

A Nuanced Look At Priorities

- ▶ What can be a priority?
 - ▶ Body Parts
 - ▶ Movements
 - ▶ Exercises
 - ▶ Stimulus
 - ▶ Training experiences

Coaches that can
navigate priorities can
create the most
individually optimized
programs in less time.

Prioritizing Priorities

- ▶ **Categorization and/or ranking**
 - ▶ **For many things, categorization is sufficient and ranking may be excessive.**
 - ▶ **You can always rank things when the situation arises where you need a more nuanced degree of prioritization.**

Prioritizing Priorities

► Categorization

- **Top/High Priority** - emphasize the most
- **Moderate Priority** - emphasize when/what you can
- **Low Priority** - Just don't go below the minimum effective dose
- **Negative Priority** - Intentionally minimize

Relative Volume Example

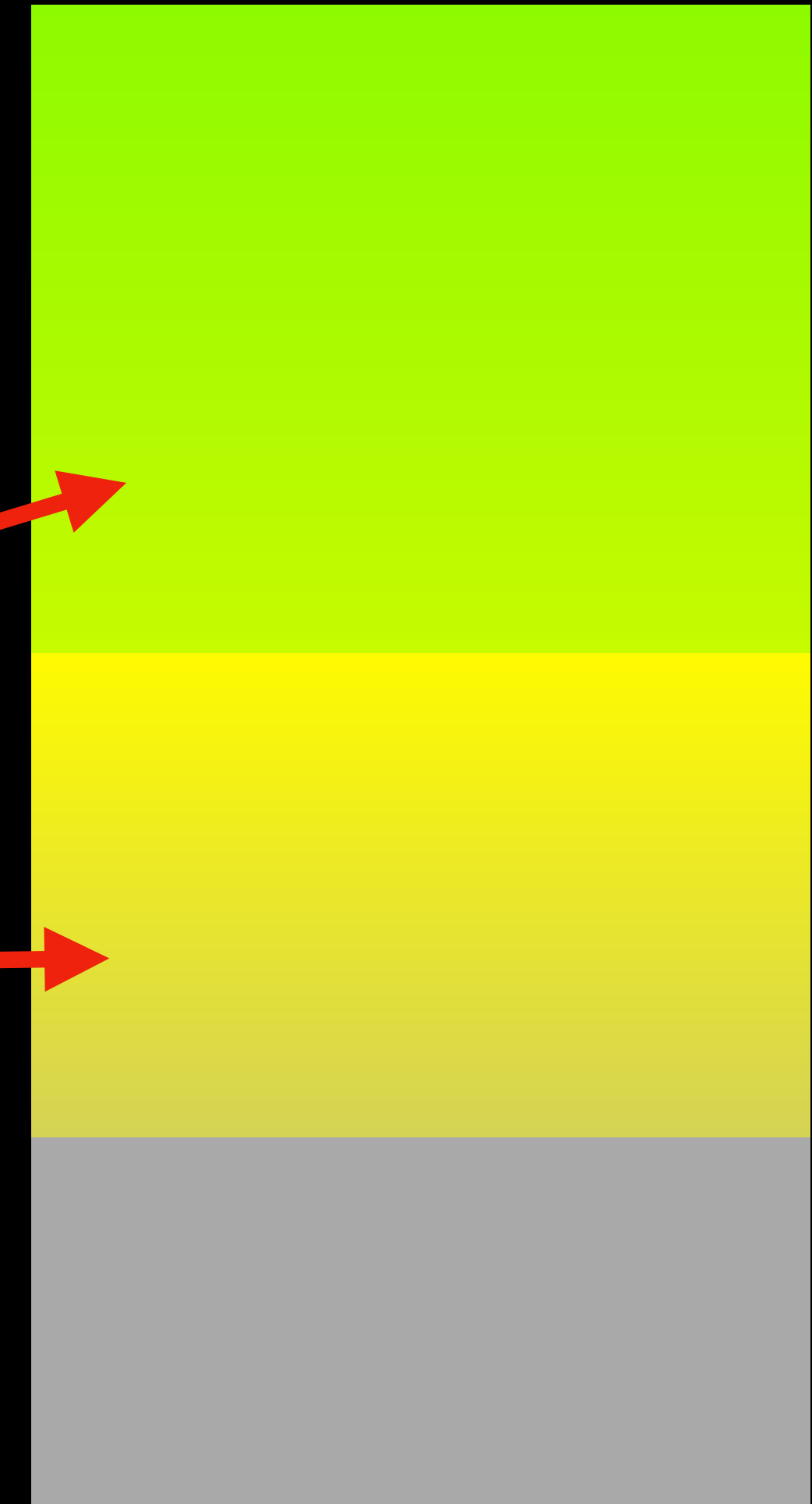
▶ **Glutes** - 8 sets/wk

▶ **Lower** - 6 sets/wk

▶ **Upper** - 4 sets/wk

▶ **Traps & Low Back**

- ▶ Use exercise selection and order to minimize, for example using fewer heavy pulls and more lower body machines for glutes. More high pulley lateral raises and Y - raises for delts.



Combining Priorities

- ▶ Something needs to be # 1, and in the absence of a clear priority between things, you simply need to choose one to proceed with your program design.
- ▶ There is more than one way to prioritize something.
 - ▶ Exercise selection
 - ▶ Exercise order
 - ▶ Volume allocation
 - ▶ Includes Frequency
 - ▶ Fatigue allocation

Combining Priorities

- ▶ When you have synergistic priorities you need to make sure you don't double up, like having 50% more than intended volume for example.
- ▶ When you have conflicting priorities, you may have to apply different ways of prioritizing them.
- ▶ Priorities can be in conflict in a variety of ways
 - ▶ Mechanically
 - ▶ Performance
 - ▶ Volume/Time

Combining Priorities

- ▶ Body Part = **Glutes**, **Lower**, Upper, **Lower Back & Upper traps**
- ▶ Movement/Exercise = Squat
- ▶ Hypertrophy Goal
- ▶ Likes to feel a good pump and exertion to feel like a session was productive

Combining Priorities

- ▶ Which is more important?
- ▶ How would prioritizing one effect the other?
- ▶ Is the squat the best glute exercise?
- ▶ Can we squat first in the session to maximize the lift while still having glute hypertrophy being the top priority?
- ▶ How do I maximize the squat while minimizing lower back?
- ▶ How specific of a squat are we talking about?
- ▶ What are the important variables to achieve/progress in the squat?
- ▶ Do we need to work on these goals linearly, can they be periodized?

How would prioritizing one effect the other?

- ▶ **Cross over fatigue**
 - ▶ If we do glutes first, the squat performance will suffer significantly.
 - ▶ If we do squats first, the local vs systemic and/or non specific fatigue will vary depending on the squat variation and technique.
- ▶ We can overcome the limitation of fatigue from the squat to still focus more on volume with how we allocate volume, and choosing exercises that allow for better performance under conditions of pre-fatigue.
- ▶ It is much more difficult to recover squat performance after pre-fatigue in the glutes.

Is the squat the best glute exercise?

- ▶ Even a glute biased squat is potentially not the most ideal glute hypertrophy exercise given the coordination demands.
- ▶ A glute biased squat also works against our negative priority of minimizing the lower back loading. More quad biased variations would be less lower back, but also less glutes.
- ▶ Despite those limitations, the squat is still going to be productive glute volume, varying in magnitude based on the variation.
 - ▶ So we have to consider both the positive and negative overlap with out other exercises.

What do we really need from the squat?

- ▶ Sometimes people want a movement irregardless of the metrics. Weight, reps, and maybe even variations may all not matter, as long as they get to do an exercise that they like or associate with their goals.
- ▶ Sometimes performance metrics are the most important things. The variables matter less than the outcome.
- ▶ Sometimes the variables are important. A focus may be on progressing load, a specific variation, progressing in a specific rep range, progressing in rep tolerance or volume even.

Recapping Training Splits Principles



- ▶ Training splits give us opportunities and limitations in how we allocate exercises and volume.
- ▶ Often overlooked is higher frequency per body part may not always be the most time or volume efficient strategy.
 - ▶ We are trying to maximize quality and quantity of training volume within time constraints for most clients.
- ▶ The research on training frequency lacks a lot of context to make blanket claims in real world conditions with higher exercise variation and more strategic exercise selection and programming variables.
 - ▶ Don't fall into a more is better mindset.
 - ▶ 2x per week is the most practical ideal in many cases
 - ▶ Programs don't have to be symmetrical. Sometimes ugly on paper results in the most beautiful training sessions in the gym.

Split Organization has pros and cons

- ▶ How you organize body parts/exercises has different pros and cons
 - ▶ What areas of overlap do you have to consider
 - ▶ What limitations do you have in exercise order and the impact of fatigue from within session placement.
 - ▶ Concerns of overlap increase with session density, being the greatest when we have consecutive training days.
 - ▶ Concerns of overlap also increase with total volume.

Specialization does not equal complicated

- ▶ It can be as simple as using a set extension method for the priority body parts
- ▶ It can be as complicated as essentially writing two different programs. For example
 - ▶ Glutes 3 x per week
 - ▶ Everything else 1x per week stacked on top in a complimentary way.

Step by step to choosing and setting up your split



1. Establish Constraints
2. Establish Priorities
3. Establish goals and a strategy for achieving the prioritization
4. Refer back to the priorities and goals you chose if you run into problems laying out your sessions.

Establish Constraints

- ▶ How many total sessions /wk or micro?
- ▶ When can those sessions be done?
- ▶ What time constraints on there for sessions?
- ▶ What logistical considerations are there both in and out of session?
- ▶ What equipment limitations are there?
- ▶ What client based limitations are there (skill, effort, recovery etc)?

Establish Priorities

- ▶ Body Parts
- ▶ Exercises/Movements
- ▶ Stimulus
- ▶ Training experiences
- ▶ Frequency vs session volume
- ▶ Efficiency Vs Maximizing
- ▶ Aggressive vs Conservative approaches

Establish Goals and strategies

- ▶ Frequency

- ▶ Volume

- ▶ Exercise selection

- ▶ Exercise Order

- ▶ Stimulus

- ▶ Architecture