

THE SIMPLY JACKED STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO TRAINING

STIMULUS, VOLUME, INTENSITY.

CHIKE ONUNKWO



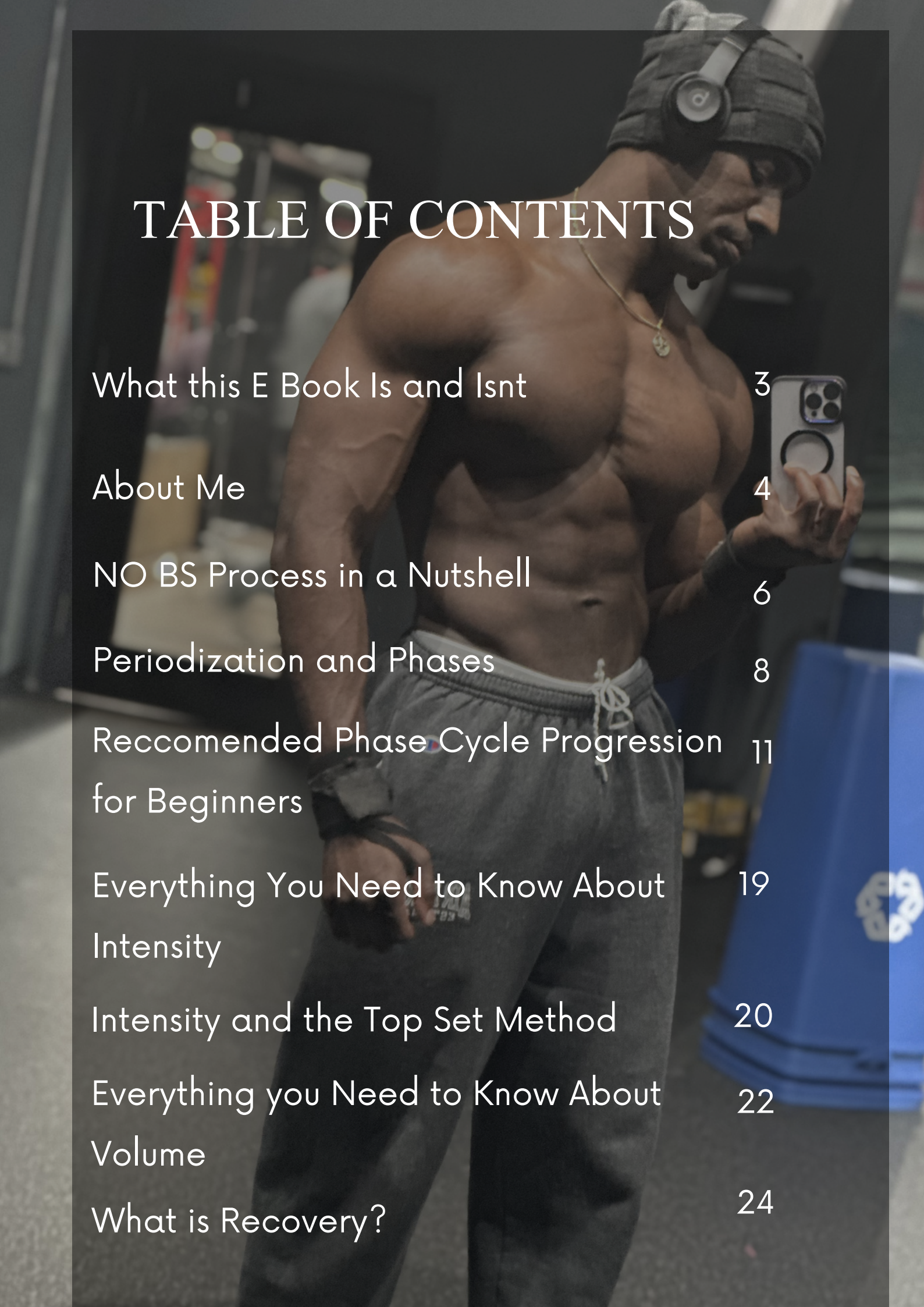
A muscular man in a gym setting, wearing a grey beanie with large headphones, a gold chain, and grey sweatpants. He is holding a smartphone in his left hand and looking down at it. The background shows gym equipment and a blue recycling bin.

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WHAT THIS E-BOOK IS AND ISN'T.

This book is a step-by-step training guide designed to be simple, practical, and easy to follow. The goal was to create a general, accessible framework that anyone can use to bring structure and consistency to their training, whether at home or in the gym (although most of the methods are best applied in a gym setting).

This book is focused exclusively on training. It is not a nutrition or diet guide. While nutrition is important, the core principles are straightforward: eating mostly whole foods and meeting basic micronutrient needs. That topic deserves its own dedicated resource.

The purpose of this book is to give you a clear starting point, fundamental principles, and essential knowledge on training, volume, and stimulus you can refer to. If you're looking for clarity, direction, and a sustainable approach to training, this book is meant to point you in the right direction and give you understanding. Nothing more, nothing less.

Thank you for checking it out. I hope you find it useful.

HOW TO USE

Read Modules in Order

Apply the Wisdom

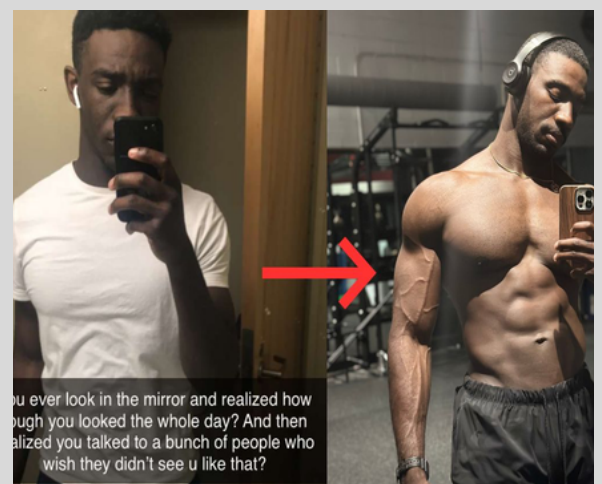
Try this advice on workouts for yourself and genuinely execute the advice given.

Commit to 90 Days

Small, consistent action > intense, unsustainable sprints.

Safety

This guide is educational. Consult a qualified professional for medical concerns.



ABOUT ME

My name is Chike, at the time of writing this I am 25 years old, and I've built an amazing body ...

I have trained consistently for over 11 years, not through perfection, but by learning how to remain disciplined when life becomes demanding. Balancing the military, content creation, and work while managing real struggles with energy, nutrition, and consistency taught me that long-term progress is built by managing energy, not just time. Through experience, I learned how to train and eat in a sustainable way, recover from burnout, and continue growing without guilt or extremes. Today, I apply these lessons to help others cut through confusion, build lasting habits, and create a physique and lifestyle they can be proud of.



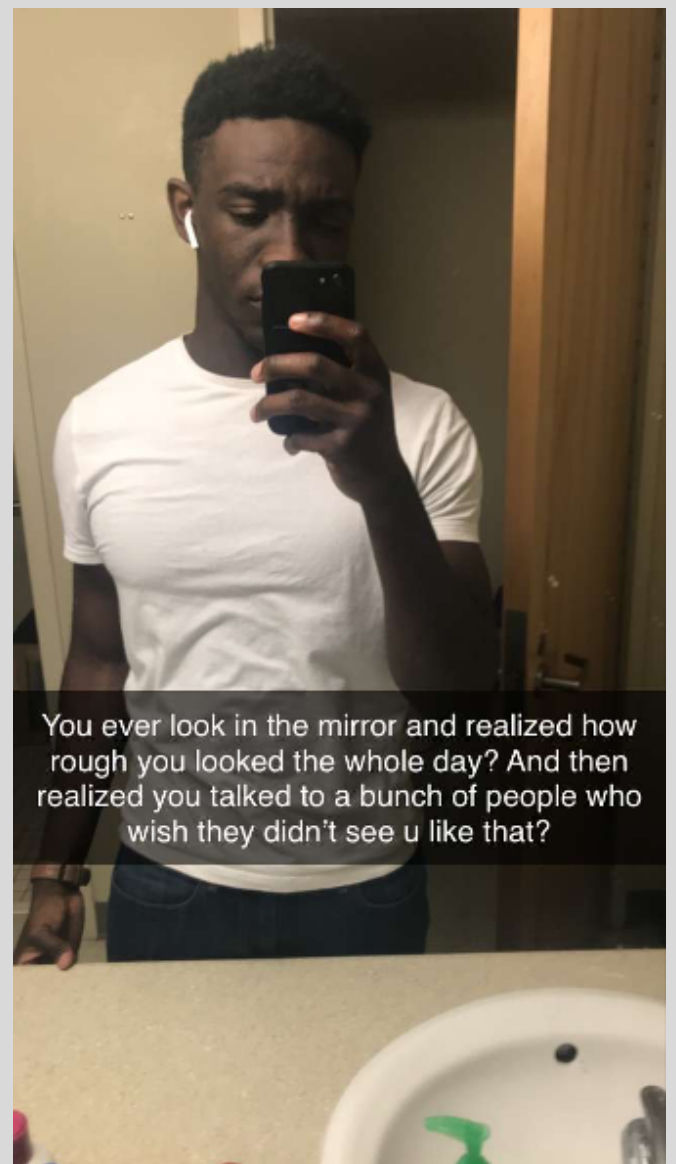
Starting off my training over a decade ago, I was obsessed with doing everything "right." I spent countless hours watching YouTube, reading forums, and trying to follow the latest routines, macros, and productivity hacks. Everyone was saying the same things...

"Just be more disciplined."

"Track everything perfectly."

"Grind harder and never miss."

But the longer I trained, the more I realized most of that advice was built for people who could structure their entire lives around the gym. I didn't live like that. Between the military, work, content creation, and real life, I needed something sustainable not something that burned me out.



I didn't want to chase hacks or extremes. I wanted to look strong, confident, and athletic while still living a full life. Over 11 years, I learned how to train and eat in a way that adapts with me how to bulk without obsession, recover from burnout, manage my energy, and stay consistent even when life gets chaotic.

This e book is my no-gimmicks, practical system for anyone who wants real results and truth in training without destroying their life to get results. It's built on long-term consistency, simple structure, and the psychology behind momentum and flow not perfection. If you want to stop spinning your wheels, silence the noise, and finally build a body you're proud of, this is for you.

THE NO BS PROCESS IN A NUTSHELL



Most people train without truly understanding what makes a set effective. They add more exercises, more sets, and more volume, assuming that doing more automatically means more growth.

This program is built around a different approach: getting more stimulus from the work you already do.



At the center of that approach is the Top Set Method a simple system designed to help you focus your effort on high-quality, productive sets instead of filling your workouts with unnecessary volume.

You'll learn how to manage your training volume, progressively increase your performance, and recognize the difference between simply doing more work and actually creating a meaningful stimulus for muscle growth.



The goal isn't to destroy yourself every workout. It's to make the sets that matter count.

Throughout this program, I'll show you how I use the Top Set Method to simplify my training, control fatigue, measure progression, and consistently create enough stimulus to grow without spending unnecessary hours in the gym.

Less wasted volume. Better execution. Greater stimulus. Simple as that.

Prioritize stimulus, not exhaustion.

The goal of every workout is to create enough stimulus for growth—not to destroy yourself with unnecessary sets. More volume does not automatically mean more muscle.

Follow the Top Set Method.

Build toward your hardest, highest-quality working sets instead of treating every set equally. Your top sets are where execution, effort, and progression matter most.

Earn intensity through execution.

If you're a beginner, don't rush into throwing around heavy weight. Learn the movement first. Control the weight, understand the correct path, and become consistent with your technique before pushing your top sets harder.

Keep your volume intentional.

Every additional set creates fatigue. Do enough quality work to stimulate growth, but understand that there comes a point where adding more volume gives you less in return.

Progress your top sets.

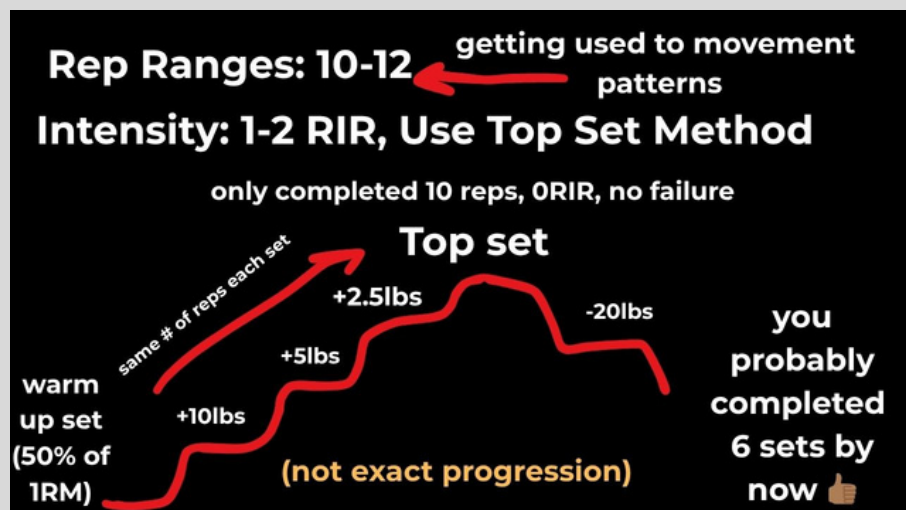
Your training needs to improve over time. Track your performance and aim to gradually add reps, weight, or improve execution. If your top sets are getting stronger while maintaining good technique, you're moving in the right direction.

Consistency beats novelty.

Don't constantly change exercises because you saw something new online.

Repeating movements allows you to master execution, accurately track your top sets, and know whether you're actually progressing.

The goal is simple: maximize stimulus, minimize wasted volume, and progressively improve the sets that matter most.



this diagram will make more sense later

PERIODIZATION AND PHASES

Here's a chart, ill explain what it means soon...

(Refer to Periodization of Phases and Their Rep Ranges to Get Reps and Sets and then use it to follow the period timeline)

Phase and Periods	Notes
0-3 Months of Consistent Training Habit Forming and Neural Training Period Timeline: - 5 weeks of Moderate - 4 weeks of Light - 2 weeks of a De-load - 1 week of rest	This phase is for making it a habit. You will need complete discipline and getting over your own emotions and consistency. You will feel pain that is unfamiliar to you both physically and emotionally and you need to break through your own barriers. Refer to my recommended books section to stay motivated, aware, and consistent. Check the table of contents
3-9 Months of Consistent Training Hypertrophy and Structure Building Period Timeline - 4-6 Weeks of Moderate - 4-6 Weeks of Heavy - 2-4 Weeks of Light - 1- Week of a De-Load or Rest - Repeat this cycle for 3-9 Months	This phase is when your gains are completely obvious and by this time you will already have built an addiction. Make sure your reps have a full ROM (range of motion) and everything has excellent form. You are no longer a beginner, but you are a gym rat that is capitalizing from his/her already visible gains.

9 -18 Months of Consistent Training Density and Sculpting Period Timeline - 4-6 Weeks of Heavy - 6-8 Weeks of Moderate - 4-6 Weeks of Light - Followed by a de-load or rest period - Repeat this process	You've made excellent progress at this stage and if you made it this far and you should be proud of yourself. This is the phase where you become the top 10 percent of men and women in terms of physique and aesthetics. You're consistent, love the gym, formed the habit, and transformed. At this stage you're nearly perfecting what's already been built.
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ok so why is this important?

Periods are phases of training within the larger training phases. They define how many repetitions you should use based on the current goal of the program. Over time, muscles adapt to a fixed repetition range and become more efficient at that stimulus, which can reduce the rate of growth. Periodization is used to prevent this by regularly changing the training stimulus.

In other words, muscles get used to training in a certain rep range and this is a guide to help you mitigate that. I wanted you to use this chart first to have something to practically apply as soon as you open the book. This will give you training structure and will serve as a basis of what you'll learn in this book later.

Outside of the beginner phase, this program allows for some flexibility. If you feel that you are still progressing and recovering well within a given period, you may remain in it slightly longer. The system is not meant to be rigid, but you should be willing to transition to a new period if progress stalls, assuming your recovery and nutrition are adequate.

As a beginner, however, you should follow the periods exactly as written. Consistency and structure are critical during the early stages of training. After completing the beginner phase and building a stable foundation, you may treat the periods as a general framework and adjust based on how your body responds, while still respecting the overall structure of the program.

Periodization of Phases and Rep Ranges

Here are all the periods of training:

Heavy Period: Density and High Threshold Motor Neuron Recruitment

- 4-5 Rep Range
- Heavy but manageable weight
- 4 – 6 weeks long typically

Moderate Period: Hypertrophy Range and Moderate Weight

- 8-12 Rep Range
- Moderate weight and focused on control and temp
- 4 – 6 weeks long typically

Light Period: Recovery and Muscular Endurance (Light Weight)

- 12-20 Rep Range
- Light weight and focused on muscular endurance and fighting fatigue
- 2-3 weeks long typically

De- Load Period

- 2 weeks long typically
- 50%-60% of your strength
- 8-10 rep range
- Focus on form and movement
- No hard sets

Rest Period

- 1 week
- No activity
- Light cardio or walks
- Stretching and Mobility

RECCOMENDED PHASE CYCLES OF TRAINING FOR BEGINNERS

The following is a reccomended chronological ordering of what I'd prescribe to a beginner who is aiming to build his first sets of muscles. This is not gospel but I reccomend this progression highly.

Phase 1 — Neurological & Habit Phase (0–3 Months)

Purpose:

- Learn technique
- Build gym identity and consistency
- Teach the nervous system how to contract aka move your muscles
- Build the habit of training

Why this matters:

- Beginners do not grow much muscle here but they gain neural efficiency, coordination, and confidence in movement.
- This is where most people quit before they see progress

Periodization Timeline for this Phase

Period 1: Hypertrophy Range and Moderate Weight

- (8-10Rep ranges using the Top Set Method)
- 5 week long duration

Period 2: Recovery and Muscular Endurance (Light Weight)

- 12 – 15 Rep Range
- 4 Weeks

Period 3: De-Load

- 2 weeks
- 50%-60% of your strength
- 8-10 rep range
- Focus on form and movement
- No hard sets

Period 4: Rest

- No activity
- Light cardio or walks
- Stretching and Mobility

Sets and Reps in this Phase per Period

In this phase you are going to do 4 sets of each exercise if you want slow and steady growth with 1 of those sets being a warmup set

For faster growth do 5-6 sets per exercise with only one of those sets being a warmup set

I recommend you start off with 4 sets for slow growth just to get used to training and then as you progress in this period you add a few more sets up to 6 sets to ensure faster growth. Anything after 6 sets is just extra and will help you grow faster, but it's not necessary. What matters is that you do not break consistency.

Remember with fitness it's not about going hard or going too soft; it's about finding that middle ground and consistently challenging yourself in a safe and fun way

Explanation of this phase and some motivation.

The focal point of this phase is to build a neurological habit in the brain becoming someone who trains consistently. This phase is what most of my content is centered around. I want beginners to start the gym the right way by focusing on hypertrophy first, then recovering properly through light weight sets, followed by a de-load and a short rest period after about two months of training.

The first three months of training are a critical window where consistency matters more than anything else. Heavy sets are intentionally limited during this phase to reduce the risk of injury and allow you to build the neural habit without unnecessary fatigue. The nervous system is still adapting, and pushing maximal loads too early is often more taxing than productive.

Every set you perform as a beginner should correspond to the period you are currently in. Moderate periods use 8–12 rep ranges and focus on hypertrophy. Light periods use 12–16 rep ranges and focus on recovery and muscular endurance. Regardless of the period, unless you are in a de-load or rest phase, you must follow the Top Set Method. Do not switch rep targets randomly. Pick a rep range that matches your current period and stick to it so you can accurately track progress. There will be more explanation on the Top Set Method in later chapters.

You should aim to train four days per week without breaking consistency. I talk a lot about consistency and preserving mental energy, and the goal of this system is to make training feel more automatic over time. That said, you still need to get used to showing up even when you don't feel like it. Long-term results require learning how to train despite low motivation, stress, or excuses.

The truth is no one else is responsible for your physical condition. Your job, friends, and daily obligations will not manage your health or physique for you. If fitness matters to you, you must make it a priority and create the time for it.

These first three months are crucial for building the habit. If you follow the periodization timeline and recover properly, you will see progress. The Neural Habit Phase builds the system that allows the body to change without it, every future phase becomes unstable.



This image is not a testimonial it's a 24-year-old man from Reddit. It represents a realistic example of how a beginner's physique typically changes over the first 0-3 months of training. You'll usually see slight increases in muscle mass and small visual improvements. This is the starting point.

Nothing dramatic happens yet, and that's normal. This phase is about laying the foundation. From here, your muscles become more responsive, and in the next phase we begin to capitalize on that with more structured progression.

You won't look "amazing" after three months, but you will have built the base that future growth depends on. When you see people online making extreme transformations in short time frames, it's often due to aggressive dieting protocols, drastic calorie cuts, or what I call "get to the top fast as a b*tch" programs methods that prioritize speed over sustainability. That's not what this program is built around.

This image is included to give you a realistic expectation for what your first three months should look like as a beginner steady progress, not extremes.

Phase 2 — Structural Growth Phase (3–9 Months)

Purpose:

- First real hypertrophy wave
- Skill + overload alignment
- Begin Top Set progression

Why this matters:

- Now the nervous system is stable enough to handle real tension.
- This is where muscle finally starts to respond.

Period Timeline for this Phase

Recruitment / Strength Period

- Reps: 4–6
- Goal: increase neural drive and muscle fiber recruitment
- Purpose: teach your body to use more of the muscle you already have

Moderate Hypertrophy Period

- Reps: 8–12
- Goal: maximize muscle growth
- Purpose: mechanical tension and volume for size

Light / Recovery Period

- Reps: 12–20
- Goal: restore joints, improve work capacity, and resensitize the muscles
- Purpose: prepare your body to grow again

De-load / Rest

- Reduced volume and intensity
- Focus on recovery and nervous system reset
- These periods repeat in cycles across the 3–9-month window.

Explanation:

The Structure & Growth Phase (Months 3–9)

The purpose of this phase is to turn consistency into visible change.

You are no longer just learning how to train — now your body is ready to respond.

This is the phase where structure meets progression.

Your nervous system is familiar with the gym, your joints are more resilient, and your movement patterns are stable. Now, we introduce strategic overload so that your training creates real physical transformation.

Why the Approach Changes

In the first phase, your body was learning how to train.

In this phase, it learns how to adapt.

That means we no longer stay in one rep range. Instead, we rotate through different periods, so your body never becomes resistant to the stimulus.

This is where muscle growth accelerates.

The Rule Still Applies

- Just like in the first phase, every set belongs to a period.
- And just like before, you must follow the Top Set Method:
- Choose the rep range that matches the period
- Track your progress
- Do not randomly change reps
- Progress only happens when the stimulus is consistent.

Phase 3 — Density & Shape Phase (9–18 Months)

Purpose:

- Build thickness, V-taper, and visual dominance
- Refine technique under heavy loads

Why these matter

- At this stage, muscles have adapted to basic stress.
- Now you must increase force production and control.

Period Timeline for this last phase

Heavy Period

- Reps: 4–6
- Goal: retain strength and muscle mass
- Purpose: remind the nervous system to hold onto size

Moderate Period

- Reps: 8–12
- Goal: maintain muscle fullness and tension
- Purpose: preserve size while increasing control and quality

Light Period

- Reps: 15–25
- Goal: increase blood flow, endurance, and definition
- Purpose: create separation, hardness, and work capacity

De-load / Recovery

- Reduced volume and intensity
- Focus on joint health and nervous system reset
- These periods rotate continuously across the 9–18-month phase.

Explanation for this Phase

The purpose of this phase is not to add large amounts of new muscle it is to refine, harden, and express the muscle you already built. At this stage, your nervous system is efficient, and your base size is established. Instead of chasing more volume or heavier weights, the focus shifts to:

- Work capacity
- Muscle density
- Visual shape
- Conditioning

This phase teaches your body to look athletic, full, and defined.

Why the Structure Changes

Earlier phases focused on building mass and strength. Now the goal is to maintain size while changing how the muscle behaves under fatigue. That is done by rotating through heavy, moderate, and light periods— but with new intent behind each one.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT INTENSITY

Intensity can be (and typically is) measure via the metric “RIR: which stands for reps in reserve

This means.. how many reps do you have in the tank or in reserve. The closer to 0 that number is then the more intense that workout set was. For example a set of 0 RIR implies you hit failure or did your max amount of reps for the weight because you had 0 RIR or 0 reps in reserve. This is the most intense kind of set you could hit and this is how Intensity is measured.

Ok so why is this important?

Well the thing is the only kind of sets that make you grow are sets called “working sets” which typically are sets that are 3-0 RIR

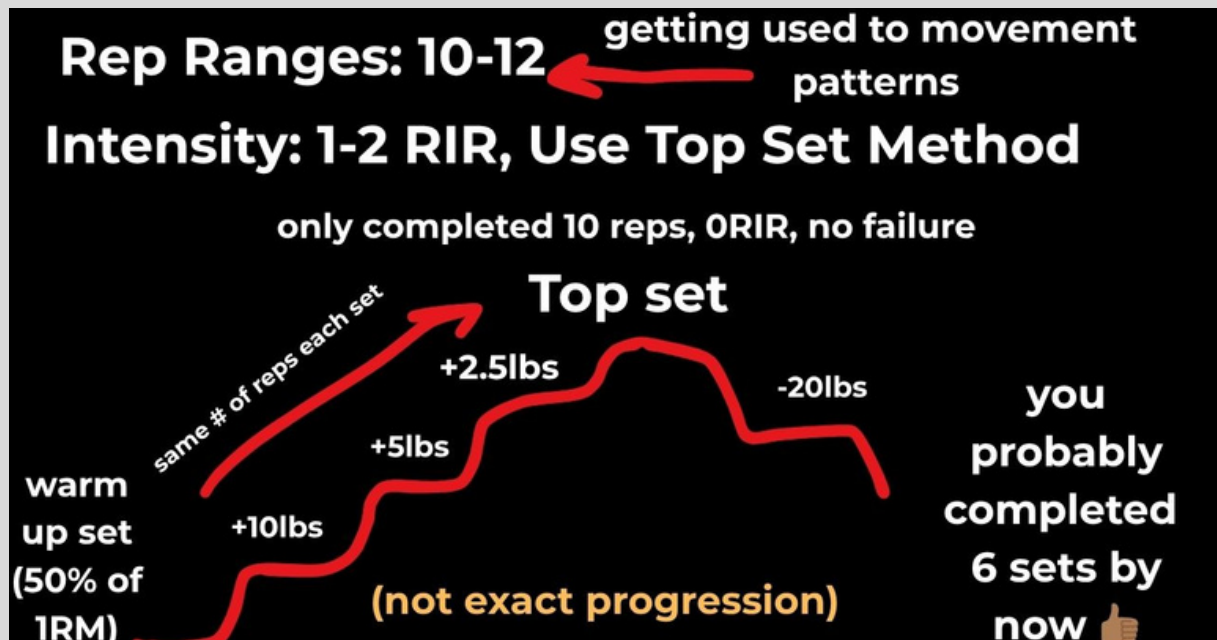
Working sets = 3-1RIR

The more working sets you hit and recover from the more you grow. We will talk more about this in the volume chapter. But for now we will just focus on the concept of intensity although both concepts are heavily intertwined into eachother.

The Top Set Method

Remember that diagram at the beginning of the book? Im going to paste it down below

The Top Set Method and Intensity (RIR)



Why has this method been so effective for me? In short it forces me to correct the mistake that many lifters fall victim to.

1. Taking too long at the bench rack
2. Hitting Intensity in a shorter amount of time
3. Actually seeing my limits in a manner that's trackable

How to hit your sets using this method:

1. Pick a rep range (refer to periodization and phases or make this decision on your own, follow your gut instinct)
2. Pick a warmup weight and do the chosen number of reps
3. add 10lbs so its harder
4. add 5-10 more pounds so you feel like you have roughly 3 or 4 RIR
5. Repeat the process of adding 2.5lbs, 5lbs, 10lbs, or even 20lbs and just progressively overload while executing with the same number of reps
6. Repeat this process until you reach 1 RIR preferably within 5 sets of this exercise
7. (Optional) Hit a drop set of a significantly lighter weight for 10-12 reps
8. Done

This is effective because:

1. **You get to see where you're actually at** - you have a constant benchmark to see if you're actually making progress. Your top set is not only an indicator of you growing in strength and hence muscle, but also if you're reaching fatigue or getting weaker due to poor diet, sleep, etc rather than you doing physique checks like an NPC
2. **It's realtime motivation fuel** - part of staying motivated is just actually seeing progress. simple as that. However, progress can only be seen with the proper value metric and that's performance.
3. **You inadvertently hit more working sets** - the nature of top set progression forces you to reach 1 or 0 RIR and seeing your TRUE limits, this means you spend a lot of time in the 3-0RIR range because while reaching that peak you will hit a vast quantity of sets in a short amount of time rather than aimlessly repping out the same 30lbs dumbbell everyone is looking for at 6pm on a wednesday. You're welcome. This is where true growth comes from

The rules of the Top Set Method

Rule 1. Never go down in weight - if you repeat the same weight at your specific given rep range that is acceptable however once you hit that weight you are not allowed to decrease it unless you're on a deload week

Rule 2. Play the Game - The game is to increase the weight once you complete a set at that weight. Think of this like a video game, when you beat a level do you play the same level over and over again? No. You move up. Once you beat a weight (level) move up by 5lbs or even 2.5lbs, no exceptions, only stop once you fail a repetition or feel like you've hit 0 RIR just to get every ounce of effort out of you. Constantly move up, that's the reality of growth.

Rule 3. Dont kill yourself or be dumb - Only follow rule number 2 if you have a spotter under a barbell, are using dumbbells so you can save yourself, know the proper form, and arent obviously injured

Rule 4. Progress slowly if necessary - you can make a 10lb or 20lb jump if you know you can obviously do more weight, otherwise take it slow and add smaller weights.

Rule 5. You aren't the wolverine (unfortunately) - unless you're doing steroids remember that we only grow via recovery (more on that later) your work should be compensated for recovery so dont overdo it.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT VOLUME

Volume can be measure by working sets per muscle group per week

$$\text{Volume} = (\text{Working sets/muscle group}) / \text{a week}$$

So what does this look like?

Say you hit 1 set of bicep curl this week and you hit it with an intensity of 4RIR then that's 0 working sets, but if you hit it for 3 RIR or less for 1 set then you've effectively hit 1 working set of biceps a week. Good job.

However for growth (I'm estimating):

- 6-10 working sets a week for slow and stead muscle growth
- 11-14 working sets a week for faster growth (harder to manage)
- 16-20 working sets a week for insanely fast growth (this has to be your job at this point)
- and that's IF and ONLY IF you can recover from all this muscle damage via protein and carbs hence why bulking is the only way to gain more strength/muslce period.

So to solidify a concept for you more effective volume does mean more growth. So why do people online say that less volume leads to more growth if that's not true? The answer is because most working individuals in modern society struggle with nutritional management and therefore it is more effective to go low volume to ensure recovery. Let me put this in an analogy for you...

If a fisherman has the power to catch 100 fish in one swoop but has the capacity to eat only 10 at a time before the rest spoil what should he do?

He should have self control and just catch 10 at a time anyway because he'd waste 90 per catch and thin out the population of fish for no reason. It's the same with training.

Just because you can hit a lot of sets doesn't mean you should, what matters is the sets you recover from just like what really matters is the fish the fisherman can actually consume not just catch. and eventually waste. It's wasted effort.



So what's the goal?

The goal is to maximize working sets you can recover from in the areas you want to grow.

But there's a problem... how could you possibly hit 6-10 working sets or more across all the muscle groups of your body? that's too many and that would make workouts too long and progress either too difficult or too slow

The solution is a few things

1. Hit compound lifts and calisthenics - these exercises hit multiple muscle groups and therefore it is the most effective way to build muscle and increase lean muscle mass across the body. Its like hunting with a shotgun rather than a sniper rifle
2. Focus on a select group of muscles - focusing on the muscles that actually make you aesthetic is the key. Not all muscles have to be worked AT THE SAME TIME
3. Periodize your muscle groups - allow yourself to train different parts of the body at different times of the year, I train upper chest for a few months then I switch to main chest



My program

I have a program aimed towards diet, and training for the aesthetic dominant body, if you want more info checkout my skool links in the description of my youtube videos or my website. If theyre not up you can contact me via email and we can work together

HOW DOES RECOVERY ACTUALLY WORK?

This chapter is going to be short because this book is aimed specifically towards training, volume, stimulus, and intensity. Not diet. However since they're so intertwined I'm going to give you the essential info you need for recovery

A “dumb-dumb” bro science explanation on recovery

Training tears your muscles apart on a micro level and hormones are signaled via testosterone to replace those micro tears with stronger ones that are built with proteins. This is why we take protein

These muscles only tear with working sets and proper intensity.

This is what you need to know

Carbs = energy like gasoline for the engine that is your muscles. This is the most underrated macro nutrient ever, you need carbs not only for your muscles but your brain as well. They break down into glucose ($C_6H_{12}O_6$) and are literal energy for your body. If you neglect this your lifts will feel like shit and you will stay small forever. Get this from breads, pastas, vegetables, and fruits that are less fibery. Best consumed before workouts maybe an hour before.

Protein = actual hardware and brick and mortar of your muscles.

Proteins are the essential material for all lean mass production in the body that also includes organs and tissue as well. Get this from all meat sources or plant protein sources, not just protein powder and whey. 0.8g/lb of body weight

Fats = hormonal regulation and transportation as well as organ insulation and body temperature regulation, this is important because cutting fat completely out of your diet will fuck it up royally. Don't do this, get fats from nuts, fish, and eggs. 0.2g/lb of body weight

Summarization on How to Recover

The main and central principle of recovery is the compensation of muscle damage via nutritious whole foods, specifically proteins which build the muscle and carbs which replenish the muscle with usable energy.

You can do 1 of 2 things

1. Eat in a caloric surplus and consume excess amount of carbs and protein. This is ideal if you want faster muscle growth, I recommend lean bulks with clean foods and a slight 300 cal to 500 cal surplus.
2. Stop training as much - this is where the low volume wisdom comes in. Not training as much will tip the scale towards compensation of muscle damage. All that matters is that nutrition > muscle damage but you're still damaging muscles enough to actually trigger a response for your body to adapt to.

However these concepts will be further explained in other programs. For now focus on training.

My best advice for you as a beginner to ensure recovery is just eat a whole food diet full of meats, grains, and fats. Personally I've found that fruits and veggies aren't all too necessary besides for the fact that we all need dietary fiber and vitamins so eat those too.

For more info checkout other E-books, guides, and programs.

If you have any questions feel free to contact me at the provided email and socials.

Thanks for buying and thanks for reading. Each purchase is a support towards my business and a confirmation that I'm helping people out there.

Good luck, and get jacked.

SIMPLY JACKED

A Step-by-Step Guide to Training, Volume, and Stimulus

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