

# Strength and Muscle Gain Plan - Level 1

4 sessions per week following either an upper body or lower body workout.

Look to progress either the weight lifted for the set repetitions, the amount of repetitions done with the same weight or add in an extra set. This is called progressive overload and is ultimately what you need to achieve over time to strengthen muscles and continue to make progress.

When working towards a rep range (e.g. 12-15) if you can complete all sets at the higher number then you are ready to progress up a weight. If you cannot achieve all sets at the lower range then it is too heavy.

***If at any time you are unsure of an exercise or need help with something such as the correct form for an exercise or an alternative option please ask the gym instructor on shift, that is what they are here for and they will be happy to help.***

## **Programme includes;**

- Cardio machines – these will help to improve cardiovascular fitness levels as well as burn calories which is needed for fat loss.
- Resistance machines – these will strengthen and tone the muscles as well as also burning calories. With the resistance machines look to keep the green ball within the lines on machine screen – gives good guidance for the speed of which the movement should be completed.
- Core work – these will help to build core strength and stability. Toning the stomach over time as you continue to work the muscles and burn calories.
- Alternate exercises column – To use if the gym you use does not have the same machine listed in the workout or the machine is in use by someone else. Alternate exercises are way to target the same muscle groups but sometimes with a slightly different movement.

By using different variations and similar movements it can add variety to the program as well as progression which will help keep it interesting and fun.

# Upper Body 1

EXERCISE	SETS X REPS	TEACHING POINTS	ALTERNATE EXERCISES
Seated row	4 sets of 12-15 reps	Low intensity – (find a level that you should be able to complete the 20 minutes without being overly tired). Set the bike seat to hip height. When cycling the leg should be almost fully extended with just a small bend in the knee.	TRX Row Cable Row
Chest press	3 sets of 8-12 reps	Feet at a comfortable width apart – ideally just wider than shoulder width as if you were going to jump. Knees and toes should go in the same direction.	Press ups Dips / assisted dips
Shoulder press	4 sets of 12 -15 reps	Focus on just bending the knee and pushing the weight down until your leg is fully flexed. Then slowly return the under control.	
Lat pulldown	5 sets of 8-12 reps	Start with the leg bent at 90degrees and then focus on straightening the knee until it is fully extended. Slowly return it to the bent position under control.	Stiff arm pushdown with cable
Chest fly	2 sets of 15 reps	Hold onto the handles to keep your back straight and against the pad. Slow control of the movement as you push the weight away from you. Control the weight on the way back down do not let the weight slam down.	Cable fly
Bicep curl machine	5 sets of 12-15 reps	Same teaching points as the abductor but squeezing the weight together rather than pushing away.	Cable rope curl Dumbbell hammer curl Resistance band curl
Tricep push down machine	3 sets of 15-20 reps	Head looking forward and keeping your body as upright as you can. Find a depth that you can comfortably get to while keeping feet flat on the floor. Arms outstretched in front of you to help balance. You can make this movement more difficult by adding a small weight, holding it close to your chest.	Rope pulldowns Cable pushdowns Resistance band pushdowns

# Lower Body & Core 1

EXERCISE	SETS X REPS	TEACHING POINTS	ALTERNATE EXERCISES
Stationary bike	20 minutes	Set the bike seat to hip height. When cycling the leg should be almost fully extended with just a small bend in the knee.	Cardio equipment of your choice
Leg press	5 sets of 6-10 reps	Feet at a comfortable width apart – ideally just wider than shoulder width as if you were going to jump. Knees and toes should go in the same direction.	Bodyweight squat, Kettlebell squat
Leg extension	3 sets of 8-12 reps	Start with the leg bent at 90degrees and then focus on straightening the knee until it is fully extended. Slowly return it to the bent position under control	
Hamstring curl	4 sets of 15 reps	Focus on just bending the knee and pushing the weight down until your leg is fully flexed. Then slowly return the under control.	
Box step ups	3 sets of 10 per leg	Set up a box or flat bench at a height that is between knee and mid-thigh. Put one leg on the box and focus on driving power through that leg to lift yourself up. Slowly lower yourself back down and repeat.	
Calf raises	4 sets of 20	Fully lift yourself up on to your tip toes and hold yourself in that position for one second focusing on the squeeze. If there is a calf machine available, then use that but still hold the contraction for 1 second.	
Plank	5 sets of 20-40 seconds	Lying on your front supporting your bodyweight with your forearms and toes. Try to brace your core and control the breathing not letting your hips raise up or drop down.	
Cable woodchop	3 sets of 10 per side	Set a cable to around head height. Grasp the handle with both hands and step away from the cable to take the weight. With straight arms bring the handle down across the body and ending up at the opposite hip. Do this slowly and under control without twisting the torso.	

# Upper Body 2

EXERCISE	SETS X REPS	TEACHING POINTS	ALTERNATE EXERCISES
Seated row	4 sets of 8-12 reps	<i>See Upper Body 1</i>	TRX Row Cable Row
Shoulder press	3 sets of 8-12 reps	<i>See Upper Body 1</i>	
Chest press	4 sets of 12 -15 reps	<i>See Upper Body 1</i>	Press ups Dips / assisted dips
Rope face pull	5 sets of 12-15 reps	Set the cable with the rope attachment to just above head height. Grasp the rope handles with an overhand grip and pull the rope toward your face pulling the rope apart as you go. Your fists should end up by your ears.	Cable rear flys Resistance band face pulls Trx 'Y' shapes
Side raises	2 sets of 15 reps	Using a light dumbbell start with the weight by your side. Bring your arms up to the side until they are straight out to the side. This is a slow and controlled movement, no need to swing the weights quickly. Improper form increases risk of injury and decreases muscle activation.	Single arm cable side raise Front raises
Tricep pushdown machine	5 sets of 12-15 reps	<i>See Upper Body 1</i>	Rope pulldowns Cable pushdowns Resistance band pushdowns
Bicep curl machine	3 sets of 15-20 reps	<i>See Upper Body 1</i>	Cable rope curl Dumbbell hammer curl Resistance band curl

# Lower Body & Core 2

EXERCISE	SETS X REPS	TEACHING POINTS	ALTERNATE EXERCISES
Stair climber	20 minutes	Choose a speed that you can comfortably maintain. Hold onto the handles if you need to for balance and stability. Try not to use them to support your bodyweight, If you feel you need to, make the exercise easier by turning the level down.	Cardio equipment of your choice
Leg press	3 sets of 15-20 reps	<i>See Lower Body &amp; Core 1</i>	Bodyweight / Kettlebell squat
Hamstring curl	3 sets of 8-12 reps	<i>See Lower Body &amp; Core 1</i>	
Leg extension	4 sets of 12-15 reps	<i>See Lower Body &amp; Core 1</i>	
Walking lunges	3 sets of 10 per leg	Take a step forward with one leg and bend the knee, to enter a lunge position. Keep the front foot flat on the floor and use your strength with the front leg to stand back up. Bring your back leg forward and in line with your body as you stand up. Repeat with the other leg to start walking lunges. To make it easier lunge on the spot. Move one leg back and bend front leg until you are in a lung position. Stand up by pushing your front leg and repeat with the other leg.	Kettlebell deadlift
Calf raises	4 sets of 20	<i>See Lower Body &amp; Core 1</i>	
Bird dog	3 sets of 10 per arm/leg	On your hands and knees raise one arm forward and extend it straight in front of you and then straighten and extend the opposite leg behind you. (Left leg, right arm) hold the position for 2-3 seconds and then return to the start. Repeat with the other arm and leg. (Right leg, left arm) this will strengthen your core muscles and also work on balance and coordination.	
Cable woodchop	3 sets of 10 per side	<i>See Lower Body &amp; Core 1</i>	