



8-WEEK STRENGTH CYCLE: WAVE PROGRESSION

Dates: August 25th - October 18th

OVERVIEW

Why This Cycle: This program is built for you if you are seeking to develop raw strength and enhance your proficiency with the barbell while maintaining balance and structure. The **wave loading** progression primes your nervous system to handle heavier weights without burning you out, and the alternating Olympic lifts keep your technique sharp. Waves also help build confidence by giving you repeated exposure to multiple weights in a single session.

Example wave:

Let's say your Back Squat wave is written as 3-2-1, 3-2-1.

- First "wave": You hit 3 reps at 70%, 2 reps at 80%, and 1 rep at 85%.
- Second "wave": You reset slightly lower (e.g., 75%) and climb back up to 85% or 90%. This way, you're training volume *and* intensity in one session. The first wave "warms up" your nervous system, so the second wave often feels faster and stronger, even at heavier weights.

Back Squat Focus: Training from the bottom emphasizes drive and midline integrity. This improves confidence "out of the hole" and helps athletes recover from missed cleans/snatches or deep positions in workouts. Expect improved positional strength, core stability, and squat endurance.

Deadlift Focus: Deficit and tempo work enhance posterior chain strength, control, and resilience from floor to lockout. It reduces sticking points and supports better bracing under load. Athletes will feel stronger through all pulling phases.

Olympic Lifting Focus: Snatch and Clean & Jerk alternate weekly, developing high-speed coordination and strength. The snatch emphasizes catch position, while the Clean & Jerk includes positional strength and skillful jerk execution. Each session supports barbell cycling, power, and Olympic mechanics.

Skill Days: Skill-focused sessions address overhead stability, footwork, and posture. They improve movement quality without accumulating fatigue. The goal is perfect practice: crisp, technical reps that translate to efficient full lifts.

Goal: Build strength and proficiency in foundational barbell movements while reinforcing technical precision in Olympic lifts.

Structure:

- **3 primary strength sessions/week:** Back Squat, Deadlift, Olympic Lift (Snatch or Clean & Jerk alternating)
- **Optional Day 4 Skill Session:** Alternating focus between Split Jerk or Snatch Balance/Zotts Press
- **Session Time:** Each under 20 minutes (excluding warm-up)

Antagonist/Accessory Guidelines:

- Accessories target opposing muscle groups for balance and posture.

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- If equipment (cable machines/adjustable bench) is unavailable, use banded, dumbbell, or bodyweight alternatives:
 - Seated Cable Row - Banded Seated Row or Ring Rows
 - Incline DB Bench - Floor Press or Flat DB Bench
 - Cable Rear Delt Flys - Banded Rear Delt Pull or DB Reverse Fly

Scaling & Notes for New Athletes:

- **Load Selection:** Start light in Weeks 1-2 to reinforce positions, even if percentages feel easy.
- **Volume Modifications:** Reduce sets (2-3 sets instead of 4-5) if you're newer to strength cycles.
- **Skill Days:** Focus on precision, not fatigue. These sessions are not meant to be taxing but instead refine positioning.
- **Missing Equipment:** Use tempo, pauses, or bands to maintain time under tension.

This cycle is designed to build strong positional awareness while increasing maximal strength. Ensure athletes are warmed up appropriately before each session.

Focus: Back Squat, Deadlift, Olympic Lifting (Snatch / Clean & Jerk)

Structure: 3 Days/Week Each session < 20 minutes (excluding warm-up)

Progression Style: Wave Loading

Accessory: Antagonist movement performed after strength

For Athletes Who Already Have A 1RM: This is for athletes who maxed out on the previous cycle (Deadlift, Snatch, and Clean & Jerk) and feel confident with their established 1RM going into this cycle. Instead of max testing, athletes may choose to perform:

- For Deadlifts and Back Squats: 3-4 sets of 3 reps @ 80-85% for consistency and technical refinement (Week 1).
- Use Week 1 to assess mobility, bracing, and speed rather than focusing on a new max.
- Olympic lifters may perform Snatch/Clean and Jerk EMOM 1 rep @75-80% for 6-8 minutes to dial in mechanics.
- The goal is to enter the wave cycle with quality movement, not fatigue.



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WEEK 1 – TESTING WEEK

Day 1 – Back Squat 1RM Test + Pull-up Variant

- **Back Squat:** Build to a 1RM in 5-6 working sets
- **Post:** 3 sets of 5-8 Weighted Pull-ups (or challenging banded strict)

Day 2 – Deadlift 1RM Test + Press Variant

- **Deadlift:** Build to a 1RM in 5-6 working sets
- **Post:** 3 sets of 6–8 Dumbbell Z-Press

Day 3 – Snatch 1RM Test + Row Variant

- **Snatch:** Build to a 1RM in 5-6 working sets
- **Post:** 3 sets of 8 Bent-over Barbell Rows

Day 4 – Skill Focus (Split Jerk)

- Split Jerk Footwork Drill (3x5 each side)
- Jerk Dip + Pause Jerk (3x2 @ light weight, 40-50%)
- **Focus:** Stability, timing, and crisp foot transition

WEEK 2

Day 1 – Back Squat (Wave 1)

- 3-2-1, 3-2-1 @ 70-80-85%, then back to 75-80-85%
- **Post:** 3 sets of 8 Ring Rows (strict tempo)

Day 2 – Deadlift (Wave 1)

- Deficit Deadlift (2-3in) 3-2-1, 3-2-1 @ 70-80-85%, then repeat
- **Post:** 3 sets of 10 Incline Dumbbell Bench Press

Day 3 – Clean & Jerk

- Pause Split Jerk (4x2 @ 65-70%)
- **Focus:** Positioning and footwork in the split
- **Post:** 3 sets of 8 Dumbbell Row (single arm)

Day 4 – Skill Focus (Snatch Balance / Zotts Press)

- Snatch Balance (3x3 @ light weight, 50-60%)
- Zotts Press from bottom of squat (3x5 w/ empty bar or light)
- **Focus:** Speed under the bar and upright stability

WEEK 3



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Day 1 – Back Squat (Wave 2)

- 5-3-1, 5-3-1 @ 72-82-88%, then back to 77-82-88%
- **Post:** 3 sets of 10 DB Reverse Fly (seated)

Day 2 – Deadlift (Wave 2)

- Tempo Deadlift (3s down) 5-3-1, 5-3-1 @ 72-82-88%
- **Post:** 3 sets of 12 Barbell Overhead Press (moderate weight)

Day 3 – Snatch Complex

- Snatch Pull + Hang Snatch (5x2 @ 75-80%)
- **Focus:** Speed under the bar and secure catch
- **Post:** 3 sets of 10 Band-resisted Face Pulls

Day 4 – Skill Focus (Split Jerk)

- Split Jerk w/ Pause in Dip & Catch (4x2 @ 50-60%)
- Tall Split Jerk Drill (3 sets of 3 reps)
- **Focus:** Emphasize footwork precision and upright torso

WEEK 4

Day 1 – Back Squat (Wave 3)

- 3-2-1, 3-2-1 @ 75-85-90%, then back to 80-85-90%
- **Post:** 3 sets of 10 Barbell Rows (supinated grip)

Day 2 – Deadlift (Wave 3)

- Deficit Deadlift 3-2-1, 3-2-1 @ 75-85-90%
- **Post:** 3 sets of 10 Dumbbell Arnold Press

Day 3 – Clean & Jerk Complex

- Clean + Front Squat + Jerk (4x2 @ 75-80%)
- **Focus:** Strong catch, tight front rack, aggressive split
- **Post:** 3 sets of 10 Wide-Grip Seated Rows

Day 4 – Skill Focus (Snatch Balance / Zotts Press)

- Snatch Balance (2x2 @ 50%)
- Zotts Press (2x5 light)
- Focus on clean, precise movement under fatigue

WEEK 5

Day 1 – Back Squat (Wave 4)

- 5-3-1, 5-3-1 @ 75-85-90%, then back to 80-85-90%
- **Post:** 3 sets of 12 Seated Cable Rows (or banded)

Day 2 – Deadlift (Wave 4)

- Tempo Deadlift (4s down) 5-3-1, 5-3-1 @ 70-80-85%
- **Post:** 3 sets of 12 Dumbbell Floor Press

Day 3 – Snatch Complex

- Snatch + Overhead Squat (4x2 (2+1) @ 75%)
- **Focus:** Catch precision and control in the overhead squat
- **Post:** 3 sets of 12 Barbell Curls (for elbow health and symmetry)

Day 4 – Skill Focus (Split Jerk)

- Split Jerk Footwork Drill (3x3)
- Pause Split Jerk (3x2 @ light/moderate)
- **Focus:** Foot consistency and timing

WEEK 6**Day 1 – Back Squat (Wave 5)**

- 3-2-1, 3-2-1 @ 78-88-93%, then back to 83-88-93%
- **Post:** 3 sets of 10 Chin-Ups (weighted or tempo)

Day 2 – Deadlift (Wave 5)

- Deficit Deadlift 3-2-1, 3-2-1 @ 78-88-93%
- **Post:** 3 sets of 10 Dumbbell Seesaw Press

Day 3 – Clean & Jerk

- Split Jerk (5x2 @ 65-70%)
- **Focus:** Foot position, posture, bar speed
- **Post:** 3 sets of 10 Ring Rows (feet elevated)

Day 4 – Skill Focus (Snatch Balance / Zotts Press)

- Snatch Balance (2x2 @ 50%)
- Zotts Press (2x5 light)
- **Focus:** Clean and precise movement under fatigue

WEEK 7 – TAPER & TUNE-UP**Day 1 – Back Squat**

- 4x2 @ 70% (Focus on speed out of the hole)



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- **Post:** 3 sets of 8 DB Rear Delt Flys

Day 2 – Deadlift

- 4x2 @ 70% (From blocks or regular setup)
- **Post:** 3 sets of 10 Dumbbell Bench Press (light/moderate)

Day 3 – Snatch 1RM Test + Row Variant

- **Snatch:** Build to a new 1RM
- **Post:** 3 sets of 8 Bent-over Barbell Rows

Day 4 – Skill Focus (Split Jerk)

- Tall Split Jerks (3x3)
- Behind Neck Jerk Balance (3x3 @ bar/light weight)
- **Focus:** speed and foot replacement

WEEK 8 – RETEST WEEK

Day 1 – Back Squat 1RM Retest

- Build to a new 1RM
- **Post:** 3 sets of 5 Weighted Pull-ups

Day 2 – Deadlift 1RM Retest

- Build to a new 1RM
- **Post:** 3 sets of 8 Dumbbell Z-Press

Day 3 – Clean & Jerk/Split Jerk 1RM Retest

- Build to a new 1RM in the Clean & Jerk or Split Jerk (athlete's choice)
- **Post:** 3 sets of 10 Dumbbell Row (heavy single arm)