How to Progress with Weights

Congratulations! If you’re reading this, it means you’ve progressed all the way to using weights for your squat, deadlift, and chest press.

This is huge – truly – and it’s hopefully the beginning of a newfound appreciation (and maybe even love!) for weightlifting. You are also gaining the benefits of strength training that go beyond muscles, such as more energy, better sleep, and improved mood.

So now what? Well, the progress doesn’t have to stop here. You can continue to increase the weight for each of the exercises to keep building your strength. Here’s how to do it:

* Aim to do **all 3 exercises twice a week**, either as a mini workout, or blended into your existing routine.
* For each exercise, make sure you can do **3 sets of 10 repetitions with your current weight** before progressing.
* It should feel like **the effort is at about a 7/10**. In other words, for each set of 10, you feel like you could do 12 or 15, but not 20.
* **Only increase weight for one exercise at a time.** You’ll reduce the chance of overdoing it and keep your progress steady.
* When you increase the weight, **only add 2-3 lbs each time.**

I’ve made a chart on the next page where you can track your progress using the above parameters.

If you have any questions at all, please don’t hesitate to reach out at sarahcourtdpt@gmail.com. I’d also love to hear how you’re coming along!

Weight Training Progress Chart

I’ve filled in the first four weeks to show you how to use this chart. Blue numbers show the weights that stay the same, and red numbers show the increased weights. These are just examples - you will **fill this in with your own numbers**!

If at any point you feel that you need to pause your progress, simply repeat the current week’s weights. The goal is consistency, not burnout.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **SQUAT** | **CHEST PRESS** | **DEADLIFT** |
| **Week 0:** | 8lbs | 3lbs | 8lbs |
| **Week 1:** | 10lbs | 3lbs | 8lbs |
| **Week 2:** | 10lbs | 5lbs | 8lbs |
| **Week 3:** | 10lbs | 5lbs | 10lbs |
| **Week 4:** | 12lbs | 5lbs | 10lbs |
| **Week 5:** |  |  |  |
| **Week 6:** |  |  |  |
| **Week 7:** |  |  |  |
| **Week 8:** |  |  |  |

When you finish Week 8, put your new numbers on Week 0, erase Weeks 1-8, and keep going!