

Progressive overload without guesswork

Use a clear decision rule to increase repetitions, load or volume.

01 / Understand the starting point

Overload means increasing a relevant training demand as capacity improves. It does not mean making every workout harder. Select one main measure for a movement and keep setup and range consistent.

02 / Make the useful distinction

Use a repetition range such as 8-12. If one set reaches 12 but later sets do not, keep the load and aim for another sound repetition next time. Compare like with like rather than shortening range to claim progress.

03 / Put it into practice

When every working set reaches the top of the range with controlled technique and similar effort, try the smallest practical resistance increase. Repetitions may return toward the bottom of the range.

04 / Review and adapt

If performance falls across repeated sessions, inspect sleep, food, schedule and total workload. Keep or reduce the dose before adding another method. Pain and neurological symptoms call for assessment rather than an overload experiment.

Original education and planning material. Sources support the general context; sample schedules and worksheets are editorial applications, not tested individual prescriptions.

Put the guide to work.

A worked example, then your own next step.

A practical example

A row log reads 10/9 at one resistance, then 11/10, then 12/12. Increase resistance slightly for the next session and reassess. This is a coaching example, not a mandatory timetable.

Your decisions

What task or goal do I want to improve?

What is my starting point and what remains uncertain?

Which detail changes my next useful action?

What would make the action easier to repeat?

When will I review it, and what would require earlier help?

Use the platform

Training: compare programs and technique guides. Daily: generate a session or arrange a week. Planner: calculate targets and select meals. Progress: record completed work. Learn: return to clinical reading when symptoms need professional assessment.

Your working record.

Printable worksheet; use the companion CSV for an editable version.

Movement	Current range and load	Set results	Technique and reserve	Next session decision

Evidence and original clinical reading

<https://acsm.org/resistance-training-guidelines-update-2026/>

This original workbook is free to keep and use. The source provides background reading; examples are practical frameworks to adapt. Individual medical and nutrition needs require suitable professional advice.