

3-DAY FULL BODY DUMBBELL PROGRAMME

EVIDENCE BASED | 6-8 WEEK BLOCK | RIR PROGRESSION

Three full-body dumbbell sessions per week, built on progressive overload and RIR-based intensity tracking. Built using the same evidence-based principles used throughout my 1-to-1 coaching programme.



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THE PRINCIPLES

PROGRESSIVE OVERLOAD

Aim to improve each week by adding weight, reps, or improving execution. Small improvements compound over time.

PLANNED DELOAD

Reduce training volume and intensity every 6-8 weeks to manage fatigue and support long-term progress.

RIR INTENSITY CONTROL

Start with a few reps in reserve and gradually increase effort throughout the training block.

LOG EVERY SET

Track your weights, reps, and effort. What gets measured gets improved.

HOW TO USE THIS PROGRAMME

TRAINING FREQUENCY	Train 3 days per week, ideally with at least one rest day between sessions (e.g. Mon/Wed/Fri). If needed, sessions can be performed on consecutive days. The priority is completing all three sessions each week.
SETS AND REPS	Each exercise has a set count and a rep range. Find a weight that's genuinely challenging in that range. Reached the top end of the range? Increase the weight next session.
RIR IN RESERVE	Reps in Reserve RIR is the number of additional reps you could perform before reaching failure. 3 RIR = stop with 3 reps left. This controls intensity without burning out in week one.
PROG. OVERLOAD	Each week, beat last week. Add 1-2 reps, or increase load by the smallest increment. Never sacrifice technique to add weight.
THE TRACKING LOG	White log pages at the back. Print them and record weight and reps for every set. Reps will likely drop across sets, this is normal.
THE DELOAD	After 6-8 weeks, same movements at 40-50% less load, 2 sets each exercise. This allows fatigue to dissipate while maintaining the adaptations you've built during the training block.
REST PERIODS	Rest until you feel recovered between sets. Usually 1 to 3 minutes for most movements.
TECHNIQUE FIRST	If form breaks down, reduce the weight. Consistent quality reps over months beats heavy sets with poor technique every time.

WEEKLY PROGRESSION GUIDE

WEEK	RIR	WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK
1	3 RIR	Establish your loads. Leave 3 reps in the tank every set. Log everything. This is your baseline.
2	2 RIR	Add 1-2 reps OR increase load by the smallest increment. Record every change.
3	1-2 RIR	Continue adding. Sets should feel genuinely hard. Do not let form slip.
4	0-1 RIR	Accumulation peak. Push close to failure. Log your heaviest lifts of the block.
5-6	0-1 RIR	Maintain or set a PR. End the block strong. Note every weight for the next cycle.
DELOAD	4-5 RIR	Drop volume 40-50%. Same movements, much lighter. Recover and consolidate.

SESSION A

FULL BODY

CHEST EMPHASIS

Two chest movements anchor this session. Establish your working weights in Week 1. These numbers are your benchmark for the entire block.



CHEST
Dumbbell Incline Press

3 sets 8-15 reps
Control the descent. Full stretch at the bottom, drive through the upper chest.



CHEST
Dumbbell Chest Flye

2 sets 10-20 reps
Slight elbow bend. Maximise the pec stretch at the bottom of every rep.



BACK
Dumbbell Bent Over Row

3 sets 8-15 reps
Hinge to 45 degrees. Drive elbows back and squeeze hard at the top.



BICEPS
Dumbbell Bicep Curl

4 sets 10-20 reps
Supinate at the top. Control the eccentric. No swinging.



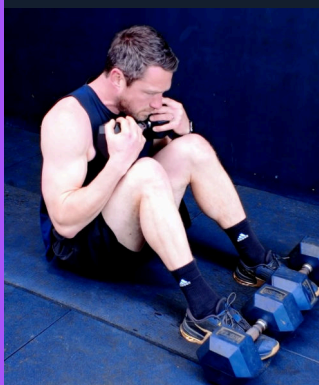
TRICEPS
Dumbbell Overhead Extension

3 sets 10-20 reps
Keep elbows tucked. Full stretch behind the head, press back up.



LEGS
Dumbbell Front Squat

2 sets 6-15 reps
Goblet or cross-arm grip. Chest tall, knees out, full depth.



CORE
Weighted Sit-Up

3 sets 10-30 reps
Hold a dumbbell on your chest. Controlled on the way down.

SESSION B

FULL BODY

SHOULDER EMPHASIS

Upright rows and lateral raises prioritise the delts. Spider curls with strict form make this a tough arm session too.



SHOULDERS
Dumbbell Upright Row

3 sets 8-20 reps
Elbows lead above hands. Squeeze at the top, controlled descent.



SHOULDERS
Dumbbell Lateral Raise

2 sets 10-20 reps
Lead with elbows. Raise to shoulder height, control the descent.



LEGS
Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift

2 sets 8-15 reps
Soft knees, hinge at the hips. Feel the hamstring stretch, drive through.



BICEPS
Dumbbell Spider Curl

4 sets 10-20 reps
Chest on incline bench. Strict form, no momentum. Full extension at bottom.



BACK
Single Arm Row

3 sets 8-20 reps
Brace on bench. Drive elbow to the hip. Full range of motion.



TRICEPS
Dumbbell Kickbacks

3 sets 8-20 reps
Upper arm parallel to floor. Full extension at the top. Control back.



CORE
Bench Crunch

3 sets 10-30 reps
Hips off the bench. Crunch knees to chest, control the extension.

SESSION C

FULL BODY

ARMS EMPHASIS

Two bicep movements to open, then triceps and a shoulder finisher. Bulgarian split squats are the hardest leg movement. Pace yourself.



BICEPS
Incline Curl

3 sets 10-20 reps
Seated on incline. Arms hang back - excellent long head stretch.



BICEPS
Concentration Curl

3 sets 10-20 reps
Elbow braced on inner thigh. Squeeze hard at the top of every rep.



CHEST
Push-Ups

3 sets 5-30 reps
Full range, chest to floor, full lockout. Elevate feet to increase difficulty.



TRICEPS
Dumbbell Skullcrushers

3 sets 10-20 reps
Lying on bench. Lower to forehead. Only the forearms move.



LEGS
Bulgarian Split Squat

2 sets 8-20 reps
Rear foot elevated. Sink deep. Drive through the front heel.



SHOULDERS
Dumbbell Rear Delt Flye

4 sets 10-20 reps
Hinge forward. Slight elbow bend. Lead with elbows, squeeze at top.



CORE
V-Up

3 sets 10-20 reps
Lift arms and legs simultaneously to meet at the top. Control the descent.

TRAINING LOG

Print and complete. Record weight and reps for each set. Format: 20kg x 10

SESSION A — CHEST EMPHASIS								
EXERCISE	SET	WK 1	WK 2	WK 3	WK 4	WK 5	WK 6	DL
Dumbbell Incline Press	S1							
	S2							
	S3							
Dumbbell Chest Flye	S1							
	S2							
Dumbbell Bent Over Row	S1							
	S2							
	S3							
Dumbbell Bicep Curl	S1							
	S2							
	S3							
	S4							
Dumbbell Overhead Extension	S1							
	S2							
	S3							
Dumbbell Front Squat	S1							
	S2							
Weighted Sit-Up	S1							
	S2							
	S3							

SESSION B — SHOULDER EMPHASIS								
EXERCISE	SET	WK 1	WK 2	WK 3	WK 4	WK 5	WK 6	DL
Dumbbell Upright Row	S1							
	S2							
	S3							
Dumbbell Lateral Raise	S1							
	S2							
Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift	S1							
	S2							
Dumbbell Spider Curl	S1							
	S2							
	S3							
	S4							
Single Arm Row	S1							
	S2							
	S3							
Dumbbell Kickbacks	S1							
	S2							
	S3							
Bench Crunch	S1							
	S2							
	S3							

