

EXERCISE

Pyramid Sets

By Cathal Fanning

- **Description**
- **Coaching Points**
- **Main Muscles Involved**

Description & Coaching Points

[Cathal is working here with his client, Dominika (Dom). The description below is best read in conjunction with the accompanying video].

Pyramid Sets - what are they and how do you use them?

There are two main variations of Pyramid Sets – an ascending pyramid or a descending pyramid. We're going to show an ascending pyramid.

What happens here is that we work with a light weight and give a client a target - in this case, 12 reps. Then, at that point, once the reps have been completed, we add weight – and then again for a third set. But as the weight is increased, the reps come down.

So we're going to give you an example of this. Dom's just going to come into the position for the Barbell Back Squat, starting with the weight that we feel that we could challenge Dom for - 12 reps.

(To Dom) So step forward, make sure you're happy, and off you go. 1...2...3...great reps Dom... keep going...4...5...6...7...8... almost there Dom...9...10...two more...last one. Okay - and take your time.

As you step yourself back at this point, the client will have a complete rest -a minute and a half minute or so, depending on the client's goal. We are then going to increase the weight. Once your client is rested, you'll ask them to come back to the bar. Now the weight is heavier, but at this point the reps are going to come down. So we're going to challenge Dom to aim to work towards 10 reps.

(To Dom) So - same movement, same technique for me Dom. When you're ready. 1...2...3... great technique...4...5...6...7...three to go...two more for me Dom...last one. And to rest there, take a step back.

At this point you'll ask the client to rest again, maybe a minute and a half or a little bit longer as they start to fatigue. But again, at this point we're going to add more weight and drop the reps further. This will be the last set. We want to really challenge the client on this one, so we've increased the weight. The reps now are going to come down to eight repetitions.

(To Dom) So Dom, when you're ready ... two more for me, Dom.

Last one. And relax. Rest there.

Give it a go.

Main Muscles Involved

This depends on the exercises you choose for your Pyramid Sets.

