

My bench press training was influenced by Jim Williams and Pat Casey. I use the word "influenced" because I am not the same as Jim Williams or Pat Casey. Accepting their routines as the last word and never thinking or innovating for myself would have eventually lead to a halt in progress. These two men have obviously perfected routines that worked best for them. You will do well by seeking all the advice you can from champions; then put it together with a knowledge of yourself and make a routine that is right for you.

The following program is designed for the intermediate lifter. It is based on a 300 pound bench press. I have not taken bodyweight into consideration, but a 165 pounder and a 220 pounder will progress at different speeds. As far as gains from this routine, a 220 lb. person starting at 300 lbs. should look for 325-330 while a 165 pounder might get 310-320. In my mind, a 15 lb. increase from this routine should be considered good progress, but 15-30 is the range depending on bodyweight, experience, and effort put into the workout. Regardless of bodyweight the key to this program is the worksets. You must really work hard and add weight whenever possible.

One very important rule is do not sacrifice good form in order to handle more weight. All you will do is develop bad lifting habits which will be very difficult to break. A good guide line for adding weight is when you have completed two consecutive workouts.

This is a sixteen week program divided into two eight week sections. The Bench Press Workout is to be done twice per week. I advocate training the way you compete. This means all reps should be done with pauses.

For the first eight weeks do the same bench press workout both days of the week. The second eight weeks will have a different routine for each day.

8 WEEK BUILD-UP ROUTINE:

WEEK #1

Bench Press 135-10, 175-8
6 reps with: 215, 235, 245, 255x2
215-8
Dumbbell Flies 3x10
Close Grip Bench Press 185-10
205-6-3
Tricep Extension 3x8
Pushdowns 3x10
E-Z Curl 4x8
Dumbbell Curls 4x8

WEEK #2 & #3

Bench Press 135-10, 175-8
6 reps with: 220, 240, 250, 260x2
220-8
Dumbbell Flies 3x10
Close Grip Bench Press 185-10
210-6-3
Tricep Extension 3x8
Pushdowns 3x10
E-Z Curl 4x8
Dumbbell Curls 4x8

WEEK #4

Bench Press 135-10, 185-8

WORKOUT of the Month

A NEW Concept in weight training instruction. A Workout by workout, set by set, rep by rep workout plan, with exact training poundages specified over the entire span of a strength training cycle, laid out for you by a top Powerlifting Champion. Each month, a different lift is analyzed. For those at different strength levels than the starting poundage specified, simply increase or decrease the training weights in direct proportion. For example, if your lift is 400, and the starting lift for the program is 500, multiply the training poundages by .8 (400 divided by 500); if your lift is 600 multiply poundages specified by 1.2 (600 divided by 500).

THE BENCH PRESS 16 Week Intermediate Program by 4-Time World Champion John Kuc



John Kuc one of the few men in powerlifting history to bench 600 pounds.

6 reps with: 225, 245, 255, 265x2
225-8
Dumbbell Flies 3x10
Close Grip Bench Press 185-10
215-6-3
Tricep Extension 3x8
Pushdowns 3x10
E-Z Curl 4x8
Dumbbell Curls 4x8

WEEK #5, #6 & #7

Bench Press 135-10, 185-8
6 reps with: 230, 250, 260, 270x2
230-8
Dumbbell Flies 3x10
Close Grip Bench Press 185-10
220-6-3
Tricep Extension 3x8
Pushdowns 3x10
E-Z Curl 4x8
Dumbbell Curls 4x8

WEEK #8

Bench Press 135-10, 185-8
6 reps with: 235, 255, 265, 275x2
235-8
Dumbbell Flies 3x10

Close Grip Bench Press 185-10
225-6-3
Tricep Extension 3x8
Pushdowns 3x10
E-Z Curl 4x8
Dumbbell Curls 4x8

The second eight weeks will concentrate more on the Bench Press. The reps will be lower and the bodybuilding will decrease. The first and second bench press training day will have a different amount of reps.

WEEK #9

1st Day Bench Press 135-10
175-8, 215-6
3 reps with: 245, 265, 275x2
245-6
Tricep Extension 3x8
Pushdowns 3x8
E-Z Curl 3x8
Dumbbell Curls 3x8

2nd Day Bench Press 135x10
175-8, 215-6, 245-3
2 reps with: 275, 285, 285x2
260-4
Same Bodybuilding as first day.

WEEK #10

1st Day Bench Press 135-10
175-8, 215-6
3 reps with: 250, 270, 280x2
245-6
Tricep Extension 3x8
Pushdowns 3x8
E-Z Curl 3x8
Dumbbell Curls 3x8

2nd Day Bench Press 135x10
175-8, 215-6, 250-3
2 reps with: 280, 290, 290x2
265-4
Same Bodybuilding as first day.

WEEK #11 & #12

1st Day Bench Press 135-10
175-8, 220-6
3 reps with: 255, 275, 285x2
250-6
Tricep Extension 3x8
Pushdowns 3x8
E-Z Curl 3x8
Dumbbell Curls 3x8

2nd Day Bench Press 135x10
175-8, 220-6, 255-3
2 reps with: 285, 295x3
270-4
Same Bodybuilding as first day.

WEEK #13

1st Day Bench Press 135-10
175-8, 220-6
3 reps with: 255, 275, 290, 285
250-6
Pushdowns 4x8
Dumbbell Curls 4x8

2nd Day Bench Press 135x10
175-8, 220-6, 255-3
2 reps with: 285, 300, 295x2
270-4
Same Bodybuilding as first day.

WEEK #14

1st Day Bench Press 135-10
175-8, 220-6, 255-3
1 rep with: 290, 300, 310
280-3
2nd Day Bench Press 135x10
175-8, 220-6, 255-3
1 rep with: 290, 300, 310
280-3

WEEK #15

1st Day Bench Press 135-10
175-8, 220-6, 255-3
1 rep with: 290, 305, 315
285-3
2nd Day Bench Press 135x10
175-8, 220-6, 255-3
1 rep with: 290, 305
3 reps with: 285, 285

WEEK #16

Contest on Saturday
Tuesday of that week:
Bench Press 135-10, 175-8
220-4, 255-2
1 rep with: 290, 305

At the contest, your attempts in the bench should range something like 280-285, 300-310, 320-330, depending on the progress you've made in the routine.

The weights will have to be adjusted for individual needs. Regardless of weights used strive to complete all sets in every workout. If you can do this you will make progress.