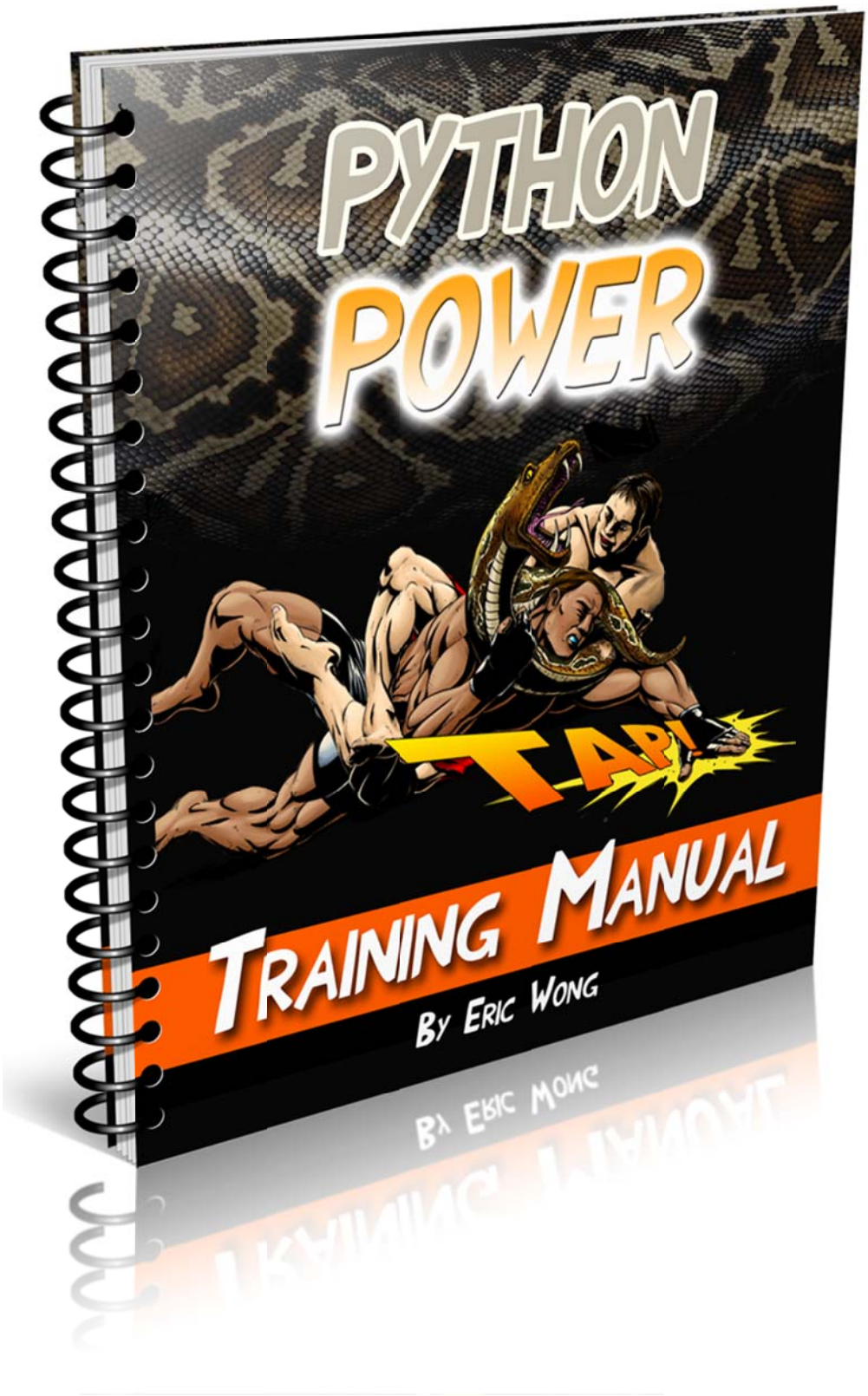
PYTHON
POWER
TAP!
TRAINING MANUAL
By Eric Wong

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Python Power Training Manual

Table of Contents

Preface

Are you ready for Python Power?

That means, getting more taps, locking up head-popping submissions and shocking your opponents and training partners with your new strength and stamina?

The exercises and workouts in this program are one-of-a-kind and once you complete the six-week program you'll have a powerful new asset to use in your submission game.

You may even want to get a python's head tattooed on one of your hands so they know what hit them when you wrap them up and they can't get out. ;)

When you're working through this program, many of the exercises aren't limited just by your muscular system.

Many, especially those working your isometric stamina, will require that you get out of your comfort zone and take your mental toughness to the next level.

The key to pushing through this is knowing that the intense burning caused by the lactic energy system IS NOT damaging your muscles or tissues.

Every second you can hang on a bit longer will translate into 2 extra seconds of holding a sub getting you more taps than ever before.

So gut it out and you will be richly rewarded!

[Of course, any shooting pain or numbness is NOT what I'm talking about here. If that happens you've got something else going on and should stop the exercise and not injure yourself]

To get the MOST out of this program, complete it as outlined.

Unless you have a specific issue that must be worked around, don't add, subtract, reverse or change the exercises or program in any way.

If you do, I can't guarantee the results.

But follow it as outlined and get ready to be the most powerful submission artist in the jungle.

Cool? Then let's go!

Background

Before we get into the meat of the program, I want to share the full story of the name behind this program…

The main idea behind the program is because in the early days of the UFC, the commentators referred to Royce Gracie as a python. Gotta show Royce some love and I named this program partly as a tribute to him.

Obviously, the commentators could see the connection between how a python asphyxiates its prey and how submissions happen, but also, WHAT and HOW the python goes about its business…

For example, they surprise their prey with a lightning-fast strike, so the poor animal doesn't know what hit him, just like you've got to do to catch a sub.

They take down animals much larger than themselves, as pictured below:

They're vicious killers but also refined. They don't spill blood and guts or maim their prey, they don't even break the animal's bones. Instead, they swallow them *whole*.

The best part is that once caught in a pythons grip, *the chance of the prey escaping is slim to none*.

It's this combination of attributes that make the Python the biggest and baddest snake on Earth.

That's why this program is called Python Power, because I want to turn YOU into a python so that once your opponents (and training partners) get in your grips, tapping is *imminent*.

The **Physical Requirements** to Becoming a Python

- **Upper Body Pull:** strength, power and isometric stamina – allow you to quickly lock up a submission and hold it until you get the tap
- **Upper Body Push:** strength and power – required for controlling opponents head and/or limbs to setup submission
- **Hips:** squeezing strength and stamina, extension power and flexibility – for being able to finish triangles, lock up limbs, or get in to unusual and awkward positions with ease
- **'Slithering' Ability –**gets you in the right position to pull off your submission

Bottom line - submission specific strength and stamina is crucial to finishing more fights and getting more taps.

To develop this, the 4 components listed above are where we'll be focusing our training energy to get you on your way to becoming a feared submission artist.

A fight or grappling match is unpredictable and can end up anywhere.

But when your opponent is in a position where you might be able to lock him up and tap him out, you need to know you've got the juice to get the stoppage.

Otherwise, you won't go for the kill or worse, you might go for it, fail, then be left with arms or legs that feel like wet noodles.

Let's prevent this from happening, shall we?

Exercises You Won't Be Doing… and Why

There are a few notable exercises missing from this program, such as heavy Bench Presses, Squats and Deadlifts.

Although this could be considered a travesty by many trainers who think these must be included all the time, here's why I've left them out…

Think of your body's ability to adapt to training as a battery with limited 'ADAPTATION ENERGY'.

If you're doing heavy exercises that take a lot of muscular and nervous system energy like Squats and Deadlifts, your adaptation energy goes to recovering from those exercises.

Anything you do outside of these exercises has less of this 'adaptation energy' to go around, so these exercises and movements don't improve as much.

Eliminate these big, taxing exercises then whatever training you do will get your body's full adaptation energy, resulting in the best gains.

Or, if you're trying to train every quality every time you workout, your body gets totally drained of its adaptation energy, so you don't improve anywhere and quickly hit a plateau.

So don't be scared of the fact that you won't be doing all of the exercises you're used to.

If you've been training consistently for a long time, the break will do you good and when you go back to them, you'll get it back quick. You might even find you'll make even faster gains than before.

Upper Body Pull (UB-Pull)

The UB-Pull muscles are engaged whenever you grab something and pull it close to your body. Exercise examples include Seated Rows and Lat Pulldowns.

In general , proper technique for these exercises is to pull your shoulder blades (scapula) back as you pull the weight/cable closer to your body so the shoulder blades move with the arms in a smooth motion.

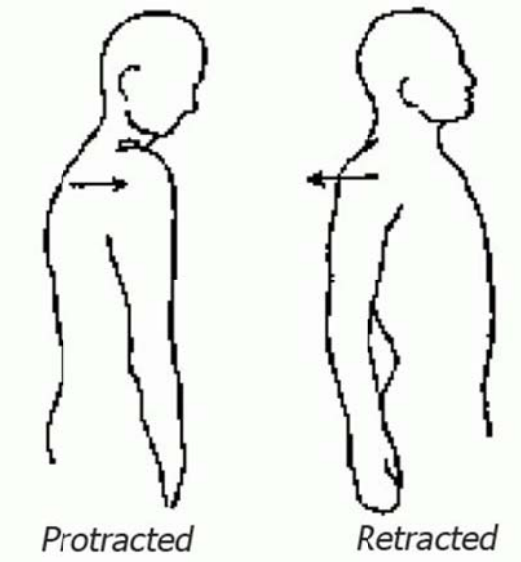
[This is called the scapulohumeral rhythm for all you biomechanics dweebs like me.]

Bottom line - We need to develop strength and power in this basic movement pattern.

But here's one of the reasons why this program is unique and so effective for grapplers and submission artists…

On top of the standard way of performing these exercises, we need to integrate different movement patterns that are specific to how submissions happen in a fight or match.

For example, when you've got your opponents back and you're fighting for a rear naked choke, you want your shoulders to be rounded forward (protracted), so that you have lots of room to search for the neck and slip your forearm under your opponent's chin.



Once you've got the choke locked up, you can't just try and squeeze with your arms/biceps to finish it off. It won't work. You won't have the power.

To finish it efficiently, you've got to pull your shoulders back (retract), engaging the powerful rhomboids, middle traps and lats. Doing so makes the choke ultra tight and will get you the tap.

That's why I've come up with exercises like the Rope Hammer Curl Row and Bear Hug Row – they develop your curl strength, then, once your biceps are fully contracted and your elbows are at full flexion, you pull your shoulder blades back to 'finish the choke'.

This is just *one* of the ways this program is designed specifically for pulling off sick submissions.

Another UB-Pull quality that you'll be improving with this program is your Isometric Stamina (IS).

Sometimes, even when you've got a choke locked up really well, you encounter a tough mofo who's got a neck like a tree trunk or who's got really strong arms.

You can finish it if you don't loosen up an inch and you can hold on long enough for your victim to fatigue. Now, it becomes a test of strength and *will*.

That's where your IS training will come into play. It's not only going to give you the ability to outlast your opponents, but you can't find a tougher mental challenge than an isometric hold.

You'll be training your IS in multiple ways:

- **Dynamic challenges** where you're holding a certain position but other parts of your body are moving training your ability to keep a tight hold while you or your opponent is moving around… An example is the Good Morning Curls exercise that trains the IS of your UB-Pull muscles while doing a Good Morning.
- **In the middle of a set** such as Inverted Rows, forcing you to work dynamically in the presence of serious fatigue due to metabolic acidosis.
- **Straight up isometric holds** – these are designed more to challenge your mental toughness and willpower to hold and fight through the intense burning to target your mental toughness and willpower. When you're in the middle of these, think of the payoff – finishing more subs and tapping guys out that you've never tapped out before.

Upper Body Push (UB-Push)

The UB-Push muscles do the opposite of the UB-Pull muscles; they're engaged when you push something away from your body, either horizontally like a Pushup or Bench Press, or overhead like a Military Press or Push Press.

Sometimes, the natural scapulohumeral rhythm is used, such as in the Pushup, other times, the scapula are held in a retracted position, like in the Bench Press.

[Side note: Holding the shoulder blades in a RETRACTED position is important when doing an UB-Push exercise while you're lying on a bench, because if they are PROtracted (rounded forward), they'll never be able to retract back because the bench will prevent it. Doing a heavy pushing exercise with the shoulder blades protracted will over-emphasize the anterior deltoids and triceps and damage the shoulder joint, which is why I'm so adamant about proper pressing form in my videos.]

Although UB-Pull movements dominate this program, UB-Push movements are still important to include in your program.

Muscular balance is one reason, you don't want to just train one movement pattern of the body without training the opposite, otherwise you'll develop an imbalance and you might risk an injury. Not good.

UB-Push movements are also necessary for some submissions, like the Kimura (keylock).

As you can see in the pic to the right, the top guy is going for the keylock and to finish it, he's got to push with his right arm while pulling with the left.

Pushing strength and power is also needed to get into position to pull off a sub, for example, if your opponent is in your guard and you do a sweep that requires a hip bump and UB-Push to knock him off. Or to escape the mount or side mount to turn the tables.

Hips

You're going to be training your Hips to be powerful and functional in movements directly specific to submissions and grappling.

You use hip extension power when doing armbars to hyperextend your opponent's elbow. The faster and more powerful your 'pop', the quicker you'll get your subs.

I couldn't resist throwing at least ONE of these pictures in. Forgive me.

You need hip flexion power to get your legs on your opponent's neck and control his body for triangle chokes.

You need hip adduction (squeezing) strength to finish triangle chokes, keep arms from escaping armbars, and maintain good positions like your opponent's back to work/finish subs.

A multi-faceted attack must be used to fully train the hips for all of the important movements for pulling off submissions.

Plus, all of these motions happen on the ground, so exercises like Squats and Deadlifts, which are the cornerstones of most programs, take a back seat here.

As I've mentioned before, this is not a beginner level program, so if you've never done a Squat or Deadlift before, you need to get on a strength and conditioning program designed around these core lifts, like my Ultimate MMA S&C program. Building your foundation first will skyrocket your results once you get to this program. Don't put the cart before the horse!

‘Slithering’ Ability

Slithering ability is how you’ll ‘snake’ your way into position. Man I’m on fire with the word play. :)

If you want to see the epitome of a guy who can slither his way into a dominant position, check out this highlight video of Marcelo Garcia in action:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AY8JlJZBgCk

In this program, you’ll be going through various exercises to improve this ability that work on your balance, coordination and mobility, such as the Leg Swoop and Hip Raises.

You’ll also go through something I’ve named the ‘Slithering’ Circuit.

The Slithering Circuit is a flow of exercises that will help you develop your ability to transition smoothly between challenging and awkward positions, making it easier for you to get to where you want in a fight or grappling match.

This circuit will also improve your grappling specific conditioning so that when those frantic moments where you’re rapidly moving up and down and changing positions, you’ll be able to push the pace and come out on top.

Your improved ability to scramble and maintain your composure will payoff against those slippery little suckers who can be tough to deal with, helping you finish them off quicker and easier than ever before.

Program Design Overview

Before each workout, you'll perform the Python Power Dynamic Warmup, which will get your body loose and mobile for the workouts.

After each workout, you'll perform the Compensatory Stretches, which fare designed specifically to balance the demands of the exercises in this program. Performing these stretches will make sure your body doesn't tighten up and get out of balance like a car with misaligned wheels.

Before you get into the workouts, you'll be assessing yourself against the Python Power Meter to see where you are BEFORE you begin the program so you can witness your gains AFTER completing the program.

Although this is a great tool, the best gauge of your progress is how many more submissions you pull off in training, so make sure you let me know how this is going for you. :)

The Python Power workouts are divided into 2 phases: **Phase 1 – Submission Strength** and **Phase 2 – Submission Stamina**.

Each phase is split up into 2 workouts, Day 1 and Day 2.

You'll be performing 3 Python Power workouts per week, so your schedule will look like this:

Phase 1 – Submission Strength

- Week 0: Python Power Assessment
- Week 1: Day 1 / Day 2 / Day 1
- Week 2: Day 2 / Day 1 / Day 2
- Week 3: Day 1 / Day 2 / Day 1

Phase 2 – Submission Stamina

- Week 4: Day 1 / Day 2 / Day 1
- Week 5: Day 2 / Day 1 / Day 2
- Week 6: Day 1 / Day 2 / Day 1
- Week 7: Python Power Reassessment

NOTE: Take at least 1 day of rest between workouts; try not to do them on consecutive days. Mon, Wed and Fri workouts work great. If you have to because of a weird schedule or something it's OK, but spread them out as much as possible.

Python Power Meter

The Python Power Meter is a set of 4 fitness tests to assess your submission ability. Basically, the goal is improvement in strength and stamina measures over the 6 week program.

When performing the assessment, make sure to **follow these general guidelines for each test**:

- ✓ Perform the Dynamic Warmup first, then a thorough warmup as detailed on the Python Power Meter Worksheet for the first test (Seated Row)
- ✓ For each subsequent test, perform a shorter warmup of 1 set of 3-4 reps at a weight lighter than your estimated working weight
- ✓ Rest 5-8 minutes between each test
- ✓ Only count reps in good form – DO NOT count reps in poor form

Here are the tests and why they're a part of the Python Power Meter:

Seated Row Strength: 4-6 rep max

- Assesses how well your Pulling muscles work together: biceps, posterior deltoids, lats, rhomboids, middle and lower traps

Bicep Curl Strength: 4-6 rep max

- Assesses the strength of your biceps working dynamically in isolation

Max # of Inverted Rows in 5 Minutes

- Assesses the relative stamina of your Pulling muscles

Max Hang Time from a Fat Bar

- Assesses your relative grip strength

Phase 1 – Submission Strength

The **Submission Strength Phase** will generally be lower reps and more sets with plenty of rest between sets. This is because to develop strength, you need to be training at a higher % of your max and you want each set to be at full capacity.

To get a little more technical, when training strength, your focus is on your Anaerobic Alactic energy system (ATP-CP). This system only has energy for about 12 seconds (hence the low # of reps) before it burns out. This system is also highly dependent on neuromuscular activation, or your brain's ability to fire up all of your muscle fibers.

Your nervous system also takes a lot longer to recover than your muscles, so although your muscles may 'feel' ready to do the next set, your nervous system likely is not, so make sure to take the rest times outlined.

Not taking enough rest between sets when trying to develop strength will kill your strength gains and leave you wondering why it didn't work, so make sure you don't rush between sets in this phase.

Phase 2 – Submission Stamina

During the **Submission Stamina Phase**, you'll be doing more reps, with more supersets/circuits and less rest, which will train your endurance more.

Training endurance is more effective following strength because you can build endurance with the new found strength, as opposed to building endurance first, then losing those endurance adaptations once you move to a strength phase.

In this phase, you'll be hitting both your Anaerobic Lactic and Aerobic energy systems. You know your lactic system is kicking in when you start to feel that intense burning feeling in your muscles.

Your aerobic energy system is pretty much always active, the higher your energy output, the more it has to supply energy for both performance and recovery. During circuits and supersets the Aerobic system will be getting a lot of work.

What To Expect From This Program…

When doing this program, some of you may notice improvements within the first 3-4 weeks.

Others may feel a little more tired when grappling/rolling, depending on how much you train during the week.

This is perfectly normal… It's when the program is complete that you'll really notice the differences, so if you are more tired, stick it out, the adaptations will come.

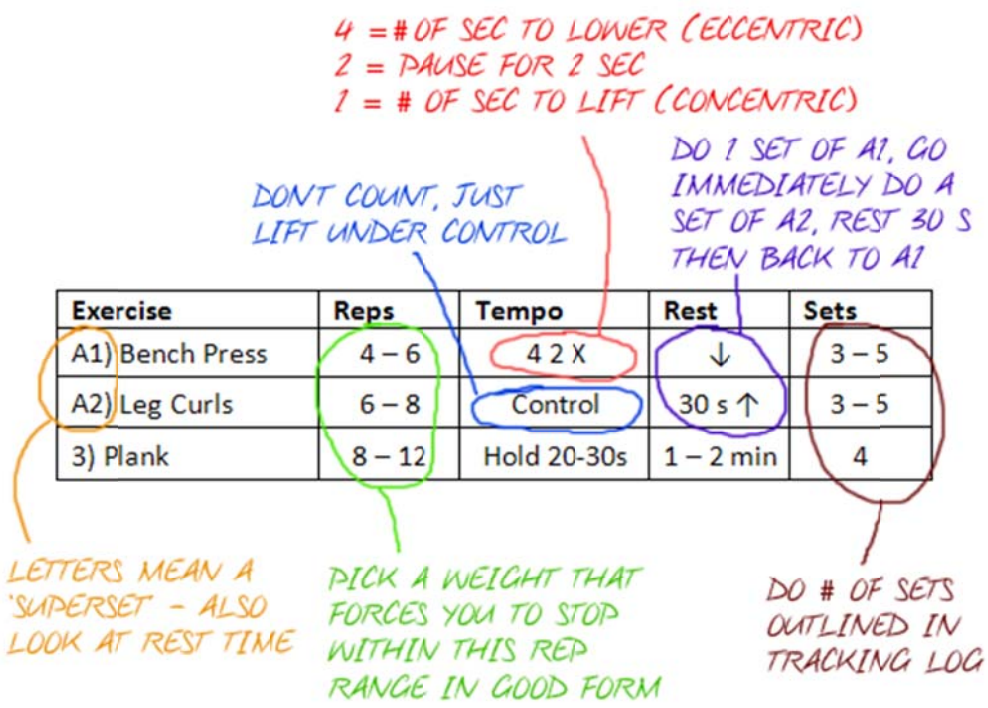
If you want to go through the program multiple times (which is a good idea), perform a different program for 3 weeks in between cycles. After 3 cycles, use a different program for at least 8 weeks before coming back to it.

[An ideal program to follow for 3 weeks between cycles is the Power Phase in my Ultimate MMA Strength and Conditioning program. This will maintain your other abilities, such as Max Strength in the big movements like Deadlifts and Bench Presses and allow you to come back and beat your previous bests in the Python Power Assessment.]

Cycling through this program over and over without anything else in between will leave some holes in your strength and conditioning because this program is very specialized, so get another program to follow in between cycles.

Understanding the Training Templates

All strength programs will be provided in the following format:



Exercise	Reps	Tempo	Rest	Sets
A1) Bench Press	4 – 6	4 2 X	↓	3 – 5
A2) Leg Curls	6 – 8	Control	30 s ↑	3 – 5
3) Plank	8 – 12	Hold 20-30s	1 – 2 min	4

Exercise

- Name and order of the exercise to perform

Reps

- A rep is one complete motion through the exercise, for example, one repetition of the bench press is taking the bar off the rack, lowering it to your chest then pressing it up until your elbows are straight

Tempo

- The pace of the movement OR amount of time to hold a static exercise
- 4 2 X – lower the weight over 4 sec (eccentric), 2 sec pause at bottom, lift weight explosively (concentric)
- Control – don't consciously aim for a particular tempo, just lift under control

Rest

- Amount of time to rest in between sets
- ↓, 30 s ↑if you see a down arrow, it means proceed to the next exercise without resting, once you see the right arrow, rest for the amount of time shown then go back to the first exercise in the sequence (superset or circuit techniques)

Sets

- Number of repetitions performed together; refer to tracking log for exact #

"It says 8 – 12 reps, how many should I do?"

The ranges are given instead of exact numbers because of the principle of progression; exercises will continue to benefit you only if they are progressed.

If you do the same weight for the same number of reps each session, your body will adapt and the exercise will be less beneficial. So, the bottom portion of your program is dedicated to the Tracking Log. The Tracking Log is where you write down the exact number of reps, sets and weights that you used so that you can improve upon the session next time.

Exercise	Reps	Tempo	Rest	Sets
1) Bench Press	8 – 12	4 2 X	60 s	3 – 4
2) Plank	8 – 12	20 – 30 s	½ of hold	1

Exercise	Date:	Aug 10	Aug 13	Aug 17
1) Bench Press	Reps	12 10 8	12 12 12	10 10 8
	Intensity	135 lbs	135 lbs	145 lbs
2) Plank	Reps	12	8	12
	Intensity	20 s holds	30 s	30 s

For the Bench Press on Aug 10, the athlete completed 3 sets, doing 12 reps for the first set and 10 reps for the second and 8 for the third all with 135 lbs. The next workout, he hit 12 reps each set, which is a signal to move up in weight, once you can do the max # of reps in any given set.

Once You Can Do the Max # of Reps For Each Set, Increase Weight

You can see a similar progression for the Plank, starting at 12 reps for a 20 s hold, then going up to a 30 s hold and getting 8 reps, then 12 reps on the last workout.

KEY: make it a habit to **write down the reps performed** after each set is completed

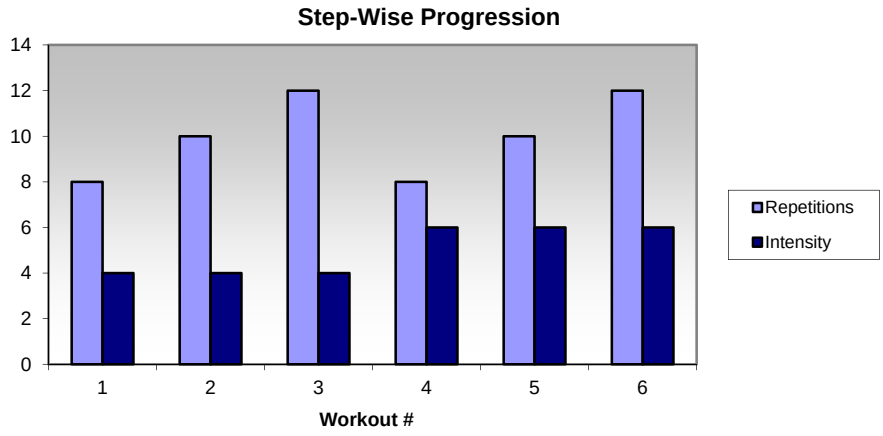
As you can see, for each session the athlete was within each rep and set range for both exercises. The progression from workout-to-workout follows a step-wise progression model for the bench press as displayed in the following graph:

"Should I use the same weights for each set?"

You can also start an exercise with a heavier weight, let's say for the Bench Press you start with 145 lbs, but can only do 8 reps. You know the next set you're not going to get in the 8-12 range with 145 lbs, so drop it down to 135 lbs and get in the range.

At first, it's a bit of trial and error, but once you've done one workout, you'll know where you stand.

Here's a graphical representation of this progression model:



The athlete starts at 8 reps then works up to the top of the range (12). At this point, the athlete increases the weight, and goes back to the bottom of the rep range (8).

To progress your exercise program, work your way up to the top of the rep range, then increase the intensity, which will bring the number of reps you can perform back to the bottom of the range, at which point you will work your way back to the top.

Following step-wise progression will ensure that you continue to improve from workout-to-workout and make gains without hitting a plateau.

Eric's General Principles of Effective Training

Here are some of my general principles of effective training and having kick-ass workouts. Apply all of these and I guarantee you'll get superb results!

- ✓ **Bring your Training Template and a Pen with you to the gym and write down your reps/sets/weights after each set.**
- ✓ Never, EVER answer your cell phone or text messages when working out. Do so and watch out for me sneaking up on you to steal it and beat you with it!
- ✓ **Get some good tunes to workout to**. I know I always have much better workouts when I'm bumping some old school Nas or Jay-Z, or maybe some Incubus. If Celine Dion pumps you up, then go for it. Just don't sing along.
- ✓ **FORM is critical**. Stop the set once you can no longer maintain good exercise technique.
- ✓ If you have a scheduled rest time and someone starts talking to you, politely interrupt them and say, "Sorry, I've got to get back to my workout."
- ✓ Speaking of schedules, **plan your workouts ahead at least 1 week in advance**, so you don't miss anything that may come up that's out of the ordinary.
- ✓ In between Max Strength sets, when you've got a few minutes, feel free to chill out and walk around, but **a minute before your next set**, focus on how you're going to absolutely destroy the set. This will help fire your nervous system up and get you faster gains.
- ✓ Never train through shooting or sharp pain. If you do, it'll cause your body to change the way it recruits muscles, causing a movement pattern disorder and eventually lead to an injury and pain. But fighting through the burning that happens when you tax a muscle is what you need to do to adapt.
- ✓ If you're tired and don't feel up to doing the full program, then **drop some of the sets and maintain the intensity**. But don't use this as an excuse to wimp-out – if you're wimping out in the gym I can only imagine what's going to happen on the mats.
- ✓ A few hours before you train, look at what you did last session and get your mind and body prepared to beat it. Making progress is the only way to force your body to adapt and get stronger and more powerful.

These are just a few of my rules for having killer workouts. Stick to these and you'll be golden!

Conclusion

Although scientific theory and background information is great to know, what really matters is what to do and how to do it.

For that, you've got 3 things to refer to, in this order:

1. **Python Power Training Templates** to see the assessment and workouts
2. **Python Power Exercise Library** to see how to perform all of the exercises properly
3. **Schedule your assessment and workouts**

Go and print out the Assessment and Training Templates and have them to refer to as you watch the videos.

Also, as you're watching the videos, it's a good idea to look over the Exercise Pictures and Descriptions at the same time to really hammer home proper form details.

It's also a good idea to follow along and practice the movements as you're learning them. Don't rush through them and move on until you've got it down, otherwise your poor brain will be confused.

I've done my best to give you a thorough understanding of the basis of this program so that you know why you're doing what you'll be doing, without getting too technical or overwhelming you with info.

Now, the rest is up to you to get it done!

I'm here to support you and help you get the most out of the program, so if you have any questions, hit me up on the Insiders Forum at:

http://www.ericwongmma.com/insiders/forum

My email is getting hammered nowadays so if you email me I can't promise a super prompt reply, but on the Forums you'll get a quicker response.

Enough talk, get to work!

Your coach,