SCULPTORS
- RESISTANCE BASICS

TEAM BODY PROJECT©

CONTENT GUIDE

Sculptors - resistance basics

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SCULPTORS – RESISTANCE BASICS

Sculptor plug-on workouts are resistance-based workouts of between 10 and 20 minutes that can be 'plugged-on' to your Team Body Project workout plan.

There are several progressive plans that you can select based on your current goals.

All sculptor workouts are multi-level/low impact.

The difficulty level will be dependent on the weight you use. (See *Using the correct weights*)

This segment of the *Transform for Life* manual will explain how you can use *Sculptors* to accelerate your results and fine tune your body.

Time under tension – the master principle

Time under tension drives everything with **resistance training**.

The various set quantities, rep speeds, weights (or load) and rep numbers are all designed to vary, increase, decrease and influence the type of tension you experience and the amount of time your muscles are under tension.

Without placing muscles under tension you are just moving your muscles and ligaments around the joint. This is great for mobilization and activation, but if you want to improve the tone, strength or shape of your muscles you will need to force 'adaptation' through applying the correct amount and duration of tension to break the muscles down and have them build back stronger, tighter and denser.

Continuous tension overloads the working muscles and forces the body to adapt.

This may sound complicated, but once you've understood and can apply the basics, with practice, it really is very simple.

Muscular Engagement

During resistance workouts you must learn to keep your muscles under tension through both the **concentric** (AGAINST gravity) and more importantly **eccentric** (WITH gravity) part of the movement.

Think of a press up.

By bending your elbows and going towards the ground you are being assisted by gravity, meaning this part of the movement could actually happen with no effort. You could literally 'fall' through the eccentric part of the movement with gravity assisting you.

Slowing this movement down by controlling and engaging the muscle to work AGAINST gravity is imperative for best results.

We call this 'eccentric control'. You can either engage your muscles to fight against gravity through the movement to generate results (eccentric control) or you can allow gravity to do the work for you and give the eccentric half of your resistance results away.

This is why eccentric control is so important.

The drive up AGAINST gravity (concentric) requires muscular effort to happen, so there is always a 'forced' contraction, but an additional focus on muscle engagement remains important to maximize engagement and tension and minimize momentum.

Before each set, read the on-screen guidelines to see which muscles should be working and focus on keeping these muscles engaged through BOTH parts of the movement; avoiding momentum through the concentric and avoiding dropping the weights through eccentric.

IMPORTANT: Whenever you are confused about which part of the movement is concentric and which part of the movement is eccentric simply consider which part of the movement is AGAINST gravity and which part is WITH.

The optional 'Squeeze'

You can also give the muscles an extra 'squeeze' at the top of the movement.

The top point of the concentric portion of your repetition before moving into the gravity assisted eccentric portion is the squeeze point.

Speed of Repetitions

The time under tension principles are also impacted by how fast the reps are, which impacts the total duration of the set.

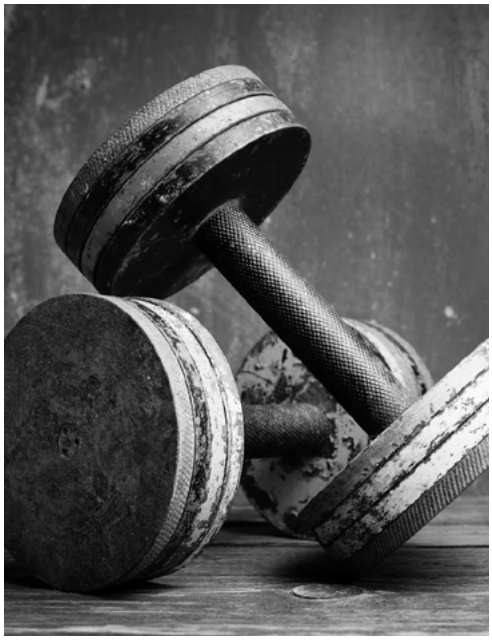
The faster the reps are, the less time the muscle is under tension and therefore, the more total reps you can theoretically complete.

The slower the reps are, the more time the muscle is under tension with each rep, and therefore the fewer reps you should be able to complete.

We have three different speeds; slow, medium and fast.

We make repetition speed easy for you in *sculptors*. A **beep** will sound to indicate the completion of each repetition.

By combining muscular engagement with the correct rep speed, you will be ensuring you get the best results for your efforts.



Note: *As you reach the final few repetitions of a set, provided the weight is correct and your engagement has been crisp, you will start to feel lactic acid gathering in the muscles you are using.*

At this point it is expected you will have to start cheating reps by accelerating the concentric with a little momentum.

This is not only normal, it shows you are pushing to the correct difficulty level for progress. (overload).

However, try NOT to cheat the eccentric part of the movement by dropping the weight using gravity under any circumstances.

Number of reps

We have four rep counts with *Sculptors*: 10, 12, 15 and 20.

The higher the rep count the longer your muscle is under tension relative to the chosen pace of each repetition.

We would never have 20 slow reps, as the time under tension would be too great. If the muscles could last this long another variable would certainly be incorrect (weight too light, engagement not sufficient, etc.).

Conversely, we would never have 10 fast reps as the time under tension would be too short. If the set is sufficiently difficult for 10 fast reps it is possible that another variable is incorrect (weight too heavy, form incorrect).

We make reps easy in *Sculptors* by setting them for you.

Rest time

The rest time given will dictate the ratio of tension versus rest. The shorter the rest time between each set the higher the percentage of time your body is under tension.

While it may appear that shorter rest times are always better or harder this is not the case. If you are always able to complete every set with low rest and high tension periods, you must consider whether you are sufficiently challenging yourself during the working period.

As a (somewhat surprising) general rule of thumb:

The higher the rep count, the lighter the weight, the less stressful (or catabolic) the time under tension, the SHORTER the rest required.

The lower the rep count, the heavier the weight, the more stressful (or catabolic) the time under tension, the LONGER the rest required.

You will not need to give too much thought to rest times, since we drive them for you through offering a variety of rest times that do not always line up perfectly to the above.

It is up to you to adjust your weights accordingly. Weight is the one variable you must control independently.

Number of sets

We have four set counts with *Sculptors*: 1, 2, 3 and 4.

The higher the set count the higher the net amount of time your muscle is under tension for each exercise grouping.

Therefore, the higher the set count for each individual exercise, the lower the total different exercise selections we would make.

We make number of sets easy within *Sculptors* by setting it for you.

Using the correct weights

Please read this section carefully. This is the one variable we cannot select for you.

When you are at the start of your training journey, any set of weights will do. In fact, you can get through the first few months of training WITHOUT any weights.

However, if you wish to continue making progress you will need to make an investment in equipment.

We do not like asking people to spend additional money on equipment BUT if you are going to take your 'at home' training seriously for the rest of your life, dumbbells offer exceptional value for money.

Exercise type 'weight' groupings

We have grouped exercises into three categories based on the weight of the dumb-bell you should probably use.

Group A exercises 'Light weight'
(4-11 lb / 2-5 kg)

Side and reverse shoulder raises and circles, chest raises, tricep extensions, punch type movements, Pilates 'control' movements.

Group B exercises 'Medium weight'
(6-22 lb / 3-10 kg)

Bicep curls, overhead shoulder press, front raises, curl and press, commando pull, overhead tricep extension, squat and press, weighted sit up, chest flies.

Group C exercises 'Heavy weight'
(11-33 lb / 5-15 kg)

Dumbbell chest press, all squat variations, bent over row, lat pullover, deadlift.

Note: *You may personally find a Group A exercise could be an A/B for you, a B could be a B/A or B/C and C could be a C/B. However, an A should NEVER be a C and a C should never be an A. If it is you should review your form, engagement and rep speed.*

Buying the correct weights

Beginner female dumbbell set

Unless you can afford it or already own them, there is little point in purchasing weights that are 1 kg or less. You will soon grow out of them and can use water bottles or other household items instead.

Note: 1 kg = 2.2 lb

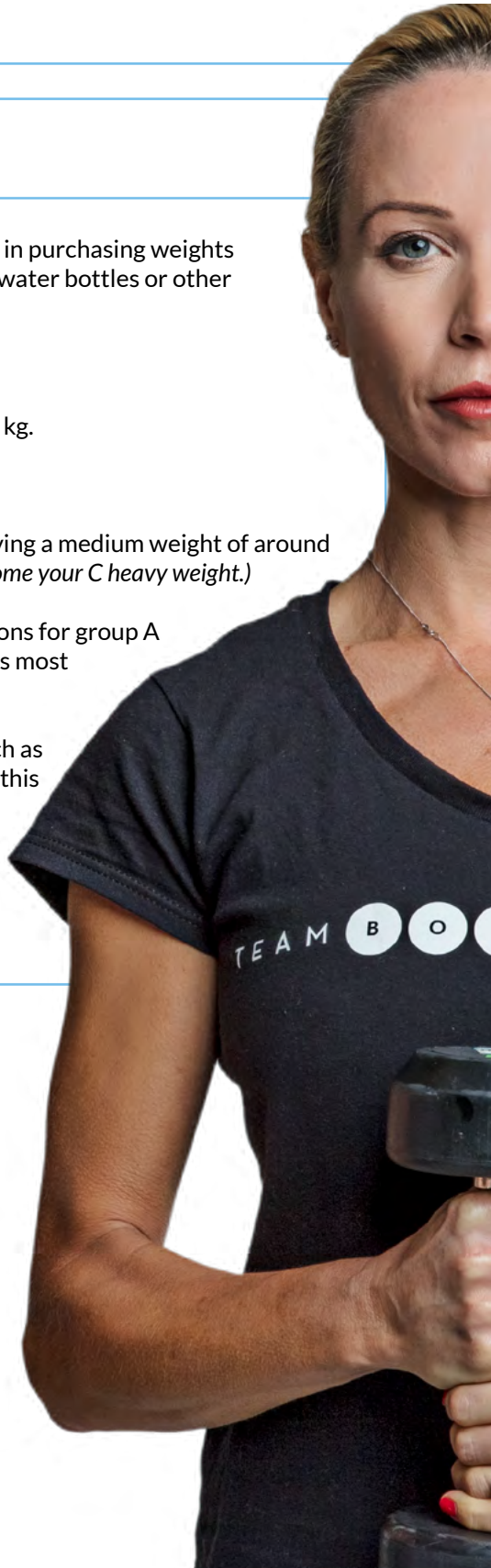
1. First set (Light). Your starting light weight should be around 2 kg. *(If you are using 1 kg for light this will become your B medium weight.)*

2. Second set (Medium). As the majority of exercises sit in B, having a medium weight of around 3-4 kg would be hugely beneficial.*(Again, this would naturally become your C heavy weight.)*

Having one set of 2 kg and one set of 8 kg will give you good options for group A and group C exercises with the capacity for choosing which one is most suitable for B exercises.

3. Third set (Heavy). After a time, you may feel like exercises such as squat variations are proving too easy with 3-4 kg weights and at this point we would recommend purchasing an additional set of dumbbells of 5-6 kg.

Note: *These are rough guidelines only and you should adjust according to your own strength and capabilities.*



Beginner male dumbbell set

Unless you can afford it, there is little point in purchases weights that are 1 kg or less, you will probably grow out of them very quickly and you can always use water bottles or other household items instead.

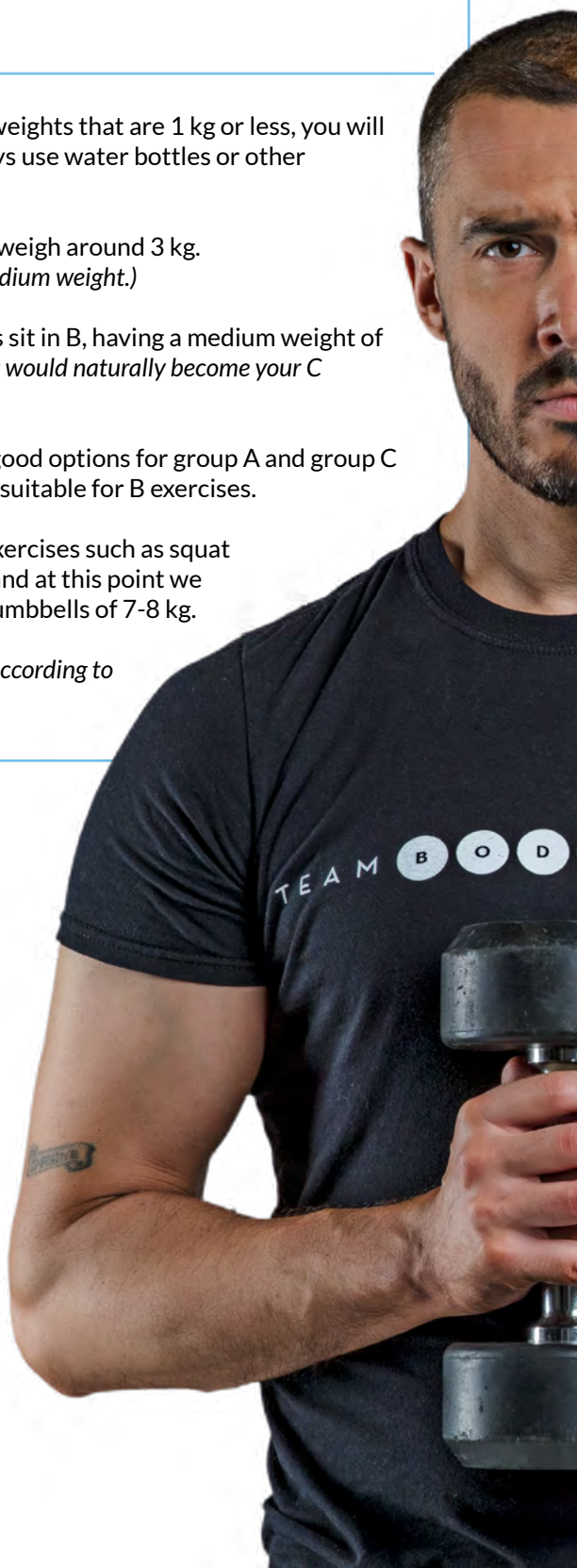
1. First set (Light). Your starting light weight should weigh around 3 kg. *(If you are using 1 kg for light this can become your B medium weight.)*

2. Second set (Medium). As the majority of exercises sit in B, having a medium weight of around 4-5 kg would be hugely beneficial. *(Again, this would naturally become your C heavy weight.)*

Having one set of 3 kg and one set of 4-5 kg will give you good options for group A and group C exercise with the capacity for choosing which one is most suitable for B exercises.

3. Third set (Heavy). After a time, you will feel like exercises such as squat variations are proving too easy with 4-5 kg weights and at this point we would recommend purchasing an additional set of dumbbells of 7-8 kg.

Note: *These are rough guidelines only and you should adjust according to your own strength and capabilities.*



Further progressions

By the time you have reached the limit with the weights recommended, you will have a good feeling for weights you are comfortable lifting and where you want to take your strength. Some members never use a weight heavier than 4 kg and some use 20 kg.

The choice is personal and depends on your goals and preferences.

Adjusting weight based on variables

The weight you select MAY also be impacted by the following variables.

- The faster the rep speed, the heavier the weight MAY have to be
- The slower the rep speed, the lighter the weight MAY have to be
- The higher the rep count, the lighter the weight MAY have to be
- The lower the rep count, the heavier the weight MAY have to be
- The shorter the rest time, the lighter the weight MAY have to be
- The higher the set count, the lighter the weight MAY have to be
- The lower the set count, the heavier the weight MAY have to be
- The more effective the muscular engagement, the lighter the weight MAY have to be
- The less effective the muscular engagement, the heavier the weight MAY have to be

In the next page we will explain how to understand which weight you should be using a little better.

How to know if you are using the wrong weight

There are three things you should be looking out for when deciding if the weight is heavy enough or too heavy:

1. Lactic acid accumulating in the muscles

If you do not feel any lactic acid or 'good pain' accumulating in the muscles by the last 2-3 reps (especially on the second, third and, if relevant, fourth set) of an exercise then the weight is either too light OR your muscle engagement is not sufficient for the rep range and speed.

2. Loss of strength

If you lose strength and have to stop BEFORE the last 2-3 reps the weight is too heavy for the rep range and speed and should be lighter.

However, if you have to stop DURING the last 2-3 reps, the weight is pushing you just beyond your limit and this is fine.

Cheating form in last few reps

As previously discussed, you can cheat form in the last few reps by accelerating or powering up against gravity, provided you keep good form, using additional momentum. You cannot however cheat form when you are moving with gravity. If you do this gravity will be stealing your results from you.

3. Loss of form

ANY time you lose form you should consider the weight too heavy for the rep range and speed and should use a lighter weight to ensure correct form.

Correct form is the most important aspect and should never be compromised under any circumstances.

Loss of form red flags

- Swinging the weights or using momentum early in the set
- Feeling muscle strain in overload redistribution areas (lower back, neck, trapezius)
- Feeling ANY muscle that is not supposed to be working – always check the muscles worked on screen
- Dropping the weights with gravity
- Not feeling the muscles you should be – always check the muscles on screen during break times

Exercise variations

Different types of exercises work different muscle groups by activating muscles relevant to the action of the joint.

To ensure we hit all muscle groups in a balanced way, we have broken down the exercises and the muscles they work into eight sections.

A. Glossary of body parts

1. Legs (compound)

Primary: Quads, hamstrings, calves and glutes
Secondary: Core

Exercise examples: Squats, deadlifts, sumo squat

2. Glutes

Exercise examples: Good mornings, donkey kicks, leg raises

3. Chest (compound and isolation)

Primary: Chest
Secondary: Anterior deltoids, triceps, core

Exercise examples: Push up, dumbbell flies, dumbbell press

4. Back (compound and isolation)

Primary: Rhomboids, Lats
Secondary: Biceps, posterior deltoids, core

Exercise examples: Bent over rows, lat pullovers

5. Biceps (isolation)

Exercise examples: Bicep curls, hammer curls

6. Triceps (isolation and compound)

Primary: Triceps
Secondary: Core, chest, anterior deltoids

Exercise examples: Tricep dips, extensions

7. Shoulders (compound and isolation)

Primary: Anterior/posterior/medial deltoid
Secondary: Trapezius, core

Exercise examples: Raised, overhead press

8. Core

Transverse abs, obliques, lower back, pelvic floor, rectus abdominus, multifidus

Exercise examples: Plank, sit up, toe taps

B. Muscles used / explanations during Sculptors

In the rest times of your Sculptor workout you will be given clear instructions on which muscles are working in the next exercise.

Please read them and focus on engaging these muscles during the set.

Deciding on a Sculptor routine

We have seven types of resistance workouts and routine plug-ons within the Sculptor program.

We call these routines *progressions*.

- Total Body progressions
- Lower body and ab progressions
- Upper body progressions
- Arm only progressions
- Back and shoulders progressions
- Chest only progressions
- Lower body only progressions

Each Sculptor program will offer a variety of rep speeds, sets, rest times and exercises to ensure you get a balanced and progressive program based on your goals.

A. Total Body progressions

Total Body routines ensure your muscles get a good total body workout and work all the muscles in a balanced way with each workout. The progressions will be designed to change the way we fatigue the muscles.

B. Isolation progressions

Isolation routines allow you to work on an area you want to focus on over a short period of time. For instance using an arm isolation routine for two weeks to improve tone and strength in arms.

Note: *The same isolation routines should not be used week after week, as this would create an imbalance.*

C. Split Body progressions

Split Body routines will work different muscle groups to fatigue on different days. This is an advanced approach suited to more experienced exercisers looking to change their approach to reignite results.

D. Random workouts

You don't have to follow a specific progression. You can decide on a different Sculptor plug-on depending on how you feel on the day and the amount of time you have.

If you have the confidence to do this, make sure you balance body parts over a period of time (see *Glossary of body parts*).

Note: *Sculptor workouts and plans should not be considered complete plans by themselves. They are workouts designed to add on to your Team Body Project cardio and circuit training to further sculpt and strengthen your body. They are here to complement the broad range of cardio, Pilates, resistance and cardio workouts we provide.*

How to use Sculptor plug-ons

A. Sculptors are ideal to use after:

- ALL cardio, Pilates and mobilization workouts
- Workouts that are less than 45 minutes in duration

Sculptors need more consideration for use after:

- Workouts more than 45 minutes in duration
- PT workouts
- Get Moving workouts
- Longer 'Personal Training' or circuit-based workouts

Sculptors are not ideal to use after:

- Pure Resistance
- Pure Resistance 2
- Danger Zone 2 (full version)

B. When to use Sculptors

A Sculptor should ideally be done BEFORE your cool down and stretch so your body is still warm from your previous workout.

You should then proceed to cool down and stretch AFTER you have finished the Sculptor.

Using the letter and number system

Each Sculptor has both a **letter** and **number** attached to it.

Letters

A workouts have an overall focus on rotating the exercises in a circuit format.

Example:

A1 workouts indicate all of the workouts are in the same category, so you could expect all of them to have a similar format.

- A1 Legs
- A1 Arms
- A1 Chest
- A1 Back
- A1 Shoulders

You can expect this entire set to have a circuit-based system.

Example A circuit format:

Bicep curls x 12 medium pace
Tricep dips x 15 fast pace
Hammer curls x 10 slow pace

Circuit x 3.

A change in letter represents a change to the overall FORMAT.

B workouts have an overall focus on grouping the exercises in a continuous repetition format.

Example B continuous repetition format:

Bicep curls x 12 x 3 medium pace
Tricep dips x 15 x 3 fast pace
Hammer curls x 10 x 3 slow pace

Numbers

Each number represents different variables **within** the letter format.

A2 workouts would have a circuit format but the speeds, numbers of reps and exercises could be different to A1.

B2 workouts would have a continuous repetition format but speeds, numbers of reps and exercises could be different to B1.

Mixing the numbers and letters

You can mix and match the numbers and letters in any way you choose, although we recommend a monitored approach.

Provided you are changing the stimulus and working the muscle in new ways you will continue to make progress.