

**HOW TO:**

# **BUILD YOUR TRAINING PROGRAM**

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**JONES THE TRAINER**

**BY MARK JONES**

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# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

You should use the information here as a guideline only. None of the advice given in this pdf is aimed at individual circumstances.

It does not take into account any pre-existing injuries or medical conditions and it is recommended you see your medical professional for advice on starting a training plan, should you have any concerns in this area.

# 1.

## GOAL SETTING

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**O**f course where else should you start other than goal setting? If you don't have an end goal (or even a few of them), then you don't have a fixed target to aim for. Perform a "needs analysis" on yourself and think about what you want to achieve - weight loss, muscle tone, sport specific goals? Simplify this process by using the SMART guide:

S pecific

M easureable

A ssignable

R elevent

T ime

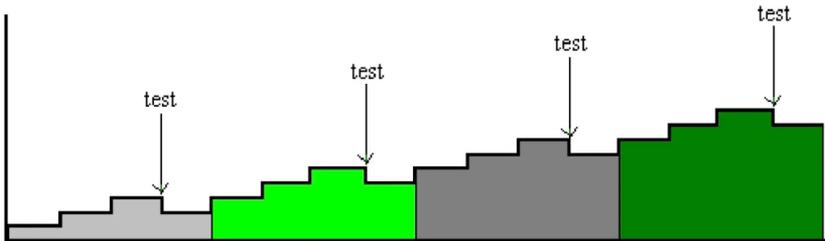
# 2.

## TRAINING CYCLES

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Once you have your end goals set out you can assign the TIME element to it. Let's say it's a year from now for your weight loss target/ muscle building/ sporting event.

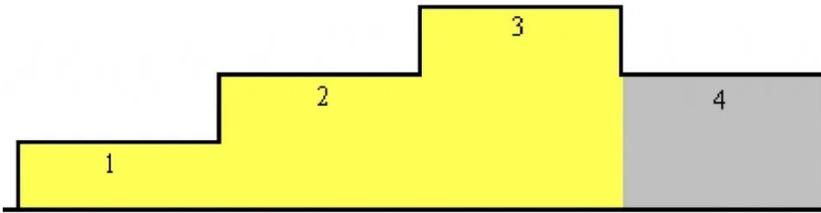
This year is known as your MACROcycle



## MACROCYCLE

This is the big picture. The point at which you want to be at for your overall goal. Then either yourself or with a coach, you break up that macrocycle into smaller lengths of time - say anything from 2 - 4 month cycles.

These are your MESOCycles

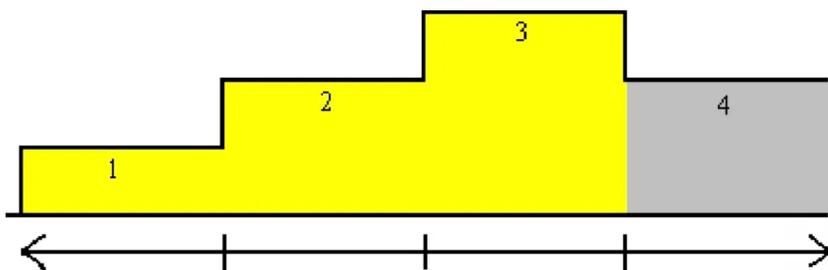


# MESOCYCLE

This now means you can set smaller milestone goals. A mesocycle is still long enough to have 'long term' goal setting and allow for flexibility should you need to reassess your programme for any reason.

If it's fat loss, then think about where you want to be at the end of each cycle whilst working toward each goal. If it's muscle building, are you wanting to hit specific loading on lifts or test a 1 rep max such as in powerlifting? If it's sport specific, are you setting testing points at the end of each cycle or competing in smaller events to track performance?

Now this is where we consider the detail and we break down mesocycles into MICROcycles.



## MICROCYCLE

The above graphic shows a mesocycle broken into 4 MICROcycles. This is where you consider the day to day and week to week detail of how you train and eat, in order to hit your short and long term targets. If it's muscle building, you are looking at factors such as progressive overload in sessions, adequate protein, splitting body sections, the number of sessions required, recovery protocols etc.

If it's fat loss, you are working out your daily and weekly calorie goals and finding out what foods you like in order to stick to the plan. You are giving yourself smaller goals such as fitting clothes and hitting your 10,000 daily steps.

If it's sport specific, you are working on position specific training for team sports, interval requirements to improve pace or power endurance for something like MMA.

# MOVEMENT BEFORE MUSCLE

Now you have the outline of your short and long term plan you can now start to focus on what your sessions will involve. I always start by training movement. It's important that before you add any kind of loading to your body and muscle – whether it's lifting in the gym or distance/ speed for cardio – you must work on how you move.



It's important to focus on potential areas where you may pick up niggles or repetitive strain injuries. Any areas of tension where mobility and flexibility are going to be required. If you have any issues then how do you structure your warm-up/ prehab routine? After all, to finish first – first you must finish!

What can you lift, push, pull, press? If you are sport specific what are you like with more unconventional movements, changes of direction, acceleration and deceleration. Have

you worked out your heart rate zones or completed a basic fitness test to get an idea of your current levels of fitness?

## **THE FIRST 2-3 WEEKS**

Once you get going, if you have focused on movement and preparing your body correctly, you will see some initial improvements in the first 2-3 weeks. This will mainly be down to improvements in the nervous system and a gradual improvement in your cardiovascular system. From here you will continue to follow your training plan and implement your progressive overload and recovery protocols.

If you are training for sports and events then consider your gym based sessions as a way of 'bulletproofing' you for your sport. It's important your strength and conditioning sessions compliment your sport and remain specific. If you are looking to change body composition (i.e. reducing body fat), use the first 2-3 weeks to get used to tracking your food and trying out your preferred dietary protocols.

This stage is very much a kind of 'launching' stage for your long term plan. But of course your plan will be adaptable too.

## **WHAT SESSION AND WHEN?**

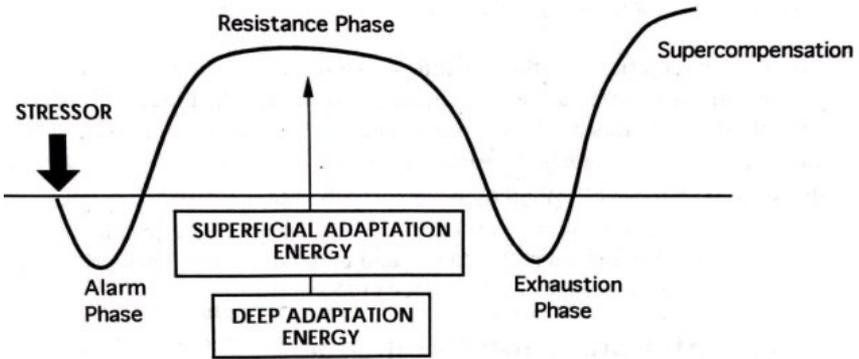
Depending on what your training goals are you need to consider when to programme the right type of session. For example, your 'power' session may be at the start of the week or when you are MOST RECOVERED. Power is moving the heaviest load that you can – in the shortest time (This does not mean the absolute heaviest load you can lift). It's about maximal muscle fibre recruitment so it would make sense you would want as little muscle fibre damage as possible.

Then you can consider when you plan your strength sessions in relation to your power, technical or even competitive sessions. Remember too that a competitive event

is where you should be doing a maximal effort and it therefore also contributes to your training load. This then has a knock on effect to your next power, strength and recovery sessions.

Programming is key!

# WHAT SESSION AND WHEN?



## General Adaptation to Exercise & Supercompensation

So you've got your plan in place and you've prepared to train. Now you can think about the detail of your sessions based on what goals you are trying to achieve. When it comes to resistance training you need an understanding of how you manipulate factors such as sets, reps and load.

High weight low reps or low weight high reps?

First of all, I want you to understand that both elicit a change in muscle mass, power and strength. All lifting will result in hypertrophy (increase in muscle). We work out overall loading by calculating:

reps x sets x KGs

We manipulate these variables, along with tempo, to get the best training response from your lifting. What you are trying to achieve depends on what is involved in your session.



Power based individuals will be looking at factors such as speed of movement and possibly the heaviest weight you can move in the shortest time. This is usually based around sets of low numbers of reps and big rest periods, as it involves maximal muscle recruitment and taking the role of the nervous system into account.

Strength based individuals will be looking at the absolute heaviest weight they can lift and have more of a focus on factors such as muscle fibre damage and time under tension in order to maximise hypertrophy or muscle building. This means higher reps and sets and working to – or close to – failure in some sets.

# SO WHICH SHOULD YOU DO?

Again, this depends on your goals but there is no reason not to do both. Power is best trained when you are most recovered in the week but it is important that you are training strength in order to be effective at power. If you are a rugby player for example, you will need to take pretty much all aspects of fitness into consideration such :

- Strength
- Power
- Strength Endurance
- Power endurance
- Cardiovascular fitness

## CARDIO BASED

Again, depending on what you are training for, your sessions will involve the detail needed to elicit the best fitness response. If you are looking to improve speed then intervals are the key. You are manipulating variables of speed, distance and time and being aware of heart rate training zones. If you need to work on distance, then miles under the belt are important. This is combined with effective nutrition and hydration strategies AND the speed strategies above.

## RECOVERY

Of course this is the most important part for all training! It's where the magic happens. You must schedule recovery days and take into account:

- Nutrition
- Hydration
- Sleep
- Soft tissue management
- Downtime

All of these factors play an important role in your adaptation for both the short and long term and go hand in hand with your training.

## **ADAPTABILITY**

It's likely things crop up that change the short term detail of your plan. Injuries, illness, LIFE but this goes back to...

Programming is key!

You can adapt the smaller details of day to day and week to week training in order to get the most out of your training. And if you are not sure about how to do this... **GET A COACH!**

The About the Author

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Mark Jones is an online fitness coach and owner of JTT online personal training. He has over 21 years coaching experience in the fitness industry, including high performance environments, working with professional rugby and football teams. Mark is a qualified strength and conditioning coach as well as having Honours and Masters degrees in sport and exercise science.



Contact me to get started or check out my free trial here:

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A close-up photograph of a woman's back and shoulder, showing well-defined muscles. She is wearing a black sports top. The image is framed by a white border.

# **THE JTT ONLINE TRANSFORMATION GUIDE**

**\*NOW ALSO AVAILABLE  
AS A HOME BASED  
PLAN**

**START CHANGING SHAPE  
HERE**