

Advanced Leg Training: Stage 2

by Ian King | Fri, Feb 09, 2001

Bring the Pain — Part III Advanced Leg Training — Stage 2 by Ian King This is stage two of a ...

Bring the Pain — Part III
Advanced Leg Training — Stage 2
by Ian King

King, I., 2001, Bring the Pain – Advanced Leg Training – Stage 2, t-mag.com, 9 Feb 2001

This is stage two of a four stage leg training program. (You can find stage one [here](#).) It will cover weeks four through six of the 12 week program. Remember, Ian suggests you go through his basic "Limping" program before you attempt this more advanced version. Links to the "Limping" series can be found in our FAQ [\[link\]](#) section.

How are you feeling? If you did stage one of this second generation program as I asked, you should be feeling pretty "buffed" and a little sore by now! I can't explain why, but I've found programs like the stage you've just completed to be like fitting a turbocharger to your car: at some point during stage two or three you may suddenly experience dramatic growth in size and/or strength! You may think it's the current stage making all the difference, but my experience suggests that it was this *first* stage that acts as a latent rocket waiting for a chance to explode. So with this promise in mind, let's take on stage two!

Remember, this advanced program is based on you being able to manipulate a number of key variables to mold the program to more specifically meet your individual needs. These variables include: body part prioritization, loading parameters, periodization models, rate of change, bilateral muscle balance and recovery models. You should have already customized your program by manipulating these variables when you did stage one. If you need your memory refreshed, read the introduction article to this series [here](#). [\[link to issue 139\]](#)

As with stage one, I'll first lay out the program, then I'll explain the exercises and the abbreviations. You'll be training legs twice a week on "A" day and "C" day (that's Monday and Thursday for most people) with one session being hip dominant and the other being quad dominant.

Enough talk, let's head to the gym!

LOWER BODY
Stage Two — Weeks 3-4, 4-6, 5-8

A Day

Warm up: 10 minutes of light aerobics, compulsory 20 to 30 minutes of lower body stretching.

Choose one of the following three options for A day:

A - Hypertrophy/Lower Training Age Option

Deadlift, MG/Overhand grip

Warm-up: 1 x 10, 1 x 8

Sets: 6/1/6/1 (totaling 4 sets)

Speed: 311*

Rest: 3-4 minutes

Deadlift Standing on Block, MG

Warm-up: nil or 1 x 4

Sets: 1 x 12-15

Speed: 311

Rest: 2-3 minutes

Stiff Leg Deadlift, WG/Chest up/Back flat

Warm-up: 1 x 10

Sets: 1 x 10

Speed: 311

Rest: 2 minutes

King Deadlift, Single leg/Bent knee

Warm-up: nil

Sets: 1 x AMRAP (as many reps as possible)

Speed: 311

Rest: 2 minutes

Shrug, MG/Overhand grip

Warm-up: 1 x 10

Sets: 1-2 x 8 to 10

Speed: 311

Rest: 1-2 minutes

A - Hypertrophy-neural/Intermediate Training Age Option

Deadlift, MG/Overhand grip

Warm-up: 1 x 10, 1 x 8

Sets: 5/1/5/1 (totaling 4 sets)

Speed: 311

Rest: 3-4 minutes

Deadlift Standing on Block, MG

Warm-up: nil or 1 x 4

Sets: 1 x 10-12

Speed: 311
Rest: 2-3 minutes

Stiff Leg Deadlift, WG/Chest up/Back flat
Warm-up: 1 x 8
Sets: 1 x 8
Speed: 311
Rest: 2 minutes

King Deadlift, Single leg/Bent knee
Warm-up: nil
Sets: 1 x AMRAP (as many reps as possible)
Speed: 311
Rest: 2 minutes

Shrug, MG/Overhand grip
Warm-up: 1 x 8
Sets: 1-2 x 6-8
Speed: 311
Rest: 1-2 minutes

A - Neural/Advanced Training Age Option

Deadlift, MG/Overhand grip
Warm-up: 1 x 10, 1 x 8
Sets: 5/1/5/1 (totaling 4 sets)
Speed: 311
Rest: 4 minutes

Deadlift Standing on Block, MG
Warm-up: nil or 1 x 4
Sets: 1 x 8-10
Speed: 311
Rest: 2-4 minutes

Stiff Leg Deadlift, WG/Chest up/Flat back
Warm-up: 1 x 6
Sets: 1 x 6
Speed: 311
Rest: 3 minutes

King Deadlift, Single leg/Bent knee
Warm-up: nil
Sets: 1 x AMRAP (as many reps as possible)
Speed: 311
Rest: 2-3 minutes

Shrug, MG/Overhand grip
Warm-up: 1 x 6

Sets: 1-2 x 5-6
Speed: 311
Rest: 2 minutes

Note that the 6/1/6/1 or 5/1/5/1 loading model is used above with deadlifts. In a nutshell, you'll do six reps, increase the load, then do a single rep. You'll then repeat this pattern again. The aim of the first 6 reps (or 5 reps) is to enhance the loading potential of the first single and second 6 rep set. The second "6 and 1" are aimed at exploiting the neural disinhibition created by the first 6 and 1. If you don't respect this, i.e. if you go too heavy at first, you won't experience this neural disinhibition, as it will be clouded by fatigue.

Here's an example of how to set up the loading:

Sample loading pattern in week 1 for the 6/1/6/1 method:

6 reps at 100 kg (220 pounds)
1 rep at 125 kg (275 pounds)
6 reps at 105 kg (about 230 pounds)
1 rep at 130 kg (about 285 pounds)

Then in the next week, the second "6 and 1" become the first set loading. For example:

Sample loading pattern in week 2 for the 6/1/6/1 method:

6 reps at 105 kg (about 230 pounds)
1 rep at 130 kg (about 285 pounds)
6 reps at 110 kg (about 240 pounds)
1 rep at 135 kg (about 295 pounds)

Of course, if there's a third week, the same technique applies but the increments don't need to be as high. For example:

Sample loading pattern in week 3 for the 6/1/6/1 method:

6 reps at 110 kg (about 240 pounds)
1 rep at 135 kg (about 295 pounds)
6 reps at 112.5 kg (about 245 pounds)
1 rep at 137.5 kg (about 300 pounds)

Now, on to the exercise descriptions.

Deadlift, MG/overhand grip (medium grip): Use a palms over grip (where both palms are facing you) just outside your legs and start from the bottom position with the weight rested on the ground. Now that you're starting to lift more weight in this exercise, it's critical you confirm your technique as per my recommendations. I've described the proper technique here [[link to issue 39, Q of Power](#)] in case you missed it.



Remember, the deadlift provides an unequalled opportunity to balance the upper back in the horizontal plane (pulling) with the front of the upper trunk (chest, or horizontal pushing). Don't miss out on this opportunity! Focus on holding the shoulder blades together during the lift (scapula retraction).

Some of you may also want to revert at this stage to an alternated grip or mixed grip (one hand over, one hand under). This grip really does need to be mastered by those planning to ultimately go heavy in this lift later in this program. To assist in gripping the bar I strongly recommend using chalk on your palms.

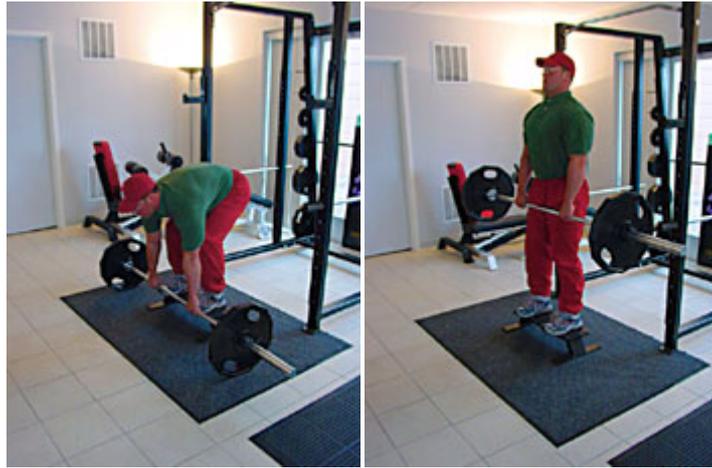
Now if you're deadlifting in the way I want (in contact with the skin all the way up), you may experience some skin damage and perhaps even bleed as a result. Keep doing this! That is, keep the bar close to the body! To reduce the skin damage, consider the following:

- * There is such a thing as a "too rough" bar. You want a bar with enough knurling to support the grip (inadequately knurled bars will slide out of your hands real quick!) but not so rough that you lose a pint of blood every workout! These extremely rough bars aren't overly common but they do exist.

- * Wear track pants. This will provide some protection from the bar. Yes, it may mean a warmer workout, but on the other side it keeps the knees and hips warm, too.

Deadlift Standing on Block, MG: This is as per above but by virtue of the small adjustment (which I'm about to explain) and the higher reps, prepare to lighten your usual load more than a little.

This deadlift variation requires you to stand on a block, with the weight position unchanged, resting on the floor. The height of the block is dependant on your flexibility and ability to create an appropriate starting position. You can, however, stand on a 20 kg full-size plate, but even this may be too much for some as their flexibility won't allow it (at least in the beginning). However, most will be okay standing on one 20 kg plate and the more advanced technically or flexibility wise may be able to stand on two 20 kilo plates.



Stiff Leg Deadlift, WG/Chest up/Back flat: In this version, the movement starts from the top in a standing position. Hold the bar with a wide grip (outside the line markings on an Olympic type bar), bend the knees slightly, but don't allow the knee angle to change during the lift.

As you flex forward at the waist, keep the chest up, push the bum backwards, and allow your weight to drift to the heels of your feet. As you go down maintain this flat back position. It's even okay to be slightly arched in the lower back. Now, if you want to totally isolate the hamstrings in this lift, only go down as far as you can with the hips and spine staying aligned.



When you reach the end of your hamstring flexibility or ability to anteriorly rotate the pelvis (push the top of the pelvis forward, back of the pelvis backwards), you're still able to flex at the base of spine, but don't! Leave the range at that. As you return to the standing position, consciously contract your glutes and push through with the hips to finish.

King Deadlift: This is a single leg, bent knee deadlift. Stand on one leg (starting with the weak side) and bend the other leg up until the lower leg is parallel to the ground. Your hands should be on your hips or by your side.

The aim is to bend the knee of the supporting leg until the knee of the non-supporting leg is brushing the ground. In reality, you may have to settle for a shorter range. (You'll understand

why I say this as soon as you do this workout.) If this is the case- and I expect it will be- look to increase the range from workout to workout.



You're allowed to bend forward at the waist as much as you want and doing so will increase the gluteal involvement. Keep the working knee aligned neutrally throughout the movement. Take three seconds to lower, a one second pause at each end, and two seconds to lift. No warm up set needed. When you can do more than 15 to 20 reps full range look to hold dumbbells in the hands.

Shrug, MG/Overhand grip: In a standing position holding a bar in front of the body, take an overhand medium grip (just outside the body). As you shrug the bar upwards with your upper traps, avoid any bending at the elbow or extension of the head. To help with the elbow, turn the elbow joint to face outwards and then consciously push the inside of the elbow joint inwards (using the triceps).



To assist the head position, keep the chin in, the head neutral, and the chest up. I want to see a flat back horizontally across the shoulder blades in the top position, not a round upper back. You can use wrist straps if you feel you need to, but only if you're no longer able to grip the bar for the duration of the set.

C Day (2nd leg day of the week)

Warm up: 10 minutes of light aerobics, compulsory 20 to 30 minutes of lower body stretching.

Choose one of the following three options for "C" day:

C - Hypertrophy/Lower Training Age Option

Squat, MB/MS

Warm-up: 1 x 10, 1 x 8

Sets: 6/1/6/1

Speed: 301

Rest: 2-3 minutes

Squat, NS/HB

Warm-up: nil

Sets: 1 x 12-15

Speed: 1.5s (see below)

Rest: 2-3 minutes

Dynamic Lunge, bar on back

Warm-up: 1 x 10 each leg

Sets: 1 x 10 each leg

Speed: 10*

Rest: 2 minutes

Single Leg Squat

Warm-up: nil

Sets: 1 x AMRAP

Speed: 311

Rest: 2 minutes

Calf Raise, standing/double leg

Warm-up: 1 x 15

Sets: 1-2 x 12-15

Speed: 311

Rest: 1-2 minutes

C - Hypertrophy-neural/Intermediate Training Age Option

Squat, MB/MS

Warm-up: 1 x 10, 1 x 8

Sets: 5/1/5/1

Speed: 301

Rest: 3-4 minutes

Squat, NS/HB

Warm-up: nil

Sets: 1 x 10-12
Speed: 1.5s
Rest: 3 minutes

Dynamic Lunge, bar on back
Warm-up: 1 x 8 each leg
Sets: 1 x 8 each leg
Speed: 10*
Rest: 2-3 minutes

Single Leg Squat
Warm-up: nil
Sets: 1 x AMRAP
Speed: 311
Rest: 2 minutes

Calf Raise, standing/double leg
Warm-up: 1 x 12
Sets: 1-2 x 10-12
Speed: 311
Rest: 1-2 minutes

C - Neural/Advanced Training Age Option

Squat, MB/MS
Warm-up: 1 x 10, 1 x 8
Sets: 5/1/5/1
Speed: 301
Rest: 4 minutes

Squat, NS/HB
Warm-up: nil
Sets: 1 x 8-10
Speed: 1.5
Rest: 3-4 minutes

Dynamic Lunge, bar on back
Warm-up: 1 x 6 each leg
Sets: 1 x 6 each leg
Speed: 10*
Rest: 3 minutes

Single Leg Squat
Warm-up: nil
Sets: 1 x AMRAP
Speed: 311
Rest: 2-3 minutes

Calf Raise, standing/double leg

Warm-up: 1 x 10

Sets: 1-2 x 8-10

Speed: 311

Rest: 2 minutes

Here's a description of the exercises involved in C day, stage two. Note that the 6/1/6/1 or 5/1/5/1 loading model as described for A day also applies to the first squat exercise on C day.

Squat, MB/MS (medium bar/medium stance): Approach the bar and place it on the shoulders behind the head, or a "medium bar" height. When you step backwards out of the racks assume a medium stance (shoulder width or just outside). Again, since you'll be going heavier this stage, be sure and use proper form.



As the load comes up, the issues of wearing a belt and or knee wraps will no doubt arise. Unless you have no background experience squatting without a belt, I wouldn't see a need for a belt in this phase. But if you've been belt reliant, closely review your decision to "burn your belt"! If you do go belt-free and are used to wearing a belt, I strongly recommend you be extremely conservative in your load selection!

Now for knee wraps. Again I don't see the need for them in this phase, and unlike the belt, there's less risk in going "cold turkey" i.e., if you have a long history of wearing knee wraps, it'll be okay to ditch them now.

But there's one constant recommendation I have for the knees: I strongly recommend wearing knees sleeves. These neoprene-like knee slips provide no support or stability, but serve to maintain a higher knee joint temperature and help maintain that temperature during rest periods.

Squat, NS/HB (narrow stance/high bar): As per the above technique, but place the bar higher on the upper back and assume a slightly narrower than shoulder width stance. The more you want to isolate the quads, the narrower you should go in the stance. Keeping your feet together is an option albeit an extreme one. Also, the closer your feet are placed, the lighter the load you'll need.

Now the 1.5 technique (also called one-and-half, or one-and-a-third technique) is used here and I'll go over that again. Lower down to the bottom of your range (ideally thigh below parallel to the ground), pause, then come up one-third of the way, pause, then go back down to the bottom where you'll pause again. Then stand up all the way, but don't fully lock out the knees. This is one rep. Pause in this slightly knee bent position before repeating.



Dynamic Lunge, bar on back: This is the type of lunge where the forward leg comes off the ground (as opposed to a static lunge, where the forward foot stays in one spot.) Place the bar on the upper back behind the head just like you're about to squat. Step out with your weakest side leg in front of you, bending both knees in one continual fast movement until the knee of the back leg is almost on the ground. Then, without pausing, drive back up with the front leg and return to the start position, i.e. with feet side by side. Then go on to the other side.



Now, if you have a significant strength imbalance between your right and left leg, then try this technique that I've developed: do two reps on the weak side consecutively, then one on the strong side. Then continue in this pattern. 10 reps a side in a conventional approach becomes a total of 21 reps, 14 on the weak side and 7 on the strong side.

Single Leg Squat: I want you to do this movement single legged, irrespective of your bilateral leg strength balance. It's a very simple concept: stand on one leg and squat as far down as your strength or flexibility (or both!) will tolerate. I'm going to throw in three options, from the easiest to the most challenging.

Easiest: Perform movement on a very reclined hack squat machine.

More challenging: Perform exercise leaning back onto a Swiss ball with the ball up against a wall (you'll just need to position the ball appropriately.)

Most challenging: Perform free standing, maybe with a vertical frame nearby to hold for balance.



Generally speaking, I encourage you to pursue range over reps, but initially use a range that allows you to get at least 8 to 10 reps.

Calf Raise, standing/double leg: Using both feet in a standing calf raise machine (pads on shoulders), make sure you work through full range i.e. full stretch, full height. If your right to left imbalance between calves is significant, consider doing this unilaterally (one side at a time). You may need to go back to doing it only with bodyweight or bodyweight plus a little external loading. Sometimes the weight of the calf press (depending upon the design of the one you're using) can be too much for single leg work.



Conclusion

After a fairly light yet painful stage one, you'll by now realize that stage two of this second generation program is not messing around; it goes straight into significantly more loading. This is why it's a more advanced program than the first generation.

I'll be back in a few weeks' time to introduce the next stage of the lower body program in the "Bring the Pain" series. Until then, have "fun" with stage two!

Note: Ian has just released a series of videos that feature demonstrations of all the exercises in his "Get Buffed!" book and the exercises featured in his articles here at T-mag. For more info, you can email him at kingsports@bigpond.com.

*Please refer to our **FAQ** section for an explanation of tempo prescriptions.

© 1998 — 2009 Testosterone, LLC. All Rights Reserved.