

# Wheels of fortune

## A specialist routine to build your legs

### Overview

Of all the mistakes I see in peoples training schedules, the most common is an inefficient approach to leg development. Why? Well probably because they are not usually on show in this country, so there is no constant nagging at the mind to do something about it. Funnily enough, there are mistakes made by both men and women in relation to leg training, this plan is aimed at adding size and strength to the legs. If you are looking to make your tree trunks more like pins, then this is not for you. If you want to feel proud of your huge wheels, then try this.

### Your Weekly Schedule (Micro-Cycle)

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>
<b>OFF</b>	<b>Legs A</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>Total Body</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>Legs B</b>	<b>OFF</b>

These days are not set in stone, but the key concept is to ensure you are getting a day off before and after each leg workout, so you can not only repair, but also get ready for the next time. You will have 2 leg training plans, of different exercises, and you will alternate between light then heavy for each plan. So if in week 1, you train the A program heavy, then you do the B program light, and the following week, you do A light, B heavy. Heavy days see you completed 3-5 sets of 12-2 reps, pyramiding the weight up so you end with a heavy set of the maximum weight you can handle for just 2 or 3 reps. Light days see you complete 3-4 sets of each movement, aiming to get a minimum of 15 reps per set, and including supersets and drop sets on this day.

### The exercises –

#### **LEGS A**

Leg Extensions  
Front Squats  
Leg Press  
Back Squats  
Donkey Calve Raises

#### **LEGS B**

Sumo Deadlift  
Walking Dumbbell Lunges  
Dumbbell Step Ups

## Leg Curls Standing Calve Raises

On your heavy day you are simply looking to use more weight each time, but be sensible. If you are not feeling a good pump in your legs, if they are not sore but your back is, then something isn't right. It may be that neurologically, you are not able to switch on particular muscles as well as you should, which is a common cause of lagging body-parts. At times like this, work with bosu and fit-balls can be very useful, adding in bosu ball squats before squats is a technique I have used with great results before. People often train legs using only their backs and glutes, with some adductor and calve involvement. The quads stay largely unused, common in people with collapsed arches. If all else fails, a chiropractic assessment is usually a good way to go. In reality, most underdeveloped legs are usually a result of one thing, a lack of hard work. Make sure you keep a track of what poundage's you use in each workout in your training journal, and maybe even start lighter than your previous best, what I call a momentum gaining cycle. This gives your body the time to build to your previous best, and gets used to small incremental additions to the weight you push. That is something else I find works really really well for any body-part, particularly on the big lifts.

On your light day, where reps are the main focus, you can combine exercises so that you complete supersets, or even tri-sets. For example, sumo-deadlifts followed immediately by leg curls, then finished off with walking lunges. That is a great combination for particularly the hamstrings and glutes.

I have added only one calve exercise per workout, as this is a legs plan, where quads and hams are the primary focus. The calves are slightly different to the larger leg muscles, and often can be trained every day when they are underdeveloped, to gain basic strength and size. If it is calve development you seek, then there is another plan for you.

## **The rest, maintenance only**

A specialisation routine means that you are focused on building a particular body-part, so the rest goes into purely maintenance. With legs, this is even more important, as no other bodypart requires such hard work as legs, they are over half of your body, and the hole they leave in your recovery ability is huge. The rest of the body needs to be treated carefully, so I would suggest you stick to purely maintenance, something like the plan below:

### ***Upper Body***

Push Ups x 50 (varied hand positions)

Incline Dumbbell Flyes

Reverse Grip Pulldowns

Dumbbell Pullovers

Dumbbell Lateral Raises

Incline Dumbbell Curls

Bench Dips

Work on around 2-3 sets per exercise, keeping your reps around 12-8, any lower and you may be using a bit too much system energy, rather than local. By that I mean that if you are straining on rep 5, then the central nervous system is getting more focus than the muscles of the target area. Think local stimulation, not huge strength gains on this routine.

## **Cardio**

Don't go overboard; any calories you use in cardio training are not then there to help with growth. That said, I am a great believer that the improvement in oxygen carrying ability and the removal of waste products that takes place when training your cardiovascular system, are both positives that aid the growth of new muscle tissue. Just don't go overboard, but maybe 30 minutes a day is not going to do you any harm. And be careful not to deplete the legs of muscle glycogen. If the legs are empty of locally available fuel from a big run, then when you train them, you won't be able to feel them as pumped as you should, and really split the fibres. If you are able to do your cardio on an upper body bike, do it, save the legs for when you need them.

## **Summary**

I can't stress highly enough, it is not what you do, it is how you do it, and hard you do it. You know if you are saving yourself, telling everyone how hard you are training but telling yourself to take it easy. It will show in the mirror. Building legs you can be proud of is hard work, very hard, just ask Arnie. But there is nothing as satisfying, as pushing yourself against all the challenges and gaining the rewards you crave. Enjoy, train hard.