



Strict Pull-up Program: Beginner

READ ME

This program is designed for newer athletes who cannot perform a strict pull-up or for athletes who can only perform a few (3-5) good reps before their mechanics fail. Scaling is always encouraged and the difficulty of the program can easily be modified by the athlete or coach. This template is designed to be printed so you can keep track of your progress by writing notes, reps, measurements, times, weights, etc.. Good luck!

Week 1				
Day	Movement	Rep Scheme	Remarks	Athlete Notes
Monday (Test Day)	Pull-ups	1 max set Rest as needed, then 20 reps	If your max set is 3 or fewer quality reps, use a band that allows you to do at least 8 reps. For the 20 reps, perform in as few sets as possible. Scale to inverted rows if required.	
	Scap Squeezes	4x10	If you can perform these hanging from a pull-up bar, do it. Otherwise do them from a horizontal position.	
Wednesday	Prone-to-standing rope climbs	3x4 ascents	Laying flat on your back or from a semi-inclined position, climb hand-over-hand until standing.	
	3-way planks	5x30 seconds	:10 front, :10 right, :10 left without rest. Rest 1-2 minutes between sets. Use an incline if necessary.	
Friday	Inverted Rows	3 max sets	Ideally these are done as horizontal to the ground as possible. Scale by increasing the incline. Scale such that you can do at least 10 reps per set.	
	Scap squeezes	4x10	See notes above.	

Week 2				
Day	Movement	Rep Scheme	Remarks	Athlete Notes
Monday	Pull-ups	30 reps	Try to improve your biggest sets from last week. Perform this in as few sets as possible with assistance that allows you to do sets of 5-6 reps. Scale to ring rows if required. Try to do this in larger sets than last week. Mix up your grip.	
	Scap squeezes	4x10	See previous notes.	
Wednesday	Negatives	4x5	Jump your chin over the bar and lower yourself slowly (about 5 seconds) until your arms are fully extended. That's one rep. If you cannot control yourself from a pull-up bar, use a light band or scale further to inverted row negatives.	
	3-way planks	5x45 seconds	:15 front, :15 right, :15 left without rest. Rest 1-2 minutes between sets.	
Friday	Inverted Rows	4 max sets	Beat your score from last week.	
	Scap squeezes	4x10	See previous notes.	

Week 3				
Day	Movement	Rep Scheme	Remarks	Athlete Notes
Monday	Pull-ups	4 max rep sets	Perform as many unassisted strict pull ups as possible. Once you fail, immediately jump into a band or an assisted variation and continue the max set. Make notes of the reps and assistance used.	
	Scap squeezes	4x12	See notes above.	
Wednesday	Prone-to-standing rope climbs	3x6 ascents	Laying flat on your back or from a semi-inclined position, climb hand-over-hand until standing.	
	Hollow Rocks	3x20 seconds	One "rep" is one back-and-forth rock. Scale to hollow rock holds if required. Rest as needed.	
Friday	Inverted Rows	4 max sets	Ideally these are done as horizontal to the ground as possible. Scale by increasing the incline. Scale such that you can do at least 8-10 reps per set.	
	Scap squeezes	4x12	If you can perform these hanging from a pull-up bar, do it. Otherwise do these from a horizontal row position.	
	Hip extensions	3x12		

Week 4				
Day	Movement	Rep Scheme	Remarks	Athlete Notes
Monday	Pull-ups	4 max rep sets	Same format as last week. The goal should be to increase the number of unassisted pull-ups, increase the number or assisted reps after failure, or use less assistance than last time if you used it.	
	Scap squeezes	4x12	See previous notes.	
Wednesday	Flexed arm hang	3 max duration sets	Jump your chin over the bar and hold yourself above for as long as possible. Scale such that you can hold each time for at least 20 seconds. This can be done with light assistance or from an inverted row position as long as it is challenging.	
	Hollow Rocks	3x30 seconds	One "rep" is one back-and-forth rock. Scale to hollow rock holds if required. Rest as needed.	
Friday (Re-test Day)	Pull-ups	1 max set	Beat your original test week number.	
	Scap squeezes	4x12	If you can perform these hanging from a pull-up bar, do it. Otherwise do these from a horizontal row position. They should be unbroken but perfect.	
	Hip extensions	3x15		

Comments

- Throughout this 4-week period it is important to mobilize the upper back, traps, lats, and scapulae in order to prevent tightness and possible injury. Use lacrosse balls, foam rollers, or a coach to help mobilize and stretch these areas. Remember the following rules for these exercises:
- Scapulae remain engaged. Whether kipping or performing pulling movements strict, failure to engage the scaps can result in instability and unnecessary pulling on the shoulder joint, potentially causing injury. Protect your shoulders - engage your scaps.
 - All pulling movements begin with the arms fully extended, with the exception of negatives where the repetition ends with the arms fully extended.
 - Maintain a sound hollow-rock position throughout these movements regardless of the scaling option you are using.