



DUMBBELL ONLY WORKOUT: INCREASE YOUR BENCH PRESS IN 8 WEEKS

Workout Summary

Main Goal: Build Muscle
Training Level: Beginner
Days Per Week: 5 Day
Program Duration: 8 Weeks
[Click here for the full workout!](#)

Equipment: Bodyweight, Dumbbells, Other
Target Gender: Male & Female
Author: Roger “Rock” Lockridge

Heavy Bench Day Progression

Once you establish your max, you’ll use percentages for your main pressing movement over the next seven weeks.

- Week 1 -75%
- Week 2 - 78%
- Week 3 - 81%
- Week 4 - 84%
- Week 5 - 87%
- Week 6 - 90%
- Week 7 - 93%

This gradual progression helps build strength while reinforcing technique and confidence.

Day 1: Heavy Bench Day

This is your primary strength day and the most important workout of the week. The focus here is moving heavy weight with strong, controlled reps. Each week, you’ll increase intensity based on your max.

Train your accessory movements heavy as well, but stop 1-2 reps short of failure. This will help you build strength without burning out too early in the program.

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Dumbbell Bench Press (see progression chart)	3	3	2 Min
Incline Dumbbell Flys	3	4 - 6	90 Sec
Decline Push Up (Feet on Bench)	3	6 - 8 (Slow Reps)	90 Sec
Seated Dumbbell Tricep Extension	3	6 - 8 *	90 Sec

*If you have heavy dumbbells, do two arm extensions. If not, go with single arm.

Day 2: Lower Body Day

Physique development isn’t the primary goal of this program, but you still want to train the entire body and continue making progress. This session provides enough volume to maintain and build lower-body strength without taking away from your pressing performance.

Take a rest day after this workout.

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Dumbbell Squat	3	8 - 10	60 - 90 Sec
Dumbbell Bulgarian Split Squat	3	8 - 10 Each	60 - 90 Sec
Dumbbell Stiff Leg Deadlift	3	8 - 10	60 - 90 Sec
Single Leg Hip Thrust with Dumbbell	3	8 - 10 Each	60 - 90 Sec
Standing Calf Raise	3	8 - 10 Each	60 - 90 Sec

Day 3: Light Bench Day

This session focuses on technique, control, and dumbbell speed. You’ll use lighter weights, but place more emphasis on tempo and execution.

For sets of 3-5 reps with very light weight, use a weight that’s around 50-55% of your max. Lower the weight slowly (3-5 seconds), pause under control (3-5 seconds), then press as explosively as possible. This helps improve power output and reinforces proper pressing mechanics.

You'll also perform higher-rep accessory work to support recovery and build muscular endurance. This workout is shorter, but still very effective.

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Dumbbell Bench Press	5	3 - 5	60 - 90 Sec
Dumbbell Flys	3	12 - 15	60 - 90 Sec
Standing Dumbbell Front Raise	3	12 - 15	60 - 90 Sec
Lying Dumbbell Extension	3	12 - 15	60 - 90 Sec

Day 4: Upper Body Day

This workout shifts focus to the rest of the upper body, primarily back, shoulders, and arms. Building these muscle groups will support your pressing strength and improve overall balance.

Start lighter and build up across sets. Push hard on your final set for each movement, but keep 1-2 reps in reserve. The only exception is push ups, where you can go to failure.

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Dumbbell Pullover	3	6 - 8	60 - 90 Sec
One Arm Dumbbell Row	3	6 - 8 Each	60 - 90 Sec
Dumbbell Shrug	3	6 - 8	60 - 90 Sec
Bent-Over Lateral Raise	3	6 - 8	60 - 90 Sec
Seated Lateral Raise	3	6 - 8	60 - 90 Sec
Alternating Standing Dumbbell Curl	3	6 - 8	60 - 90 Sec
Concentration Curl	3	6 - 8	60 - 90 Sec
Triceps Kickback	3	6 - 8	60 - 90 Sec
Push Up	1	Failure*	60 - 90 Sec

*If you can do more than 25 push ups, do them with feet elevated.

Day 5: Full Body Day

This session gives additional attention to the rest of the body without overloading your chest and pressing muscles. Keep the weights moderate and focus on clean, controlled reps.

If you’re short on time, perform 2 sets per exercise. If you want more volume, go with 3. Either approach will be effective as long as the intensity is appropriate.

Take one to two rest days after this workout.

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Wide Stance Goblet Squat	2 - 3	8 - 10	60 - 90 Sec
Walking Lunges (Per Leg)	2 - 3	8 - 10	60 - 90 Sec
Seated Dumbbell Calf Raise	2 - 3	8 - 10	60 - 90 Sec
Side Bends (Per Side)	2 - 3	8 - 10	60 - 90 Sec
Bent Over Dumbbell Row	2 - 3	8 - 10	60 - 90 Sec
Arnold Press	2 - 3	8 - 10	60 - 90 Sec
Hammer Curl	2 - 3	8 - 10	60 - 90 Sec
Dumbbell Overhead Extension	2 - 3	8 - 10	60 - 90 Sec