

# Lyle McDonald Generic Bulking Routine – FAQ

Compiled By Alisenon Jan '09

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## 1. The basics

### 1.1 Lyles Bulking Routine - The basic setup

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...03&postcount=1>

Quote:

Mon: Lower  
Squat: 3-4X6-8/3' (3-4 sets of 6-8 with a 3' rest)  
SLDL or leg curl: 3-4X6-8/3'  
Leg press: 2-3X10-12/2'  
Another leg curl: 2-3X10-12/2'  
Calf raise: 3-4X6-8/3'  
Seated calf: 2-3X10-12/2'

Tue: Upper  
Flat bench: 3-4X6-8/3'  
Row: 3-4X6-8/3'  
Incline bench or shoulder press: 2-3X10-12/2'  
Pulldown/chin: 2-3X10-12/2'  
Triceps: 1-2X12-15/1.5'  
Biceps: 1-2X12-15/1.5'

For the thu/Fri workouts either rpeat the first two or make some slight exercise substitutions. Can do deadlift/leg press combo on Thu, switch incline/pulldown to first exercises on upper body day. A lot depends on volume tolerance, if the above is too much, go to 2-3X6-8 and 1-2X10-12

### 1.2 Consider this: the routine is called the generic BULKING routine and not the generic STRENGTH routine!

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=763>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*if you want a workout geared more towards stnregth, here's a though: pick a traning program geared specifically to strength*

*this is primarily for bulking with one mod being that you can adjust it for relatively more strength gains*

*it's not called the generic STRENGTH routine*

### 1.3 What does 3-4 in the routine description mean?

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=273>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*I prefer to give set and rep ranges for the simple fact that if you tell someone to do 4 sets of 8, they will do 4 sets of 8 even if they should have stopped at the third set on rep 6.*

*3-4 sets means 3 to 4 sets. So after your third set, you need to make a judgement call. if I were there coaching you, I'd make it for you. Judging by how fatigued you looked on the third set, what your reps looked like, how fried you looked. If you still looked strong, I'd have you do a 4th set. If you looked fried, you'd stop at 3.*

#### **1.4 How much gain can I expect as a natural on this routine?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=694>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*As far as rate of weight gain, the average male can gain maybe .5 lb muscle/week (1 lb/week under rare conditions). 1 lb/week should be about the maximum and that would yield 1/2 lb fat gain. Which should let you stretch out the bulking cycle between 10-15% bodyfat without getting fat too quickly.*

#### **1.5 And what about the gains for a female?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=704>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*half as much*

#### **1.6 So I got that cardio has benefits on a bulk. Why so?**

This one: <http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=696>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*It is "teaching the muscles to use fat for energy".*

*Just a shorthand way of saying 'maintaining all of the adaptations' involved in fat oxidation.*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **eatit**

*how does this work? does your body really lose the ability to target fat if a deficit isn't present?*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*you're eating lots of carbs and plenty of calories, body is never needing to burn lots of fat. in that*

*state, and in the absence of any cardio, you get a downregulation of fat oxidizing stuff.*

*one of the big differences between trained and untrained in terms of endurance is higher fat oxidation in trained. I'd have to look up how long it takes to get some of the adaptations, don't recall offhand. but easier IMO to just maintain it.*

*aerobics during the bulk has other potential benefits anyhow*

And also this one: <http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=396>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*It's a matter of duration and intensity.*

*Too many people (Blade for example) have found that, even if it doesn't significantly impact on fat gain durin the cycle, it makes moving back into fat loss much easier. I suspect it's just amatter of keeping fat mobilizing/oxidizing enzymes up to speed so that you're not starting from total scratch when you move into your diet. IF it has further partitioing benefits, all the better.*

*But I'm not talking about either much in terms of frequency, volume or intensity. A couple of time/week for 20-30' helps with work capacity, recovery, burns a few calories, etc, etc.*

You may want to look at this as well with regards to cardio while bulking:

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...dio#post221596>

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...dio#post211454>

### **1.8 How to warmup for this routine?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=359>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*Do progressive low rep warmups and make your first set the heaviest. 1-2 reps short of a true RM or you won't get the volume. Then either maintain that weight or lower it to keep the rep range up. I don't generally like ascending pyramids except for technique/neural work.*

*warmup, just to your heaviest set and then either stay there or pyramid down*

### **1.9 Which rep cadence should I use?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=252>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **fut**

*3) Is there any specifics to how slow the concentrics and rest part of the excercise should be?*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*3. on the lower rep stuff, 2-3 second eccentric, no or brief pause to dissipate SSC, explosive concentric. On the higher rep stuff, maybe 2 up/2 down.*

## **2. Programming this routine: cycle length, progression, specialization, ...**

### **2.1 How would a basic cycle with run-up, progression and deload look like?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=429>

also here:

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=269>

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=388>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*week 1: 80-85% of previous maxes*

*week 2: 90-95% of previous maxes*

*week 3-n (where n is either 7 or 9): push the weights as much as you can*

E.g.:

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mle\_ii**

*Week 4 = 100 lbs*

*Deload week 1 = 85 lbs*

*Deload week 2 = 92.5 lbs*

*Week 1 of second cycle = 100 lbs*

*Week 2 of second cycle = 100+whatever lbs I can push up*

### **2.2 So why does the generic deloading protocol reduce intensity rather than volume?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=872>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*because after 4-6 weeks of heavy loading, the joints and such need a break (in addition to the mind) that keeping intensity up but dropping sets wouldn't provide.*

*it's also usually easier to add more weight when you backcycle to submaximal weights which is what the deload ends up being (depending on if you look at it as a 2 week deload after the previous hard block or the 2 week runup for the next hard block)*

### **2.3 So how do I progress from cycle to cycle? How do I emphasize strength?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=402>

also:

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=308>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*each cycle lasts 6-8 weeks (2 week submax runup + 4-6 weeks pushing the weights), you can repeat it*

*in subsequent cycles, you can switch exercises or rep ranges or both. don't switch anything within a given cycle.*

*I was thiking earlier today that a nice progression would be a cycle of*

*6-8+10-12 ('pure' hypertrophy)*

*5's + 8-10 (strength/hypertrophy)*

*3's+6-8 (strength emphasis)*

*then repeat.*

**2.4 I am a bodybuilder, do I have to do pure strength work at all?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=694>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*I don't think bodybuilders need to do a ton of pure strenght work (5's and lower reps), but some seems to help get neural mechanismcs cranking so that they can use heavier weights in true mass gaining phases.*

*If they are using a power bodybuilding approach (i.e. 5X5 followed by 3X8 or 3X10-12), they may not need any pure strength work. Not much certainly.*

*Maybe 2-3 short cycles (3-6 weeks) per year. I think the question is whether to put it before or after bulking cycles (we just discussed this in the context of Innermusic wanting another training approach). I could probably go either way on it in this regards.*

*Benefits to putting it after the size work:*

*a. Tissues already conditioned to heavier work*

*b. Could make a decent transition into cutting (so drop to 3X3 + 1-2x8 while bringing calories back to maintenance)*

*Disadvantages*

*a. Done right before cutting, you may not get the same benefits in terms of helping your size program*

*Benefits of putting it before size training*

a. Greater strength lets you move more weight during the mass phase

*Disadvantages*

a. Jumping straight into heavy work without a runup might cause an injury.

*I suppose the solution is an alternation of mass with short strength blocks.*

*So say you finish up a run of my bulking program at 4X6-8 + 2-3X10-12 or whatever. That's 2 weeks of run up to 4-6 weeks bulking. You could then move to 5X5+2-3X6-8, 2 week run up to 4-6 weeks bulking. Then 3 weeks of 3X3 + 1X8 (the high rep set helps to maintain mass/tonnage/volume). So that's 6-8 weeks + 6-8 weeks + 3 weeks = 15-21 weeks. About the length most will say you can maintain good upwards progress in strength.*

*Probably a good time to move to dieting at that point. So take two weeks to simply stabilize your strength while you bring calories back down. If you haven't been doing a bit of cardio during the bulking*

a. shame on you

b. now is the time to bring it in gradually to teach your muscles to use fat for energy again.

## **2.5 How much volume should I do on the lower rep routine variations?**

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=460>

*I dunno, something like*

*3-5X5 + 2-3X8-10 (this would be a heavy training load)*

*3X3 + 2-3X6-8*

and:

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=404>

*8X3 is going to be too much. 3X3 is probably fine*

## **2.6 So if those 10-12 rep sets are for metabolic work, is metabolic work to be expected from the "high" rep 6-8 rep sets on the strength emphasized phase?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=558>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Blade**

*There's plenty of metabolic work in sets of 8 reps, even 5x5 provides a blend of loading and metabolic work.*



## 2.7 Doing leg curls on the 3x3 sets: should I really do sets of 3?

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=558>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Blade**

*No triples with leg curls, no - or at least not with extremely heavy loading. 3x3 on compounds...it's common sense, really.*

## 2.8 How do I know how much volume is right?

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=464>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Anthrax Invasio**

*Do you think a person should try to go with the higher number of sets and drop off if they notice too much fatigue? I figure more is better IF you can keep it up. I learned that from the HST guys, anyway*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*yeah, you could probably use a fatigue dropoff to determine set count.*

## 2.9 When to change exercises? How to vary exercises?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=548>

*if you want to switch movements, do it during the submax break-in, gives you time to re-establish good form*

*that is, between cycles*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=308>

*either*

*a. do two different upper and lower workouts. An option I at least allude to in the original description. Make lower 1 a squat emphasized workout. Make lower 2 deadlift or leg press. Start upper 1 with flat bench and row. Start upper 2 with incline bench and pulldown. This will give you some exercise variety though.*

*By the time you start worrying about starting with delts or arms or whatever, you need to look at my specialization cycles.*

*b. Change exercises after each cycle. So after you run out of steam in a 2 week runup/4-6 week progression, change up your exercises and do it again. 2 submax weeks (gives you time to relearn the movements) and 4-6 weeks pushing the poundages. Rinse and repeat.*

## **2.10 So, there is no time off from this routine? No SD?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=539>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*Yeha, I do'nt see any huge need to take time off btween cycles*

*every 3 cycles, you might take a 5 day break completely off*

## **2.11 How do I do intra-cycle progression on this routine?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=306>

Quote:

About the only progression I see in the thread is adding weight to the bar, I continue this as long as I can or do I stop after a certain amount of time and change volume/reps/exercises?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Rodolphe**

*In the end, when you don't progress anymore, you can try to cut volume or intensity (make the second workout a light day). If you start losing strength, it is time to start a new cycle.*

Quote:

As for adding weight to the bar, should I do it across each exercise each week when I can? Or only on the areas I want to focus on? Or only for certain rep ranges?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Rodolphe**

*It depends on your goals and priorities. You can specialise some bodyparts and train the others at maintenance. At the end of a cycle, after your primary exercises you may be too exhausted to add weights to your other lifts. Instead of adding reps, you can try adding weight on the bar.*

Quote:

The over all theme of my questions is how do I make this routine progress beyond "add weight to the bar".

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Rodolphe**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...ead.php?t=7886>

*and again, whenever you see a fall in your performance for 2-3 consecutive workouts, back off the weights and start a new cycle.*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...7&postcount=98>

*Unfortunately, short of going submaximally most of the time, there's really no way to structure progression.*

*Well, not for much more than a week. For exmple, you will occasionally come across the workouts of the following variety*

*week 1: 85%*

*week 2: 90%*

*week 3: 95%*

*week 4: 100%*

*week 5: shoot for 102-105%*

*Or whatever it is. This makes some monstrous assumptions about how fast your adapting, how much strength you're gaining and at what rate. While they are probably based on some sort of average rate of progression....well, I'm still waiting to meet that average person I keep hearing about.*

*Someone who progressed much more quickly would be held back by such. Someone who progressed more slowly would get chewed up trying to keep up. Unless you really know your own rate of progression, I don't see it being that useful except in the submaximal runup phase. So a typical HG approach might be sort of like I said*

*week 1-4: move from 80% to about 95% with rather standard weight progression*

*week 5+: break out hte little weights and add weight when you get your target reps with one in the tank. So if you do 5 and know you could have done 6 or 7, add some weight.*

*Big movements can usually go 2.5-5 lbs, littler movements 1-2.5 lbs.*

*Or you can use a double progression, set a rep range like 6-10. Build to 10, add 5% (which is worht about 2-3 reps or so) which brings you back to 6-7. Build back up. Problem is that some people have way more trouble adding reps than they do adding weight ina fixed rep range. A double progression might stall them out forever. I had a guy once who could add weight all day long to chins. But try to add reps above about 5 and nothing.*

*A problem within any given workout is overlap. If your squat goes up, you are entering any other quad exercise with more fatigue, even hamstrings may take a hit. It's not uncommon to see leg curls appear to regress after someone does some big things on a back squat. Are their hamstrings weaker? Of course not, it's residual fatigue.*

*If you add weight to bench, delts and tris will be more tired so the same thing applies. Same for back and biceps.*

*For the most part, when I evaluated people's workout logs, I only really paid huge attention to the first exercise in any given grouping because of the overlap. If bench went up but delts/tris stayed the same or went down, I didn't conclude that they were overtraining or getting weaker in delts/tris. It was just fatigue from bench work.*

*None of which is probably very helpful.*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Lifting N Tx**

*Or: Progression with the 5% solution*

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=720>

<http://www.bodyresults.com/e25solution.asp>

*Second suggestion is kind of a hybrid of the dropping reps idea. I'm thinking of trying it sometime and I'll throw it out as an idea to think about. It's called the 5% solution. Basically, you vary rep ranges by workout to allow progression. A quick example from the linked page is easier than trying to describe it. Given an 8RM on bench press of 110 lbs:*

*Quote:*

*Session 1 100lbs for 6 reps for 5 sets*

*Session 2 105lbs for 5 reps for 5 sets*

*Session 3 110lbs for 4 reps for 5 sets*

*Session 4 105lbs for 6 reps for 5 sets*

*Session 5 110lbs for 5 reps for 5 sets*

*Session 6 115lbs for 4 reps for 5 sets*

*Looks like an idea that could be adapted to various routines to aid in load progression.*

## **2.12 Is there a reason why the routine is set up as lower/upper/rest and not upper/lower/rest?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=263>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*1. probably not*

*2. but it does avoid Mon = bench day for upper body training*

*2a. You also train legs first after the weekend rest and legs usually takes the most energy*

*3. Upper body fatigue (i.e. midback) is more likely to negatively affect squats/deads than the converse (fatigue from squats/deads affecting upper body)*

*4. you can just as readily make it*

*Mon: lower*

*wed: upper*

*fri: lower*

*sat: upper*

*If you need more rest between workouts. That way only two are back to back. Or switch the lower and upper so you get lower on Saturday when you don't have work, etc.*

**2.13 But I've seen others recommending lower body after upper body? Should I really avoid an arrangement like this?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=266>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*Life, she is full of compromises. I bet if you train heavy back prior to DL or RDL, you'll find that your DL/RDL go to absolute hell. given the injury risk when you lose form on DL/RDL, you can probably guess what my preference is if something has to get shorted.*

**2.14 Can I increase frequency e.g. 2 days on, 1 day off, thus dropping one day of rest?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=261>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*I think, given teh volume, you wil lbe happier with the extra day of recovery on the weekends.*

**2.15 I do not recover. What can I do?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=303>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*Two options here if the volume is too high/you're not recovering/gaining.*

*1. cut it further. Go to 2X6-8 and 1X10-12*

*2. Reduce teh frequency, make the program a 3 day/week altenrating upper/lowr program. So every workout gest done three times every 2 weeks.*

*Mon: upper*

*wed: lower*

*fri: upper*

*mon: lower*

*wed: upper*

*fri: lower*

**2.16 So some experiences with regards to workout frequency**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=847>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Kiwi**

*I have tried both 3 times per week and 4 times per week options over the last few years. This is what I've noticed:*

*I think that when I'm bulking the 4X version has given me better hypertrophy gains than 3x. 3x seems equally as effective for strength though. Right now I'm using 3X for cutting and it's helping me keep my strength well.*

*Sometimes 4X can have me feeling quite fatigued, which is why I wondered if it's too much. Yet that said, I always manage to have a good workout with it once I'm in the gym and I add weight to the bar consistently from one workout to the next.*

*I've also tried both 3X and 4x with different levels of volume. Wrt to strength/hypertrophy it seems to make no difference whether for example I do 2 heavy sets of deadlifts or 4; the strength increase the following workout is the same.*

*Taking all the above into account, when I next bulk I think I'll try going back to 4x per week (since this gave me best hypertrophy) but with medium volume since higher volume seems to fatigue me more without delivering better results.*

## **2.17 How to modify this routine to work it on a 3 day/week schedule?**

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=185>

*Two options*

- 1. Make it a 3 day/week full body routine and just distribute everything in a semi-reasonable way.*
- 2. Just alternate workouts so everything gets hit once every 5th day. So*

*Mon: Upper*

*Wed: Lower*

*Fri: Upper*

*Mon: Lower*

*Wed: Upper*

*Fri: Lower*

*etc.*

Or upper/lower/fullbody:

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=662>

*I kind of like  
Mon/Tue: upper lower split  
Fri: full body*

*everything still gets hit 2X/week although Fri can be a bear.*

*on Fri, basically mash the two upper/lower workouts but cut the volume in half for each to make it more realistically completable. So you do something like*

*squats: 2X6-8  
RDL: 2X6-8  
another quad movement: 1x10-12  
hams: 1X10-12  
bench: 2x6-8  
row: 2X6-8  
incline: 1X10-12  
pulldown: 1x10-12*

*you get the idea.*

## **2.18 So if I'm only training 3 times a week, should I increase volume to compensate?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=918>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*The answer is no: do the fucking routine as written.*

*And since your'e now going to ask 'Why' and argue with me, I'll save us both time and point out that the majority reason to cut the frequency is for recovery purposes, some people can't recover from 4 days/week of training. Especially old farts and people who are afraid to eat.*

*Cutting the frequency and then INCREASING the volume to compensate is fucking stupid.*

## **2.19 What advantages/disadvantages are to be expected from the 3 day a week split?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=666>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **quickone**

*In my experience, 3 days = better recovery and more motivation to train.*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*there is that issue too, the recovery one. Mon/Wed/Fri/Sat is one way around it, only one doubled up set of days and you can sit around all day Sunday to recovery*

*I think the question is whether 4 (or more) days/week would give better calorie partitioning*

## **2.20 Would "conjugate periodization" work just as well?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=218>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **monkeydan**

*Would it be 'better' (I don't really know what I mean by this) to have one heavy day and one light day per week? So something like...*

*mon - lower heavy (3-6 reps)*

*tues - upper light (10-12 reps)*

*wed - off*

*thurs - lower light (10-12 reps)*

*fri - upper heavy (3-6 reps)*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **monkeydan**

*So you're saying that it won't make any difference to either size or strength gains?*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*Heavy/light tends to be more oriented towards strength*

*For size, just do what I fucking outlined and quit fucking fucking with it*

## **2.21 Do you think one top set with weights pyramiding down would be much different to 3-4x6-8 with "sets across" (all weights the same) in terms of hypertrophy?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=361>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*Again, at this point you're splitting hairs and it depends on the person and their ability to repeat sets with the same weight.*

*Some can do it easily, some can't.*

*But let's say after warmups you go*

*200X8 (this is rep or two short of failure)*

*200X7 (the next one would have gotten grindy)*

*200X6*

*For your last set, you need to drop the weight by about 5% to stay in the 6-8 rep range. So go to*



190.

*Alternately, if you knew that the above was your normal pattern (to lose a rep every set), you could adjust the weight on each set by 5% down to get all 8 reps. So you go 200, 190, 180, 170 but get 8 reps on each set.*

*Again, at this point we're splitting hairs and I don't think it will matter hugely in the long run.*

*Oh yeah, both workouts are heavy. Heavy/light is more for strength and neither of the days is so heavy to really require a light day. If your recovery is that poor either*

*a. cut the volume on the individual workouts*

*b. change the frequency to 3 days/week alternating upper/lower*

**2.22 So the basic routine is supposed to be worked as sets across or as a slightly descending pyramid. What would be the difference if the routine would be worked to a max heavy set?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=651>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*I'm inclined to think that doing it the way might yield better strength gains but less optimal mass gains (since you don't get as much volume on the single set day).*

**2.23 I want to do (part of) the routine in a rest-paused style fashion. How to setup this?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=587>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*cut the number of work sets down significantly if you decide to do this*

*consider, for example, that Doggercrapp has his guys doing ONE set/bodypart every 5 days but it's hitting failure + 3 rest pauses*

**2.24 Or clustering?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=588>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **wazzup**

*Or you could try clustering. (Do sets of 4/5 with your 8 RM with short rests)*

*With DC you'd get 8-4-2 (14 and 3 times failure)*

*With clustering you'd get 5-5-4 (14 and maybe failure on the last cluster)*

*same amount of work, less failure.*

**2.25 So can I do supersets on this routine? E.g.: Bench, 30" rest Row 30" rest Bench and on and on.**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=673>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*can be a good way to train although I'd take longer than 30" between sets. but it's a more time efficient way to train for sure. I'd say 1' between supersets at least.*

*a potential problem is overlap*

*for example people forget that both bench and row involve triceps long hed, heavy rows can affect benching when you alternate superset*

*so try it but if you find it cratering your poundages when you alternate, save it for the end (arm stuff, core stuff).*

**2.26 Or maybe giant sets? Especially useful for the lower rep stuff (3x3)**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=675>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*when I first got to SLC and was doing a lot of low rep sets in the weight room I would do this to save time*

*front squat*

*rest 1.5'*

*hammer incline press*

*rest 1.5'*

*chins*

*rest 1.5'*

*repat. so I'd get 5-6' between sets of the same thing and could get through 6 sets of 3 in less than 3 hours*

**2.27 So I like doing circuit style training. Would this be appropriate for this routine?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=670>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*the problem is with the overlap*

*so you go flat bench, row, shoulder press, pulldown, tris, bis*

*now you come around to flat bench nd you've sequentially fatigued delts and tris*

*not a good approach IMO*

### 3. Exercise selection

#### 3.1 If I'm doing high bar squats, aren't those already working the legs totally?

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=388>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*hamstrings and full squats: depends on who you ask. I just discussed this with Alwyn, he said tht if you're full squatting, he wouldn't generally do RDL, if parallel squatting, he would.*

*I'm alittle more paranoid, too many knee problems in my past. Might do a reduced volume of RDL after full squats. So 4 sets full squats, 2 sets RDL or something.*

#### 3.2 I want to do deadlifts on this routine. How can I incorporate them?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...98&postcount=4>

*DL: 3-4X6-8 (or go setst of 5)*

*Leg press: 3-4X6-8*

*Then probably do leg curls if you need another leg movement after that. And an isolation leg exercise or split squats if you need another quad exercise.*

*The problem with squatting after DL is that low back fatigue will really limit squats. Frankly, DL + leg press + leg curl (maybe) is more than enough of a kick-ass leg workout.*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=286>

*dl replaces squat, lung replaces other exercise (I assume you mean split squat here) So*

*deadlift: 5X5*

*lunge: 3X6-8*

*leg curl: 3X6-8*

*calf crap*

*core*

#### 3.3 Can I deadlift twice per week?

maybe reduce volume i.e. 3x5:

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=292>

or do this:

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=294>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*A deadlift/front squat combo (on the two days) would probabl work well. 3-5X5 deadlift one day, 3-5X5 front squat the other. Followed by the other stuff.*

### **3.4 I want to bring up my deadlift on this routine. Dropping squats completely?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=850>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **jc**

*since this thread has been revived, I am going to ask something I have been wondering for some time now.*

*I want to focus more on bringing up my deadlift, and I have found out that 2x week frequency has been key in making strength/size gains in my training. I was thinking about totally dropping squats in my next training cycle and just having deads be my main lower movement. I am just worried about losing a lot of squat strength and do not want my quads to shrink. I was thinking that if I stuck with leg presses after deads, then maybe a few sets of leg extensions would maintain/build my quads w/out alternating squats and deads every other workout and sacrificing gains?*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*or light squats (80%) after deads once/week*

### **3.5 Aren't deads alone sufficient for mid-back?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=329>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*I think you need a dynamic mid back movement to optimally train the area. I don't think deads alone are sufficient*

*kelso shrugs work fine with DB's you do 'em on an incline bench, you'll need straps to go heavy*

kelso shrugs, e.g.: <http://www.weighttrainersunited.com/latshrug.html>

### **3.6 Why are rows recommended to be done close underhand grip?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=165>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*underhand means more biceps involvement.*

*And I want it done with the elbows close to the body as this will give more lat involvement since it involves more shouldre extension.*

*Wider grip mean elbows higher, less lats involvement. and nearly impossible to use and undergrip.*

### **3.7 Can I do bent-over/barbell rows, wouldn't they cause too much lower back fatigue?**

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=325>

*if someone had to do bent over rows, I'd put them either after back squat or deadlift. On the light day (Wed), pick something that isn't going to stress the low back out. Use a chest supported row, do chins, do kelso shrugs.*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Pauly**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=250>

*Granted, BB rows and SLDL is a lot for the lower back, Ive had probs doing this in the past. Based on what I do now Id say learn to love one arm DB rows. I never used to like them - couldnt get the right feel if I went under 8 reps, but now I reckon theyre awesome if done properly. Them and a few chins a week is all I do for my back now and it seems to be doing ok.*

### **3.8 How to do split squats?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=317>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*for split squats, I'd recommend doing this*

- a. alwys start with the weaker leg, let this determine peformance of the stronger*
- b. do one leg, take a rest period (1-1.5 minutes), do the other leg, rest period, first leg, rest period, etc. If you try to do one leg and then the other with no break, you'll run into CV limitations*

### **3.9 So I've seen incline bench and incline flies incorporated. Which one should I choose?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=579>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*low reps and isolation movements generally do not go together, though I've done 5's on a pec deck*

*whether you pick flye or incline as a second chest movement depends a lot on triceps strength (and goal for the rest of the workout). if first compound chest movement wrecks your tris, I see no point in doing compound incline work; it will be ineffective. doing incline flyes or whatever will be more productive IMO from the standpoint of the pecs*

*then, after triceps have had some rest, you can do overhead press if you want*

### **3.10 Can I include laterals?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=130>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*I think lateral raises are a fine substitution/addition, especially after you trash triceps with bench/incline*

### **3.11 I want to have huge upper pecs and delts. How can I do more work for them?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=161>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **monkeydan**

*Currently I'm doing bench/row AND incline bench/rear flyes, as well as DB/military press/pullups. Is this teh gay?*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*I think it's too much for a single workout and you will probably benefit from splitting it up.*

*So one day, do*

*bench/row + incline bench/rear flyes (stricly, pulldown would probably better oppose incline bench)*

*bench/row + overhead press/chins*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=575>

*if you're doing 2 pushing movements (flat/incline bench), a third (OHP) is probalby too much, you could do some side raises after that*

*if you did flat bench and incline flye, you could do OHP*

*Or you could do flat bench/OHP press combo and skip inclines*

### **3.12 And what about shrugs?**

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=853>

*just do a couple of sets after back*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **jc**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=856>

*just me, but I found that heavy rows(t-bar) tend to stimulate my traps pretty good*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **JazzK1**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=861>

*I'm the same. I like to keep some direct traps work. I row regularly and don't feel the same "stimulation" in the upper fibers as I do with direct work.*

*I do keep the volume light though. Usually 1 set RP'd or 2 straight sets after back and (direct) shoulder work.*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=862>

*how much traps I get activated on rows will depend on the type of row and what form is use*

*yates row or hammer iso row or something and you'll get a lot of traps 1 since there is a lot of shoulder elevation*

*properly done cable or bent over row, where the shoulders are scooped and Traps 1 is at best active isometrically.*

*big traps just narrow teh shoulders anyhow, Gironda said so*

### **3.13 Could olympic movements be incorporated into this routine?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=617>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**  
*sure*

*first movement of the day*

*have 2 snatch/snatch related days, 2 clean/clean&jerk related days.*

### **3.14 So basically an olympic variant every workout?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=619>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mimo**

*So you would do an olympic variant on every workout?*

*Like:*

*Monday: clean/lower*

*Wednesday: snatch/upper*

*Friday: clean/lower*

*saturday: snatch or high pulls/upper*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*yup but they don't have to be the same movement, depending on the skill of the lifter (i.e. do they need lots of technical practice on the basics). so you might full clean one day, power lean another, full snatch one day, power snatch another. OR just power movements every day.*

### **3.15 You may want to watch out for shoulder girdle overload:**

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Alkanphel**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=624>

*Naturals still keep a high amount of OH work in there.*

*If you're worried about it, just manipulate load, volume, and frequency to adjust for your tolerances. Also, you can choose different kinds of OH lifts and supporting/assistance movements that vary in the amount of strain they place on a given person.*

*It's just like anything else.*

*Doesn't cause me any undue issues- natural, juiced, or during PCT. Some people can handle it better than others, and it's something that should be adjusted upwards only in a gradual fashion.*

*Don't get me wrong, with all of the attention I give to Presses, I start breaking down, for lack of a better phrase at the moment, if I start going crazy (too heavily, too frequently, and too long*



*without switching or backing off) with OH Pin Presses w/bands, BTN Push Presses, Push Presses, Bradford Presses, and Close-grip Military Presses (among others). I take notice of this, adjust the routine accordingly.*

*Same deal with OL lifts themselves.*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=630>

*since you'll be starting very light initially to learn technique in the movements, I don't know how much of an issue this will really be*

*you probably won't want every day to be heavy once they do get technique down. Maybe 2 heavy days tops and either 2 light and 1 light/1 medium day.*

*Or, again, just control it with choice of movement. Clean from floor or full clean is heavy, power clean from hang is light. Snatch from floor or full snatch is heavy, power snatch from hang is light.*

### **3.16 Why are higher reps recommended for the arm exercises?**

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=130>

*a. habit*

*b. aesthetics*

*c. cuz arms already got hit in lower rep ranges with the compound pushing so you might as well hit a different MU pool*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=378>

*arms have already gotten hit heavily in lower rep ranges and it's easy to annoy a tendon*

*you could probably drop arm work and be fine (see FortifiedIron's no isolation hypertrophy routine).*

*but you throw in some higher rep pump work to keep the OCD bodybuilding bastards happy and move on*

## 4. Diet

### 4.1 I want to cut on this routine. How to?

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=383>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*IMO, any training that works for bulking works for cutting but yes, you can/may need to cut the volume (and or frequency), but maintain intensity (weight on bar).*

*So rather than 4 sets of 6-8 + 2-3 set of 10-12 when you had plenty of food to recover from, you dro back to 2 sets of 6-8 and 1 set of 10-12 but try to keep the weight on the bar.*

*What you really don't ever want to do is lower the weight on the bar. That's a fantastic way to lose muscle.*

*as mentioned endlessly, you can maintain most biomotor capacities with a 2/3rds reduction in volume and frequency but ONLY if you maintain intensity.*

### 4.2 How do I transit from bulking to dieting on this routine, i.e. the hardening period?

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=552>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*either reduce volume or frequency or both. What would probably be best is to reduce volume (you can cut it by 2/3rds) for 2 weeks while you move calories to maintenance. so 4X6-8 + 3X10-12 becomes 2X6-8 and 1X10-12 or so. Consider this a consolidation period but keep the weight on the bar the same (don't try to increase it). Used to be called a hardening period. if you want to bring in a low volume of cardio (start low, 20' every other day)*

*then you can start with a gradual caloric reduction/increase in cardio (if needed).*

### 4.3 Should I do deload and the run-up while dieting?

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=677>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Conciliator**

*You're generally not going to be getting any stronger or making any PR's while dieting. Even when you aren't dieting, a drop in load constitutes a loss of the stimulus for the degree of muscle you're carrying. Things just get worse when you combine it with a caloric deficit.*

*I wouldn't deload. Continue lifting heavy and try to maintain your strength in all your heavy sets.*

#### 4.4 So how should I eat while bulking and doing the deload?

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=683>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*yeah, it's not uncommon to see more growth during the deload, probably want to keep calories slightly above maintenance to take advantage*

#### 4.5 What about recomposition with this protocol?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Anthrax Invasio**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=877>

*Should work fine. Do a 3-day split for Lyle's routine. I dunno if four days will work as well with IF.*

*Focus carbs (and calories, in general) around training, particularly in the window after, eat within 8 hours, fast for 16. Lower carbs on diet days, don't go crazy on cardio at first (joints will suffer, leg strength may as well), and eat less calories.*

*The difference in calories shouldn't be TOO vast on training and diet days, though. That's per Work's most recent recommendation - too big a discrepancy is no good.*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=879>

*agreed, probably have to move it to a three day/week alternating ABABA kind of thing.*

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=894>

*I think you should go about setting the daily calories relative to maintenance*

*if your current maintenance is 4000 cal/day, you'd need a slight surplus on training days to cover energy requirements for muscle growth and a deficit from that value on the other days to keep fat down/cause fat loss.*

*so you might end up at 4500/3500 or whatever depending on goals. or even 4300/3500 or whatever.*

## 5. Miscellaneous

**5.1 I have heard, Lyle will make another book and promised to fucking translate all his other stuff for those foreigners overseas?**

<http://monkeyisland.lylemcdonald.com...&postcount=413>

Yes that's right.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **lylemcd**

*Another book project that has been on my mind, yes*