Beginner Upper / Lower Split Workout Program (Gym Edition)



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Program details: Beginner Upper / Lower Split Workout Program (Gym Edition)

About the Program

Parameter	Details
Training Type	Upper / Lower Split Training System
Level	Beginners (Post Full-Body Phase)
Frequency	4 Training Days per Week
Program Duration	4 Weeks
Workout Duration	60–75 Minutes
Primary Goal	Muscle Gain (Hypertrophy), Strength Foundation
Training Location	Gym
Required Equipment	Complete gym equipment (machines, barbells, dumbbells, cables)
Exercise Selection	Compound and isolation exercises
Weekly Structure	Upper Body / Lower Body split
Progression Model	Gradual increase in load, reps, or training volume
Fatigue Management	Alternating upper and lower body sessions
Beginner-Friendly	Yes – controlled volume and logical exercise selection
Rest Between Sets	60–90 seconds (compound), 45–75 seconds (isolation)
Warm-Up Included	Yes – general and movement-specific warm-up sets
Cool Down	Optional mobility work and stretching

Weekly Training Overview

Day	Training Focus
Monday	Upper Body Workout (Day 1)
Tuesday	Lower Body Workout (Day 2)
Wednesday	Rest or Light Mobility
Thursday	Upper Body Workout (Day 3)
Friday	Lower Body Workout (Day 4)
Saturday	Optional Cardio or Active Recovery
Sunday	Rest

Week 1 – Adapting to Upper / Lower Split Training

Day 1 – Monday (Upper Body – Week 1)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE	Muscles Worked
Machine Chest Press	3	12–14	7	Chest, triceps, anterior delts
Lat Pulldown (Wide Grip)	3	12–14	7	Lats, biceps, upper back
Seated Cable Row	3	12–14	7	Mid-back, rhomboids, biceps
Dumbbell Shoulder Press	3	12–14	7	Deltoids, triceps
Cable Lateral Raise	3	14–16	7	Lateral deltoids
Cable Triceps Pushdown	2–3	14–16	7	Triceps
Dumbbell Biceps Curl	2–3	14–16	7	Biceps

Day 2 – Tuesday (Lower Body – Week 1)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE	Muscles Worked
Leg Press	4	12–15	7	Quads, glutes
Lying Leg Curl	3	14–16	7	Hamstrings
Goblet Squat	3	12–14	7	Quads, glutes
Romanian Deadlift (Barbell or Dumbbells)	3	12–14	7	Hamstrings, glutes
Standing Calf Raise (Machine or Smith)	3	14–18	7	Calves
Seated Calf Raise	2–3	14–18	7	Calves

Day 3 – Thursday (Upper Body – Week 1)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE	Muscles Worked
Incline Dumbbell Press	3	12–14	7	Upper chest, shoulders, triceps
Assisted Pull-Ups or Neutral Grip Pulldown	3	10–12	7	Lats, biceps
Chest-Supported Machine Row	3	12–14	7	Upper & mid-back
Machine Shoulder Press	3	12–14	7	Deltoids
Rear Delt Fly (Machine or Cables)	3	14–16	7	Rear delts, upper back
EZ-Bar Cable Curl	2–3	14–16	7	Biceps
Overhead Cable Triceps Extension	2–3	14–16	7	Triceps

Day 4 – Friday (Lower Body – Week 1)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE	Muscles Worked
Hack Squat or Smith Machine Squat	4	10–12	7	Quads, glutes
Seated Leg Curl	3	14–16	7	Hamstrings
Walking Lunges (Dumbbells)	3	12 steps/leg	7	Quads, glutes
Hip Thrust (Barbell or Machine)	3	12–14	7	Glutes
Standing Calf Raise	3	14–18	7	Calves
Ab Crunch Machine or Cable Crunch	3	15–20	7	Abdominals

Week 2 – Building Volume & Confidence

Day 1 – Monday (Upper Body – Week 2)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE	Muscles Worked
Machine Chest Press	4	10–12	7–7.5	Chest, triceps, anterior delts
Lat Pulldown	4	10–12	7–7.5	Lats, biceps, upper back
Seated Cable Row	3	12–14	7–7.5	Mid-back, rhomboids, biceps
Machine Shoulder Press	3	10–12	7–7.5	Deltoids, triceps
Cable Lateral Raise	3	14–16	7–7.5	Lateral deltoids
Cable Triceps Pushdown	3	12–14	7–7.5	Triceps
Cable Biceps Curl	3	12–14	7–7.5	Biceps

Day 2 – Tuesday (Lower Body – Week 2)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE	Muscles Worked
Leg Press	4	12–14	7–7.5	Quads, glutes
Romanian Deadlift (Barbell or Smith)	3	10–12	7–7.5	Hamstrings, glutes
Seated Leg Curl	3	12–14	7–7.5	Hamstrings
Walking Lunges (Dumbbells)	3	12 / leg	7–7.5	Quads, glutes
Standing Calf Raise	4	14–16	7–7.5	Calves
Machine Crunch	3	15–20	7–7.5	Abdominals

Day 3 – Thursday (Upper Body – Week 2)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE	Muscles Worked
Incline Dumbbell Press	4	10–12	7–7.5	Upper chest, shoulders
Assisted Pull-Ups	4	8–10	7–7.5	Lats, biceps
Pec Deck / Chest Fly	3	12–14	7–7.5	Chest
Face Pull (Cable)	3	14–16	7–7.5	Rear delts, upper back
EZ-Bar Curl	3	12–14	7–7.5	Biceps
Overhead Cable Triceps Extension	3	12–14	7–7.5	Triceps

Day 4 – Friday (Lower Body – Week 2)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE	Muscles Worked
Hack Squat or Squat	4	10–12	7–7.5	Quads, glutes
Lying Leg Curl	3	12–14	7–7.5	Hamstrings
Hip Thrust (Barbell or Machine)	3	10–12	7–7.5	Glutes
Leg Extension	3	14–16	7–7.5	Quadriceps
Seated Calf Raise	4	14–16	7–7.5	Calves
Hanging Knee Raises	3	15–20	7–7.5	Abdominals

Week 3 – Building Volume and Training Confidence

Day 1 – Monday (Upper Body – Week 3)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE	Muscles Worked
Barbell or Machine Bench Press	4	8–10	7.5	Chest, triceps, anterior delts
Lat Pulldown or Assisted Pull-Up	4	10–12	7.5	Lats, biceps, upper back
Seated Dumbbell Shoulder Press	3	10–12	7	Deltoids, triceps
Seated Cable Row	3	10–12	7	Mid-back, lats, biceps
Dumbbell Lateral Raise	3	12–15	7	Lateral deltoids
Cable Triceps Pushdown	3	12–14	7	Triceps
Dumbbell Biceps Curl	3	12–14	7	Biceps

Day 2 – Tuesday (Lower Body – Week 3)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE	Muscles Worked
Barbell Back Squat or Hack Squat	4	8–10	7.5	Quads, glutes
Romanian Deadlift (Barbell or Dumbbells)	4	8–10	7.5	Hamstrings, glutes
Leg Press	3	10–12	7	Quads, glutes
Lying or Seated Leg Curl	3	12–14	7	Hamstrings
Standing or Seated Calf Raise	4	12–15	7	Calves
Plank	3	30–45 sec	7	Core

Day 3 – Thursday (Upper Body – Week 3)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE	Muscles Worked
Incline Dumbbell Press	4	8–10	7.5	Upper chest, shoulders
One-Arm Dumbbell Row	4	10–12	7.5	Lats, mid-back
Cable Face Pull	3	12–15	7	Rear delts, upper back
Chest Fly (Machine or Cables)	3	12–14	7	Chest
EZ-Bar Curl	3	10–12	7	Biceps
Overhead Cable Triceps Extension	3	12–14	7	Triceps

Day 4 – Friday (Lower Body – Week 3)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE	Muscles Worked
Deadlift (Trap Bar or Conventional)	4	6–8	7.5	Posterior chain
Bulgarian Split Squat	3	10–12 / leg	7.5	Quads, glutes
Leg Extension	3	12–14	7	Quadriceps
Hip Thrust (Barbell or Machine)	3	10–12	7	Glutes
Seated Calf Raise	4	12–15	7	Calves
Hanging Knee Raise or Cable Crunch	3	12–15	7	Core

Week 4 – Peak & Consolidation Phase

Day 1 – Monday (Upper Body – Week 4)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE
Barbell or Machine Bench Press	4	6–8	8
Lat Pulldown or Assisted Pull-Ups	4	8–10	8
Seated Dumbbell Shoulder Press	3	8–10	8
Seated Cable Row	3	10–12	8
Cable Lateral Raise	3	12–15	8
Cable Triceps Pushdown	2–3	10–12	8
Dumbbell or Cable Biceps Curl	2–3	10–12	8

Day 2 – Tuesday (Lower Body – Week 4)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE
Barbell Back Squat or Leg Press	4	6–8	8
Romanian Deadlift (Barbell or Dumbbells)	4	8–10	8
Walking Lunges	3	10–12 / leg	8
Seated or Lying Leg Curl	3	10–12	8
Standing Calf Raise	4	12–15	8
Hanging Knee Raises or Cable Crunch	3	12–15	8

Day 3 – Thursday (Upper Body – Week 4)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE
Incline Dumbbell Press	4	8–10	8
Chest-Supported Machine Row	4	8–10	8
Cable or Dumbbell Shoulder Press	3	8–10	8
Face Pulls	3	12–15	8
EZ-Bar Curl	2–3	10–12	8
Overhead Cable Triceps Extension	2–3	10–12	8

Day 4 – Friday (Lower Body – Week 4)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	RPE
Hack Squat or Front Squat	4	6–8	8
Hip Thrust (Barbell or Machine)	4	8–10	8
Bulgarian Split Squat	3	8–10 / leg	8
Leg Extension	3	12–15	8
Seated Calf Raise	4	12–15	8
Plank or Ab Machine	3	30–45 sec	8

Understanding RPE in This Program

Throughout this Upper / Lower split workout program, you'll notice frequent references to **RPE**. This isn't accidental. RPE is one of the most practical tools for controlling training intensity, especially for beginners who are still learning how their body responds to resistance training.
Rather than relying strictly on percentages or fixed weights, RPE allows you to adjust effort based on how challenging a set actually feels. This makes training safer, more individual, and far easier to progress over time.

RPE Level	What It Feels Like	Reps Left in Reserve (Approx.)	Beginner-Friendly Interpretation
RPE 6	Comfortable effort	4–5 reps left	Warm-up or very light working sets
RPE 7	Challenging but controlled	3 reps left	Ideal intensity for beginners
RPE 8	Hard, but technically clean	2 reps left	Upper end for beginners with good form
RPE 9	Very hard, near failure	1 rep left	Rarely recommended for beginners
RPE 10	Maximal effort	0 reps left	Not recommended for beginners

RPE 7 means you could perform about three more clean repetitions if needed, but you stop the set while your technique remains solid and controlled. This intensity allows beginners to stimulate muscle growth and strength without excessive fatigue or risk of injury.
Using RPE consistently teaches you how to listen to your body — a skill that becomes increasingly valuable as your training experience grows.

Beginner Training Alternatives Worth Exploring

If you feel this *Upper / Lower Split Workout Program* is currently too demanding — whether due to overall training volume, recovery limitations, or time constraints — it may be a smart move to step back to a structured **full-body training system** first.

- **Beginner Full Body Training Program for Maximum Muscle Gains (Gym-Based)**
  A balanced introduction to resistance training using both machines and free weights. Ideal for complete beginners training in a gym environment.
- **Beginner Machine-Only Full Body Workout Program (Gym Edition)**
  A low-risk, confidence-building option that relies entirely on machines. Perfect for those new to the gym or uncomfortable with free weights.
- **Dumbbell-Only Full Body Workout for Beginners (Home Edition)**
  Designed for home training with minimal equipment. Focuses on fundamental movement patterns using adjustable dumbbells.
- **Barbell-Only Full Body Workout for Beginners (Home Edition)**
  A structured introduction to barbell training that emphasizes technique, strength development, and progressive overload.
- **Kettlebell-Only Full Body Workout for Beginners (Home Edition)**
  A dynamic full-body routine that improves strength, coordination, and conditioning using one or two kettlebells.

- **Full-Body Resistance Band Workout Plan for Beginners (Home Edition)**
  A joint-friendly, portable training solution using resistance bands. Ideal for beginners training at home with limited space and equipment.
- **4-Week Bodyweight-Only Full Body Workout Program (Home Edition)**
  An equipment-free program focused on building basic strength, mobility, and movement awareness using bodyweight exercises only.
- **4-Week Beginner Free-Weights Workout Program (Home or Gym)**
  A balanced introduction to both barbells and dumbbells, aimed at building muscle, flexibility, and overall strength through classic resistance training.

