

SCRAWNY TO BRAWNY - GROUND ZERO (6 WEEKS)

So you wanna get brawny, huh?

Well, a training program is just one small component of a much bigger picture. To truly have an awesome transformation, you'll need habit-based nutrition, accountability, and top-notch coaching.

Still, exercise is crucial. That's why we wrote this custom 6-week training program to help get you started. Now, let it be known that getting Brawny not only takes guts (and the requisite food to fill those guts), it also takes balls.

Balls to do stuff you've never done. Balls to do re-do stuff you may have slacked on before. And balls to build a true and honest foundation. This program is designed to give you that foundation.

Phase 0 – Ground Zero – is your opportunity to see how the guys in our Scrawny To Brawny program rock the transformations they do, and what it takes for you to get into the same kind of shape.

This 6-week build-up is a stand-alone training block involving weight training, intervals, and some yoga. (Don't be nervous – yoga is good for you.) It's designed to tune-up your form, bulletproof your weaknesses, and get you ready for a massive transformation. And you can do it all in about 4 hours in the gym per week.

Weeks 1 & 2 = mobility

Weeks 3 & 4 = weights & intervals

Weeks 5 & 6 = weights, intervals, and some yoga

FOR THIS PHASE YOU'LL NEED:

- A tennis ball
- A foam roller (Beginner: *OPTP*. Intermediate: *EliteFTS*. Advanced: *RumbleRoller*)
- A set of stretch bands (*Iron Woody*)
- A timer or stopwatch, since there is a strict time limit between exercises

We'll be training four days a week and repeating a variation of each workout six times over the course of this phase. Plenty of time to use progressive overload. So make sure every time you hit the gym to find a way to do a little more, a little better.

You can either:

- a) Increase the amount of weight you lift -- while keeping good form
- b) Increase the number of reps completed from week to week

Each day is named after the “main lift” of that session. This PDF outlines your schedule, as well as introduces you to all the exercises, with photos and tips to safely execute them. Now, enough with the talking. Let’s build some muscle.

Calendar

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
1	Squat (prep)	Bench (prep)	Rest	Deadlift (prep)	Chin-up (prep)	Rest	Rest
Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
2	Squat (prep)	Bench (prep)	Rest	Deadlift (prep)	Chin-up (prep)	Rest	Rest
Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
3	Squat	Bench	Rest	Deadlift	Chin-up	Intervals	Rest
Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
4	Squat	Bench	Rest	Deadlift	Chin-up	Intervals	Rest
Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
5	Squat	Bench	Yoga	Deadlift	Chin-up	Intervals	Rest
Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
6	Squat	Bench	Yoga	Deadlift	Chin-up	Intervals	Rest

Note: If there are any outstanding medical reasons why you shouldn't be participating, don't. It's your responsibility to check with your doctor before starting any new exercise program. The S2B Coaching Team takes no responsibility for your use of this program. (But you already knew that.)

DAY 1: SQUAT (PREP)

Warm-up & prep

Do 2-3 minutes walking on the treadmill, pedaling a bike, or using the rowing machine. Get your blood pumping and your temperature up.

Complete the foam rolling, tennis ball, and mobility work below.

FOAM ROLLING WORK

- Quads (front of legs)
- IT bands (sides of legs)
- Hamstrings (back of legs)
- Adductors (inside of legs, from the groin to just above the knee)
- Glutes (crossed-over leg; lean in to that butt cheek)

KEY POINTS:

- Click for [VIDEO](#).
- Complete 30-60 seconds on each side (Example: 60 seconds on your right hamstrings, then 60 seconds on your left).
- Keep your muscles relaxed (even though you'll feel moderate pain), and roll back & forth over each part.

NOTE: *Weeks 1 & 2 are a bit like playing detective; you're finding spots that might later become injuries, working on them, and preventing them from causing you trouble further on down the road. You're also building the foundation that all your hard-earned muscle is going stem from.*

BRAWNY TIP: *A brawny guy prevents injuries from happening; a scrawny guy reacts and wonders, "Why me?"*

TENNIS BALL WORK

- Glute-hamstring insertion
- TFL
- Calves
- Soles of feet

KEY POINTS:

- Click for [VIDEO](#).
- Dig in to any "trigger points" (spots that make you wanna cry when you press on them). They'll loosen up with time.

MOBILITY WORK

- Prisoner squats (the closer your toes are to the wall, the harder)
- Prayer squat (hands in prayer position, push the elbows out against the knees while pushing the groin forward)
- Clamshells (use a band for extra challenge)
- Overhead twisting lunges
- Spidermans
- Pistol squats (assisted or unassisted; keep your back heel on the ground)

KEY POINTS:

- Click for [VIDEO](#).
- Complete 5-10 repetitions OR 30-60 seconds of each.
- Important: Don't simply go through the motions. Take your time on each movement, concentrating on what you're supposed to feel.

DAY 2: BENCH (PREP)

Warm-up & PREP

Do 2-3 minutes walking on the treadmill, pedaling a bike, or using the rowing machine. Get your blood pumping and your temperature up.

Complete the foam rolling, tennis ball, and mobility work below.

FOAM ROLLING WORK

- Rhomboids (give yourself a hug and lean slightly to each side)
- Thoracic extension (stretch arms above head so biceps are next to ears, and arc your upper back as much as possible)
- Lats (big back muscles; lying sideways while “on the phone”)
- Shoulders (like going to sleep)
- Biceps
- Triceps

KEY POINTS:

- Click for [VIDEO](#).
- Complete 30-60 seconds on each side (Example: 60 seconds on your right shoulder, then 60 seconds on your left).
- Keep your muscles relaxed (even though you’ll feel moderate pain), and roll back & forth over each part.

TENNIS BALL WORK

- Pecs (chest)
- Upper back
- Internal rotators
- Traps (lean in to a corner; let your arm hang)

KEY POINTS:

- Click for [VIDEO](#).
- Dig in to any “trigger points” (spots that make you wanna cry when you press on them). They’ll loosen up with time.

MOBILITY WORK

- Scarecrows
- Reach, roll & lift
- Push-ups (hands close together for more difficulty)
- Reverse push-ups
- Scapular push-ups
- Reverse scapular push-ups
- Band pull-apart

KEY POINTS:

- Click for [VIDEO](#).
- Complete 10 repetitions of each.
- Important: Don’t simply go through the motions. Take your time on each movement, concentrating on what you’re supposed to feel.
- And be patient with the scapular stuff. It’s tricky, but important for later.

DAY 4: DEADLIFT (PREP)

Warm-up & Prep

Do 2-3 minutes walking on the treadmill, pedaling a bike, or using the rowing machine. Get your blood pumping and your temperature up.

Complete the foam rolling, tennis ball, and mobility work below.

FOAM ROLLING WORK

- Quads (front of legs)
- IT bands (sides of legs)
- Hamstrings (back of legs)
- Adductors (inside of legs, from the groin to just above the knee)
- Glutes (crossed-over leg; leaning in to that butt cheek)

KEY POINTS:

- Click for [VIDEO](#).
- Complete 30-60 seconds on each side (Example: 60 seconds on your right hamstrings, then 60 seconds on your left).
- Keep your muscles relaxed (even though you'll feel moderate pain), and roll back & forth over each part.

NOTE: Make sure to check out the videos if you're unsure about anything.

TENNIS BALL WORK

- Glute-hamstring insertion
- TFL
- Calves
- Soles of feet

KEY POINTS:

- Click for [VIDEO](#).
- Dig in to any "trigger points" (spots that make you wanna cry when you press on them). They'll loosen up with time.

MOBILITY WORK

- Wall-butt touches (the further you are from the wall, the more of a stretch you'll feel; keep your knees straight)
- Glute-bridges
- Bird-dogs
- Pike walks
- Lying supermans
- Toy soldiers
- Running butt-kicks

KEY POINTS:

- Click for [VIDEO](#).
- Complete 5-10 repetitions OR 30-60 seconds of each.
- Important: Don't simply go through the motions. Take your time on each movement, concentrating on what you're supposed to feel.

DAY 5: CHIN-UP (PREP)

Warm-up & PREP

Do 2-3 minutes walking on the treadmill, pedaling a bike, or using the rowing machine. Get your blood pumping and your temperature up.

Complete the foam rolling, tennis ball, and mobility work below.

FOAM ROLLING WORK

- Rhomboids (give yourself a hug and lean slightly to each side)
- Thoracic extension (stretch arms above head so biceps are next to ears, and arc your upper back as much as possible)
- Lats (lying sideways while “on the phone”)
- Shoulders (like going to sleep)
- Biceps
- Triceps

KEY POINTS:

- Click for [VIDEO](#).
- Complete 30-60 seconds on each side (Example: 60 seconds on your right shoulder, then 60 seconds on your left).
- Keep your muscles relaxed (even though you’ll feel moderate pain), and roll back & forth over each part.

NOTE: Hey, why not finding a training partner to join you on all this stuff? You’re gonna need a spotter in a couple of weeks anyway!

TENNIS BALL WORK

- Pecs (chest)
- Upper back
- Internal rotator
- Traps (lean in to a corner; let your arm hang)

KEY POINTS:

- Click for [VIDEO](#).
- Dig in to any “trigger points” (spots that make you wanna cry when you press on them). They’ll loosen up with time.

MOBILITY WORK

- Scarecrows
- Reach, roll & lift
- Push-ups (hands close together for more difficulty)
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- Reverse scapular push-ups
- Band pull-apart

KEY POINTS:

- Click for [VIDEO](#).
- Complete 10 repetitions of each.
- Important: Don’t simply go through the motions. Take your time on each movement, concentrating on what you’re supposed to feel.
- And be patient with the scapular stuff. It’s tricky, but important.

DAY 1: SQUAT

Warm-up & PREP

Do 2-3 minutes walking on the treadmill, pedaling a bike, or using the rowing machine. Get your blood pumping and your temperature up.

Complete 10 minutes of foam rolling, tennis ball, and mobility work – of your choice – from the Day 1: Squat (prep) workout.

(1) Alternating dumbbell lunge Do 2 sets of 10 reps
Rest 45 seconds, repeat

(2) Leg press Do 4 sets of 6 reps
Rest 2:00 minutes, repeat

(3a) Leg extension Do 3 sets of 8 reps
Rest 1:15 minutes

(3b) Leg press calf raise
Rest 1:15 minutes, repeat

NOTE: Exercise a/b notation means perform one set of exercise “a” and then one set of exercise “b”, alternating back and forth between the exercises marked with the same number until all sets have been completed.

For exercises performed in a single-sided manner, complete the prescribed number of repetitions (reps) on each side. The exercise demonstrations and instructions will indicate whether the repetitions are to be completed in an alternating or non-alternating fashion.

DAY 2: BENCH

Warm-up & PREP

Do 2-3 minutes walking on the treadmill, pedaling a bike, or using the rowing machine. Get your blood pumping and your temperature up.

Complete 10 minutes of foam rolling, tennis ball, and mobility work – of your choice – from the Day 2: Bench (prep) workout.

(1) Dumbbell Cuban rotation Do 3 sets of 8 reps

Rest 45 seconds, repeat

(2a) Kneeling cable X-row Do 3 sets of 8 reps

Rest 15 seconds

(2b) Cable crossover

Rest 1:15 minutes, repeat

(3a) Pronated reverse push-up Do 4 sets of 6 reps

Rest 45 seconds

(3b) Barbell bench press

Rest 1:30 minutes, repeat

NOTE: Exercise a/b notation means perform one set of exercise “a” and then one set of exercise “b”, alternating back and forth between the exercises marked with the same number until all sets have been completed.

For exercises performed in a single-sided manner, complete the prescribed number of repetitions (reps) on each side. The exercise demonstrations and instructions will indicate whether the repetitions are to be completed in an alternating or non-alternating fashion.

DAY 3: YOGA

Attend a class, do some stretching, or take 5 minutes for Brawny Yoga with Coach Paul (*VIDEO*).



Note:
Weeks 5 & 6 only.

DAY 4: DEADLIFT

Warm-up & PREP

Do 2-3 minutes walking on the treadmill, pedaling a bike, or using the rowing machine. Get your blood pumping and your temperature up.

Complete 10 minutes of foam rolling, tennis ball, and mobility work – of your choice – from the Day 4: Deadlift (prep) workout.

(1) Swiss ball lying leg curl Do 2 sets of 8 reps

Rest 45 seconds, repeat

(2) Single-leg Romanian deadlift Do 4 sets of 6 reps

Rest 2:00 minutes, repeat

(3a) Cable pull-through Do 3 sets of 8 reps

Rest 1:15 minutes

(3b) Cable crunches

Rest 1:15 minutes, repeat

NOTE: Exercise a/b notation means perform one set of exercise “a” and then one set of exercise “b”, alternating back and forth between the exercises marked with the same number until all sets have been completed.

For exercises performed in a single-sided manner, complete the prescribed number of repetitions (reps) on each side. The exercise demonstrations and instructions will indicate whether the repetitions are to be completed in an alternating or non-alternating fashion.

DAY 5: CHIN-UP

Warm-up & PREP

Do 2-3 minutes walking on the treadmill, pedaling a bike, or using the rowing machine. Get your blood pumping and your temperature up.

Complete 10 minutes of foam rolling, tennis ball, and mobility work – of your choice – from the Day 5: Chin-up (prep) workout.

(1) Standing rope face-pull Do 2 sets of 10 reps

Rest 45 seconds, repeat

(2a) Medium-grip chin-up Do 4 sets of 6 reps

Rest 2:00 seconds, repeat

(3a) Seated dumbbell shoulder press Do 3 sets of 8 reps

Rest 1:15 minutes

(3b) Hanging leg raise

Rest 1:15 minutes, repeat

NOTE: Exercise a/b notation means perform one set of exercise “a” and then one set of exercise “b”, alternating back and forth between the exercises marked with the same number until all sets have been completed.

For exercises performed in a single-sided manner, complete the prescribed number of repetitions (reps) on each side. The exercise demonstrations and instructions will indicate whether the repetitions are to be completed in an alternating or non-alternating fashion.

DAY 6: INTERVALS

PREP & Warm-up

Complete 2-5 minutes of foam rolling, tennis ball, and mobility work (your choice), appropriate to the type of intervals you're doing (Example: Sprinting intervals = Lower body prep; Swimming intervals = Upper body prep).

Do 2-3 minutes on the treadmill, bike, rowing machine, or in the pool. Get your blood pumping and your temperature up.

INTERVALS

Complete one of the following options by sprinting, biking, rowing, or swimming:

Work	Rest	Repeat
10 seconds	20 seconds	8-12 times
15 seconds	45 seconds	6-10 times
20 seconds	1 minute 40 seconds	4-6 times
30 seconds	2 minutes 30 seconds	3-5 times

KEY POINTS:

Make no mistake; these should be H-A-R-D (like there's a lion or a shark chasing you). Ease into the first few, and pay attention to how you're feeling. If something doesn't feel right, scale back.

Otherwise, aim for 9/10 on the difficulty scale. Make every second count.

COOL-DOWN

Spend 5-10 minutes catching your breath, stretching, and trying not to lose your lunch.

GROUND ZERO - EXERCISE DIRECTORY

DAY 1: SQUAT

Alternating dumbbell lunge	14
Leg press	15
Leg extension	16
Leg press calf raise	17

DAY 2: BENCH

Dumbbell Cuban rotation	18
Kneeling cable X-row	19
Cable crossover	20
Pronated reverse push-up	21
Barbell bench press	22

DAY 4: DEADLIFT

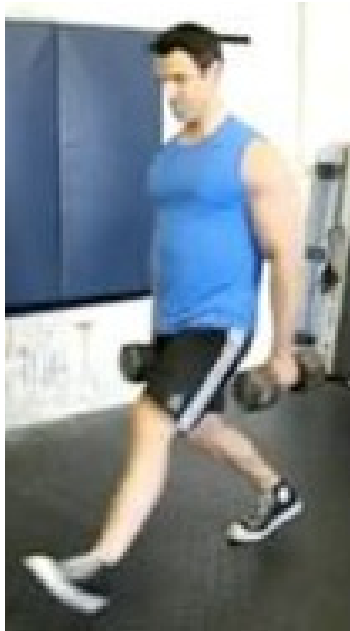
Swiss ball lying leg curl	23
Single-legged Romanian deadlift	24
Cable pull-through	25
Cable crunches	26

DAY 5: CHIN-UP

Standing rope face-pull	27
Medium-grip chin-up	28
Seated dumbbell shoulder press	29
Hanging leg raise	30

DAY 1: SQUAT

Alternating dumbbell lunge



SET-UP

Pick up a pair of dumbbells, positioned at your side

MOVEMENT

Lunge forward with first leg. Land on heel then forefoot.

Return to original standing position by forcibly extending hip and knee of forward leg (pushing through the heel!)

Repeat by alternating lunge with opposite leg

KEY POINTS

Hip flexor flexibility is important (the day's foam rolling, tennis ball, and mobility prep work will get you on your way with that)

Torso should remain upright entire time

Lead knee should point in the same direction as foot throughout the lunge

A long lunge emphasizes gluteus maximus (pushing through the heels); short lunge emphasizes quadriceps (pushing through the toes). Our preference is the glutes (heel-push) here.

DAY 1: SQUAT

Leg press



SET-UP

- Sit on machine with back on padded support
- Place feet on platform
- Extend hips and knees
- Release dock lever and grasp handles

MOVEMENT

- Lower platform by flexing hips and knees until hips are completely flexed
- Return by extending knees and hips

KEY POINTS

- Adjust safety brace and back support to accommodate near full range of motion and prevent winking (rounding) of lower back underneath you
- Keep knees pointed in same direction as feet
- Do not allow heels to raise off of platform, being sure to push with both heel and forefoot
- Placing feet higher on platform emphasizes the glutes; placing feet lower on targets the quads

DAY 1: SQUAT

Leg extension



SET-UP

Sit down on a leg extension machine with knees lined up with the pivot point of the machine.

Adjust the back support so that your butt is nestled in and back is straight (ie. sitting up straight, instead of like a lower back-rounded, couch-potato)

Set the stoppers to allow for as much range of motion as is comfortable

Grip the handles for support

MOVEMENT

Explosively extend knees by flexing the quads

Perform the eccentric (lowering) portion in a slow and controlled manner

KEY POINTS

Hold tight to the handles, and keep butt nestled back throughout exercise (to avoid rounding of the lower back)

If a leg extension isn't available, practice more pistol squats instead

DAY 1: SQUAT

Leg press calf raise



SET-UP

Sit on a machine with back straight (butt nestled in)

Place feet on the platform

Extend hip and knee

Release dock lever and grasp handles at your sides

Slide feet down so that only toes and balls of feet are on the lower portion of the platform with heel and arch extending off

MOVEMENT

Push sled by extending ankle as far as possible

Return by bending ankle until calf is stretched. The further the stretch, the bigger the calves, so don't short-change yourself.

KEY POINTS

Reposition stance if foot slips

Keep knees straight throughout exercise or bend only slightly during stretch

Shoes are acceptable to wear, and even recommended for extra traction against the platform

DAY 2: BENCH

Dumbbell Cuban rotation



SET-UP

Start with your upper arms raised out to your sides until they're parallel to the ground and in line with your shoulders

MOVEMENT

Rotate the dumbbells toward your forehead but stop just shy of vertical at the top of the movement

Once you're comfortable with the standard range of motion, try extending a bit past vertical, keeping your elbows high and pushed out to the sides

Be gentle, and start with a light weight (no shame in using pink dumbbells here... it's not a heavy-weight exercise)

KEY POINTS

Once again, be gentle

Keep your elbows bent at 90 degrees and wrists straight throughout

Take it slow and watch your momentum. Range of motion and activating the rotator cuff – not using heavy weights – are the goals here.

DAY 2: BENCH

Kneeling cable X-row



SET-UP

Set a single handle in the high position on each side of double cable station

Kneel on a mat between stations

Grasp each handle with the opposite side hand (i.e. right hand grabs left cable handle and vice versa)

Begin with wrists crossed in front of your face

MOVEMENT

Exhale, pulling the handles back and down behind you

Stick your chest out and inhale as you slowly lower the weights (wrists crossed in front of your face again)

Maintain good upright posture throughout movement

KEY POINTS

Use light bands instead of cables if necessary

Squeeze shoulder blades together at end of movement

DAY 2: BENCH

Cable crossover



SET-UP

Place the pulleys in a high position (above your head)

Select the resistance to be used

Grab hold of the pulleys in each hand and step forward with one foot

Lift your chest up high (like a gorilla), bending forward slightly at the waist

MOVEMENT

Keeping a slight bend in your elbows, extend your arms to the sides in a wide arc as you exhale

Cross your wrists over the midline

Return arms to start position as you inhale, using the same arc of motion

Hold and squeeze the contraction for a second before repeating

KEY POINTS

Maintain a slight bend in your elbows to prevent stress at the biceps tendon

Throughout the movement, the arms and torso should remain stationary – movement only occurs at the shoulder joint

Alternate crossing wrists, remembering to keep your chest high

If needed, adjust the point in front of you where your arms meet

DAY 2: BENCH

Pronated reverse push-up



SET-UP

Using a Smith machine or squat rack, secure a bar about 3 or 4 feet off the floor

With your heels down and your hands in a pronated (overhand) position, let your torso hang under the bar

Retract your shoulder blades and keep your head neutral (looking up at the ceiling)

MOVEMENT

Exhale, pulling your chest towards the bar, and keeping your body stiff

Inhale, slowly lowering yourself down again, but make sure to keep your shoulder blades retracted (pulled back)

KEY POINTS

Keep your elbows in close to your sides instead of winged out away from you

For extra challenge, place your heels up on a box, bench, or Swiss ball

DAY 2: BENCH

Barbell bench press



SET-UP

Lie on a bench, feet on the floor

Use a spotter to unrack the bar from the supports, keeping the lats tight

MOVEMENT

Lower the bar under control to the chest

Press the bar up to the ceiling, driving through the lats and chest as if pushing yourself down and away from it

“Spread” the bar with your hands, keeping the elbows tucked

As you lower, keep your elbows at or above bench level

KEY POINTS

Take time setting up the lift

Keep your chest lifted and back engaged – maintain a solid arch in your upper back and tightness throughout the core

Keep your feet purposefully pressed into the floor, or elevate on plates or a step if it's not comfortable to maintain on the floor

Avoid hyperextending elbows at the top

Keep the bar level by ensuring your grip spacing is even

DAY 4: DEADLIFT

Swiss ball lying leg curl



SET-UP

Lie on your back with a Swiss ball under your heels, and your hands face-down in T-position for support

Extend your hips (flex your glutes) so your body goes straight

MOVEMENT

Exhale, flexing your hamstrings and bringing the ball towards you

Inhale, slowly straightening out your knees, and rolling the ball away from you

Keep your hips straight so as not to sag

KEY POINTS

For extra challenge, come right up on your toes and keep flexing your hamstrings while the ball is close to you

Don't put your butt down 'til you're finished!

DAY 4: DEADLIFT

Single-leg Romanian deadlift



SET-UP

Holding a dumbbell in each hand, stand on one foot, with the other foot hovering beside it

MOVEMENT

Inhale on the way down, extending your hovering foot as high as you can behind you and slowly lowering the dumbbells to just above the floor on either side of your standing foot. Keep a slight bend in the front knee.

Pause at the bottom

Exhale on the way up, explosively thrusting your hips forward and your chest up (back to starting position; hovering foot beside standing foot)

Regain your balance, and repeat to complete all reps on the same leg.

KEY POINTS

Only lower the dumbbells as far as your body will allow, and be patient. Just going past the knees (while keeping your hovering foot high behind you) is a great start

For more activation of the hamstrings, keep the weight especially on your heel

DAY 4: DEADLIFT

Cable pull-through



SET-UP

Using a low-cable pulley and a rope attachment, stand facing away from the pulley

Dig your heels in to the floor, reach between your legs, and grab the rope attachment

Take a half-step forward/away from the pulley (it should feel like a stretch, just holding on to the rope), and keep your chest upright

MOVEMENT

Explosively thrust your hips forward with the rope between your legs

Clench your butt cheeks as hard as you can at the top, and pause for a second

Inhale on the way down, digging your heels in and slowly hinging your hips back

Keep the chest upright and a slight bend in your knees

Pause at the bottom, feeling the stretch in your hamstrings

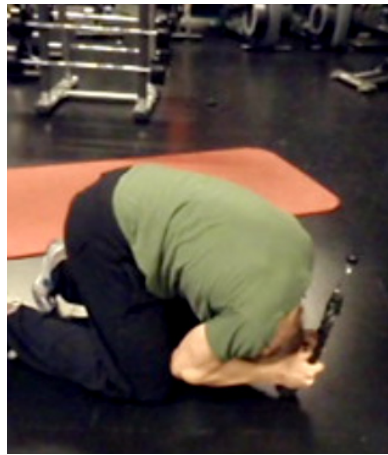
KEY POINTS

If you feel a strain in your lower back, it could be that you're not digging in with your heels hard enough (most of the weight should be on them), or that your chest isn't upright enough

Dig in your heels and puff up your chest – you'll feel it in the hamstrings and butt

DAY 4: DEADLIFT

Cable crunches



SET-UP

Using a cable pulley at medium-height and a rope attachment (or a band attached to a chin-up bar), kneel down with your fists just above your head. You can also place a pad under your knees for extra support.

MOVEMENT

Begin by arching your back as much as possible to pre-stretch the abs

Close your eyes in order to get a better mind-muscle connection

Imagine trying to bury your nose into your groin

Keep the abs contracted as hard as possible (it should be difficult to breathe there)

Pause, and slowly begin arching back to the full stretched-out starting position

KEY POINTS

It's more important to get a good mind-muscle connection than it is to pound the core with lots of weight

Pay close attention to how hard you're squeezing, and not just whether you're completing the reps

An enviable core comes from quality work, not quantity

DAY 5: CHIN-UP

Standing rope face pull



SET-UP

Stand in front of a cable station and set cable pulley at head-height with rope attachment

Grasp rope and brace yourself with one foot in front of the other (resisting the forward-pull of the weight)

Lean your torso back slightly

MOVEMENT

Retract shoulder blades and exhale as you pull the rope attachment toward your nose

Hold it there for a second, then inhale as you slowly lower the weight back to start

Repeat without putting the weight down between reps

KEY POINTS

Stay braced with your legs the whole time

DAY 5: CHIN-UP

Medium-grip chin-up



SET-UP

Grasp pull-up bar with underhand grip (palms facing you)

Begin from a dead-hang (hands are the only thing flexed), elbows straight

MOVEMENT

Retract your shoulder blades by lifting your chest and pulling your shoulders back

Pull yourself up until chin is over the bar

Lower under control

KEY POINTS

Keep your elbows tucked in tightly against your ribcage while you pull yourself up and lower yourself down

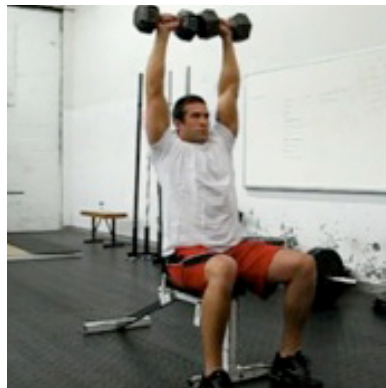
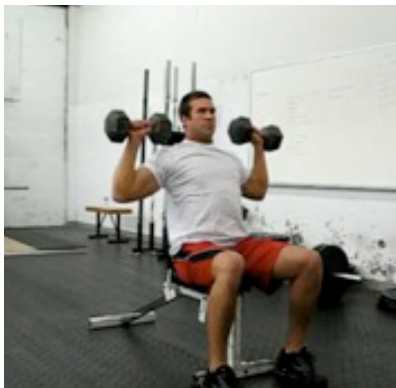
For extra difficulty, try touching your sternum (breast bone) to the bar while keeping your belly-button up high

For extra help, tie a band around the chin-up bar and rest your knee(s) on it. You could also use an assisted chin-up machine, or get a friend to spot you.

Start every rep from a dead-hang. No cheating at the bottom go all the way down!

DAY 5: CHIN-UP

Seated dumbbell shoulder press



SET-UP

Sit on a bench with back support, dumbbells resting on your knees.

One at a time, “kick” them up to your shoulders, and get comfortable

MOVEMENT

Press overhead until arms are straight

Lower until elbows are parallel with the shoulders, and repeat

KEY POINTS

Keep a slight bend in the elbows at the top, to maximize tension on the shoulders

Don't over-arch your lower back

Gently lower the weights to your shoulders, then to your knees before putting them down

Avoid jerking the weights from the floor or swinging them down from shoulder-height

DAY 5: CHIN-UP

Hanging leg raise



SET-UP

Grasp the neutral handles (palms facing each other) of a chin-up station, and hang

Keep your feet together throughout

MOVEMENT

Brace your abs and as you exhale, flex your hips

Raise your feet until your thighs are past parallel to the ground

Inhale as you lower your thighs slowly

KEY POINTS

Control your momentum by trying not to swing

For extra challenge, keep your knees straight the whole time

Aim for a 1:2 ratio, going up normally, and moving slower on the way down. You'll feel that in the morning!