

Mathias Method

By Ryan Mathias

Strength to Change the World

Level 5- Variation

This program level is only for advanced athletes who are very strong and have significant explosive power. Your body and mind are now powerful machines that are ready for a change. They are used to the same style of training for years and want to continue growth through many exercise variations. You will now vary everything in your training in cycles. There will be no room for stagnation. You will attack your body with everything you have from multiple angles to create the greatest potential for continuous growth. After allowing a significant amount of time for your body and mind to overcome the confusion of training with great variation, you will be ready to give it a new stimulus that will change the strength game forever, through the Mathias Method level 6.

Variation in training is a very useful tool to continue growth while building up weaknesses. There are many ways to vary exercises in order to gain strength in all areas with differing stimuli. Some simple ways to vary an exercise are; rep variation, intensity, foot or hand position, bar or equipment being used, change of angle, varying the range of motion, pausing and adding accommodating resistance. The limit of variation is only what you can come up with, but no matter what variation you utilize, it needs to make your main lift stronger. The farther you vary away from your main lift, the less effective it will be. It is most optimal to only change one or two variables from the lift, or motion, you are trying to improve. Generally, the simplest variation of a lift is rep variation, or utilizing a different rep range week to week. By doing 3 reps to build up your one rep max you are utilizing variation. In the Mathias Method, the repetitions constantly staying within an optimal range; which in turn will maintain a variation in intensity. Therefore these will not count towards your weekly variation. From here you can change the lift in one or two more ways. This can be a change of equipment utilized, and/or way the lift is performed. For any variation you use, avoid doing it again over the next 2-3 weeks. This will allow enough time for other variations to build strength in different ways. A powerful plan is to utilize a 4 week cycle in which you use four base variations that will build strength in a different way for each main lift. For example, one week you can do the main lift as it is meant to be, and then work on static strength (pauses), next partial range of motion and anything else you come up with. Variation among accessory work only occurs every other week. This allows you to ensure you are progressing by doing more than you did the previous week. Some of the accessory work is listed with two variations to rotate between. These can be changed but the purpose should stay the same. Every accessory exercise is meant to work a specific plane of motion, increase training volume, train weaknesses, build muscle and improve the main lifts. Find what is most effective for you and work it hard. Though variation is important in training at this level, do not lose focus of your goals. Enjoy changing things up, but work smart and hard.



Squat/ Deadlift Mobility Warm-Up

General Warm-Up and Systems Check:

Toe Reach	x 10
The Bow	x 10-30 sec.
Torso Twist & Reach	x 10 total
Side Bend & Reach	x 10 total
Hip Circles	x 10 total
Hip Open-Close	x 1 each
Paleo Squat	x 30+ sec.

The Daily 30:

Paleo Squat	x 10
Push-Ups	x 10
Prone Cobra	x 10

Training Specific Mobility:

Lat Stretch- Underhand	x 10-30 sec.
Bicep Stretch	x 10-30 sec.
Squat & Extend	x 3
Dynamic Hamstring Stretch	x 10 total
Deep Lunges	x 10 total
Dynamic Pigeon Stretch	x 10 each

Add any additional mobility stretches here to fit your specific needs

Activation Techniques:

Single Leg Romanian Deadlift	x 10 each
Hip Airplanes	x 10 each
Bulgarian Split Squat	x 10 each

BONUS- Calf Mobility

Static Single Leg Calf Stretch	x 2 min. each
Weighted Deep Squat Calf Stretch	x 1 min. each



Bench Press/ Olympic Lift Mobility Warm-Up

General Warm-Up and Systems Check:

Toe Reach	x 10
The Bow	x 10-30 sec.
Torso Twist & Reach	x 10 total
Side Bend & Reach	x 10 total
Hip Circles	x 10 total
Hip Open-Close	x 1 each
Paleo Squat	x 30+ sec.

The Daily 30:

Paleo Squat	x 10
Push-Ups	x 10
Prone Cobra	x 10

Training Specific Mobility:

Arm Circles	x 10 each
Horizontal Hug & Open	x 10
Shoulder Flexion-Extension	x 10
Single Arm Swings	x 10 each way
Scapular Rotations	x 10 each
Chest Stretch	x 10 sec.
Lat Stretch- Overhand	x 10-30 sec.
Doorway/ Pec Minor Stretch	x 10-30 sec.
Scapular Abduction Stretch	x 10-30 sec.
Calf-Hamstring Stretch	x 30+ sec. each
Exaggerated Lunge	x 30+ sec. each
Weighted Deep Squat Calf Stretch	x 1 min. each

Add any additional mobility stretches here to fit your specific needs

Activation Techniques:

Dumbbell Shoulder Warm-Up

Lateral Raises	x 10
Front Raises	x 10
Reverse Flyes	x 10
Military Press	x 10
Shoulder Dislocations	x 10



Day 1- Heavy Squat/ Deadlift Training

Warm-Up & Technique Work:

Box Jump Variation	3-5 x 3
Weighted Chin-Ups (Weeks 1-2)/ Weighted Pull-Ups (Weeks 3-4)	- x 25
Light Squat/ Deadlift Variation	3 x 5

Main Lifts:

Squat/ Deadlift Variation	- x 1-5
Deadlift/ Squat Variation	3-5 x 3-6

Accessory Work:

Leg Press (Weeks 1-2)/ Leg Curl (Weeks 3-4)	3 x 8-10
Barbell Rows (Weeks 1-2)/ Dumbbell Rows (Weeks 3-4)	4 x 6-8
Bicep Curl Variation	3 x 8-10
Side Planks	3 x 45 sec.
Mobility Work	10+ min.



Day 2- Heavy Olympic Lift/ Bench Press Training

Warm-Up & Technique Work:

Olympic Lift Complex	3 x 3
Olympic Lift	Prilepin's Table
Incline Press/ Light Press Variation	3 x 5

Main Lifts:

Bench Press Variation	- x 1-5
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Accessory Work:

Dumbbell Press (Weeks 1-2)/ Incline Dumbbell Press (Weeks 3-4)	4 x 6-8
Dumbbell Military Press (Weeks 1-2)/ Military Press (Weeks 3-4)	4 x 6-8
Reverse Flyes (Weeks 1-2)/ Face Pulls (Weeks 3-4)	4 x 8-10
Lateral Raises (Weeks 1-2 only)	3 x 8-10
Hanging Leg Raises (Weeks 1-2)/ Decline Crunches (Weeks 3-4)	- x 25/50
Mobility Work	10+ min.



Day 3- Light Squat Training

Warm-Up & Technique Work:

Pull-Ups (Weeks 1-2)/ Chin-Ups (Weeks 3-4) - x 50

Front Squat/ Light Squat Variation 3 x 5

Main Lift:

Squat 3 x 8-10

Accessory Work:

Good Mornings/ Back Extensions 3 x 10-15

Leg Curls (Weeks 1-2)/ Leg Press (Weeks 3-4) 3 x 10-15

Seated Rows (Weeks 1-2)/ Lat Pull-Downs (Weeks 3-4) 5 x 10-15

Bicep Curls Variation 3 x 10-15

Planks 3 x 60-90 sec.

Mobility Work 10+ min.



Day 4- Light Olympic Lift/ Bench Press Training**Warm-Up & Technique Work:**

Hang Olympic Lift	3 x 10
Incline Press/ Light Press Variation	3 x 5

Main Lift:

Bench Press	3 x 8-10
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Accessory Work:

Dumbbell Military Press	3 x 10-15
Dips (Weeks 1-2)/ Push-Ups (Weeks 3-4)	- x 50-75
Triceps Extension Variation	3 x 10-15
Face Pulls (Weeks 1-2)/ Reverse Flyes (Weeks 3-4)	3-4 x 10-20
Lateral Raises (Weeks 3-4 only)	3 x 10-15
Crunches (Weeks 1-2)/ Leg Raises (Weeks 3-4)	- x 50-75
Mobility Work	10+ min.

