

Progressive Overload Without the Overwhelm™

Progressive overload simply means giving your muscles a little more challenge as your current routine becomes easier.

Progress does not require lifting heavier every week. Change one small thing only when your form and recovery are ready.

Six Ways to Progress



1

Add a Repetition

Example:
Move from 8 repetitions to 9.



2

Add a Set

Example:
Move from 1 set to 2.



3

Increase Resistance Slightly

Use the next manageable weight or band.



4

Use More Range

Move a little farther only if it stays comfortable and controlled.



5

Slow the Movement

Take more time during the lowering phase.



6

Choose a Harder Variation

Use less support or progress to a more challenging version.

How Do I Know I May Be Ready?

- ☐ My form has stayed steady for several sessions.
- ☐ I can complete my planned repetitions with control.
- ☐ I could do several more repetitions at the end.
- ☐ I recover well before the next session.
- ☐ The exercise feels easier than when I began.

Progress Today



- Choose one small change.
- Keep everything else the same.
- Notice how the new challenge feels.

Stay Where You Are

- Your form is still improving.
- Recovery is taking longer.
- Sleep, stress or symptoms are affecting you.
- The current level still feels challenging.



A Gentle Progression Could Look Like

Week 1:
1 set of 8



Week 2:
1 set of 9



Week 3:
1 set of 10



Later:
slightly more resistance

This is only an example. Progress may take longer, and some weeks are for maintaining.

Progress You May Notice Outside the Gym



Stairs feel easier



Groceries feel lighter



Balance feels steadier



You recover sooner

Exercise: _____ What feels easier now: _____ One change I may try: _____



Gentle Reminder

Maintaining your current strength during a demanding week is still meaningful.



Martine's Midlife Wellness Tip

Keep a simple record. Small improvements are easy to miss when you rely on memory alone.



When to Step Back

Reduce the challenge if form changes, pain increases, recovery worsens, or fatigue carries into daily life.

