
COSTA FITNESS

THE MUSCLE BUILDING BLUEPRINT

12 Weeks of Training and Nutrition to Build Lean Muscle Efficiently

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HOW THIS WORKS

This is a complete system built from hundreds of real client programs. Follow the sheet, eat according to the plan, track your numbers.

This program is designed to maximize muscle growth. You will eat at a slight caloric surplus, train with progressively increasing volume, and use structured periodization. The surplus gives you the energy and recovery resources to train harder and grow. If you are underweight, new to training, or have been training without structure, this is your starting point.

12 weeks. Two 6 week mesocycles. Volume ramps each week, then deloads on Week 6.

What counts as progress:

More reps at the same load. More load at the same reps. Same performance with better technique. Same performance at a lower RPE. Improved photos or measurements at the same body weight. Any of these mean the program is working.

PROGRESSION AND TRACKING

Double progression: increase reps within your range first. When you hit the top of the range on all sets with solid technique, increase weight and build back up from the lower end.

Starting weight: Pick a load that places your first set within the target rep range while leaving the prescribed reps in reserve. First set usually lands toward the higher end, then reps taper as fatigue builds.

Trend upward, not perfectly. Your goal is to trend upward across the mesocycle. Weekly volume will often rise, but it does not need to increase perfectly every week. Performance fluctuates from fatigue, sleep, life stress. That is normal.

Week by week intensity:

Week	RIR	Focus
1	3 to 4	Technique and baseline weights
2	2 to 3	Beat last week by 1 to 2 reps
3	2 to 3	Push reps or weight
4	1 to 2	Near failure on compounds
5	0 to 1	Failure on isolations. Intensity techniques.
6	4+	Deload: weight ~25% down, sets ~50% down

Meso 2 (Weeks 7 to 12) follows the same structure at a higher baseline.

SET YOUR CALORIES

These multipliers are starting estimates. Confirm by tracking body weight trends for 2 to 3 weeks.

Step 1: Estimate maintenance. Body weight (lbs) x activity multiplier.

Activity	Multiplier	Example (170 lbs)
Sedentary	12 to 13	2,040 to 2,210
Lightly Active	13 to 14	2,210 to 2,380
Active	14 to 15	2,380 to 2,550

Step 2: Add 200 to 400 calories for a lean surplus.

Aim for 0.5 to 1 lb/week gain. Example: $170 \times 14 = 2,380 + 300 = 2,680$.

Step 3: Set macros.

Protein: 0.7 to 1.0g per pound. In a surplus you have more margin. Spread across 3 to 5 meals.

Fats: ~0.3 to 0.4g per pound floor.

Carbs: Fill the rest. Carbs are your primary training fuel in a surplus.

When to adjust:

If gaining more than 1 lb/week consistently, pull back 100 to 200 cal. If weight is flat after 2 to 3 weeks, add 100 to 200. Use weight, waist, photos, performance, and recovery to decide.

Sample Day: ~2,600 Calories

Meal	Foods	P	C	F	Cal
1	3 eggs, 1c egg whites, 80g oats, banana	48	75	18	655
2	6oz chicken, 200g rice, broccoli, 1T olive oil	48	65	16	610
3	6oz 93% ground beef, 150g sweet potato, salad	42	35	14	445
4	6oz ground turkey, 200g pasta, marinara	44	70	12	580
5	Shake: whey, 1T PB, 8oz milk, banana	38	45	12	430

Anchor protein, set a fat floor, flex carbs up or down to hit your number.

4 DAY UPPER / LOWER SPLIT

Sets shown are Week 1 starting volume. Sets increase each week per the progression table above.

DAY 1 — UPPER A (Chest / Back Focus)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Machine Chest Press (Flat)	3	8-12	Handles at mid chest. Set upper back, controlled press.
Machine Incline Press	3	8-12	Control negative. Stable shoulder position throughout.
Pec Deck Machine	2	10-15	Squeeze peak contraction. Full stretch between reps.
Seated Cable Row	3	8-12	Pull to lower sternum. Retract shoulder blades at peak.
Machine Shoulder Press	2	8-12	Full ROM. Core braced, no excessive low back arch.
Machine Lateral Raise	2	10-15	Control eccentric. Lead with elbows, no shrugging.
Cable Triceps Pushdown (Rope)	3	10-15	Pull rope apart at bottom. Elbows pinned to sides.
Cable Curl (Bar)	3	10-15	Elbows pinned. Constant tension, no swinging.

DAY 2 — LOWER A (Quad / Core Focus)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Leg Press	3	8-12	Full ROM. Back flat on pad, feet shoulder width.
Hack Squat Machine	3	8-12	Shoulders against pads. Controlled descent.
Leg Extension Machine	2	10-15	Pause at top for peak contraction. Control eccentric.
Lying Leg Curl Machine	3	10-15	Hips flat on pad. Squeeze at peak contraction.
Hip Press Machine	3	8-12	Feet high to emphasize glutes. Full lockout.
Seated Calf Raise	3	12-20	Full stretch at bottom, pause at top. No bouncing.
Cable Crunch	2	12-20	Flex spine not hips. Exhale hard at bottom.

DAY 3 — UPPER B (Back / Shoulders Focus)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Lat Pulldown	3	8-12	<i>Pull to upper chest. Drive elbows down, chest up.</i>
Chest Supported Row	3	8-12	<i>Chest against pad. Squeeze shoulder blades.</i>
Straight Arm Pulldown	2	10-15	<i>Arms straight. Pull with lats, not biceps.</i>
Machine Incline Press	3	8-12	<i>Stable torso. Controlled shoulder position.</i>
Cable Lateral Raise	2	10-15	<i>Low pulley, slight forward lean. Smooth reps.</i>
Reverse Pec Deck	2	10-15	<i>Face machine. Elbows slightly bent, lead with elbows.</i>
Cable Triceps Pushdown (Bar)	3	10-15	<i>Elbows pinned to sides. Full extension.</i>
Cable Rope Curl	3	10-15	<i>Curl and supinate at top. Slow eccentric.</i>

DAY 4 — LOWER B (Posterior Chain Focus)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Romanian Deadlift	3	8-12	<i>Hip hinge. Slight knee bend. Feel hamstring stretch.</i>
Seated Leg Curl	3	10-15	<i>Adjust pads for comfort. Controlled tempo.</i>
Abductor Machine	3	12-20	<i>Upright posture. Pause at peak, control return.</i>
Leg Press (High Foot)	3	8-12	<i>Feet high on platform. Glute emphasis.</i>
Leg Extension Machine	2	10-15	<i>Squeeze at top. No momentum.</i>
Standing Calf Raise	3	12-20	<i>Full stretch, pause at top. Every rep controlled.</i>
Pallof Press	2	10-15	<i>Resist rotation. Press straight out. Ribs down.</i>

5 DAY PUSH / PULL / LEGS / UPPER / LOWER

DAY 1 — PUSH (Chest / Shoulders / Triceps)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Machine Chest Press (Flat)	3	8-12	Handles at mid chest. Controlled press.
Incline Dumbbell Press	3	8-12	30 to 45 degrees. Elbows at 45 degrees.
Cable Fly (Mid to Low)	2	12-15	Pain free arc. Constant tension.
Machine Shoulder Press	3	8-12	Full ROM. Core braced.
Machine Lateral Raise	3	12-15	Control eccentric. No shrugging.
Rope Triceps Pushdown	3	10-15	Pull apart at bottom. Elbows pinned.
Overhead Cable Extension	2	10-15	Face away. Feel stretch at top.

DAY 2 — PULL (Back / Biceps / Rear Delts)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Lat Pulldown (Wide Grip)	3	8-12	Pull to upper chest. Smooth, no jerking.
Seated Cable Row	3	8-12	Pull to lower sternum. Retract shoulder blades.
Straight Arm Pulldown	2	10-15	Arms straight. Pull with lats.
Reverse Pec Deck	3	12-15	Lead with elbows. Control tempo.
Cable Upright Row (Wide)	2	10-15	Wide grip to reduce AC stress.
Rope Hammer Curl	3	10-15	Neutral grip. Slow eccentric.
Incline Dumbbell Curl	2	10-12	Full stretch at bottom. Slow eccentric.

DAY 3 — LEGS (Quads / Hams / Glutes / Calves)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Leg Press	4	8-12	Full ROM. Back flat on pad.
Hack Squat Machine	3	8-12	Shoulders against pads. Controlled descent.
Leg Extension	3	10-15	Pause at top. Control eccentric.
Lying Leg Curl	3	10-15	Hips flat. Squeeze at peak.
Walking Lunges	2	8-12/leg	Upright torso. Knee stability.
Standing Calf Raise	3	12-20	Full stretch. Pause at top.
Pallof Press	2	10-12/side	Resist rotation. Ribs down.

DAY 4 — UPPER (Full Upper Body)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Lat Pulldown (Neutral)	3	8-12	Drive elbows down. No swinging.
Machine Chest Press	3	8-12	Stable torso. Full ROM.
Cable Row (Neutral)	3	10-15	Scapular retraction at peak.
Dumbbell Shoulder Press	3	8-12	Controlled eccentric. No excessive arch.
Cable Lateral Raise	2	12-15	Low pulley. Smooth reps.
Cable Triceps Pushdown	2	10-15	Elbows pinned. Full extension.
Cable Curl (Bar)	2	10-15	Constant tension. No momentum.

DAY 5 — LOWER (Posterior Chain / Glutes)

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Romanian Deadlift	3	8-12	Hip hinge. Feel hamstring stretch.
Leg Press (High Foot)	3	10-12	Glute emphasis. Controlled descent.
Seated Leg Curl	3	10-15	Controlled tempo throughout.
Leg Extension	2	12-15	High rep pump. Squeeze at top.
Abductor Machine	3	12-20	Pause at peak. Control return.
Seated Calf Raise	3	12-20	Full stretch. Pause at top.

6 DAY PPL / PPL SPLIT

DAY 1 — PUSH A

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Machine Chest Press (Flat)	3	8-12	Handles at mid chest. Controlled press.
Machine Incline Press	3	8-12	Control negative. Stable shoulders.
Cable Fly	2	12-15	Constant tension. Slow negatives.
Machine Shoulder Press	3	8-12	Full ROM. Core braced.
Machine Lateral Raise	2	12-15	Control eccentric. Lead with elbows.
Rope Triceps Pushdown	3	10-15	Pull apart at bottom.
Overhead Cable Extension	2	12-15	Face away. Stretch at top.

DAY 2 — PULL A

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Lat Pulldown (Wide)	3	8-12	Pull to upper chest. No jerking.
Chest Supported Row	3	8-12	Chest on pad. Squeeze blades.
Straight Arm Pulldown	2	10-15	Arms straight. Lats only.
Reverse Pec Deck	3	12-15	Lead with elbows.
Rope Hammer Curl	3	10-15	Neutral grip. Slow eccentric.
Cable Curl (Bar)	2	10-15	Elbows pinned. Constant tension.

DAY 3 — LEGS A

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Leg Press	4	8-12	Full ROM. Back flat on pad.
Hack Squat	3	8-12	Shoulders against pads. Full depth.
Leg Extension	3	10-15	Pause at top. Control down.
Lying Leg Curl	3	10-15	Hips flat. Squeeze at peak.
Standing Calf Raise	3	12-20	Full stretch. Pause at top.
Cable Crunch	2	12-20	Flex spine. Exhale at bottom.

DAY 4 — PUSH B

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Incline Dumbbell Press	3	8-12	30 to 45 degrees. Elbows at 45.
Pec Deck Machine	3	10-15	Squeeze peak. Full stretch.
Cable Lateral Raise	3	12-15	Low pulley. Slight lean.
Dumbbell Shoulder Press	3	8-12	Controlled eccentric.
Cable Triceps Pushdown (Bar)	3	10-15	Elbows pinned. Full lockout.
Overhead Tricep Extension	2	12-15	Elbows stable. Feel stretch.

DAY 5 — PULL B

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Lat Pulldown (Neutral)	3	8-12	Drive elbows down. No swing.
Seated Cable Row	3	8-12	Pull to sternum. Retract blades.
Cable Upright Row (Wide)	2	10-15	Wide grip. Reduce AC stress.
Reverse Pec Deck	2	12-15	Control tempo.
Incline Dumbbell Curl	3	10-12	Full stretch bottom. Slow eccentric.
Cable Rope Curl	2	10-15	Supinate at top.

DAY 6 — LEGS B

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Coaching Cue
Romanian Deadlift	3	8-12	<i>Hip hinge. Hamstring stretch.</i>
Leg Press (High Foot)	3	10-12	<i>Glute emphasis.</i>
Seated Leg Curl	3	10-15	<i>Controlled tempo.</i>
Leg Extension	2	12-15	<i>Pump finisher.</i>
Abductor Machine	3	12-20	<i>Pause at peak.</i>
Seated Calf Raise	3	12-20	<i>Full stretch. Pause top.</i>
Pallof Press	2	10-12/side	<i>Resist rotation. Ribs down.</i>

STEPS, CARDIO, AND RECOVERY

Aim for 8,000 to 12,000 steps per day. For most people, increasing daily steps is one of the easiest high return ways to raise energy expenditure without hurting recovery. Build up gradually.

For muscle building, cardio is about health and work capacity, not deficit. 2 to 3 sessions per week of 20 to 30 min low intensity (walking, light cycling) is enough. Do not add so much that it eats into your surplus.

When possible, choose lower impact modalities and place cardio after lifting or on separate days.

Sleep: 7 to 9 hours. Non negotiable for recovery and hormonal regulation.

Rest periods: Keep them consistent week to week for the same exercise. Compounds: 2 to 4 min. Secondary: 90s to 2 min. Isolation: 60 to 90s.

AFTER WEEK 12

Run it again with higher starting weights and a different emphasis variant.

Switch splits for a new stimulus.

Learn to build your own with the Mastering Muscle Building course on Udemy.

Work with a coach for personalized programming. DM @costafitness on Instagram.

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