

12-WEEK WORKOUT ROUTINE INSPIRED BY FRANK ZANE

Created by: [Murshid Akram](#)

Frank Zane follows a three-week cycle workout that involves 12 training and nine rest days.

He used to follow pull-legs-pull split (PLP) – pull workouts on day one, leg workouts on day two, and push workouts on day three.

Pull day includes back, biceps, and forearm exercises; leg day comprises thigh, calves, and glute exercises; and push day involves chest, shoulder, and triceps exercises.

Frank Zane's 21-Day Workout Schedule

- Day 1 – Pull Workout
- Day 2 – OFF
- Day 3 – Leg Workout
- Day 4 – Push Workout
- Day 5 – OFF
- Day 6 – Pull Workout
- Day 7 – OFF
- Day 8 – Leg Workout
- Day 9 – Push Workout
- Day 10 – OFF
- Day 11 – Pull Workout
- Day 12 – OFF
- Day 13 – Leg Workout
- Day 14 – Push Workout
- Day 15 – OFF
- Day 16 – Pull Workout
- Day 17 – OFF

- Day 18 – Leg Workout
- Day 19 – OFF
- Day 20 – Push Workout
- Day 21 – OFF
- Repeat four times to complete the 12-week program.

Workout Instructions

- **Variety of Exercises:** Combine **compound and isolation exercises** to build strength, size, and definition.
- **High Volume Workout:** The Frank Zane workout plan involves performing plenty of exercises, reps, and sets. It requires decent nutrition and adequate recovery time.
- **Combination of Different Loads:** You can make as many changes to this program as you like, but make sure you include heavyweight sets to work on your strength and light to moderate weight sets to promote hypertrophy and muscle definition.
- **Frequent Cardio:** You can perform aerobic workouts on rest days to improve cardiovascular fitness.
- **Core Workout:** This program involves performing **ab exercises** on each training day, but it is optional. Train only if you want to buttress your abdominal muscles.
- **Warm-up:** Always start your workout with a warm-up set to increase blood flow and prepare your muscles for the main workout.
- **Rest Between Sets:** Take 3 minutes rest during compound heavy sets and 30-90 seconds between **isolation exercises**.

Day 1 – Pull Workout

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets	Reps
Snatch Grip Deadlift	Back	3	15, 12, 10
Rack Pull/Off Blocks	Back	4	10, 8, 7, 6
T-Bar Rows	Back	3	12, 10, 8
Front Lat Pulldown	Back	3	12, 10, 8
Dumbbell Row	Back	3	8-10
Concentration Curls	Biceps	3	8-10
Alternating DB Curl	Biceps	3	8-10

Incline Dumbbell Curl	Biceps	3	8-10
Barbell Reverse Curls + Wrist Curl	Forearms	2	12 + 20
Body Curl + Hanging Leg Raises	Core	2	50
Hanging Knee-ups + Russian Twist	Core	2	50

Instructions:

- Frank Zane performed one-arm and dual-arm lat stretches between sets to stimulate muscle growth.
- Feel the contraction in your biceps before uncurling your arm.

Day 2 – OFF

Rest completely so your muscles can recover and prepare for the next session.

Day 3 – Leg Workout

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets	Reps
Unilateral Leg Extensions	Quads	2	15/leg
Barbell Back Squat	Quads	6	15, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8
Machine Leg Press	Quads	3	15, 10, 8
Lying Leg Curls	Hamstrings	3	12, 11, 10
Leg Extensions	Quads	3	12, 10, 8
Standing Calf Raise	Calves	3	15-20
Donkey Calf Raise	Calves	4	20-25
Seated Toe Raises	Calves	1	20
Sit-ups	Upper Ab	2	Failure
Lying Leg Raises	Lower Ab	2	Failure

Instructions:

- The first two sets of unilateral leg extensions will be performed with light weight to prepare your legs for intense leg exercises.
- Seated toe raises will be the drop set, which involves performing 20 reps in four subsets, dropping weight in each subset.

Day 4 – Push Workout

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets	Reps
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Barbell Bench Press	Chest	6	12, 10, 8, 6, 4, 2
Incline DB Bench Press	Chest	1	30
Decline Dumbbell Flyes	Chest	3	12, 10, 8
Cross Bench DB Pullover	Chest	3	8-10
Close Grip Bench Press	Triceps	3	12, 10, 8
1-arm Overhead Extensions	Triceps	3	12, 10, 8
Rope/Bar Pushdown	Triceps	3	12, 10, 8
Bent-over Lateral Raise	Rear Delt	3	15, 12, 10
Cable Lateral Raise	Side Delt	3	12, 10, 8
Hanging Leg Raises + Body Curl	Abs	2	20-25
Hanging Knee-ups + Russian Twist	Abs	2	20-25

Exercise Instructions:

- **Incline DB Bench Press:** Set the bench at a 70-degree incline position and perform ten reps; drop the angle to 60-degree perform eight reps; again, lower the bench at a 45-degree angle and complete six reps, and finally perform 4-6 reps at a 30-degree incline position.
- **Decline Dumbbell Flyes:** Adjust the bench at a 10-degree decline angle and perform the above-outlined reps.
- **Stretches:** Perform doorway stretches between sets.

Day 5 – OFF

Day 6 – Pull Workout

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets	Reps
Barbell Row	Back	3	12, 10, 8
Front Lat Pulldown	Back	3	12, 10, 8
Leverage Row	Back	3	8-10
Straight-arm Pulldown	Back	3	12-15
Alternating DB Curl	Biceps	3	8-10
Incline Dumbbell Curl	Biceps	3	8-10
Preacher/Cable Curl	Biceps	3	8-10
Wrist Extension + Wrist Curl	Forearms	2	12 + 20
Hanging Knee Raises	Core	3	20
High-to-Low Cable Chop	Core	3	20/side
Plank	Core	3	1-min

Day 7 – OFF

Day 8 – Leg Workout

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets	Reps
Leg Extension	Quad	3	16, 14, 12
Back Squat	Quad	3	15
Hack Squat	Quad	3	10
Leg Curl	Hamstring	3	18, 14, 12
Leg-Press Calf Raise	Calves	4	15
Seated Calf Raise	Calves	3	15
Roman Chair Sit-up	Abs	1	100
Decline Reverse Crunches	Abs	3	40, 30, 30
Hyperextension	Lower Back	2	Failure

Source: Frank Zane Book: Body, Mind, Spirit.

Day 9 – Push Workout

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets	Reps
Incline DB Bench Press	Chest	4	12, 10, 8, 6
Flat Dumbbell Flyes	Chest	3	12, 10, 8
Dumbbell Pullover	Chest	3	10
Close-Grip Bench Press	Triceps	3	12, 10, 8
Rope/Bar Pushdown	Triceps	3	12, 10, 8
Kickback	Triceps	3	12, 10, 8
Behind-the-Neck Smith Machine Press	Shoulder	3	15, 12, 10
Rear Lateral Raise	Rear Delt	3	12, 10, 8
Side Lateral Raise	Lateral Delt	2	8-10
One-Arm Side Cable Lateral Raise	Side Delt	2	8-10
Roman-Chair Sit-up + Lying Leg Raise	Abs	5	30

Day 10 – OFF

Day 11 – Pull Workout

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets	Reps
Wide Grip Pull-up	Back	3	12, 10, 8
T-Bar Row	Back	3	12, 10, 8

Single-arm Cable Row	Back	3	8-10
Machine Lat Pullover	Back	3	10-12
Barbell Biceps Curl	Biceps	3	8-10
Preacher Curl	Biceps	3	8-10
Incline Dumbbell Curl	Biceps	3	8-10
Wrist Extension + Wrist Curl	Forearms	2	12 + 20
Body Curl + Hanging Leg Raises	Core	2	50
Hanging Knee-ups + Russian Twist	Core	2	50

Day 12 – OFF

Day 13 – Leg Workout

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets	Reps
Leg Extension	Quad	3	16, 14, 12
Leg Press	Quad	4	15, 12, 10, 8
Lunges	Quad	3	10/leg
Leg Curl	Hamstring	3	20, 15, 12
Donkey Calf Raises	Calves	3	15
Romanian Deadlift	Calves	3	15
Roman Chair Sit-up	Abs	2	100
Decline Reverse Crunches	Abs	3	40, 30, 30

Day 14 – Push Workout

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets	Reps
Incline Hammer Chest Press	Chest	4	12, 10, 8, 6
Flat Dumbbell Bench Press	Chest	3	12, 10, 8
Seated Pec Deck Fly	Chest	3	10
Seated Overhead Press	Shoulder	3	12, 10, 8
Lateral Delt Raises	Shoulder	3	12, 10, 8
Front Raises	Shoulder	3	12, 10, 8
French Press	Triceps	3	15, 12, 10
Rope Press Down	Triceps	3	12, 10, 8
One-arm Triceps Extension	Triceps	2	8-10
Body Curl + Hanging Leg Raises	Abs	2	20
Wood Chop + Reverse Crunches	Abs	2	20

Day 15 – OFF

Day 16 – Pull Workout (Superset)

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets	Reps
Front Lat Pulldown + Cable Crossover Behind the Neck	Back	3	12, 10, 8
Seated Cable Row + One-arm DB Row	Back	3	12, 10, 8
Barbell Curl + Hammer Curl	Biceps	3	8-10
Preacher Curl + Incline Dumbbell Curl	Biceps	3	8-10
Wrist Extension + Wrist Curl	Forearms	2	12 + 20
Body Curl + Hanging Leg Raises	Core	2	50
Hanging Knee-ups + Russian Twist	Core	2	50

Day 17 – OFF

Day 18 – Leg Workout (Superset)

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets	Reps
Dumbbell RDL + Leg Extension	Leg	3	16, 14, 12
Leg Press + Leg Curl	Leg	3	15, 12, 10, 8
Lunges + Donkey Calf Raises	Leg	3	10/leg
Low Back Extension + Step-up	Leg	3	20, 15, 12
Roman Chair Sit-up + Decline Reverse Crunches	Abs	3	50

Day 19 – OFF

Day 20 – Push Workout (Superset)

Exercise	Target Muscle	Sets	Reps
DB Bench Press + Lateral Raise	Chest + Shoulder	3	10-12
Dumbbell Flyes + Rear Delt Raise	Chest + Shoulder	3	10-12
Pullover + Crossover	Chest	3	10-12
Close-Grip Bench Press + Pushdown	Triceps	3	10-12
Bar Dips + Kickback	Chest + Triceps	2	10-12
Upright Row + Reverse Fly	Trap and Shoulder	2	10-12
Roman-Chair Sit-up + Lying Leg Raise	Abs	3	30

Day 21 – OFF

Perform light cardio workout for 20-30 minutes.

Additional 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.

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. Make Adjustment

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)
4. [Bulk Extreme](#) (Supplement)
5. [Mass Extreme](#) (Supplement)

Helpful Resources:

- [20 Best Dumbbell Pull Exercises](#)
- [Dumbbell Push Exercises](#)
- [Top 10 Barbell Pull Exercises](#)
- [8 Best Barbell Push Exercises](#)
- [Compound Exercises List](#)
- [Isolation Exercises List](#)
- [30 Best Gym Exercises for Abs](#)

Related Workout Programs

- [12 Week Dorian Yates Workout Routine](#)
- [12-Week Arnold Schwarzenegger Workout Program](#)
- [12-Week Ronnie Coleman Training Schedule](#)
- [12-Week Phil Heath Training Program](#)
- [12-Week Lou Ferrigno Workout Routine](#)
- [The Ultimate 200 Rep Workout \(Ft. John Meadows\)](#)

- [12-Week Jay Cutler Training Program with Free PDF](#)

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