Pyramid Strength Training Workout

There are several types of pyramid workouts including ascending, descending, and variations thereof. As a result, there are literally thousands of possible combinations of reps, sets and weights that can be incorporated into a pyramid format. To keep clients from feeling overwhelmed, this particular pyramid workout utilizes an "ascending pyramid" format and is designed to be straightforward and relatively simple to follow. It starts with light weight and high repetitions for the first set and then gradually moves to heavier weights and fewer reps for each successive set until the top of the pyramid is reached. This workout should be performed 2 to 3 days a week with a minimum of 1 day of rest between workouts, or 2 to 3 days if your clients are relatively new to weight training.

#1: Program Overview
Equipment: Any Precor Strength Training System
Total Time: Approximately 60 minutes
Goal: To build muscular strength and endurance.

#2: Warm-Up
Equipment: Gradually increase core temperature on a Precor cardio machine
Total Time: Approximately 5 – 7 minutes
Stretch: Following the warm-up, perform some basic stretches for the arms, shoulders, hamstrings, and quadriceps.

#3: Training Tips
Know Your Body: Remind clients to pay attention to their body during workouts as they begin resistance training. Some muscle fatigue is normal, but if they feel any pain and/or discomfort, the exercise should be stopped immediately.
Remember to Breath: During resistance exercises, remind clients to breathe normally and don’t hold their breath.
Control Your Motion: Clients should perform the exercises in a slow and controlled manner over a full range of motion.
Progress Appropriately: As clients become more comfortable with the exercise routine, challenge them by first increasing the number of repetitions, then the weight.

#4: Workout Structure
Basics: After the warm-up is complete, start the resistance training portion of the workout.
Weight: Use enough weight so that the client can achieve muscle fatigue during the last 1 or 2 repetitions in each set. In this pyramid workout, it will take some trial and error to pick the ideal weight for each set. As a rule, start with 50 to 65 percent of the maximum weight they can lift for 1 repetition (i.e., 1 Rep Max or RM), and then increase this weight incrementally for each set until they are lifting about 75 to 90 percent of their 1RM for the last set. If clients have questions about how much weight to lift or are hesitant, err on the side of using lighter weight to avoid injury and excessive muscle soreness.
Number of exercises: 10
Number of repetitions: Start with 12 to 15 repetitions and end with 4 to 6 at the top of the pyramid. As the client becomes more familiar with the routine and format, you can alter the number of repetitions and weight so that they are performing only 1 to 3 repetitions for the last set. Keep in mind that there is no set rule that clients have to perform the same number of reps per set for each exercise. Tailor the program to their body and needs, and make sure you track their progress to achieve optimal results.
Number of sets: Four (4) sets per pyramid. As the client becomes more familiar with the workout format, you can play around with the number of sets and pyramid format (e.g., by including a descending phase), but as a general rule, keep the number of sets between 3 and 10.
Amount of rest between sets: Approximately 30 seconds
Amount of rest between exercises: Approximately 1-2 minutes

Note: Some of the exercises may not be available on all Precor strength machines.
**Number of Sets/Repetitions:**
- Set 1: 12 – 15 reps (weight: 50 – 65%)
- Set 3: 6 – 8 reps (weight: 70 – 85%)
- Set 2: 8 – 10 reps (weight: 60 – 75%)
- Set 4: 4 – 6 reps (weight: 75 – 90%)

For video instruction, go to https://www.youtube.com/user/precorinc

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