

THE BEST 12 WEEK PYRAMID WORKOUT ROUTINE FOR MUSCLE BUILDING

Created by: [Murshid Akram](#)
Check out [article](#) for more info

From superset and tri-set to drop set and pyramid set, there are various ways of training the muscles for bodybuilding. Out of multiple rep-set methods, I'll share about pyramid workout routine in this article.

The pyramid workout is an excellent way of training muscles for bodybuilding. It involves performing multiple sub-sets within a set. During the pyramid sets, the number of reps or weights will increase after each subset.

It helps the lifter reach muscular fatigue in a more time-efficient manner than the [conventional rep-set method](#).

You can integrate the pyramid sets into your training program to [increase muscular strength](#), endurance, and mass.

In this article, I'll share all about the pyramid workout, such as its benefits, disadvantages, how to do it, and a sample of 12-week workout routine.

If you want to try challenging and different workouts, follow this pyramid workout routine to [maximize your strength and size](#).

Pros and Cons of Pyramid Sets Workout

Let's see some of the benefits and downsides of pyramid sets training that will help you whether you should do it or not.

Benefits:

- **Stimulate Muscle Growth:** Pyramid workout allows you to increase the reps or weights in each subset and target the muscles with different levels of intensity. This kind of training keeps the muscles under tension for a longer duration and helps stimulate muscle growth.
- **Interesting and Challenging:** The increasing weight and lowering reps or lowering weight and increasing reps makes the pyramid workout interesting and challenging. The changing rep and weight keep your attention on lifts that helps achieve better results.
- **Time Efficient:** Pyramid workout allows you to perform more repetitions in the same or less time than the straight sets, making it a time efficient workout training.
- **Improve Cardiovascular Fitness:** Pyramid sets also keep your heart rate high during the lifts, torches significant calories, and promote cardiovascular fitness.

Disadvantages:

- **Tiring:** The pyramid sets are an intense method of training, so it can make you tire quickly.
- **Not Suitable for Beginners:** This is only for intermediate to advanced lifters with decent muscular strength and endurance.
- **Not for Bodyweight Workout:** Bodyweight exercises, such as pull-ups, bar dips, push-ups, and hanging knee raise, play crucial role in strength and muscle building. However, there's no resistance involved during those movements, so you can't do them like other exercises unless you use additional weight.

How to Design a Pyramid Workout Program?

Here's how you can do the back and chest pyramid set workout.

- Sets per exercise: 3
- Subsets per set: 3
- Rest between sets: 2-3 minutes

The intensity of lift during reps-focused pyramid workout:

- **Subset 1:** Lift at 75% of maximum strength (1RM) and perform three reps.
- **Subset 2:** Lift at 50% of your 1RM and do six reps.
- **Subset 3:** Lift at 25% of your 1RM and perform nine reps.
- **Instructions:** If you maximally lift 50kg in one rep, then perform three reps with 37-38 kg in the first subset, followed by six reps with 25 kg in the second subset and nine reps with 12-13 kg in the third subset.

The intensity of lift during weight focused pyramid workout:

- Subset 1: Lift at 25% of your 1RM and perform nine reps.
- Subset 2: Lift at 50% of your 1RM and do six reps.
- Subset 3: Lift at 75% of maximum strength (1RM) and perform three reps.
- **Instructions:** If you maximally lift 60kg in one rep, then perform nine reps with 15 kg in the first subset, followed by six reps with 30 kg in the second subset and three reps with 45 kg in the third subset.

I hope it's clear what pyramid training is and how to do it. Now, let's see an example of a 12-week pyramid workout plan that can break your plateau and help increase strength and muscle mass.

12-Week Pyramid Workout Routine to Transform Your Physique

Schedule:

- **Monday** – Chest and Triceps
- **Tuesday** – Back and Biceps
- **Wednesday** – Legs and Shoulder
- **Thursday** – OFF
- **Friday** – Chest and Glutes
- **Saturday** – Back and Legs
- **Sunday** – OFF

This five-day weekly schedule allows you to train your large muscle groups (chest, legs, and back) twice a week. And training major muscles two times weekly is a great way to promote strength and hypertrophy.

If you also want to focus on core development, you can integrate [abs and oblique exercises](#) into your training program to bolster your mid-section.

Warm-up: It is best to do 5-10 minutes of warm-up exercises to increase your heart rate and prepare your muscles for intense resistance exercises. You can jog on the treadmill, do bodyweight cardio exercises, or lift a light bar and dumbbell for warm-up.

Week 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 – Reps Focused Pyramid Sets

Perform this workout every alternate week during the 12 weeks program.

Monday – Chest and Triceps

Exercise	Subsets	Intensity	Sets
Flat Barbell Bench Press	3, 6, 9	70%, 50%, 25%	3
Pec Deck Fly	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	3
High-to-Low Cable Fly	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	3
Rope/Bar Pushdown	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	2
One-arm Overhead Cable Triceps Extension	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	2

Tuesday – Back and Biceps

Exercise	Subsets	Intensity	Sets
Front Lat Pulldown	3, 6, 9	70%, 50%, 25%	3
Seated Cable Row	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	3
Bent-over Row	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	3
EZ Bar Curl	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	2
Hammer Curl	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	2

Wednesday – Legs and Shoulder (Superset Workout)

Exercise	Subsets	Intensity	Sets
Overhead Press + Leg Extension	3, 6, 9	70%, 50%, 25%	3
Lateral Delt Raises + Leg Curl	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	3

Rear Delt Machine Fly + Calf Raises	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	3
-------------------------------------	---------	---------------	---

Friday – Chest and Glutes

Exercise	Subsets	Intensity	Sets
Incline Chest Press (DB/Bar/Machine)	3, 6, 9	70%, 50%, 25%	3
Pec Deck Fly	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	3
High-to-Low Cable Fly	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	3
Hex or Trap Bar Deadlift	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	2
Hip Thrust	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	3

Saturday – Back and Legs

Exercise	Subsets	Intensity	Sets
Leg Press	3, 6, 9	70%, 50%, 25%	3
Front Lunges	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	3
V-Grip Front Lat Pulldown	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	3
Seated Cable Row	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	2
Chest-Supported Row	3, 6, 9	75%, 50%, 25%	2

Week 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 – Weight Focused Pyramid Sets

Monday – Chest and Triceps

Exercise	Subsets	Intensity	Sets
Flat Barbell Bench Press	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Seated Pec Deck Fly	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Bent Cable Chest Fly	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Rope/Bar Pushdown	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	2
Skull Crusher	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	2

Tuesday – Back and Biceps

Exercise	Subsets	Intensity	Sets
Conventional Deadlift	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Front Lat Pulldown	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Seated Cable Row	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Preacher Curl	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	2
Cable Rope Curl	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	2

Wednesday – Legs and Shoulder (Superset)

Exercise	Subsets	Intensity	Sets
Overhead Press + Leg Extension	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Lateral Delt Raises + Leg Curl	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Rear Delt Machine Fly + Calf Raises	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Shrug + Face Pull	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	2

Friday – Chest and Glutes

Exercise	Subsets	Intensity	Sets
Incline Chest Press (DB/Bar/Machine)	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Seated Pec Deck Fly	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Dumbbell Pullover	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Hip Thrust	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	2
Dumbbell Frog Pump	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	2

Saturday – Back and Legs

Exercise	Subsets	Intensity	Sets
Back Squat	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
Leg Press	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
V-Grip Lat Pulldown	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3
One-arm DB Row	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	2
T-Bar Row	8, 6, 4	30%, 45%, 60%	3

Key Tips for Maximizing Your Workout Plan and Achieving Optimal Results

1. Pre-Workout Meal

A good pre-workout meal sets the foundation for an effective workout session. The pre-workout meal helps you perform better during the workout and supports muscle-building.

You should have your meal 30 minutes to 2 hours before the training, depending on what kind of food you consume.

Examples of pre-workout foods include:

1. [Protein Shake](#)
2. Chicken Salad
3. [Dried Fruits](#)
4. Oatmeal
5. [Energy Bars](#)
6. Peanut Butter and Toast
7. Yogurt with Fruit/Granola
8. Fruit Smoothies
9. Eggs

2. Workout When You Feel Energetic

Working out when you feel active lets you put your 100 percent into the workout. It could be morning, afternoon, or evening.

3. Keep yourself hydrated during the workout

Several studies have shown keeping yourself hydrated during the workout is essential to prevent injuries and uneasiness and enhance performance. So, it is best to drink water when you feel hypohydration.

4. Post Workout stretching and cool down

Most people often miss post-workout stretching, but many athletes and coaches recommend doing this. It may have a positive impact on your training because it helps reduce muscle soreness. (If you do not have time extra time, skip this part).

5. Post-workout Meal

The post-workout meal plays a crucial role in building muscles. You can have a great workout session, but if you don't consume protein and carbs after the workout, your muscles might not grow.

That's why you should have a great meal after the resistance training to maximize your results. There's no scientific evidence that taking a post-workout meal just after the workout elicits better results. Still, it is good to take your meal as soon as you finish the workout.

I suggest consuming at least 40-50 grams of protein and one gram of carbs per kg of your body weight for optimal results (it is only an example; a nutritionist can help you better in this case).

Examples of Post-Workout Meals:

- Protein shakes and banana.
- Oatmeal with yogurt, almonds, and berries.
- Chicken burrito with salad and cheese.
- Grilled chicken with roasted vegetables and rice.
- Egg omelet with avocado on whole grain toast.
- Salmon with sweet potato.
- Whole grain crackers with cheese and fruit.

6. Make Progress

Increase the load, the number of reps and sets, and the session duration as you progress further. Pushing your limit to a certain extent may help you build muscle faster.

7. Creator note

You can make any changes you want in this program. For example, you can increase and decrease repetitions, sets, interval time, and the daily workout duration. You can also replace any exercise you don't like.

Recommended Brands:

1. [Performix](#) (Supplement)
2. [Beyond Body](#) (Book)
3. [Amazon](#) (Supplement)

Helpful Resources:

- [20 Best Dumbbell Pull Exercises](#)
- [Dumbbell Push Exercises](#)
- [Top 10 Barbell Pull Exercises](#)
- [8 Best Barbell Push Exercises](#)
- [13 Barbell Squat Variations](#)

Related Workout Programs:

- [Free 12-Week Ab Workout Plan to Forge Six-Pack Abs](#)
- [12-Week Glute Program to Transform Your Booty](#)
- [10-Week Chest Workout Routine for Strength and Size](#)
- [12-Week Shoulder Workout Program for Defined Delts](#)
- [12-Week Body Transformation Workout Plan](#)

Help us grow online so we can reach to large audience:

[Reddit](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Pinterest](#) | [Flipboard](#)

Disclaimer

This program is created by Murshid Akram, founder of Thefitnessphantom.com. These guidelines are not formulated to suit any nutrient deficiencies, allergies or any other food related health problems. If you are an individual with such problems, you should consult an Accredited Practicing Dietitian or qualified health professional. The information provided here “as is” and for general health improvement recommendations only to promote healthy eating and lifestyle habits. It is not intended as medical advice, and should not be used to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any medical conditions. You should not use this Book as a substitute for qualified professional health advice, diagnosis or treatment. Thefitnessphantom.com and Murshid Akram makes no warranties or representations, express or implied, as to the currency, accuracy, completeness, reliability or suitability of the information contained or referenced on this site.

The information is subject to professional differences of opinion, human error in preparing this information and unique differences in individuals’ situations. We are not liable for any loss resulting from any action taken or reliance made by you on any of the information or material contained in this file.

If you use, or otherwise rely on, any of the information you are responsible for ensuring, by independent verification, its currency, accuracy, completeness, reliability and relevance to your own personal and individual circumstances.

You should always obtain any appropriate professional health advice relevant to your particular circumstances. Copyright and all other intellectual property rights in materials contained in the Book are owned by, or licensed to, Thefitnessphantom.com No intellectual property rights or other rights in, and to, the information and materials on this site are transferred to any person who acquires or may use. Except as permitted under the applicable law in your location.

You may not adapt, reproduce, publish or distribute copies of any materials contained on our website or from our file (including, but not limited to text, logos, graphics, photographs, video clips, trademarks, garment graphics, sounds or images) in any form (including by e-mail or other electronic means).