



12-WEEK HYPERTROPHY PROTOCOL

4 days / week · Upper / Lower Split · Intermediate

Overview

A periodized upper/lower split built to drive muscle growth through progressive mechanical tension and accumulated training volume. Twelve weeks are organized into three four-week blocks, each raising the demand before a planned deload consolidates your gains.

12

Weeks, in 3 blocks

4×

Sessions per week

6–12

Working rep range

RPE 7–9

Target effort

How to run it

- Train on a schedule that gives at least one rest day between the two Upper and two Lower sessions, for example Mon / Tue / Thu / Fri.
- Warm up each lift with 2–3 ramping sets before your working sets. Working sets are what is listed below.
- **RPE** is Rate of Perceived Exertion: RPE 8 means you finish with roughly 2 reps left in the tank, RPE 9 means about 1 rep left.
- Rest 2–3 minutes on the main compound lifts, 60–90 seconds on isolation work.

The Weekly Split

Perform the same four sessions each week. Sets, reps, and effort shift block to block, see the progression table that follows.

DAY 1 · UPPER A · Strength emphasis

EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	REST
Barbell Bench Press	4 × 6–8	2–3 min
Weighted Pull-Up (or Lat Pulldown)	4 × 8–10	2 min
Seated Dumbbell Shoulder Press	3 × 8–10	2 min
Chest-Supported Row	3 × 10–12	90 sec
Incline Dumbbell Curl	3 × 10–12	60 sec
Overhead Triceps Extension	3 × 10–12	60 sec



TRAINING PROTOCOL

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DAY 2 LOWER A · Quad emphasis

EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	REST
Back Squat	4 × 6–8	3 min
Romanian Deadlift	3 × 8–10	2–3 min
Walking Lunge	3 × 10–12 / leg	2 min
Leg Extension	3 × 12–15	60 sec
Standing Calf Raise	4 × 10–15	60 sec
Hanging Leg Raise	3 × 12–15	60 sec

DAY 3 UPPER B · Hypertrophy emphasis

EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	REST
Incline Dumbbell Press	4 × 8–10	2 min
One-Arm Dumbbell Row	4 × 8–10	2 min
Lateral Raise	4 × 12–15	60 sec
Cable Row (neutral grip)	3 × 10–12	90 sec
Cable Fly	3 × 12–15	60 sec
EZ-Bar Curl / Rope Pushdown (superset)	3 × 12–15	60 sec



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DAY 4 LOWER B · Posterior emphasis

EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	REST
Deadlift (conventional or trap-bar)	4 × 5–6	3 min
Front Squat or Hack Squat	3 × 8–10	2–3 min
Seated Leg Curl	4 × 10–12	90 sec
Hip Thrust	3 × 10–12	2 min
Seated Calf Raise	4 × 12–15	60 sec
Cable Crunch	3 × 12–15	60 sec

— Block Progression

Keep the exercises the same and let the stimulus climb across the three blocks, then deload in Week 12 to realize the growth.

Block	Weeks	Focus	Working Sets	Effort (RPE)
Accumulation	1–4	Build volume tolerance, dial in technique	As written	7 → 8
Intensification	5–8	Add load, drop reps 1–2 on main lifts	+1 set on main lifts	8 → 8.5
Realization	9–11	Peak overload, add an intensity technique	+1 set on all	8.5 → 9
Deload	12	Recover and consolidate	Halve the sets	6

— Progression Rules

- **Double progression:** stay at a weight until you hit the top of the rep range on every set, then add the smallest load and drop back to the bottom of the range.
- On the main compound lifts (bench, squat, deadlift, press), aim to add a little load every 1–2 weeks while holding your target RPE.
- In the Realization block, add **one** intensity technique per muscle group per week, a drop set or a rest-pause set on the final set of an isolation exercise. Do not add it to heavy compounds.
- Log every session. If a lift stalls for two weeks, reduce the load 10% and build back, this is a normal part of the process.



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Recovery drives growth. Aim for 7–9 hours of sleep, adequate protein across the day, and enough total food to support training. Progress is built in the hours between sessions, not just in the gym.

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