



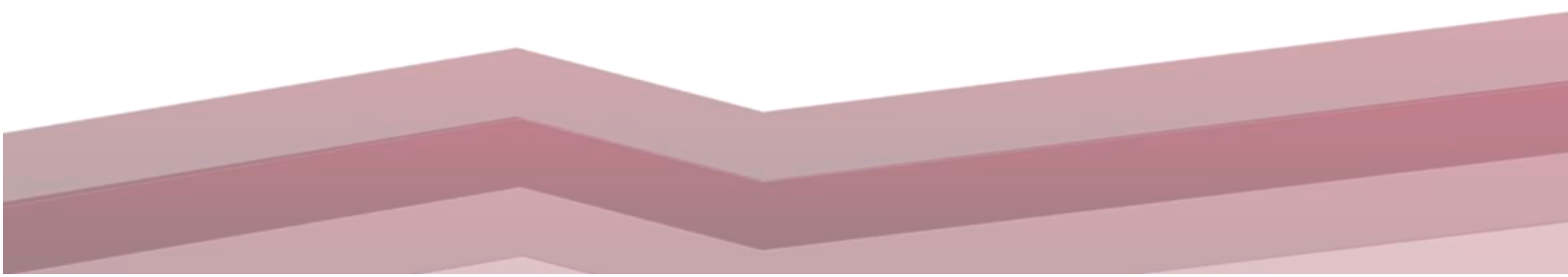
Advanced Novice Strength Program

By Evan Clark

SlowlyStronger.com

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Program Introduction

The Advanced Novice Program is designed for lifters who have successfully completed the novice program and are ready to take their training to the next level. This program provides a structured approach to bridge the gap between novice and intermediate lifting.

The program begins with a one-week introductory phase, followed by a five-week development block. A deload week is scheduled in week 7 to allow for recovery, after which the intensification phase spans weeks 8-11. Finally, the program peaks in weeks 12-13, preparing you for maximal performance.

This is a three-day-per-week program that incorporates RPE (Rate of Perceived Exertion) to help you develop self-regulation skills sooner. There are explanatory videos of RPE in the FAQ. If you prefer, you can use the RPE chart in the FAQ to convert RPE to percentage-based training, aiming to regularly increase your estimated one-rep max (e1RM).

The focus is on powerlifting, targeting significant strength gains in the squat, bench press, and deadlift, while also promoting hypertrophy. The volume is increased compared to the novice program, yet it remains manageable for those transitioning from novice to intermediate levels.

The program introduces more complex training methods and variations of the main lifts to keep your training fresh and effective. Additionally, it's recommended to include conditioning and upper back work 1-2 times per week to support overall fitness and stability.

Key Highlights:

Introductory Week (Week 1): Eases you into the program.

Development Block (Weeks 2-6): Focuses on building strength and muscle.

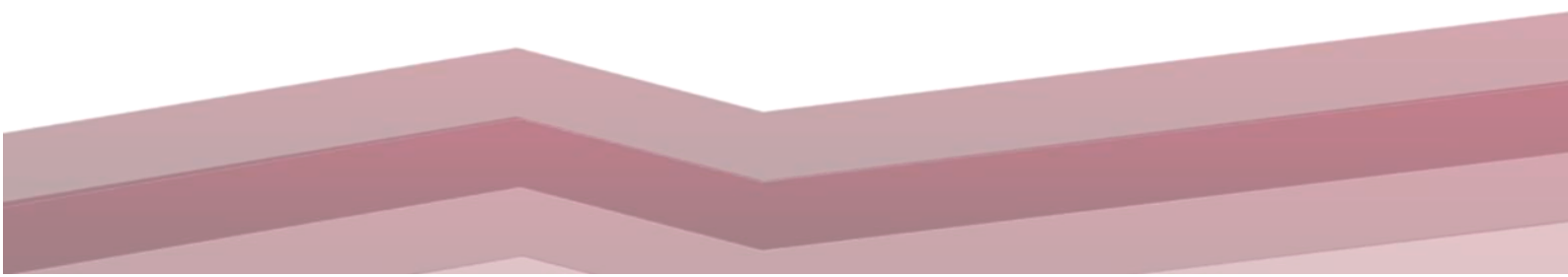
Deload (Week 7): Allows for recovery and preparation for the next phase.

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Intensification Phase (Weeks 8-11): Increases intensity to prepare for peak performance.

Peak (Weeks 12-13): Maximizes your strength for potential testing or competition.

Embark on this advanced novice program to continue your journey towards becoming a stronger, more proficient lifter, building on the foundations you've already established.



The Advanced Novice Program

Introductory Week 1

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Notes
	Squat	1	1				RPE: 7
	Squat	3	5				70% of e1RM
	Bench	1	1				RPE: 7
	Bench	3	5				70% of e1RM
	Romanian Deadlift	3	10				Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
	Dumbbell Bench	3	8				Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Notes
	Deadlift	1	1				RPE: 7
	Deadlift	2	5				70% of e1RM
	Pause Bench	1	5				RPE: 8
	Pause Bench	2	5				70% of e1RM
	303 Tempo Squat	3	10				Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
	Press	3	8				Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9

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Day 3	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Notes
	Squat	1	6				RPE: 7
	Squat	2	6				5% Back-off
	Close-grip Bench	3	6				Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
	Pause Deadlift	1	5				RPE: 7
	Pause Deadlift	2	5				10% Back-off

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Week 2

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Notes
	Squat	1	5					RPE: 8
	Squat	3	5					70% of e1RM
	Bench	1	1					RPE: 8
	Bench	3	5					70% of e1RM
	Romanian Deadlift	3	10					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
	Dumbbell Bench	4	8					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Notes
	Deadlift	1	1					RPE: 8
	Deadlift	3	5					70% of e1RM
	Pause Bench	1	5					RPE: 9
	Pause Bench	3	5					70% of e1RM
	303 Tempo Squat	3	10					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
Overhead Press	4	8					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7	

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Day 3	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Notes
	Squat	1	6					RPE: 8
	Squat	2	6					5% back-off
	Close-Grip Bench	4	6					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
	2ct Pause Deadlift	1	5					RPE: 8
	2ct Pause Deadlift	2	5					10% Back-off

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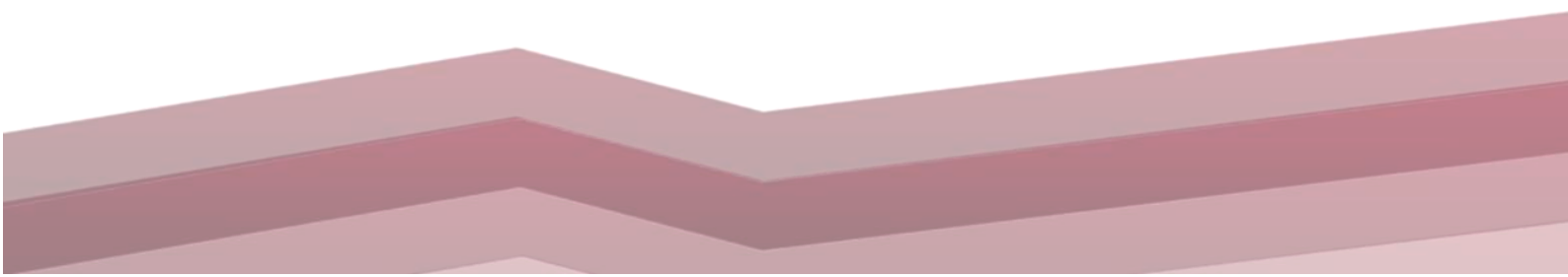
Week 3

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Notes
	Squat	1	5					RPE: 9
	Squat	3	5					70% of e1RM
	Bench	1	1					RPE: 8
	Bench	4	5					70% of e1RM
	Romanian Deadlift	4	10					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
	Dumbbell Bench	4	8					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Notes
	Deadlift	1	1					RPE: 8
	Deadlift	4	5					70% of e1RM
	Pause Bench	1	5					RPE: 9
	Pause Bench	3	5					70% of e1RM
	303 Tempo Squat	3	10					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
	Overhead Press	4	8					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7

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		Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
Day 3		Squat	1	6						RPE: 8
		Squat	3	6						5% back-off
		Close-Grip Bench	5	6						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7 Set 5 @ RPE 7
		2ct Pause Deadlift	1	5						RPE: 8
		2ct Pause Deadlift	3	5						10% Back-off



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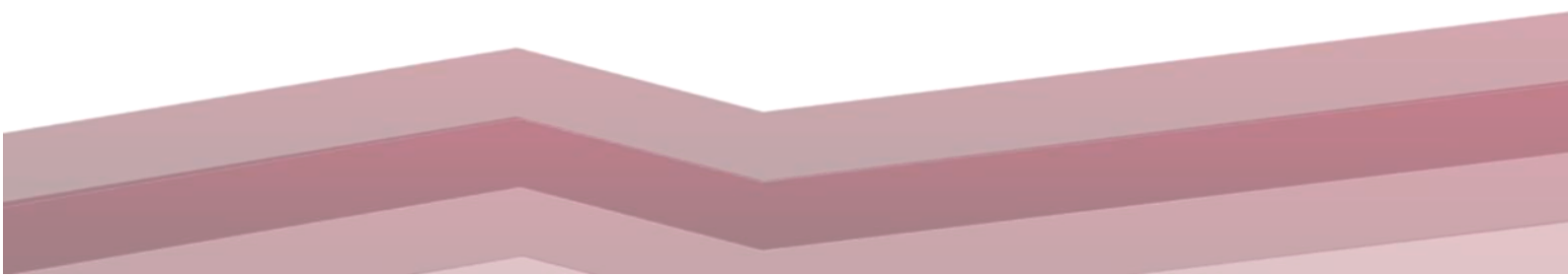
Week 4

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Notes
	Squat	1	5					RPE: 9
	Squat	3	5					70% of e1RM
	Bench	1	1					RPE: 8
	Bench	4	5					70% of e1RM
	Romanian Deadlift	4	10					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
	Dumbbell Bench	4	8					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Notes
	Deadlift	1	1					RPE: 8
	Deadlift	4	5					70% of e1RM
	Pause Bench	1	5					RPE: 9
	Pause Bench	3	5					70% of e1RM
	303 Tempo Squat	3	10					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
Overhead Press	4	8					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7	

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		Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
Day 3		Squat	1	6						RPE: 8
		Squat	3	6						5% back-off
		Close- Grip Bench	5	6						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7 Set 5 @ RPE 7
		2ct Pause Deadlift	1	5						RPE: 8
		2ct Pause Deadlift	3	5						10% Back-off



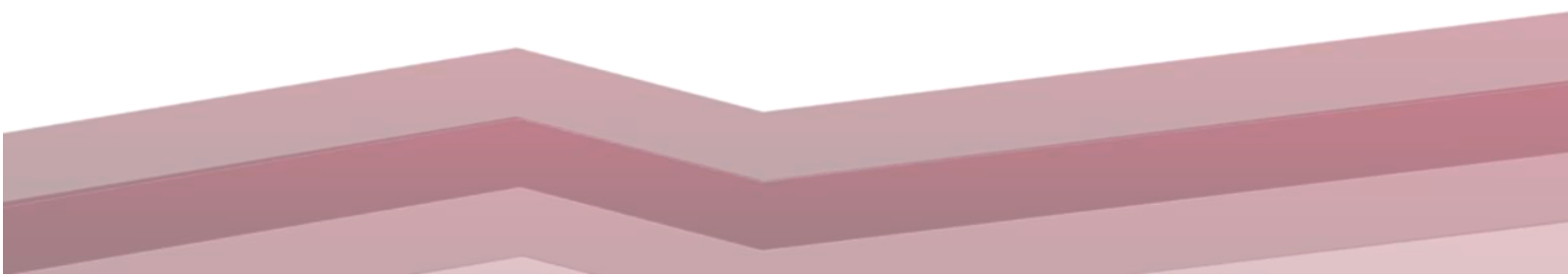
Week 5

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Notes
	Squat	1	5					RPE: 9
	Squat	3	5					70% of e1RM
	Bench	1	1					RPE: 8
	Bench	4	5					70% of e1RM
	Romanian Deadlift	4	10					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
	Dumbbell Bench	4	8					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Notes
	Deadlift	1	1					RPE: 8
	Deadlift	4	5					70% of e1RM
	Pause Bench	1	5					RPE: 9
	Pause Bench	3	5					70% of e1RM
	303 Tempo Squat	3	10					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
Overhead Press	4	8					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7	

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		Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
Day 3		Squat	1	6						RPE: 8
		Squat	3	6						5% back-off
		Close-Grip Bench	5	6						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7 Set 5 @ RPE 7
		2ct Pause Deadlift	1	5						RPE: 8
		2ct Pause Deadlift	3	5						10% Back-off



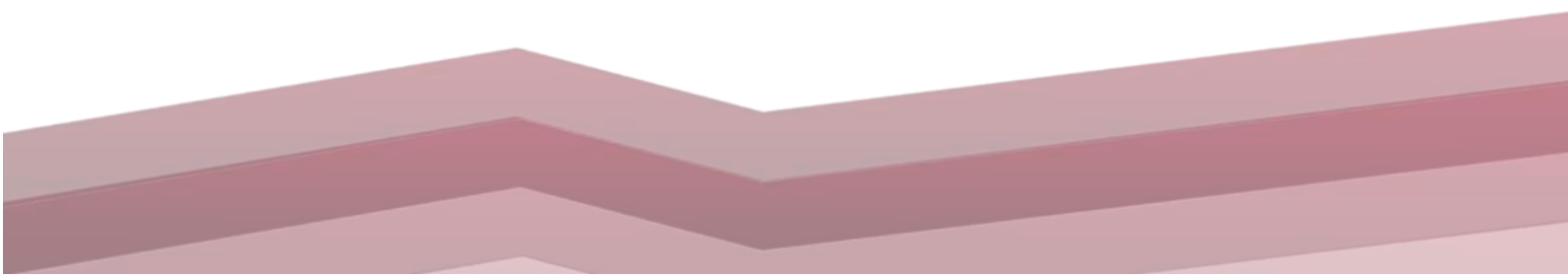
Week 6

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Notes
	Squat	1	5					RPE: 9
	Squat	3	5					70% of e1RM
	Bench	1	1					RPE: 8
	Bench	4	5					70% of e1RM
	Romanian Deadlift	4	10					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
	Dumbbell Bench	4	8					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Notes
	Deadlift	1	1					RPE: 8
	Deadlift	4	5					70% of e1RM
	Pause Bench	1	5					RPE: 9
	Pause Bench	3	5					70% of e1RM
	303 Tempo Squat	3	10					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
Overhead Press	4	8					Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7	

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		Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
Day 3		Squat	1	6						RPE: 8
		Squat	3	6						5% back-off
		Close-Grip Bench	5	6						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7 Set 5 @ RPE 7
		2ct Pause Deadlift	1	5						RPE: 8
		2ct Pause Deadlift	3	5						10% Back-off



Week 7

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Notes
	Squat	1	4				RPE: 7
	Squat	2	4				RPE: 8
	Bench	1	3				RPE: 7
	Bench	2	3				RPE: 8
	Stiff-leg Deadlift	1	8				RPE: 7
	Stiff-leg Deadlift	1	8				RPE: 8

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Notes
	Deadlift	1	4				RPE: 7
	Deadlift	2	4				RPE: 8
	Pause Bench	1	4				RPE: 7
	Pause Bench	2	4				RPE: 8
	Leg Press	1	8				RPE: 7
	Leg Press	1	8				RPE: 8

Day 3	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Notes
	Slingshot Bench	1	5				RPE: 7
	Slingshot Bench	2	5				RPE: 8
	Pin Squat	1	4				RPE: 7
	Pin Squat	2	4				RPE: 8
	Block Pull	1	4				RPE: 7
	Block Pull	1	4				RPE: 8

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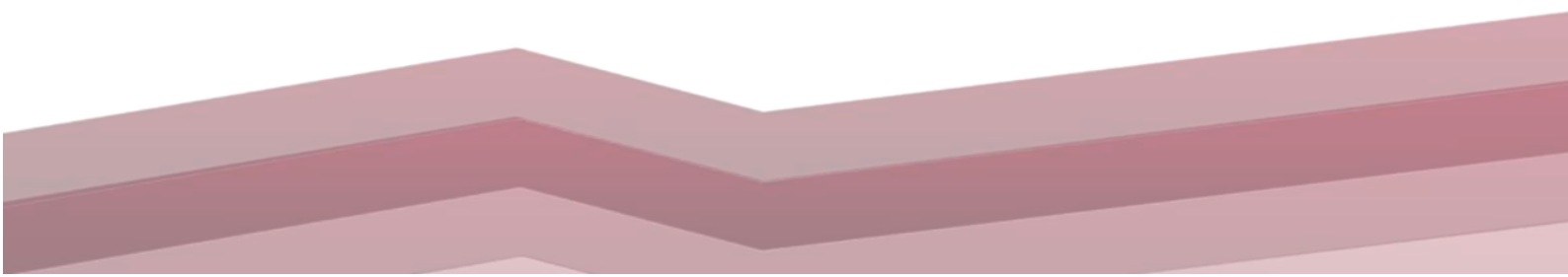
Week 8

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
	Squat	1	1						RPE: 8
	Squat	1	3						RPE: 9
	Squat	3	3						10% Back-off
	Comp Bench	1	1						RPE: 8
	Comp Bench	1	3						RPE: 9
	Comp Bench	3	3						10% Back-off
Stiff-leg Deadlift	3	8						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9	
Overhead Press	4	3						RPE: 8	

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
	Deadlift	1	1						RPE: 8
	Deadlift	1	3						RPE: 9
	Deadlift	3	3						10% Back-off
	Pause Bench	3	1						RPE: 8
	Pause Bench	1	3						RPE: 7
Leg Press	3	8						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9	

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		Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
Day 3		Slingshot Bench	4	5						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
		Pin Squat	4	5						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
		Block Pull	3	4						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
		Pin Bench	4	5						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7



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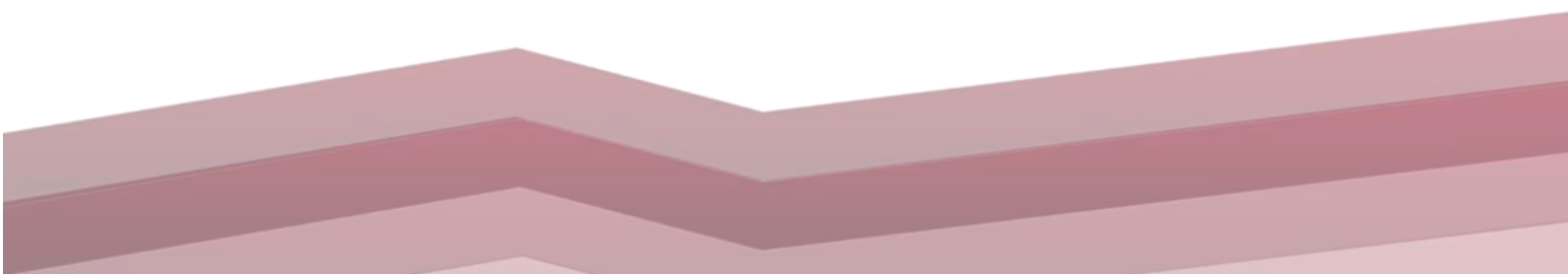
Week 9

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
	Squat	1	1						RPE: 8
	Squat	1	3						RPE: 9
	Squat	3	3						10% Back-off
	Comp Bench	1	1						RPE: 8
	Comp Bench	1	3						RPE: 9
	Comp Bench	3	3						10% Back-off
	Stiff-leg Deadlift	3	8						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
	Overhead Press	4	3						RPE: 8

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
	Deadlift	1	1						RPE: 8
	Deadlift	1	3						RPE: 9
	Deadlift	3	3						10% Back-off
	Pause Bench	3	1						RPE: 8
	Pause Bench	1	3						RPE: 7
	Leg Press	3	8						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9

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		Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
Day 3		Slingshot Bench	4	5						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
		Pin Squat	4	5						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
		Block Pull	3	4						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
		Pin Bench	4	5						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7



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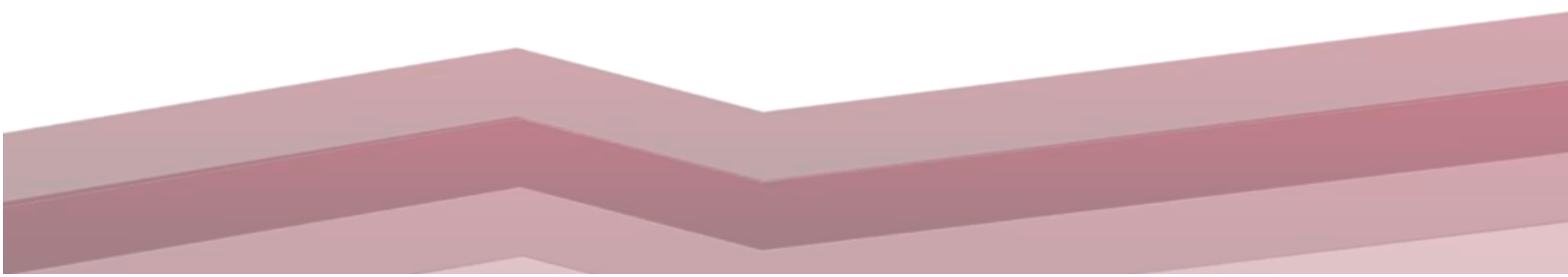
Week 10

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
	Squat	1	1						RPE: 8
	Squat	1	3						RPE: 9
	Squat	3	3						10% Back-off
	Comp Bench	1	1						RPE: 8
	Comp Bench	1	3						RPE: 9
	Comp Bench	3	3						10% Back-off
	Stiff-leg Deadlift	3	8						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
	Overhead Press	4	3						RPE: 8

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
	Deadlift	1	1						RPE: 8
	Deadlift	1	3						RPE: 9
	Deadlift	3	3						10% Back-off
	Pause Bench	3	1						RPE: 8
	Pause Bench	1	3						RPE: 7
	Leg Press	3	8						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9

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		Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
Day 3		Slingshot Bench	4	5						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
		Pin Squat	4	5						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
		Block Pull	3	4						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
		Pin Bench	4	5						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7



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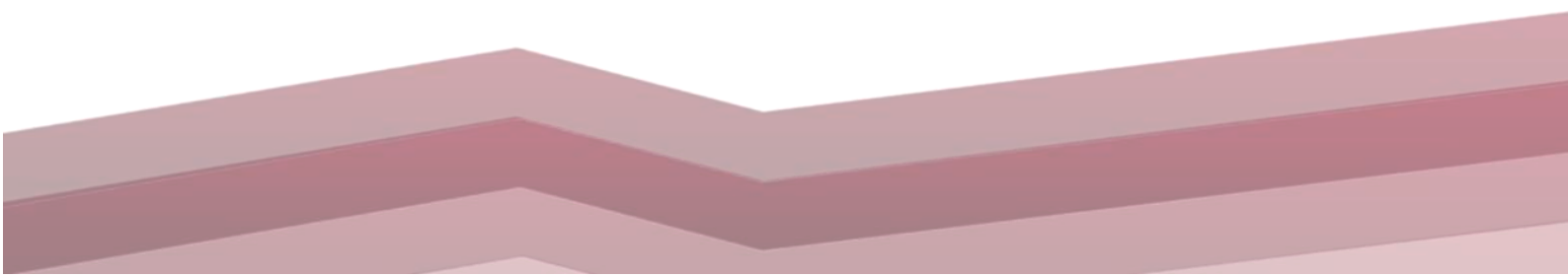
Week 11

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
	Squat	1	1						RPE: 8
	Squat	1	3						RPE: 9
	Squat	3	3						10% Back-off
	Comp Bench	1	1						RPE: 8
	Comp Bench	1	3						RPE: 9
	Comp Bench	3	3						10% Back-off
	Stiff-leg Deadlift	3	8						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
	Overhead Press	4	3						RPE: 8

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
	Deadlift	1	1						RPE: 8
	Deadlift	1	3						RPE: 9
	Deadlift	3	3						10% Back-off
	Pause Bench	3	1						RPE: 8
	Pause Bench	1	3						RPE: 7
	Leg Press	3	8						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9

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		Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
Day 3		Slingshot Bench	4	5						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
		Pin Squat	4	5						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7
		Block Pull	3	4						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
		Pin Bench	4	5						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9 Set 4 @ RPE 7



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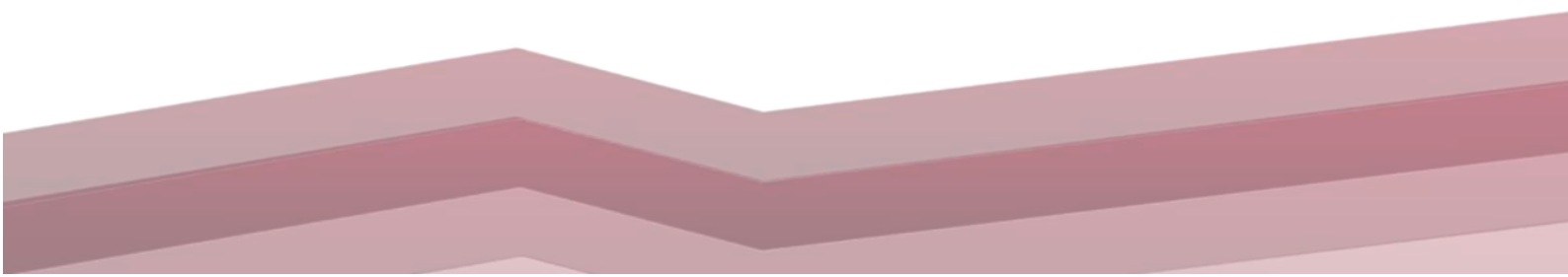
Week 12

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
	Squat	1	1						RPE: 8
	Squat	1	3						RPE: 9
	Squat	2	3						10% Back-off
	Comp Bench	1	1						RPE: 8
	Comp Bench	1	3						RPE: 9
	Comp Bench	2	3						10% Back-off
	Stiff-leg Deadlift	3	8						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8
	Overhead Press	3	3						RPE: 8

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
	Deadlift	1	1						RPE: 8
	Deadlift	1	3						RPE: 9
	Deadlift	2	3						10% Back-off
	Pause Bench	3	1						RPE: 8
	Pause Bench	1	3						RPE: 7
Leg Press	3	8						Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9	

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		Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Notes
Day 3	Slingshot Bench	3	5							Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
	Pin Squat	3	5							Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
	Block Pull	3	3							Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9
	Pin Bench	3	5							Set 1 @ RPE 7 Set 2 @ RPE 8 Set 3 @ RPE 9



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Week 13

Day 1	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Notes
	Squat	1	1		RPE: 8
	Squat	1	1		RPE: 9
	Squat	1	5		RPE: 6
	Comp Bench	1	1		RPE: 8
	Comp Bench	1	1		RPE: 9
	Comp Bench	1	5		RPE: 6
	Deadlift	1	1		RPE: 8
	Deadlift	1	1		RPE: 9
	Deadlift	1	5		RPE: 6

Day 2	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Notes
	Squat	1	1		RPE: 8
	Comp Bench	1	3		RPE: 8
Deadlift	1	1		RPE: 8	

Day 3	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Set 1	Notes
	Squat	1	1		RPE: 10
	Comp Bench	1	1		RPE: 10
Deadlift	1	1		RPE: 10	

FAQ

Can I swap exercises?

No problem swapping exercises. The first half of the program is higher volume, with exercises which I personally find are more conducive to hypertrophy. The second half of the program is higher intensity, with exercises I find are better at getting you used to lifting heavier weights. Deadlifts are a great example: a block pull can be done heavier than a normal deadlift, so is better at psychologically preparing you to lift a heavy 1RM than a paused deadlift. Swapping exercises is fine, as long as you try to keep to the spirit of the program.

I missed a week?

Try to just repeat the week you were at without increasing your estimated 1 rep max. If you missed 2 weeks, it may be worth restarting from either week 1 or week 7.

I missed a workout?

Just do the workout you missed next time you go to the gym. e.g: You usually do day 1, 2 and 3 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, but you miss Wednesday's day 2 workout. You'll just make Friday your day 2, and Monday your day 3, and then Wednesday will be your day 1. Its no biggee.

RPE? I hate RPE!

Honestly, I'm not too keen on it either. I recommend always rating your lifts RPE after the fact regardless. If you hate RPE, then I suggest just swapping RPE out for a percentage using this chart:

<https://articles.reactivetrainingsystems.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/E1RM-TABLE-1024x322.png>

For example, 1 rep @ 8 RPE is 92.2% of your 1 rep max, so just load that weight on the bar, lift it and next week increase your estimated 1 rep max and lift 92.2% at your new 1 rep max, and repeat each week.

Even if you use RPE, try to increase your eIRM each week if you hit the designated RPE.

RPE is just a way to load the bar, but if you use a chart like the one linked it is no different to simply working off a percentage.

Uhhh... What is RPE?

Part 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXQaEq4_2IY

Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xEYSsfiWIE>

Conditioning?

Limit conditioning to 2-3 times per week. If you are doing 3 times per week try to vary it so the stress is not focused on one bodypart. For example, running 3 times per week is going to be tough with this program, just like swimming 3 times per week will be tough. But running 1-2x per week, and then swimming 1-2x per week will be more manageable.

If you want to include cardio or conditioning, then check out my article on [cardio and strength training](#).