

FREE PROGRAMME F01

CALIBRE FOUNDATION FULL-BODY

8 WEEKS · 3 DAYS · FREE

V1.0

Coach Mo · Train with CALIBRE

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DURATION	FREQUENCY	SESSION	EFFORT	LEVEL
8 weeks	3 days / week	45–60 min	RIR	Beginner

How to use

- 1 Read every page before session one. Beginners gain most from doing the basics exactly as written.
- 2 Weeks 1–2 are for learning the lifts: stop every set with 3 reps in reserve.
- 3 Train three non-consecutive days a week, sessions A, B, C in order. A missed day is gone, not owed.
- 4 Write load, reps and RIR for every working set before you leave the station.

Who it is for

Who this is for

- Complete beginners, and anyone with under six months of consistent lifting.
- People who want to learn the squat, hinge, press and pull properly before chasing anything else.
- Anyone who can train three days a week for eight weeks, 45–60 minutes a session.
- Men and women. Same sessions; only the loads differ.

Who should not run this

- Lifters with more than six months of consistent training. You have outgrown this; apply and coaching will place you.
- Anyone returning after a long break, injury or surgery. Apply instead, so a coach can dose your return.
- Anyone with unmanaged pain or an unassessed injury. Get cleared first. I coach, I do not diagnose.
- Anyone looking for a fat-loss, cut or bulk plan. This is a training block, not a diet.

Entry requirement: under 6 months of consistent lifting.

The method

I built Foundation Full-Body for your first eight weeks of real training. Three full-body sessions a week, the same handful of lifts, and a simple rule for adding load. You are not here to be entertained. You are here to learn four movement patterns well enough that every programme after this one works better.

Nothing in this block goes to failure. Beginners progress quickly without it, and clean reps build the technique you will rely on for years. The first four weeks use sets of 6–8 to learn the lifts. Weeks 5–7 move the main lifts to sets of five, the way strength foundations have been built for decades.

CALIBRE PRINCIPLE

Earn the pattern, then earn the load.

A load you cannot lift with the same technique every rep has not been earned yet. The log decides, not your mood.

Where the style comes from

This programme borrows from two long-standing traditions: the classic 5×5 strength-and-size foundation (ramping warm-up sets, then three work sets at one weight, never to failure) and brief full-body training three times a week with a few hard, strict sets. Both are described here as general methods, adapted for beginners with RIR limits and one heavy deadlift day a week.

Based on established training styles. Not affiliated with or endorsed by any athlete.

Why it works

- Full-body training three times a week lets you practise each main lift often, which suits beginners learning new movements.
- You do not need to train to failure to make progress. Stopping with 2–3 reps in reserve keeps technique clean and still builds strength and muscle.
- Weekly volume is modest on purpose, around 6–10 hard sets per muscle. That is plenty for a beginner, and it leaves room to recover and add load most weeks.

Eat regular meals with enough protein and protect your sleep. Tailored nutrition is part of coaching, not this free programme.

How to run it

The week

DAY	SESSION	FOCUS	WHAT IT COVERS
Mon	Session A	Full body	Squat, bench press, row, hinge accessory, trunk
Tue	—	Rest	Walk. No extra training
Wed	Session B	Full body	Deadlift, overhead press, pulldown, split squat, trunk
Thu	—	Rest	Walk. No extra training
Fri	Session C	Full body	Squat, DB press, row, leg curl, carry
Sat–Sun	—	Rest	Two full rest days

Any three days with a rest day between each session. Deadlift is trained once a week, in session B.

Session length: 45–60 min including the warm-up. If you are short on time, cut the last exercise, never the rest periods.

Reading the tables

Main lifts are marked in the notes. They get the ramp sets and the longest rests.

If you cannot yet squat with a barbell, use a goblet squat for weeks 1–4 and switch when your depth is consistent. Log which one you used.

THE MISSED-DAY RULE

Missed days are gone, not owed. If you miss a session, skip it, log the skip and run the next session in order. Do not double up, and do not bolt the missing exercises onto the next session. A block with one missed session is still a good block. A block of crammed sessions is not.

Effort, tempo and rest

RIR – how hard each set is

RIR means reps in reserve: how many more clean reps you could have done at the end of a set. It is the only effort scale in this programme.

TARGET	WHAT IT FEELS LIKE
RIR 4	Four clean reps left. Warm-up pace. Deload week only.
RIR 3	Three left. Bar speed normal. Week 1 calibration.
RIR 2	Two left. Reps slowing, form unchanged.
RIR 1	One left. The last rep is slow but clean.
RIR 0	No clean rep left. Technical failure: stop when form would break. RIR 0 is not used in this programme.

When a table says 1–2, aim for 2 early in the week and 1 only when form is clean. If you are unsure how many reps you had left, assume it was fewer.

Tempo

Tempo is four digits: lowering, pause at the bottom, lifting, pause at the top, in seconds. 3010 means 3 seconds down, no pause, 1 second up, no pause. X means lift with intent, as fast as clean technique allows. The tempo is part of the prescription: a faster lowering is a lighter set, and it makes your log useless.

Rest

Rests are written m:ss. 2:00 is two minutes, 1:30 is ninety seconds. Rest is the minimum. Take the full time on compound lifts, even when you feel ready early.

Warm-up and ramp sets

General warm-up – 8 to 10 minutes

- 1 5 minutes easy on a bike, rower or incline walk. Warm, not tired.
- 2 2 rounds: 10 bodyweight squats, 10 band pull-aparts, 10 hip hinges with a dowel or empty hands, 8 incline push-ups, 6 dead bugs per side.
- 3 Before each new pattern (squat, hinge, press, pull), one easy set of the first exercise at about half your working load.

Ramp sets

Ramp sets come before each main lift: squat, bench press, deadlift and overhead press. Percentages are of today's planned working load. Two ramp sets plus three work sets is where the name 5×5 comes from. Ramp sets are not logged as working sets.

SET	LOAD	REPS	REST	NOTE
Ramp 1	Empty bar, or about 40%	8–10	1:00	Groove the pattern. Film it if you can
Ramp 2	About 70%	5	1:30	Same tempo and depth as the work sets
Work sets	100%, same load each set	Table	Table	The sets that count. Log them

Accessories need no ramp. Do one easy set of 8 at about half your working load if the movement is new.

Before every session: recovery gate

GATE	SIGNS	ACTION
GREEN	Slept reasonably, normal soreness, warm-up feels normal	Train as written
AMBER	Poor sleep, heavy legs or arms, ramp sets feel slow or heavy	Keep loads. Add 1 to every RIR target. Drop the last set of isolation work
RED	Sharp or joint pain, illness, or pain that changes how you move	Do not train through it. Skip, log it, and get it assessed if it persists

The sessions

Sessions — weeks 1–4 as written. Weeks 5–7 change the main lifts to 3 × 5 (see notes and the week-by-week table). Weeks 1–2 and week 8 RIR follow the week-by-week table.

Session A – Full body

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	TEMPO	REST	RIR	NOTES
Back squat	3	6–8	3010	2:30	2–3	Main lift. Weeks 5–7: 3 × 5
Barbell bench press	3	6–8	3010	2:30	2–3	Main lift. Weeks 5–7: 3 × 5. Safeties set
Chest-supported row	3	8–10	2011	1:30	2	Chest stays on the pad
DB Romanian deadlift	2	8–10	3011	1:30	2–3	Hinge practice. Stop at the stretch
Dead bug	2	8 / side	2020	1:00	2	Lower back stays down

Session B – Full body

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	TEMPO	REST	RIR	NOTES
Trap-bar deadlift	3	5–6	20X0	3:00	2–3	Main lift, once a week. Weeks 5–7: 3 × 5
Overhead press	3	6–8	3010	2:00	2–3	Main lift. Ribs down, no layback
Lat pulldown	3	8–10	3011	1:30	2	Full stretch at the top
DB Bulgarian split squat	2	8–10 / leg	3010	1:30	2–3	Hold a support if balance limits you
Plank	2	20–40 s	—	1:00	2	Ribs down, glutes tight

Session C – Full body

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	TEMPO	REST	RIR	NOTES
Back squat	3	6–8	3010	2:30	2–3	Main lift. Weeks 5–7: 3 × 5
Incline DB press	3	8–10	3010	1:30	2	Control the lowering
One-arm DB row	3	8–10 / side	2011	1:30	2	Weaker side first
Seated leg curl	2	10–12	3011	1:00	2	Pause at full contraction
Farmer carry	2	30 m	—	1:00	2	Tall posture. Do not rush

Week by week

WEEK	MAIN LIFTS	RIR	WHAT CHANGES
1	3 × 6–8	3 on everything	Learn the lifts. Start light; the log starts here
2	3 × 6–8	3 on everything	Same loads or slightly heavier if every rep looked the same
3	3 × 6–8	Table	Double progression starts. Add reps, then load
4	3 × 6–8	Table	Same as week 3
5	3 × 5, same load	2–3	Main lifts move to 3 × 5. Start about 5–10% heavier than your week-4 load
6	3 × 5, same load	2–3	Add the smallest load step when all 3 × 5 were completed at RIR 2 or more
7	3 × 5, same load	2	Same rule. Accessories unchanged all block
8	2 × 5 at week-7 load	3–4	Deload and exit. Fill in the pattern checklist

Progression and deload

Double progression

- 1 Every exercise has a rep range, for example 8–10.
- 2 Start at the bottom of the range with a load that lands on the target RIR.
- 3 Each session, try to add a rep to one or more sets, at the same load, tempo and RIR.
- 4 When every working set reaches the top of the range at the written tempo and RIR, add the smallest load step next session: usually 2.5 kg on a barbell, 1–2 kg per dumbbell, or one pin on a machine.
- 5 The added load takes you back towards the bottom of the range. Build up again.

When you stall

A stall is two sessions in a row with no extra rep or load on the same exercise at the same RIR. First check sleep, tempo and the log. If the same exercise stalls a third time, reduce the load by about 10% and build back up through the range.

On the 3 × 5 lifts: if you miss a rep, repeat the load next session. Two missed sessions in a row, drop about 10% and build back up. Never grind reps with changing technique.

Week 8: deload and exit

Week 8 is a deload and an exit. Main lifts drop to 2 sets of 5 at your week-7 load, accessories to 1 set, and every set stops at RIR 3–4.

Use the week to fill in the pattern checklist below. If you can tick every line, you are ready for an intermediate programme.

Pattern checklist – week 8

- Squat: same depth every rep at working load, heels down, filmed from the side.
- Deadlift: bar or handles move in a straight line, back position unchanged from first rep to last.
- Bench and overhead press: same touch point and bar path every rep, ribs down.
- Rows and pulldowns: full range with no swinging.
- Log: every session of the eight weeks recorded, including missed ones.

Recovery checks

- Sleep: are you getting enough to feel recovered most mornings? Sleep is the first thing to fix when progress stalls.
- Food: eat regular meals with a good protein source at each one. Tailored nutrition is part of coaching; it is not in this free programme.
- Soreness: normal muscle soreness is fine. Soreness that is still there at the next session for the same muscle means the RIR is not honest.
- Bar speed: if your ramp sets feel slow two sessions in a row, treat the day as AMBER.

I want the log filled in before you ask me why you are not progressing.

Exercise swaps

Swap equipment, never the movement pattern. Pick your swap in week 1 and keep it for all 8 weeks so the log stays comparable. The right column is a gentler option if a movement causes pain; if pain persists or is sharp, stop and get it assessed.

PROGRAMMED	EQUIPMENT SWAP	IF IT HURTS, TRY
Back squat	Hack squat, pendulum squat or Smith squat	Heel-elevated goblet squat, or leg press with a shorter range
Goblet squat	Leg press or hack squat	Goblet squat to a box, or Spanish squat with a band
Barbell bench press	Smith bench, or machine chest press	DB bench press with a neutral grip
Chest-supported row	Machine row, or T-bar row with chest pad	Seated cable row, neutral handle
DB Romanian deadlift	Cable pull-through, or 45° back extension	45° back extension, bodyweight or light plate
Trap-bar deadlift	Conventional deadlift, or plate-loaded hip-hinge machine	Trap-bar deadlift from blocks, or DB Romanian deadlift
Overhead press	Machine shoulder press, or seated DB shoulder press	Landmine press, or neutral-grip DB press
Lat pulldown	Assisted pull-up, or machine pulldown	Neutral-grip or single-arm cable pulldown
DB Bulgarian split squat	DB split squat, rear foot on the floor	Split squat holding a support, bodyweight
Incline DB press	Incline machine press, or incline Smith press	Low-incline DB press, neutral grip
One-arm DB row	Band row, anchored at chest height	Chest-supported DB row on an incline bench
Seated leg curl	Lying leg curl, or cable leg curl	Lying leg curl, or sliding leg curl on a towel
Dead bug	Band-resisted dead bug	Dead bug with arms only, feet supported
Plank	Pallof press	Incline plank on a bench
Farmer carry	Trap-bar or handle carry	Suitcase carry with one lighter DB

Session log

Duplicate this page, one per session. Write load and reps before you leave the station, not from memory in the car park. Ramp sets are not logged.

DATE	DAY	EXERCISE	LOAD	REPS	RIR	TEMPO HELD?
						Y / N
						Y / N
						Y / N
						Y / N
						Y / N
						Y / N
						Y / N
						Y / N
						Y / N
						Y / N

Weekly check – five minutes on your rest day

ITEM	STANDARD
All planned sessions done, or missed ones logged as missed	Gone, not owed
Every working set logged: load, reps, RIR	If it is not logged, it did not happen
Tempo held on every working set	Faster lowering is a lighter set
Rest kept as written on compound lifts	Cut an exercise, never the rest
RIR honest: film one set a week if unsure	The log is only as good as the RIR
No exercises added on impulse	Execution beats novelty

What next

Eight weeks in, you know the lifts, the log and how RIR feels. That is the foundation every intermediate programme assumes.

Next step: 3-Day Professional (Online Standard)

The usual next step is 3-Day Professional, my three-session full-body block for people with some training behind them, run inside Online Standard coaching. If the barbell numbers are what you enjoyed most, coaching may place you on Strength Standard instead. Either way, a coach decides from your log, not from a guess.

Coaching is where I read your log, watch your lifts and adjust the plan week to week. A free PDF cannot do that for you.

APPLY FOR COACHING

Apply: <https://trainwithcalibre.com/#/apply>

Bring your week 3 and week 7 main-lift numbers, your pattern checklist and your full log. First message should be your data, not your goals.

If it is not logged, it did not happen.

LEGAL AND MEDICAL

Education and coaching guidance for healthy adults. Not medical advice, and no medical claims are made. I coach, I do not diagnose.

If you have a medical condition, are pregnant, take medication, or have pain that worsens, stop and get cleared by a qualified medical professional before continuing.

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