

PowerBuilder - with Ben Pollack

This program is designed for those that want to be HUGE and HUGELY STRONG. And strong specifically within the "big 3" lifts. 12 weeks of programming to have you hitting PRs and carrying more lean tissue than ever before. Many "powerbuilding" programs just smash together a powerlifting program and a bodybuilding program...the result? Way too much for most people to recover from. So Ben Pollack and I have put our brains together to create an effective, efficient and legit PowerBuilding program that will get you epic results, AND programming you can actually recover from.

This program has 3 blocks. The load progressions were designed by Ben himself (so be sure to watch accompanying overview videos), and the hypertrophy/"accessory work" were designed by me, to fill in a lot of the aesthetic "gaps" traditional power lifting programs miss.

As for every program, feel free to adjust variables slightly as needed. The base metric of "1 REP" is not well established in "research", and can vary largely from individual to individual. So feel free to make slight adjustments to the program's prescribed: Rep ranges, Number of working sets, and Proximity to Failure (RIR). Anyone that argues any of these variables down to the single metric of measure as definitively "the best", has spent too much time on social media, and too little time applying training to actual humans. In addition, every individual brings large differences to the table as far as "outside the gym" variables: nutrition, sleep, stress, etc. So while I'm confident this program provides epic guidelines and a great place to start, you are ultimately your own study of 1. So feel free to experiment a bit.

Also, with exercise selection I always follow one of my main, guiding training principles of: As little as possible to produce maximal results. That said, there is no exact cut off point for the number of exercises per workout. So if you want to add an exercise or even two to any given workout, same as the advice I give above... try it out, measure progress and adjust accordingly. Lastly, exercise selection is based on what I feel has the most evidence for being effective long-term, but for any single exercise on the program, there are always other options that can accomplish the same goal similarly. So feel free to swap exercises based on preference, or if you need a recommendation get in the forums.

Rest: 90 seconds - 3 minutes before working sets

Suggested split structure:

Pull

Arms

Off

Push (Chest, Delts - raises only, 1 biceps)

Lower
Delts and Arms
Off

Other split options for consideration:

Legendary recovery:

4 days on, 1 day off

Good recovery:

2 days on, 1 day off

Below average recovery:

1 on, 1 off

*These are still just suggestions. There is no right or wrong option here. You can also make this work with any schedule. Whenever you train, just pick right up on the next session. Hypothetically, if you're ever sick, rundown, excessively busy, stressed or just have a moment of laziness and train less days than the suggested split, no worries at all just pick back up right where you left off. At the same time if you are recovering like a robot, or just absolutely love training more often than the suggested split, have added it. Don't let anyone, myself included, limit how much you love the train, or make you feel guilty for missing a session. Long-term consistency and adherence are.

Block 1 - Week 1-4

Pull

Deadlift

Week 1 - All sets done with 65% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 12 reps

Set 2: 12 reps

Set 3: 12 reps

Week 2 - All sets done with 70% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 10 reps

Set 2: 10 reps

Set 3: 10 reps

Week 3 - All sets done with 75% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 8 reps

Set 2: 8 reps

Set 3: 8 reps

Week 4 - All sets done with 80% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 6 reps

Set 2: 6 reps

Set 3: 6 reps

chest supported tbar rows

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

single arm pull down

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

rope pull over

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

forward lean machine "lat"row

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

tbar rows

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

Arms

single arm preacher curls

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

Swiss close-grip press with chains

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

B1 single-arm hammer curl

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

B2 cable cross triceps extension

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

Push (Chest, Delts - raises only, 1 biceps)

Flat Bench

Week 1 - All sets done with 65% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 12 reps

Set 2: 12 reps

Set 3: 12 reps

Week 2 - All sets done with 70% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 10 reps

Set 2: 10 reps

Set 3: 10 reps

Week 3 - All sets done with 75% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 8 reps

Set 2: 8 reps

Set 3: 8 reps

Week 4 - All sets done with 80% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 6 reps

Set 2: 6 reps

Set 3: 6 reps

reverse band high incline (45 degrees ish) smith 2 sets:

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

roller flys

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

Delt cable y-raises

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

cable rear delts

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

single-arm machine preacher

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps

cable cross triceps extension

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

Lower

squat

Week 1 - All sets done with 65% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 12 reps
Set 2: 12 reps
Set 3: 12 reps

Week 2 - All sets done with 70% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 10 reps
Set 2: 10 reps

Set 3: 10 reps

Week 3 - All sets done with 75% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 8 reps

Set 2: 8 reps

Set 3: 8 reps

Week 4 - All sets done with 80% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 6 reps

Set 2: 6 reps

Set 3: 6 reps

seated leg curls

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

reverse band hacks

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

lying leg curls

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

Delts/Arms

lying cuff laterals raises -

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

reverse pec dec -

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

rack military press -

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

single arm preacher curls

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

single arm cable extensions

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

Block 2 - Week 5-8

Pull

Deadlift

Week 5 - All sets done with 82.5% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 5 reps

Set 2: 5 reps

Set 3: 5 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 6 - All sets done with 85% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 3 reps

Set 2: 3 reps

Set 3: 3 reps

Set 4: 3 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 7 - All sets done with 87.5% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 3 reps

Set 2: 3 reps

Set 3: 3 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 8 - All sets done with 90% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 3 reps

Set 2: 3 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

chest supported tbar rows

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

single arm pull down

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

rope pull over

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

forward lean machine "lat"row

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

tbar rows

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

Arms

single arm preacher curls

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

Swiss close-grip press with chains

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

B1 single-arm hammer curl
Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps

B2 cable cross triceps extension
Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

Push (Chest, Delts - raises only, 1 biceps)

Flat Bench

Week 5 - All sets done with 82.5% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 5 reps
Set 2: 5 reps
Set 3: 5 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 6 - All sets done with 85% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 3 reps
Set 2: 3 reps
Set 3: 3 reps
Set 4: 3 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 7 - All sets done with 87.5% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 3 reps
Set 2: 3 reps
Set 3: 3 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 8 - All sets done with 90% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 3 reps
Set 2: 3 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Lower

squat

Week 5 - All sets done with 82.5% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 5 reps

Set 2: 5 reps

Set 3: 5 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 6 - All sets done with 85% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 3 reps

Set 2: 3 reps

Set 3: 3 reps

Set 4: 3 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 7 - All sets done with 87.5% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 3 reps

Set 2: 3 reps

Set 3: 3 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 8 - All sets done with 90% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 3 reps

Set 2: 3 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

seated leg curls

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

reverse band hacks

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

lying leg curls

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

Delts/Arms

lying cuff laterals raises -

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

reverse pec dec -

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

rack military press -

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

single arm preacher curls

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

single arm cable extensions

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

Block 3 - Week 9-12

Pull

Deadlift

Week 9 - All sets done with 92.5% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 2 reps

Set 2: 2 reps

Set 3: 2 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 10 - All sets done with 95% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 2 reps

Set 2: 2 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 11 (TAPER) - All sets done with 75% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 1 rep

Set 2: 1 rep

Set 3: 1 rep

Set 4: 1 rep

Set 5: 1 rep

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 12 - Test new 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 1 rep

chest supported tbar rows

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

single arm pull down

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

rope pull over

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

forward lean machine "lat"row

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

tbar rows

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

Arms

single arm preacher curls

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps

Swiss close-grip press with chains

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

B1 single-arm hammer curl

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps

B2 cable cross triceps extension

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

Push (Chest, Delts - raises only, 1 biceps)

Flat Bench

Week 9 - All sets done with 92.5% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 2 reps
Set 2: 2 reps
Set 3: 2 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 10 - All sets done with 95% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 2 reps
Set 2: 2 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 11 (TAPER) - All sets done with 75% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 1 rep

Set 2: 1 rep
Set 3: 1 rep
Set 4: 1 rep
Set 5: 1 rep
3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 12 - Test new 1 Rep Max
Set 1: 1 rep

reverse band high incline (45 degrees ish) smith 2 sets:

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

roller flys

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

Delt cable y-raises

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

cable rear delts

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

single-arm machine preacher

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps

cable cross triceps extension

Set 1: 6-8 reps
Set 2: 6-8 reps
Set 3: 6-8 reps
1-2 RIR

Lower

squat

Week 9 - All sets done with 92.5% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 2 reps

Set 2: 2 reps

Set 3: 2 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 10 - All sets done with 95% of 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 2 reps

Set 2: 2 reps

3 minutes rest before working sets

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Set 1: 1 rep

Set 2: 1 rep

Set 3: 1 rep

Set 4: 1 rep

Set 5: 1 rep

3 minutes rest before working sets

Week 12 - Test new 1 Rep Max

Set 1: 1 rep

seated leg curls

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR

reverse band hacks

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

lying leg curls

Set 1: 6-8 reps

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Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

single arm cable extensions

Set 1: 6-8 reps

Set 2: 6-8 reps

Set 3: 6-8 reps

1-2 RIR