

The 5-Day Split

Push / Pull / Legs / Upper / Lower. The sweet spot — enough frequency, enough volume, still enough room to recover. Use this once you've got some training experience.

Reps & weight

Every exercise is **8–12 reps**. Pick a weight you can do at least 8 of, but not more than 12.

Effort

Stop **1–2 reps before failure** on most sets. Compounds 2–3 reps shy; isolation you can push to 0–1.

Rest

2–3 minutes between sets. Not so short you're still burning, not so long you feel completely fresh.

The split

MON – FRI, WEEKEND OFF

Every muscle hit twice a week • roughly 12–20 hard sets per muscle • past 20 the returns drop off and recovery becomes your ceiling

Push

DAY 1

Incline dumbbell press	3 × 8–12
Flat bench / machine press	3 × 8–12
Shoulder press	3 × 8–12
Lateral raise	3 × 8–12
Triceps pushdown	3 × 8–12

Pull

DAY 2

Lat pulldown / pull-up	3 × 8–12
Barbell row	3 × 8–12
Seated cable row	3 × 8–12
Rear delt fly	3 × 8–12
Bicep curl	3 × 8–12

Legs

DAY 3

Squat / hack squat	3 × 8–12
Romanian deadlift	3 × 8–12
Leg press	3 × 8–12
Leg curl	3 × 8–12
Standing calf raise	4 × 8–12

Upper

DAY 4

Incline dumbbell press	3 × 8–12
Barbell / cable row	3 × 8–12
Lat pulldown	3 × 8–12
Lateral raise	4 × 8–12
Bicep curl	3 × 8–12
Triceps pushdown	3 × 8–12

Lower

DAY 5

Hack squat / leg press	4 × 8–12
Romanian deadlift	3 × 8–12
Leg extension	3 × 8–12
Leg curl	3 × 8–12
Seated calf raise	4 × 8–12

Double progression

The only progression rule you need. You can't run it without writing your workouts down — use your notes app.

STEP 1

Pick a weight you can do at least 8 reps of, but not more than 12.

STEP 2

Each week, or every two weeks, add reps to your sets.

STEP 3

Once you hit 12 reps on every set, increase the weight.

STEP 4

Your reps drop back to 8. Repeat this forever.

If your sets are limited, spend them here

The shape you're chasing is the V — wide shoulders, wide back, small waist.

1 Side delts • 2 Back / lats • 3 Arms • 4 Chest • 5 Legs

Form

Full range of motion, especially the stretch — that's where most of the growth signal comes from. Control the lowering. No ego lifting.

Cardio, alongside this split

4 × 15 min Zone 2 per week — conversational pace, ~60–80% max heart rate. • **2 × 15 min Zone 4–5** per week — a word, never a sentence, ~85–100%.