

Complex Training

*Performed as a complex/circuit, 30-45 seconds between each station.

*Complete as many circuits as time/energy permits

*You can combine different patterns in the same workout, or simply just do one by its self.

*You can add some extra isolation work after the patterns

*The below patterns are examples yet very effective.

OVERHEAD PATTERN

A1. Top half standing overhead press from pins (supramax)

A2. Standing over head press (maximal)

A3. Push press (strength-speed)

A4. Medicine ball throw overhead (speed-strength)

A5. Plyo Push up with feet elevated (speed/explosion)

DEADLIFT PATTERN

A1. Deadlift from floor (maximal)

A2. Power snatch (strength-speed)

A3. Jump goodmornings (speed-strength)

A4. Broad jumps (reactive)

A5. Prowler pushing 30m (strength-endurance)

BENCH PATTERN

A1. Top half bench press form pins/floor press (supramax)

A2. Bench press (maximal)

A3. Speed bench (50% bar weight) + chains (strength-speed)

A4. Medicine ball throw from chest/ dumbbell speed flies (speed-strength)

A5. Plyo push ups (reactive)

SQUAT PATTERN

- A1. Back squat (maximal)
- A2. Power clean (strength-speed)
- A3. Jump squat (speed-strength)
- A4. jumps (reactive)
- A5. Sled dragging backwards 60m (strength-endurance)

BACK PATTERN

- A1. Barbell bent over rowing (1-2 seconds hold at peak)
- A2. Chin-up static hold for max time
- A3. TRX rear delts for max reps
- A4. Sled rowing 30m

PROGRESSION MODEL FOR THE COMPLEXES

*We start the workout by ramping up to the maximum weight we can accelerate for 3 reps on the "maximal" movement. This is done the first week... for the weeks after that (until week 6) we ramp up the weight reached the first week.

**This progression model is applied to the overload/supramax, maximal and strength-speed movements

WEEK 1. 5 sets of 3 reps

WEEK 2. 5 sets of 3 reps trying to progress by creating more acceleration

WEEK 3. 5 sets of 4 reps (same weight)

WEEK 4. 5 sets of 5 reps (same weight)

WEEK 5. 6 sets of 5 reps (same weight)

WEEK 6. 7 sets of 5 reps (same weight)

*Then add 10-20lbs to your weights and start a new cycle

**For the overload/supramax movements we use 10-20% more than the maximal movement

How to Build Your Own Complex

Regular complexes have 5 or 6 stations, which is very effective but unpractical if you train in a commercial gym. Here is how you can play around that and maintain a high level of effectiveness.

First you have to understand that a complex is build on what I call the force spectrum or force chain... these "chains" has several links (6) and in a complex you go from link to link in either ascending or descending order.

The links are:

1. Supramaximal/Overload (MASS emphasis) ... a movement where you can use more weight that you normally would the full exercise... e.g. partials, supramaximal holds, negatives, pushing from pins
2. Maximal/near maximal (MASS emphasis) ... a big compound movement where you use 80%+ of your max... normally closer to 85-90% for sets of 3-5
3. Strength-Speed (MASS and ACCELERATION) ... an exercise where you accelerate a moderate to heavy weight... e.g. the olympic lift variations, traditional movements with 45-55% for max speed.
4. Speed-Strength (ACCELERATION and mass) ... an exercise where you accelerate a light load ... e.g. throws, jumps squats, etc.
5. Reactive (ACCELERATION emphasis) ... an exercise where you "jump" with your own body... e.g. jumps, plyo, plyo push-ups, etc.
6. Speed OR Strength-endurance (depending on goal)... if it's a speed movement it is a sprint, a take-off, a prowler sprint a hill sprint or something similar for strength-endurance it is a loaded effort lasting 60-120 seconds.

UNDERSTAND THAT WHEN YOU BUILD A COMPLEX YOU USE THE SAME MOVEMENT PATTERN FOR ALL EXERCISES.

A 5 or 6 points complex would thus have one exercise for each link performed back-to-back (as a circuit) with varying rest intervals depending on goal.

You can see how this would be hard to do in some crowded gyms.

So how do you set up a limited complex that will still be very effective?

You make it a 3 links complex instead of 5-6.

BUT (AND THIS IS IMPORTANT) YOU HAVE TO COVER THE WHOLE SPECTRUM.

Here's how you easily do that...

There are 3 training zones;

ZONE 1 (strength) = Supramax and Max

ZONE 2 (power) = Strength-Speed and Speed-Strength

ZONE 3 (speed or speciality) = Reactive and Speed (or strength-endurance in some cases)

So to make a 3 points complex you pick on exercise in each zone for each complex.

So for example for ZONE 1 you could pick either a supramax OR a maximal movement... for example pick between a top half deadlift from pins OR a deadlift from the floor

Then for ZONE 2 you pick either a strength-speed or a speed-strength movement ... for example, either a power clean from the hang OR a jump goodmorning

Finally for ZONE 3 you pick either a reactive or speed exercise ... for example either a broad jump series for distance OR a prowler sprint

With proper organization you will need only one bar and some space

And you will get roughly 80-90% of the performance benefits from a 5-6 points complex and about 70% of the work capacity benefits.

When doing 3 point complexes you can either do the complex for more sets (you would do a 5 points complex 6-8 times... a 3 points you could do 8-10) or perform more different complexes during a workout.

NOTE: IF YOUR GOAL IS WORK CAPACITY AND FAT LOSS YOU CAN USE A STRENGTH-ENDURANCE MOVEMENT AS YOUR 3RD EXERCISE.