



5 PULLUP TRAINING PLAN

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Overview

Hitting the benchmark of 5 pullups straight is a significant landmark achievement. Reaching this goal signifies an upgrade in upper body strength, specifically in the upper back and arms. Whether you are an athlete, trying to get fit for a job (such as firefighter, paramedic, search and rescue worker etc.) or are just seeking a new fitness goal to conquer, this plan will help you achieve this goal and take your physical fitness to the next level.

The training plan is divided into 3 blocks (mesocycles) and each block is one month long. Each block is divided into one week long cycles (microcycles). Within each week, there is one day in which pullups are being done. On this day, your focus will be on slightly increasing the total number of pull ups you do during that workout. As the weeks and months go on, the total amount of reps will gradually increase, and this should result in an increase in the maximum number of pull ups you are capable of doing during a single set.

Considerations

Since pull ups are a bodyweight exercise, body composition can have a significant effect on your ability to do them. The more body fat you carry, especially around your waist, the more difficult it will be for you to hit the target of 5 straight pull ups. The most accessible way to check if your levels of body fat are within a good range is by measuring your waist. Ideally, your waist should be less than half of your height (if you are 5'10" make sure your waist stays smaller than 35"). Not only will getting a slimmer waist make this program more manageable, it will also lower the risk of injury to your joints and be beneficial to your cardiovascular health. On that note, it is also important to point out that you should also keep your waist larger than 40% of your height as being too slim comes with its own health risks (if you are 5'10" your waist should be larger than 28").

Gender is another consideration. Since men generally have more muscle mass than women, they can generally achieve this goal quicker than women can. This does not mean that this goal is unrealistic for women. Simply search "woman doing 5 pull ups in a row" on any social media platform and you will find many results. As long as you keep your waist size between 40-50% of your height and you meet the pull up prerequisite, following this program should help achieve or exceed the goal of 5 pull ups in a row, if not get you very close.

Prerequisite

Before following this program you should be able to do at least 2 pull ups straight with good form and full range of motion.

Pull up Form and Technique

Here is a link to a video that breaks down form and technique.

How to follow program

As mentioned earlier, the program has one training day, in which you will be doing pull ups, per week. Ideally, you should train your upper back muscles 2-3 times per week. There should be at least 48-72 hours between those days to allow the upper back muscles to adequately recover before training them again (that number will depend on the individual's ability to recover). In between those days you may train other muscle groups such as your chest, legs or arms, do cardio or even have a dedicated rest day. You should note that it would be best practice to avoid training your back again until that 48-72 hour period passes. Here is an example of what a training week can look like:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Day 1 Pull ups + Upper body	Day 2 Lower body squat day	Cardio	Day 3 Upper body	Day 4 Deadlifts + lower body	Cardio + Abs	Rest

When training push ups, on both days, they should be done as the first exercise, after a sufficient warmup and mobility drills. Here is an example:

Week 1 - Day 1
Pull ups 1, 1, 1 DB shoulder press 3 x 12 Cable rows 3 x 10-12 E-Z bar curls 3 x 8-10 Tricep pushdown 3 x 10-12

Since this is a pull up focused program, only the sets and rep schemes for pushups will be presented. As far as other exercises or training days, do what you please, just note that you would be well advised to take one or two rest days, when you will not workout, every week.

Be sure to start with an adequate warmup to start your workout. A brisk walk on a treadmill or using the stationary bike at a moderate pace until you start sweating would be sufficient. Some mobility drills and rotator cuff exercises can be done as well if needed.

Before starting with the main pull up sets you should work your way into them by doing some warmup sets like this:

10 assisted pullups (@30% of bodyweight) | 1 min rest

5 assisted pullups (@50% of bodyweight) | 1 min rest

2 assisted pullups (@70% of bodyweight) | 2 min rest

If you do not have access to an assisted pullup machine you can warmup the same way at a lat pull down machine. You can also use bands with decreasing tension if neither machine is available.

Before getting into the program, the *deload week* needs to be explained, as this is a highly essential part of your training. A deload is a part of the program in which the training volume and intensity is decreased to allow the body to recover while still practicing the movement. Many people find this phase of training boring but it is important to emphasize that you should not skip the deload because doing so will lead to overtraining which would cause your progress to stall or even regress. You can use the deload as an opportunity to focus on perfecting your form, tempo and other areas of your technique.

Pull up Training Program

Month 1

Week 1

Day 1

Pull ups 1, 1, 1 | 2 min rest between sets

Week 2

Day 1

Pull ups 1, 1, 2 | 2 min rest between sets

Week 3

Day 1

Pull ups 1, 2, 2+| 2 min rest between sets

Week 4 *DELOAD*

Day 1

Assisted pull ups 3, 3, 3 @50% bodyweight| 2 min rest between sets

Month 2

Week 1

Day 1

Pull ups 1, 1, 2| 2 min rest between sets

Week 2

Day 1

Pull ups 1, 2, 2| 2 min rest between sets

Week 3

Day 1

Pull ups 2, 2, 3+| 2 min rest between sets

Week 4 *DELOAD*

Day 1

Assisted pull ups 3, 3, 3 @50% bodyweight| 2 min rest between sets

Month 3

Week 1

Day 1

Pull ups 2, 2, 2| 2 min rest between sets

Week 2

Day 1

Pull ups 2, 2, 3| 2 min rest between sets

Week 3

Day 1

Pull ups 3, 3, 3+| 2 min rest between sets

Week 4 *DELOAD*

Day 1

Assisted pull ups 3, 4, 4 @50% bodyweight| 2 min rest between sets

Month 4

Week 1

Test day

Warmup:

10 assisted pullups (@30% of bodyweight) | 1 min rest

5 assisted pullups (@50% of bodyweight) | 1 min rest

2 assisted pullups (@70% of bodyweight) | 2 min rest

5 pull up attempt!

Month 4 (cont.)

Week 2

Day 1

Pull ups 3, 3, 3 | 2 min rest between sets

Week 3

Day 1

Pull ups 3, 3, 4+ | 2 min rest between sets

Week 4 *DELOAD*

Day 1

Pull ups 3, 3, 4 | 1 min rest between sets

Month 5

Week 1

Day 1

Warmup:

10 assisted pullups (@30% of bodyweight) | 1 min rest

5 assisted pullups (@50% of bodyweight) | 1 min rest

2 assisted pullups (@70% of bodyweight) | 2 min rest

10 pull up attempt part 2!

Good luck 💪