	3 × 8	90 sec
Goblet Squat	3 × 8	90 sec
Hanging Knee Raise	3 × 10	60 sec

— 12-Week Progression

Linear progression is the whole plan: add a little weight whenever you complete every rep with good form.

Weeks	Focus	Loading
1–4	Learn the lifts, groove technique	Add weight when all reps are clean
5–8	Keep adding load, reps stay at 5	Small jumps every session
9–11	Push loads, expect the odd stall	Repeat a weight before adding
12	Light week, then retest your loads	Back off, then set new numbers

— Progression Rules

- When you miss reps two sessions in a row on a lift, drop that lift 10% and build back up. Stalling and rebuilding is normal and expected.
- Film your big lifts occasionally to check form, or train with someone who can spot your technique.
- Consistency beats intensity in year one. Three solid sessions a week, every week, is the whole game.
- Eat enough to support the work and get your sleep, beginners build fastest when they recover well.

Master the basics. Everything in your first year comes from adding a little weight to a handful of compound lifts done well. Keep it simple, keep it consistent, and the results follow.

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TRAINING PROTOCOL

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