

10 – 8 – 6 – 15

by

Alan Palmieri

First and right up front, I want it understood I did not originate the 10 – 8 – 6 – 15 routine. Vince Gironda brought it to the forefront and popularized it. It may very well have been, and I believe it was Vince, who actually developed the routine. Over the years, I made various modifications to the routine in order to make it more productive for my specific needs and body type. Here is one modification of the routine I have followed with a great deal of success. It should be understood that the 10 – 8 – 6 – 15 routine is designed to help get past sticking points and ruts in training. It is not designed to be a routine followed for extended periods.

Vince indicated in his course of instructions that you were to perform each of the four sets as follows:

First set is to be performed for 10 reps with 50% of your maximum.

Second set is to be performed for 8 reps with 75% of your maximum.

Third set is to be performed for 6 reps with 100% of your maximum.

Fourth set is to be performed for 15 reps with 35% of your maximum.

Vince's description of the term "maximum" in this case was; "whatever weight you can handle with effort, 6 reps is considered maximum." I know... this description can leave a lot to ones imagination and it does not provide a good definition but that was Vince.

I have written and instructed movements to be performed using a percentage of a person's maximum poundage, or of their 1 rep maximum poundage and have always found them to be somewhat confusing and difficult. It takes time to determine these poundage's and they cannot be established in one workout. Many variables affect the ability to establish accurate maximum poundage and 1 rep maximums. Your diet, sleep and rest, outside activity, mental state, season of the year, routine you are on, the routine you were previously on, and a host of other factors have a direct impact on your ability to

perform a 1 rep lift, as it should be. What I do when following this routine is remember the 2 rep rule. “If you are to perform 10 reps of a movement and you can perform 8 or 12 reps, you are okay and within range.” “If on the other hand, you can perform 7 or 13 reps, the weight is either too light or too heavy.” 2 reps over or under is the range you need to stay within but constantly strive to hit the rep scheme exactly. Of course, you will need to make adjustments in your next workout so that you can actually get the number of reps you are supposed to. Do not allow the 2 rep rule to keep you from the designated number of reps you are to perform.

10 – 8 – 6 – 15 is a very easy routine to follow even though many question it to death and make it more complicated than what it really is. Relax; realize it is one of many routines to help get you past sticking points, ruts in your training, and training boredom. Don’t make more of this routine than what it is. I have come to not only recognize it’s value in a well rounded training program but I have also learned to thoroughly enjoy the routine, almost looking forward for the opportunity to employ it in my training.

Those familiar with Vince’s 10 – 8 – 6 – 15 routine, will see the changes I have incorporated in this version. I have added movements and instead of working the upper body three days per week and legs two days per week, as outlined by Vince, I have set it up so each body part is worked two times per week. This allows for a complete muscle breakdown and ample time for rest and recuperation between each attack on a given muscle. I also incorporated some super-sets. This works for me as well as others and is especially beneficial in overcoming stubborn muscles that simply do not want to respond to normal training.

Monday:

Flat Dumbbell Flyes

Super-Set 10 – 8 – 6 - 15

Neck Barbell Press

“V” Dips 10 – 8 – 6 – 15

Close Grip Triceps Press

Super-Set 10 – 8 – 6 - 15

Lying Two Arm Dumbbell

Extensions

Tuesday:

Two Arm Dumbbell Row

Super-Set 10 – 8 – 6 - 15

Barbell Row to Waist

Chins 10 – 8 – 6 – 15

Incline Dumbbell Curl

Super-Set 10 – 8 – 6 - 15

Close Grip Barbell Curl

Wednesday:

Standing Dumbbell Press

Super-Set 10 – 8 – 6 - 15

Seated Dumbbell Laterals

Front Squat

Super-Set 10 – 8 – 6 - 15

Sissy Squat

Leg Curl 10 – 8 – 6 – 15

Calf Raises 10 – 10 – 8 – 6 – 15

Thursday:

“V” Dips 10 – 8 – 6 – 15

Incline Dumbbell Press **10 – 8 – 6 – 15**

Lying EZ Triceps

Extensions **10 – 8 – 6 – 15**

Friday:

Long Lat Pull **10 – 8 – 6 – 15**

One Arm Dumbbell Row **10 – 8 – 6 – 15**

Barbell Body Drag Curl **10 – 8 – 6 – 15**

Saturday:

Standing Dumbbell

Laterals **10 – 8 – 6 – 15**

Sissy Squat **10 – 8 – 6 – 15**

Leg Extension **10 – 8 – 6 – 15**

Leg Curl **10 – 8 – 6 – 15**

Calf Raises **10 – 10 - 8 – 6 – 15**

You will notice I did not list abs separately, this is because I will do them on different days of the week. Select any two days you want as long as it is not on days you work biceps and you must leave one day between workouts. I usually perform the following movements for abs.

¼ Barbell Roll

Super-Set **10 – 8 – 6 – 15**

Frog Curls

Another thing you will notice is Tuesdays back workout; chins. Chins are difficult to perform for most people. If you cannot perform the rep sequence listed, perform what you can and do not become discouraged. Continue to practice adding reps as you can.

I have found this to be a very effective workout not to mention enjoyable and a break from my otherwise normal routine. My rest time between sets are held to a minimum, no more than 30 to 45 seconds and I always push to cut it even more. Never sacrifice form in your quest for speed or for poundage. It is not the amount of weight you use but rather the execution on the movement.

There is no doubt about the sheer volume of this workout being high; it is designed to be this way. That is why one should not continue the routine for extended periods, doing so will cause you to over train your muscles and over tax your system, neither of which will produce results. Some find success following this routine for only one week, taking a week layoff and then resuming their normal routine. Others will follow it for four weeks proceeded with a week layoff and then take to another program. No exact timetable etched in stone as far as the duration goes, every individual will have to experiment on their own to discover what will work best for them.

Keep intensity high as your are trying to shock your muscles into a new phase. Most, who follow this routine for the first time, discover the body actually responding after the very first workout. This routine is vastly different from anything tried in the past and it really throws the body, as well as the mind, into a different state.

Enjoy the new feeling and results you will receive from the 10 – 8 – 6 – 15 routine!

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