

Bodybuilding Program

What kind of workout is this?

This is a 4x / week workout that contains 10 weeks of workouts. It is set-up in a push-pull format.

Who should use this workout?

The workout is designed for the moderately advanced lifter. It is centered on primarily free weight exercises.

How does it work?

A good bodybuilding workout is designed around *volume*. This means you will spend more time lifting than resting. A lifter will get stronger with this kind of workout, but its primary focus is on increasing size.

How can I use this workout?

I suggest taking an easy, unloading week every 5th week in the program. Since this program contains 10 weeks of workouts, this workout, if you take some off weeks can last you nearly the entire semester. You may choose to rearrange some of the workout days or substitute your own exercises. Ask our trainers for their suggestions as well.

Why should I “trust” this workout?

This workout was written by Travis Erickson, the former director of UW-L’s strength and conditioning concentration. Travis has 15 years of experience writing strength training programs for all populations. He created this workout specifically to be used in the UW-L strength and conditioning facilities. Travis is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Coach (CSCS) through the National Strength and Conditioning Association. He currently serves as the Manager of the UW-L strength centers. You can contact him in person in either the REC or Mitchell Hall facilities, via e-mail at Erickson.trav@uwlax.edu or by phone at 785-6546.

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Bodybuilding 4x/week push-pull split

Weeks 1, 2			Reps by set					Rest	Comments
Day	Order	Exercise	1	2	3	4	5		
1	1a	Back squats	10	8	8			2 min	Full ROM
	2a	Leg press	10	8	8			2 min	
	3a	Leg extensions	8	8	8			90s	Work "friendly" ROM
	4a	Front lat pulldowns	12	12	12			90s	Wide grip -- squeeze lats
	5a	Cable straight-arm pulldown	12	12	12			90s	This is a lat exercise similar to a pullover, except with a cable; single or double-arm
	6a	EZ bar bicep curl	12	12	12			90s	Don't cheat
	7a	Cable bicep curl	12	12	12			90s	Don't cheat
	8a	Lower abs	12	12	12			90s	You choose -- body curl, Garhammer raise, pelvic tilt, etc.
2	1a	Incline DB press	12	12	12			90s	<45 degree angle
	2a	Cable chest flyes	12	12	12			90s	
	3a	Push-ups (hands on bench)	F	F				90s	Go to failure on both sets
	4a	DB front raise (thumbs up)	12	12	12			90s	Do both arms simultaneously
	5a	Machine or DB lateral raise	12	12	12			90s	
	6a	Underhand cable tricep extension	12	12	12			90s	
	7a	Russian twist on swiss ball	12	12				90s	Each side
	8a	Swiss ball crunches	12	12	12			90s	Do these right and 12 will feel challenging
3	1a	Barbell reverse lunges	12	12				90s	Go ahead and alternate legs
	2a	Machine seated row	10	8	8			2 min	Cable row or a machine designed for it
	3a	Lying leg curls	12	12	12			90s	
	4a	Bent over flyes	8	8	8			2 min	Stay bent over, keep arms straight and don't cheat by bouncing
	5a	DB concentration curls	8	8	8			90s	
	6a	Reverse hyperextensions	10	10	10			90s	Don't truly hyperextend your back
	7a	Lower abs	12	12	12			90s	You choose again (see day 1)
4	1a	Flat bench press	10	8	8			2 min	
	2a	DB shoulder press	10	8	8			2 min	Seated or standing
	3a	Incline cable or DB incline flyes	8	8	8			90s	
	4a	Barbell shrugs	8	8	8			90s	I usually throw traps in with shoulders as opposed to back; personal preference
	5a	DB skullcrushers	8	8	8			90s	
	6a	DB tricep kickbacks	8	8				90s	
	7a	Twisting crunches	15	15	15			60s	
	8a	Crunches	12	12	12			60s	Pulse twice at top for each rep

Day 1 = heavier legs/lighter back & biceps
 Day 2 = lighter chest, shoulders & triceps
 Day 3 = lighter legs/heavier back & biceps
 Day 4 = heavier chest, shoulders & triceps

Larger muscle group exercises (for legs, chest, back, and shoulders) will have heavier and lighter days. This is based mainly on repetition scheme but also on relative intensity. On the lighter days the rest periods will be slightly shorter and you should lift hard, but you shouldn't reach failure very often. On the heavier days, the rest periods may be slightly longer and the reps a tad fewer and you may reach failure slightly more often.

Bodybuilding 4x/week push-pull split

Weeks 3, 4			Reps by set					Rest	Comments
Day	Order	Exercise	1	2	3	4	5		
1	1a	Back squats	12	10	10			90s	Full ROM
	2a	Single-leg leg press	12	10	10			90s	
	3a	Leg extensions	10	10	10			90s	Work "friendly" ROM
	4a	Neutral grip lat pulldown	15	15	15			90s	
	5a	Cable straight-arm pulldown	15	15	15			90s	This is a lat exercise similar to a pullover, except with a cable; single or double-arm
	6a	Reverse grip bicep curls	15	15	15			90s	Overhand grip
	7a	Cable bicep curl	15	15	15			90s	Don't cheat
	8a	Lower abs	15	15	15			90s	You choose -- body curl, Garhammer raise, pelvic tilt, etc.
2	1a	Incline DB press	15	15	15			90s	<45 degree angle
	2a	Flat bench DB flyes	15	15	15			90s	
	3a	Push-ups (hands on medicine balls)	F	F				90s	Go to failure on both sets
	4a	Poliquin press (use DBs)	15	15	15			90s	
	5a	Cable lateral raises	15	15	15			90s	1-arm or double-arm
	6a	Underhand cable tricep extension	15	15	15			90s	
	7a	Russian twist on swiss ball	15	15	15			90s	Each side
	8a	Swiss ball crunches	15	15	15			90s	Go to 15s
3	1a	Walking lunges	12	12	12			90s	Go ahead and alternate legs
	2a	Bent over DB row	12	10	10			90s	
	3a	Lying leg curls	15	15	15			90s	
	4a	Reverse chest flye machine	10	10	10			90s	
	5a	Barbell 21's	21	21	21			90s	bottom/top/full ROM 7 reps at each
	6a	Reverse hyperextensions	12	12	12			90s	Don't truly hyperextend your back
	7a	Lower abs	15	15	15			90s	You choose again (see day 1)
4	1a	Flat bench press	12	10	10			90s	
	2a	DB arnold presses	12	10	10			90s	Seated or standing
	3a	Decline DB chest flyes	10	10	10			90s	
	4a	Barbell shrugs	10	10	10			90s	I usually throw traps in with shoulders as opposed to back; personal preference
	5a	Incline DB skullcrushers	10	10	10			90s	Go just below 45 degrees
	6a	Rope tricep cable pushdowns	10	10	10			90s	
	7a	Twisting crunches	15	15	15			60s	
	8a	Crunches	15	15	15			60s	Pulse twice at top for each rep

Day 1 = heavier legs/lighter back & biceps

Day 2 = lighter chest, shoulders & triceps

Day 3 = lighter legs/heavier back & biceps

Day 4 = heavier chest, shoulders & triceps

Reps have jumped up and rest periods dropped in some areas. After this two week period there will be an unloading week and then you will begin doing some supersets.

Bodybuilding 4x/week push-pull split

Weeks 5, 6			Reps by set					Rest	Comments
Day	Order	Exercise	1	2	3	4	5		
1	1a	Back squats	10	8	8			2 min	Full ROM
	2a	Leg press	10	8	8			2 min	
	2b	Leg extensions	8	8	8			90s	Work "friendly" ROM
	3a	Front lat pulldowns	12	12	12			90s	Wide grip -- squeeze lats
	3b	Cable straight-arm pulldown	12	12	12			90s	This is a lat exercise similar to a pullover, except with a cable; single or double-arm
	4a	EZ bar bicep curl	12	12	12			90s	Don't cheat
	4b	Cable bicep curl	12	12	12			90s	Don't cheat
5a	Lower abs	12	12	12			90s	You choose -- body curl, Garhammer raise, pelvic tilt, etc.	
2	1a	Incline DB press	12	12	12			90s	<45 degree angle
	2a	Cable chest flyes	12	12	12			90s	
	2b	Push-ups (hands on bench)	F	F	F			90s	Go to failure on both sets
	3a	DB front raise (thumbs up)	12	12	12			90s	Do both arms simultaneously
	3b	Machine or DB lateral raise	12	12	12			90s	
	4a	Underhand cable tricep extension	12	12	12			90s	
	4b	Dip assist	10	10	10			90s	
5a	Russian twist on swiss ball	12	12				90s	Each side	
6a	Swiss ball crunches	12	12	12			90s	Do these right and 12 will feel challenging	
3	1a	Barbell reverse lunges	12	12	12			90s	Go ahead and alternate legs
	2a	Machine seated row	10	8	8			2 min	Cable row or a machine designed for it
	3a	Lying leg curls	12	12	12			90s	
	4a	Bent over flyes	8	8	8			2 min	Stay bent over, keep arms straight and don't cheat by bouncing
	5a	DB concentration curls	8	8	8			90s	
	6a	Reverse hyperextensions	10	10	10			90s	Don't truly hyperextend your back
	7a	Lower abs	12	12	12			90s	You choose again (see day 1)
4	1a	Flat bench press	10	8	8			2 min	
	2a	DB shoulder press	10	8	8			2 min	Seated or standing
	3a	Incline cable or DB incline flyes	8	8	8			90s	
	4a	Barbell shrugs	8	8	8			90s	I usually throw traps in with shoulders as opposed to back; personal preference
	5a	DB skullcrushers	8	8	8			90s	
	6a	DB tricep kickbacks	8	8				90s	
	7a	Twisting crunches	15	15	15			60s	
	8a	Crunches	12	12	12			60s	Pulse twice at top for each rep

Day 1 = heavier legs/lighter back & biceps
 Day 2 = lighter chest, shoulders & triceps
 Day 3 = lighter legs/heavier back & biceps
 Day 4 = heavier chest, shoulders & triceps

Note the supersets on days 1 and 2. This workout has the same exercises as the first workout you began doing. In fact, days 3 and 4 are identical. Look back on old workouts -- you should be doing more weight now. The next two week cycle will be a re-tooling of weeks 3 and 4. Superset = do one set of the first exercise and then go right to the next exercise and do 1 set. Then rest the required time and then proceed to do the whole thing again. Choose your weights wisely!

Bodybuilding 4x/week push-pull split

Weeks 7, 8			Reps by set					Rest	Comments
Day	Order	Exercise	1	2	3	4	5		
1	1a	Back squats	12	10	10			90s	Full ROM
	2a	Single-leg leg press	12	10	10			90s	
	2b	Leg extensions	10	10	10			90s	Work "friendly" ROM
	3a	Neutral grip lat pulldown	15	15	15			90s	
	3b	Cable straight-arm pulldown	15	15	15			90s	This is a lat exercise similar to a pullover, except with a cable; single or double-arm
	4a	Reverse grip bicep curls	15	15	15			90s	Overhand grip
	4b	Cable bicep curl	15	15	15			90s	Don't cheat
	5a	Lower abs	15	15	15			90s	You choose -- body curl, Garhammer raise, pelvic tilt, etc.
	2	1a	Incline DB press	15	15	15			90s
2a		Flat bench DB flyes	15	15	15			90s	
2b		Push-ups (hands on medicine balls)	F	F				90s	Go to failure on both sets
3a		Poliquin press (use DBs)	15	15	15			90s	
3b		Cable lateral raises	15	15	15			90s	1-arm or double-arm
4a		Underhand cable tricep extension	15	15	15			90s	
4b		Bench dips	F	F					Put feet up for added challenge
5a		Russian twist on swiss ball	15	15	15			90s	Each side
6a		Swiss ball crunches	15	15	15			90s	Go to 15s
3	1a	Walking lunges	12	12	12			90s	Go ahead and alternate legs
	2a	Bent over DB row	12	10	10			90s	
	3a	Lying leg curls	15	15	15			90s	
	4a	Reverse chest flye machine	10	10	10			90s	
	5a	Barbell 21's	21	21	21			90s	bottom/top/full ROM 7 reps at each
	6a	Reverse hyperextensions	12	12	12			90s	Don't truly hyperextend your back
	7a	Lower abs	15	15	15			90s	You choose again (see day 1)
4	1a	Flat bench press	12	10	10			90s	
	2a	DB arnold presses	12	10	10			90s	Seated or standing
	3a	Decline DB chest flyes	10	10	10			90s	
	4a	Barbell shrugs	10	10	10			90s	I usually throw traps in with shoulders as opposed to back; personal preference
	5a	Incline DB skullcrushers	10	10	10			90s	Go just below 45 degrees
	6a	Rope tricep cable pushdowns	10	10	10			90s	
	7a	Twisting crunches	15	15	15			60s	
	8a	Crunches	15	15	15			60s	Pulse twice at top for each rep

Day 1 = heavier legs/lighter back & biceps
 Day 2 = lighter chest, shoulders & triceps
 Day 3 = lighter legs/heavier back & biceps
 Day 4 = heavier chest, shoulders & triceps

Note the supersets on days 1 and 2. This workout has the same exercises as the 2nd workout you began doing. In fact, days 3 and 4 are identical. Look back on old workouts -- you should be doing more weight now. The next cycle will be an unloading week followed by higher volume. Superset = do one set of the first exercise and then go right to the next exercise and do 1 set. Then rest the required time and then proceed to do the whole thing again. Choose your weights wisely!

Bodybuilding 4x/week push-pull split

Weeks 9, 10			Reps by set					Rest	Comments
Day	Order	Exercise	1	2	3	4	5		
Mon	1a	Incline DB press	15	15	15	15		45s	
	2a	Flat DB press	15	15	15	15		45s	
	3a	Machine chest flye	15	15	15	15		45s	
	4a	Neutral grip lat pulldown	15	15	15	15		45s	Wider grip (not narrow)
	5a	Underhand grip seated row	15	15	15	15		45s	
	6a	Machine reverse flye	15	15	15	15		45s	For your back
	7a	Barbell skullcrushers	15	15	15	15		45s	
	8a	Rope tricep cable pushdowns	15	15	15	15		45s	
	9a	Dip assist	15	15	15	15		45s	
Tue	1a	Hip sled	12	12	12	12		60s	
	2a	Leg curl	12	12	12	12		60s	
	3a	Walking lunges	12	12	12			60s	Holding DBs
	4a	Shoulder press machine	12	12	12	12		60s	
	5a	Cable lateral raises	12	12	12	12		60s	
	6a	Upright row w/ cable	12	12	12	12		60s	
	7a	Reverse incline DB bicep curls	12	12	12			60s	Lie facing bench @ 35 degree angle
	8a	Seated hammer curls	12	12	12			60s	
	9a	Low cable bicep curls (reverse grip)	12	12	12			60s	Hold bar overhand -- don't break wrists!
Thu	1a	Wide grip lat pulldowns	12	12	12	12		60s	
	2a	Row to neck (use rope)	12	12	12			60s	
	3a	Cable straight-arm pulldown	12	12	12	12		60s	
	4a	Decline smith machine chest press	12	12	12	12		60s	go about 15 degrees below parallel
	5a	Incline cable chest flye	12	12	12			60s	drag a bench or a Swiss ball over to cable crossover
	6a	Push-ups -- hands on bench	12	12	12	12		60s	keep your back straight
	7a	V-bar tricep cable pushdowns	12	12	12			60s	
	8a	Single-arm supinated cable pushdown	12	12	12			60s	
Fri	1a	Back squats	15	15	15	15		45s	
	2a	Step-ups	15	15	15	15		45s	
	3a	Deadlifts	15	15	15	15		45s	
	4a	Barbell shoulder press	15	15	15	15		45s	
	5a	Front raises	15	15	15	15		45s	
	6a	Side-leaning lateral raises	15	15	15	15		45s	Lean sideways on a swiss ball at about a 45 degree angle and do 1-arm lat. Raises
	7a	Straight bar bicep curls	15	15	15	15		45s	
	8a	Incline hammer curls	15	15	15	15		45s	
	9a	Single arm preacher curls	15	15	15	15		45s	

Important notes: On lifting days you should do 30min cardio in the morning before the workout and 30min cardio at night well after the lifting workout

The first cardio day on lifting days should be of a continuous nature that isn't super-intense

The 2nd cardio day on lifting days should be more interval in nature and be of a higher intensity

On non-lifting days (Wed. and either Sat. or Sun.) you should do 1 hour of cardio and it should be moderately intense

Abs: Wed = hard abs after cardio and hard again on the Sat. or Sun. after cardio