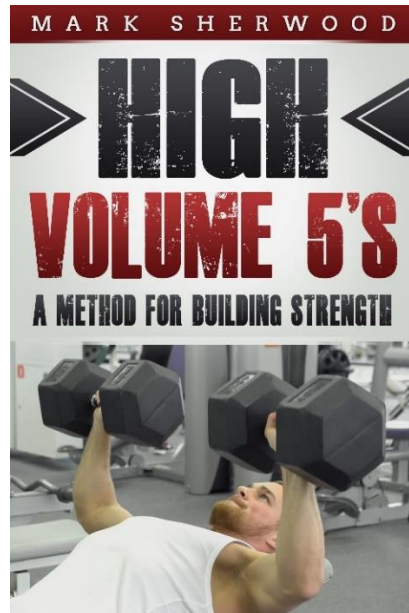


High Volume 5's

A Method For Building Strength



Mark Sherwood

For more information from the author visit:

<http://www.precisionpointtraining.com/>

Copyright © 2018 by Mark Sherwood

Giant Pyramid Training: A Method For Building Strength

By Mark Sherwood

The author and publisher of the information in this book are not responsible in any manner for physical harm or damages that may occur in response to following the instructions presented in this material. As with any exercise program, a doctor's approval should be obtained before engaging in exercise.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Chapter 1: Choose Basic Exercises

Chapter 2: Use 50% to 65% Of Your Single Rep Max

Chapter 3: Five Reps Per Set

Chapter 4: 60 to 90 Seconds Rest Between Sets

Chapter 5: Lift According To Your Capacity For Strong Sets

Chapter 6: Training Frequency

Chapter 7: Progressing At The Right Rate

Chapter 8: Building A High Volume Foundation

About The Author

Additional Resources

Introduction

In this brief book, you will learn an approach to training that allows you to accumulate a substantial amount of training volume without accumulating an overabundance of fatigue. In order to get strong as possible, you must have a sufficient amount of energy, force, and power, throughout your workouts. The only way to accomplish this is to pace yourself throughout each workout. If you accumulate fatigue too quickly during the early stages of a training session, you will find yourself in a state of weakness and fatigue throughout the majority of the workout. This mistake will hinder your progress, but it can be avoided through the correct use of high volume 5's.

High volume 5's training is based on seven guidelines. These seven guidelines are listed below and will then be explained one at a time in separate chapters.

1. Choose basic exercises based on pressing, pulling, and squatting.
2. Use fairly light weights that range from 50% to 65% of your single rep max.
3. Perform five forceful reps for each set.
4. Rest 60 to 90 seconds between sets.
5. Keep repeating sets for a muscle group as long you can lift the weight forcefully for all five reps of each set.
6. Press three times per week, squat twice per week, deadlift and pull once per week.
7. Gradually add weight as the weights become easier to lift.

Chapter 1

Choose Basic Exercises



Exercise selection plays a vital role in any well-constructed strength training program, including high volume training. The quickest most efficient way to build strength is to focus on exercises that are based on pressing, pulling, and squatting motions.

3 Basic Powerlifts

The most basic of the pressing, pulling, and squatting exercises consist of the three powerlifts which include:

1. Bench Press
2. Squats
3. Deadlifts including conventional and sumo

Variations of Pressing, Pulling, and Squatting

In addition to the three basic powerlifts, there are many other variations of pressing, pulling, and squatting exercises. Several of these variations are listed in the chart on the next page:

Variations of Pressing, Squatting & Pulling		
Variations Of Pressing	Variations of Squatting	Variations Of Pulling
Incline Press Decline Press Overhead Press Dips Push-ups	Front Squats Belt squats Hack squats Goblet Squats Leg Press	Bent Over Rows Seated Pulley Rows Lat Pulldowns Pull-ups
The pressing exercises that are based on the use of a barbell can be replaced with dumbbells if desired.		

The majority of exercises performed in your workouts should be based on pressing, pulling, and squatting exercises. I recommend that you keep your workouts simple in terms of exercise selection. If you are scheduled to do a pressing exercise for a given workout, just do one pressing exercise (note: this is a suggestion, not a rule). The same goes for squatting exercises and pulling exercises. In contrast, you may choose to switch to different kinds of pressing, pulling, or squatting exercises from workout to workout. In other words, you may want to do overhead presses on Monday, incline presses on Wednesday, and bench presses on Friday. By doing this, you keep each workout simple, but you make room for a variety of exercises over the course of a week.

The number of sets that you should do for each exercise is based on your personal capacity to repeat sets as long as the muscle group you are training remains at full strength. This will be discussed in greater detail in chapter five.

Assistance Exercises That Isolate Muscles

You also have the option of including assistance exercises that isolate a specific muscle group that you are targeting. Since you will be doing high volume work with basic pressing, pulling, and squatting exercises, you only need to do a moderate amount of sets with the isolation exercises. I recommend choosing just one or two isolation exercises per workout. The isolation exercises should be done for 3 sets of 5 reps, or 5 sets of 5 reps with enough weight to challenge you to do five even paced reps for each set. A list of common assistance exercises you may want to utilize include:

- Hyperextensions: For lower back and hamstrings
- Reverse hyperextensions: For lower back and hamstrings
- Leg Curls: For hamstrings
- Triceps extensions (any variation)
- Dumbbell Raises to the front, side, or rear: For deltoids
- Curls for biceps (any variation)

Chapter 2

Use 50% to 65% Of Your Single Rep Max



High volume training should be done with fairly light weights that range from 50% to 65% of your single rep max for the exercise being performed. If you try to do high volume training with heavy weights, it can easily lead to burn out. The use of fairly light weight is what allows you to perform a lot of sets of five reps without overtraining.

A four Week Training Cycle: Increase by 5% Each Week

Notice that 50% to 65% of your single rep max is a range, not one specific percentage of weight. I recommend that you emphasize a different percentage of weight each week. The easiest way to do this is to start with 50% the first week, and increase by 5% each week until you reach 65% during the fourth week. This forms a four week training cycle which is shown below:

Week 1: Use 50%

Week 2: Use 55%

Week 3: Use 60%

Week 4: Use 65%

Start Each Exercise With 50%

Even though you will be emphasizing a different percentage of your single rep max each week, start with 50% on your first set of each exercise. Do this throughout the four week cycle as follows:

During Week 1:

Start with 50% for your first set of each exercise.

Repeat the rest of your sets with 50% of your single rep max.

During Week 2:

Start with 50% for your first set of each exercise.

Increase the weight to 55% for the rest of your sets.

During Week 3:

Start with 50% for your first set of each exercise.

Use 55% for your second set.

Increase the weight to 60% for the rest of your sets.

During Week 4:

Start with 50% for your first set of each exercise.

Use 55% for your second set.

Use 60% for your third set.

Increase the weight to 65% for the rest of your sets.

The exact amount of work sets that you should perform for each exercise or muscle group is based on your personal capacity to remain at full strength. This will be explained in greater detail in chapter five.

Once you have finished a four week training cycle, you can start the cycle over again with 50% of your single rep max.

Chapter 3

Five Reps Per Set



Some of the best powerlifters in the world come from Russia. Many of the Russian lifters prefer to utilize a lot of training volume in their workouts. However, the Russian version of high volume training may be different than the expectations that many people have of high volume training. Many lifters immediately assume that high volume training refers to doing high reps for each set. While the Russians do perform a lot of reps within a workout, most of their lifters do not perform a lot of reps per set. Instead of doing a few sets that each consist of a lot of reps, they do a lot of sets that each consist of low reps. This holds true even when fairly light weights are used. For example, instead of using a fairly light weight for 5 sets of 15 reps, they would use a fairly light weight for 15 sets of 5 reps.

The Onset of Fatigue Should Occur Gradually

Many lifters accumulate fatigue rapidly within a set by pushing themselves to do as many reps as possible. Do not assume that a high amount of fatigue at the end of each set will lead to a high amount of strength. When doing a lot of sets of 5 reps, you will not feel very much fatigue at the end of each set. Some degree of fatigue will gradually accumulate by the end of the workout because you will be doing a lot of sets, but you should not feel fatigue at the end of each set.

Force, Power, Perfect Form

The emphasis of volume workouts with 5 reps is not on fatigue, strain, or struggle. Your primary focus when repeating sets of 5 reps should be on force, power, and repetition with perfect form. You can accomplish this by limiting the number of repetitions to only five reps per set. Will you be tired at the end of your first, second, or third set? No, you will still have plenty of energy in reserve to do many more sets

that can all be performed with force, power, and perfect form. This is how you build strength with high volume training.

5 Reps per Set for Every Set

When using 50% of your single rep max, you may be able to do 25 consecutive reps if you push yourself to fatigue, but you will stop at 5 reps to avoid fatigue. The same goes when using any other percentage, as you will perform 5 reps when using 50%, 55%, 60%, or 65% of your single rep max. The high volume 5's workouts are very simple, you will perform 5 forceful reps for every set of every exercise.

Anaerobic A-lactic Endurance

The fact that you will have plenty of energy in reserve after doing a set of 5 reps is what allows you to remain strong for a lot of sets. Your goal is to do a lot of sets, and to do so without overtraining. This type of training builds a specific type of endurance. Many people think of endurance in the context of aerobic endurance or lactate endurance. You will not be building either of these types of endurance but will be building anaerobic A-Lactic endurance within the creatine phosphate energy system. In other words, you will get better at doing a lot of sets of 5 reps that are performed with force and power. You may notice that if you stick with high volume 5's on a consistent basis, you will be able to do more sets of 5 reps before growing fatigued.

High Volume 5's Amplify the Effects of Heavier Training

Building a solid base with the right type of volume training will tend to energize your metabolism. Many lifters find that this amplifies the effects of their training when they eventually change to heavier weights with less volume. The conditioning and endurance that are developed from high volume training make it easier to recover when you decide to start increasing the weight and decreasing the volume. When done correctly, high volume 5's will make the rest of your training work better.

Chapter 4

60 to 90 Seconds Rest Between Sets



Don't Rush

When performing high volume 5's, you may have the urge to move quickly from set to set because the first few sets will feel pretty easy. This has the potential to cause you to train at a faster pace than you should. To avoid this mistake, make sure you give yourself **60 to 90 seconds of rest between sets** in order to pace yourself properly to do plenty of sets. If you move too quickly from set to set, you will begin to tire out before you have done the amount of sets you are truly capable of performing at full strength.

Don't Linger Between Sets

Some of you may have the exact opposite tendency of those who move from set to set too fast. This is most likely to happen to those who are already in the habit of utilizing long rest periods between sets when training for strength. You generally need at least three minutes of rest before doing another set if you push yourself to do as many reps as possible with a heavy weight. However, you will not be pushing yourself to do as many reps as possible within each set, nor will you be using heavy weights. This being the case, you shouldn't need more than **60 to 90 seconds of rest between sets**.

Heavier Weight = More Rest

When using only 50% of your single rep max, you should be able to move a little faster by resting only 60 seconds between sets. Of course when you increase the weight, the sets are going to be a little more taxing and you may need 90 seconds of rest between sets when using 65% of your single rep max.

More Taxing Exercises Require Longer Rest

Another factor to be considered is the exercise being performed. You may find it easy to move from set to set with only 60 seconds of rest between sets when performing bench presses, however, deadlifts are a lot more taxing and you may need all 90 seconds between sets; even with 50%.

To be honest, it's not going to hurt you if you rest three to five minutes between sets, but if you do a high volume workout with that much rest between sets, you will be in the gym for a long, long time. If you want to complete a high volume workout within a reasonable amount of time, learn to move at a moderate pace. This allows you to get a lot of sets in by the end of each workout without being gassed out with fatigue early in the workout.

Chapter 5

Lift According To Your Capacity For Strong Sets



The high volume 5's workout is not based on a predetermined number of sets that you are required to perform. The amount of sets that are performed will vary from lifter to lifter according to their capacity for strong sets. What are strong sets? They are sets that are performed while you are at full strength. If you keep repeating sets and reach a point where you sense that the force of your lifts or the speed of your reps are starting to decrease, you are no longer at full strength. This is the point where you should quit working the muscle group that you have been exercising. You can then move on to a different muscle group, or terminate the workout if you have completed all of your exercises for a given workout.

Many lifters who engage in high volume training do so because of the belief that more is better. This is only true up to a certain limit; the limit being the number of sets you can perform while remaining at full strength. The key to high volume training is to be able accumulate a lot of volume without overtraining. This can be done by using fairly light weight and limiting yourself to five reps per set. The number of sets should be determined according to how many strong sets can be repeated at full strength.

If the concept of strong sets seems somewhat unclear in relationship to how many sets you should do, consider two factors that let you know when to stop repeating sets for a muscle group. The first factor is feel, the second is a mental awareness of rep speed, or rep pace.

Feel

If the weights suddenly begin to feel heavy, or your reps start to feel sluggish, it is an indicator that you are no longer at full strength. If you feel like you can do 30 sets of 5 reps at full strength, you are probably using a very casual rep pace throughout the workout instead of performing your reps in a forceful manner.

Rep Pace or Rep Speed

Lifters who are fully tuned in to their body are going to notice the difference in rep speed when they are at full strength compared to when they are not. As fatigue sets in, you will reach a point when your muscles weaken and rep speed starts to slow down. When you sense this is starting to happen, stop.

Differences In Capacity

Most lifters are going to be able to reach 10 to 12 sets at full strength when working with 50% of their single rep max. Some may be able to do close to 20 sets, and some may only be able to do eight or nine. Of course if you increase the weight up to 65% of your single rep max, you won't be able to do as many sets at full strength as you could when using 50%. You may find that you can only perform seven to nine sets with 65%. Of course if you can do more than this at full strength, you should.

Switching Exercises Every 3 to 4 Sets

If you truly want to maximize your training volume, you may be able to increase the number of sets you can perform at full strength by switching exercises every three to four sets. For example, if you are doing squats and bench presses within the same workout, you can do three to four sets of squats, and then do three to four sets of bench presses. You would continue to switch back and forth between squats and bench presses every three to four sets as long as the muscle groups being worked remain at full strength.

When switching back and forth between exercises, your muscles will have a longer rest period every three to four sets. For example, when doing your first four sets of squats, your legs will be resting 60 to 90 seconds between sets. If you then switch to bench presses for four sets, your legs are going to get a rest period of at least five minutes before you come back to squats again. You may find that the amount of sets you can perform at full strength goes up when using this method.

Capacity for Volume Can Be Improved

As mentioned in chapter three, you may find that high volume training with 5 reps causes your anaerobic A-Lactic endurance to increase. If this happens, you will notice that you can perform more sets of 5 reps at full strength. Those who originally had the ability to do 10 sets of 5 reps with 50% may eventually develop the ability to perform 12 to 15 sets of 5 reps at full strength.

The bottom line for high volume training with 5 reps is to gauge the number of sets that you perform according to your own capacity for strong sets. Be careful not to imitate others who may have a different capacity for strong sets than you. You are an individual, so train within the context of your individual physiology.

Chapter 6

Training Frequency



Training frequency refers how often you work a muscle group each week. There is no hard and fast rule for training frequency that neatly applies to every lifter. Even though this is true, I am going to make a recommendation as a starting place for how often to train each type of exercise. My recommendation is listed below:

Press three times per week

Squat twice per week

Deadlift and pull once per week

Why the variance in frequency for different types of exercise? Because some exercises are more taxing than others. The most demanding exercise is deadlifts. If you do high volume deadlifts three times per week, the workload can bury you and lead to over training. This is why I recommend that you deadlift and pull only once per week. Not only that, but deadlifts work your legs and lower back. If you consider that that your legs and lower back are heavily utilized when doing squat workouts, then you can see that the combination of two squat workouts and one deadlift workout will work your legs and lower back three times per week, which is plenty in the context of high volume training.

Notice also that pressing exercises are performed three times per week. This may seem like a lot to some lifters, but pressing exercises are not highly taxing and many of you will find that they can be done three times per week as long as you stay within your capacity for strong sets.

When following the procedures for high volume 5's, at least three workouts per week must be performed. If you split up pressing exercises, squatting exercises, and pulling exercises into different workouts, then you will be working out more than three days per week. Regardless of how you organize your exercises into a weekly schedule, make sure you perform each exercise according to the guidelines that have been outlined in this book.

Assistance Exercises

A different set of guidelines should be applied to assistance exercises. Assistance exercises are optional. If you choose to do them, choose one or two assistance exercises that correspond to the muscles being worked for a given workout. Do 3 sets of 5 reps, or 5 sets of 5 reps for each assistance exercise. Use enough weight to make it challenging to do five even paced reps for each set, but avoid strenuous grinder reps.

Forming A Weekly Schedule

Once you know the proper procedures for each exercise, you can put the exercises you want to perform into a schedule. Some of you may prefer a schedule based on three workouts per week. Others may prefer a schedule based on four or five workouts per week. All of these options are shown on the next two pages:

3 Workouts per Week		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench Press Belt Squats	Incline Press Deadlifts Seated Pulley Rows	Dumbbell Bench Presses Squats
Do 5 Reps per set		
Repeat sets of an exercise as long as you are at full strength.		
Use 50% week 1, 55% week 2, 60% week 3, and 65% week 4 See chapter 2 for thorough explanation		
Rest 60 to 90 seconds between sets.		
Include assistance exercises as desired.		

4 Workouts per Week			
Monday	Wednesday	Friday	Saturday
Goblet Squats Incline Press	Squats Overhead Press	Bench Press	Deadlifts Seated Pulley Rows
Do 5 Reps per set			
Repeat sets of an exercise as long as you are at full strength.			
Use 50% week 1, 55% week 2, 60% week 3, and 65% week 4 See chapter 2 for thorough explanation			
Rest 60 to 90 seconds between sets.			
Include assistance exercises as desired.			

5 Workouts per Week				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Saturday
Squats	Bench Press	Deadlifts Seated Pulley rows	Bench Press	Overhead Press Goblet squats
Do 5 Reps per set				
Repeat sets of an exercise as long as you are at full strength.				
Use 50% week 1, 55% week 2, 60% week 3, and 65% week 4 See chapter 2 for thorough explanation				
Rest 60 to 90 seconds between sets.				
Include assistance exercises as desired.				

Chapter 7

Progressing At The Right Rate



High volume training with light weights will not amount to anything productive if you don't have a plan for increasing the amount of weight you are using. Since high volume training is done with fairly light weights, some people may believe that it will have little effect on strength gains. But remember that fairly light weight refers to 50% to 65% of your single rep max.

The Example of Serge Nubret

Serge Nubret was a bodybuilder who competed in the 1960's – 1980's. He only weighed a little over 200 pounds but could bench 500 pounds raw without the modern bench shirts or raps that do a lot of the lifting for you. Serge preferred volume training with 225 pounds or less when doing his bench press workouts. Of course for many people, 225 pounds would be heavy, but it was light for Serge as it was under 50% of his single rep max.

The example of Serge Nubret shows that it is possible to get stronger by using light weights. It also shows that if you start out using light weights and keep gaining strength as you add more weight, the added weight will still seem light. For example, if 50% of your single rep max is only 100 pounds, many would think of it as a light weight. However, if your strength improves to the point where 50% of your single rep max is 200 pounds, many people would think of it as a fairly heavy weight. Regardless of the fact that 200 pounds may look heavy to some lifters, it won't feel any heavier to you than when you were using 100 pounds; it will still only be 50% of your max.

Goal: Add Weight Without Adding Difficulty

Your basic goal is to keep increasing the amount of weight without the added weight becoming more difficult to lift. In order for this to happen, the weight that you are currently using must become easier to lift. When it becomes easier to lift, add five pounds. Each time you add five pounds, it shouldn't feel any more difficult to lift than the last time you added five pounds.

If you start with 100 pounds, and it becomes easier to lift, you can move up to 105 pounds. When you move up to 105 pounds, it shouldn't feel any more difficult than when you started out with 100 pounds. Each time the current weight you are using becomes easier to lift, you add another five pounds until you are using 110 pounds, then 115 pounds, 120 pounds, and so on. If it takes you two years to work your way up to 150 pounds, it shouldn't feel any more difficult to lift 150 pounds than when you started with 100 pounds two years earlier.

Of course if you are following the procedure described in chapter two, then you will be adding weight from week to week across a four week cycle. Just to review chapter two, you will be using 50% of your single rep max during week one of a four week training cycle. During week two, you will be using 55%. The weights will be increased to 60% during week three, and then to 65% during week four.

When you finish week four, you will start a new four week cycle by returning to the same weight you used for 50% of the previous cycle. However, you may notice that 50% percent seems lighter when starting the new cycle than it did in the previous cycle. If it does, you will probably be able to do more sets at full strength than you could with the same weight in the previous cycle. This is a sign that you have gained strength, and you can repeat the four week cycle with an additional 5 pounds.

If you start a new cycle, but the same weights don't feel any easier to lift than the previous cycle, you are not ready to add weight to your lifts yet. It may take eight weeks instead of only four weeks to add five pounds to your lifts. The thought of adding five pounds every eight weeks may give you the impression that you are not making any progress, but if you think it through, you will be much stronger at the end of a year. An example will help to understand this.

Let's look at a lifter who has a max bench press of 200 pounds. When using 50% of his single rep max, he will be working out with 100 pounds. If the lifter is able to add 5 pounds every eight weeks without the lifts becoming any more difficult, he will be using 130 pounds within a year of training. Simple math will tell you that 100 pounds is 50% of 200, and 130 pounds is 50% of 260. If you carefully consider these numbers, you will realize that this lifter increased his max bench from 200 pounds to 260 pounds. He did it by adding five pounds to his lifts every eight weeks when training with 50% of his max.

Be patient when adding weight to your lifts and only add weight when you sense that the weights are becoming easier to lift. If you are adding weight to each four week training cycle, and each cycle becomes more difficult than the last, you are adding weight too fast. In contrast, if you are adding weight at the right rate, each training cycle should feel relatively the same in terms of effort and difficulty. Be careful not to overlook the importance of these concepts. Your ability to make long term progress will be accentuated if you learn how to add weight at the right rate.

Chapter 8

Building A High Volume Foundation



High volume 5's training is designed for the specific purpose of gaining strength. Many lifters equate high volume training with train until your drained; don't stop until you drop. Hopefully you can see that this mentality is not the basis of high volume 5's. You should keep a good pace without trying to race. The idea is to start strong and finish strong, even if you train long. Get in plenty of reps, but avoid a high amount of fatigue at the end of your sets.

High volume training is generally used as a foundational type of training that serves as an excellent base for heavier training. It is probably not a training strategy that most lifters are going to use on a continual basis, but you may find that it provides an initial boost to your strength and metabolism. After a period of high volume training, you can then switch to a training method consisting of less volume and more weight. When you make the switch to heavier training, the fact that it was preceded by a high volume training base will tend to make your body more responsive to the heavier training.

Those of you who love to do a lot of sets within your workouts are going to enjoy high volume 5's. If you have been using a training system based on heavy, slow, low volume training, and you feel like you need a switch, get in the gym and start repeating sets of five reps with 50% to 65% of your max. Keep going as long as you feel strong and repeat the workouts as long as they keep working. In the process, do your best to learn your capacities, make adjustments when necessary, and refine your workouts. If you are diligent to do these things, you can't help but get bigger, stronger, and better. Best of training to you.

About The Author

Mark Sherwood is a long time fitness enthusiast who has pursued weight training and other fitness activities for over thirty years. His educational and professional background include a B.S. degree as an exercise specialist in physical education from the University of Wisconsin Madison, and positions as a fitness instructor and physical education teacher.

One of Mark's passions is to distinguish between strength training concepts that are consistently effective as opposed to those that are effective for a short time period. Through his education, research, and personal trial and error, he has endeavored to gain the necessary knowledge to share effective training strategies with those who desire to maximize their training results.

Mark resides with his family in Southern California. For more training resources from Mark, you can visit www.precisionpointtraining.com. In addition, you can view more books on strength training that he has authored on the next page.

Additional Resources

A Quick Guide To Strength

Beginning Strength Training

Cluster Set Training

Force And Frequency Training

High Frequency Strength Training

Heavy Frequency Training

Individualized Workouts For Hardgainers

Never Miss A Lift

Overcoming Strength Training Plateaus

Quick Workouts For Quick Muscles

Rest-Pause Training

Strength Challenge 20/20

Strength Training Capacity

Strength Training Thresholds

Strength To The Max

Strength To The Max And Beyond

The 1 x 100 Challenge

The High Frequency Training Pyramid

The Peak Strength Principle

12-10-8-6: A Workout Plan For Building Size And Strength