

# 12-Week Muscle-Building Upper Lower Split for Beginners

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Check out [article](#) for more info

This 12-week program is divided into three phases, four weeks each.

**In the first phase**, you'll train three times weekly (two upper body days and one lower body day). It includes mostly [gym machine exercises](#) that will build your basic strength and prepare you for [free-weight exercises](#).

**The second phase** involves training four times weekly, two sessions each for the upper and lower body. With one additional leg day, this phase allows you to equally focus on the upper and lower body and build a muscular physique.

**The last phase** includes five sessions per week, three for the torso and two for the legs. With five sessions per week, this

phase will continue challenging your muscles to work hard for four consecutive weeks.

This ultimate routine will help you bolster your fundamental strength, build lean mass, enhance your bodily appearance, and scale your fitness to the next level.

Split Type	Upper-Lower Split
Program Duration	12 Weeks
Workout Goal	Physique Development
Experience Require	None (Beginners)
Sessions/Week	3-5 Days
Duration/Session	60-75 minutes
Target Gender	Male and Female

## Instructions to Follow the Workout Plan

- **Warm-up:** I suggest doing some cardio and **dynamic warm-up exercises** to increase your body temperature and prepare your muscles for an effective resistance training session. For example, you can do kettlebell swings, push-ups, the world's greatest stretch, and light sets for any exercise you're to perform.
- **Rest between sets:** I recommend keeping the rest time between sets as short as possible. Short rest periods, such as 30-60 seconds, have proven effective for muscular hypertrophy.

- **How heavy should you lift?** You can lift as heavy as your muscles allow as long as you maintain the form and intensity during the workout.
- **Increase the load over time:** Increasing the load over time will continue to push your muscles to work hard and grow simultaneously.
- **Maintain proper form:** Ensure you perform each exercise with proper form. I recommend checking step-by-step instructions on YouTube before doing all exercises.

## Week 1 to 4

You'll start your program with a three-day split—two sessions for the upper body and one for the lower body.

- Day 1 – Upper Body
- Day 2 – Lower Body
- Day 3 – Upper Body
- Alternate Day Off

This split will run for the first four weeks, and then we'll increase it to one session after the fourth week.

This three-day upper-lower split will bolster your fundamental strength and progress your fitness for the coming weeks.

Rest for 2 minutes between sets.

## Day 1 – Upper Body

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets x Reps
Seated Pec Deck Fly	Chest	3 x 15
Smith Machine Overhead Press	Shoulder	3 x 15
<a href="#">Incline Machine Chest Press</a>	Chest	3 x 15
<a href="#">Machine Lateral Raise</a>	Shoulder	3 x 12
Triceps Rope Press Down	Triceps	3 x 15

## Day 2 – Lower Body

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets x Reps
Seated Leg Extension	Quadriceps	3 x 15
Machine Leg Press	Quadriceps	3 x 15
Lying/Seated Leg Curl	Hamstrings	3 x 15
<a href="#">Dumbbell Goblet Squat</a>	Quadriceps	3 x 12
Calf Raises	Calves	3 x 15

## Day 3 – Upper Body

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets x Reps
Pull-ups	Back	3 x Failure
Front Lat Pulldown	Back	3 x 15
Seated Cable Row	Back	3 x 15
Reverse Fly	Upper Back	3 x 15
Dumbbell Biceps Curl	Biceps	3 x 12

## Week 5 to 8

The second phase involves four training sessions, two each for the upper and lower body.

It has one additional day for leg workouts than the previous phase.

- Monday – Upper Body
- Tuesday – Lower Body
- Wednesday – OFF
- Thursday – Upper Body
- Friday – Lower Body
- Saturday – OFF
- Sunday – OFF

This phase involves performing moderate reps (10-12) with a shorter rest period than the first phase.

Taking shorter rest between sets keeps your muscles warm and increases metabolic stress, one of the factors of muscle growth.<sup>1</sup>

After completing this split, you'll be stronger and prepared for more challenging workouts.

Rest for 90 seconds to 2 minutes between sets.

## Monday – Upper Body

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets x Reps
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Seated Pec Deck Fly	Chest	3 x 12
Incline Dumbbell Bench Press	Chest	3 x 12
Machine Flat Bench Press	Chest	3 x 12
Dumbbell Front Raises	Shoulder	3 x 10
Unilateral DB Lateral Raises	Shoulder	3 x 10
Bar Push Down	Triceps	3 x 15

## Tuesday – Lower Body

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets x Reps
Seated Leg Extension	Quadriceps	3 x 15
Machine Leg Press	Quadriceps	3 x 15
Lying/Seated Leg Curl	Hamstrings	3 x 15
Dumbbell Lunges	Quadriceps	3 x 12
Calf Raises	Calves	3 x 15

## Thursday – Upper Body

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets x Reps
Pull-ups	Back	3 x Failure
Front Lat Pulldown	Back	3 x 12
Seated Cable Row	Back	3 x 12
Single-arm DB Row	Back	3 x 10/arm
Reverse Fly	Upper Back	3 x 12
Concentration Curl	Biceps	3 x 12

## Friday – Lower Body

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets x Reps
Dumbbell Front Squat	Quadriceps	3 x 15
Lying/Seated Leg Curl	Hamstrings	3 x 15
Cable Pull Through	Posterior Chain	3 x 12
Calf Raises	Calves	3 x 15

# Week 9 to 12

In the last phase, there will be one additional session for the upper body workouts, meaning you'll do five sessions instead of four – three sessions for the torso and two for the legs.

- Monday – Upper Body
- Tuesday – Lower Body
- Wednesday – Upper Body
- Thursday – OFF
- Friday – Lower Body
- Saturday – Upper Body
- Sunday – OFF

It involves performing a lower number of reps with a heavy load. The heavy load challenges muscles to work hard and [helps enhance strength](#) and muscle growth.

Rest for 60 seconds to 2 minutes between sets.

## Monday – Upper Body

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets x Reps
Seated Pec Deck Fly	Chest	3 x 12
Incline Dumbbell Bench Press	Chest	3 x 12

Machine Flat Bench Press	Chest	3 x 12
Dumbbell Front Raises	Shoulder	3 x 10
Single-arm Lateral Raises	Shoulder	3 x 10
<a href="#">Crossbody Cable Extension</a>	Triceps	3 x 15

## Tuesday – Lower Body

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets x Reps
Dumbbell Lunges	Lower Body	3 x 10/arm
Seated Leg Extension	Quadriceps	3 x 15-20
Machine Leg Press	Quadriceps	3 x 15-20
Lying/Seated Leg Curl	Hamstrings	3 x 15-20
Calf Raises	Calves	3 x 20-30

## Wednesday – Upper Body

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets x Reps
Pull-ups	Back	3 x Failure
Front Lat Pulldown	Back	3 x 8-12
Seated Cable Row	Back	3 x 8-12
Chest Supported Row	Back	3 x 10-12
Reverse Machine Fly	Upper Back	3 x 10-12
Barbell Curl	Biceps	3 x 10-12

## Friday – Lower Body

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets x Reps
Smith Machine Back Squat	Lower Body	3 x 8-12
Step-up	Lower Body	3 x 10/leg
Romanian Deadlift	Posterior Chain	3 x 8-10
BW Glute Bridge	Glutes	3 x 12-15

## Saturday – Upper Body

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets x Reps
Overhead Press	Shoulder	3 x 10-12
Close Grip Bench Press	Triceps	3 x 10-12
Single-arm DB Row	Back	3 x 10/arm
One-arm Kickback	Triceps	3 x 10/arm

# The Fitness Phantom Nutritional Tips for Beginners

If you're a beginner and lean, you'll see some noticeable gain in a few months, even without focusing much on diet.

However, if you want to achieve optimal results, I suggest you also focus on your diet.

I recommend including pre- and post-workout meals in your regime to improve your performance and encourage muscle growth.

A good pre-workout meal can have anything that is rich in protein and healthy carbs and easy to digest.

For example, you can eat a protein bar, smoothie, banana, Greek yogurt, or oatmeal. Whatever you consume, make sure you have your pre-workout meal 1 to 2 hours before the training, depending on what kind of food you consume.

A post-workout meal should have a good amount of protein and healthy carbs. For example, you can have white or whole

eggs, oatmeal, roasted chicken, banana, whey isolate, etc. The sooner you consume a post-workout meal after the workout, the better for your muscles to rebuild and growth.

If you want an efficient diet plan, then I suggest consulting a nutritionist for a customized diet program based on your needs.

### **Helpful Resources:**

- [20 Best Dumbbell Pull Exercises](#)
- [Dumbbell Push Exercises](#)
- [Top 10 Barbell Pull Exercises](#)
- [8 Best Barbell Push Exercises](#)
- [30+ Best Smith Machine Exercises](#)
- [13 Barbell Squat Variations](#)
- [Barbell Workouts For Mass Gain](#)
- [The Ultimate List of Isolation Exercises](#)

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