

GOLD MEDAL BODIES

HANDSTAND MODULE ROAD MAP

GMB Handstand Module Road Map

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the GMB Handstand Road Map. As with most maps, even though the destination is the same for everyone, we all won't arrive at the same time. This program is flexible, and can be tailored to your current skill level.

Depending upon your background, you might be able to achieve a great Freestanding Handstand within a month. For others, it might take up to 6 months, or even longer! And there's nothing wrong with that at all! Just stick with it and you'll make progress.

This program gives you the most efficient way to achieve your goals, so don't worry if it seems that you aren't moving as fast as you'd like. If you follow the program correctly, then you'll be moving at the best pace you can, and you'll eventually get to where you want to be.

That's why we don't provide a specific period of time to practice each level in this guide.

Instead, we want you to work at your own pace, making sure to keep track of where you are in each level so that you know when it's time to advance. You'll know if you've advanced too quickly to the next level because your body will tell you - in other words, it will be too difficult! Pride may be a significant factor here so if you truly want a beautiful handstand, ditch your ego and really listen to and trust your body. Don't resist going back a level once you've realized that you moved on too quickly. It's actually not a step back if you weren't supposed to move forward in the first place.

We know this kind of structure (or lack thereof) can be confusing for those who are used to having someone tell them precisely when to move on to the next phase of a program, after a specific length of time.

However, handstand work is a completely different ball game. This skill requires careful and deliberate progress with a lot of repetitive work. Each phase of handstand work must be mastered before moving on to the next. If not, you'll keep spinning your wheels and fail to reach to the end goal of a straight body handstand. Got it? Great!

Let's get started.

GETTING STARTED

How To Read This Guide

There's a lot of information in this document and in the accompanying videos. Don't expect to digest it all in one sitting.

As noted in the Introduction, handstands are a skill that will take everyone a different amount of time to develop. And as you continue to practice over time, your experience will give you new ways of looking at the info and instructions in this program,

So make a note to return to these materials in a week, then again in a month - and whenever you come to a new turning point or crossroads in your practice.

You'll be sure to find new insight every time you do.

TRAINING FREQUENCY AND RECOVERY DAYS

We do not recommended doing handstand work everyday because of the stress it places on your wrists and shoulders. Recovery time is crucial for progress, so training for 3 days (4 at the most) per week is optimal. Take at least 1 day off between training sessions.

FOR EXAMPLE, A GOOD TRAINING SCHEDULE IS EITHER:

- ★ Monday/Wednesday/Friday
- ★ Tuesday/Thursday/Saturday



1. WRIST AND SHOULDER WARM UP

For each handstand session, begin with the wrist and shoulder warm up (add in the shoulder opener exercises as needed). In addition, you can also do your favorite full body warmup routine (i.e. light jogging, jumping rope, bicycling, etc.).

WRIST PREP

- 1. Start on your hands and knees, with fingers pointed forward.
- Lock your elbows out straight, round your back and lean forward to stretch your wrists. Don't hold the position - instead rock back and forth going to the edge of the uncomfortable stretch.
- Switch your hands so that your fingers are facing your knees, and repeat as above.
- 4. Flip your hands over so that the back of your hands is on the floor and your fingers are pointing towards your knees. Again, rock back and forth to the point of a good stretch. Don't force it, you'll improve much faster by being patient!

SHOULDER PREP

EXERCISE 1

- Standing tall, lift both arms up straight overhead with your palms facing away from you.
- Keep your shoulder blades pulled together and downwards as you bring your arms backward.

EXERCISE 2

- 1. This exercise stretches the shoulders in the opposite direction.
- 2. Stand tall and bend forward at the hips while you reach your arms back behind you, with the palms facing the ceiling.
- 3. Use a towel or bands/tubing to assist, if needed.
- When you are ready for it, change your hand position, and turn your palms so they face the floor. This will give you a deeper stretch.

EXERCISE 3

- This exercise uses tubing/ bands to do a "half circle" starting from overhead to back behind you.
- 2. Pull the band outwards throughout the movement as much as necessary to complete the half circle. This is similar to the old school "dislocates" using a stick/dowel, but the use of the tubing is much more forgiving on your shoulders.

2. Lock Outs or Jump Tucks

If you are just beginning your handstand training, these movements will be your conditioning exercises. Be sure to practice good form!

Once you have progressed to working on the wall, use Lock Outs and Jump Tucks as your warm up.

As Conditioning Exercises, Do:

- ★ 3-5 reps with 1-2 minutes rest
- ★ A total of 5 sets

As YOUR WARM UP, DO:

- ★ 10 reps of Lock Outs with 1-2 min rest
- ★ 10 reps of Jump Tucks with 1-2 min rest

Lоск Оитs

- Start on your hands and knees and lock your elbows out straight.
- 2. Rock forward and lift your hips up in the air.
- Keep your shoulders directly over your hands and don't arch your back. For now, don't worry about the height of your hips.

JUMP TUCKS

- Begin in the same position as the Lock Outs.
- Lift your hips up as high as you can while maintaining a straight upper body. It's best to perform these against a wall since your balance and strength isn't going to be perfect just yet.
- This is NOT a handstand. This movement strengthens your arms to get them ready for the work ahead.

3. Hollow Body Hold

Refer to the main Handstand Module training manual for detailed descriptions of the stages/movements of the Full Hollow Body progression.

THE 4 STAGES OF THE FULL HOLLOW BODY

- 1. Tuck
- 2. Leg Extension
- 3. Full Leg Extension and Arm Raise
- 4. Full Hollow Body

PRACTICE YOUR CURRENT LEVEL HOLLOW BODY PROGRESSION FOR:

- ★ Hold for 10 seconds with 20 seconds rest
- ★ Do 5 sets total

Even if you can already perform a Full Hollow Body hold, you should perform a Hollow Body hold for up to 30 seconds before moving on to Wall Work.



The Full Hollow Body

RECAP

At the Start of Each Training Session, Do:

- Wrists and Shoulder Warm Ups
- 2. Lock Outs and/or Jump Tucks (either as Conditioning Exercises or Warm Up)
- Hollow Body Holds (as Conditioning Exercises or Warm Up)

Depending on your strength level, when you first start out with handstand training, you might end your workout after finishing your Hollow Body Holds.

That is just fine!

Don't get discouraged! Keep working until you have the strength in your arms to begin wall work. Once you've gained strength in your arms and have reached the Full Hollow Body, you can move on to Wall Work.

4. WALL WORK - FACING THE WALL

ANKLES FLEXED AT 90 DEGREES WITH FEET ON THE WALL

- Walk your feet up the wall and focus on each component of your body (make sure you are aligned properly).
- Keep your hands close to the wall. You should be in a hollow body position with chin tucked, and feet in proper position against the wall.
- Position your toes against the wall with your ankles flexed 90 degrees.
- 4. Work up to holding for 30 seconds.

Do:

★ 5 sec. hold for multiple sets (up to 8 sets)

Once, you can do that comfortably, increase the hold time by an additional 5 seconds. The goal is to work up to comfortably holding the wall facing handstand for 30 seconds (8 sets at a time). Use the following progression as your guide.

WITH TOES ON WALL AND ANKLES BENT AT 90 DEGREE ANGLE, DO:

- ★ 5 second hold x 8 sets
- ★ 10 second hold x 8 sets
- ★ 15 second hold x 8 sets
- ★ 20 second hold x 8 sets
- ★ 25 second hold x 8 sets
- ★ 30 second hold x 8 sets

Once you've achieved this goal, the next step is to point your toes (and hold) while in the wall facing handstand.

TOES POINTED WITH FEET ON THE WALL

IN THIS POSITION, WORK UP TO:

★ 30 second hold x 8 sets

Use the same progression structure provided earlier, and gradually increase your holds by 5 seconds. Practice the 30 second hold for at least three sessions before moving on to Wall Work - Facing Out.



Toes Pointed Facing The Wall

Your rest period between sets is up to you. Make sure that you are fully rested so that you can perform a perfectly held Hollow Body handstand facing the wall each time. This rest period is a good time to stretch out your wrists and shoulders.

Conditioning Cool Down

Hollow Body Conditioning

Perform these directly after the Wall Work.

Do the hollow body hold (at your level):

★ Hold for 1 min, and rest for 30 sec.
★ Do a total of 3 sets

Lock Outs

This exercise ends the session.

Do:

- ★ 10 reps
- ★ A total of 3 sets

5. WALL WORK - FACING OUT

This is where our handstands start to come to life!

HEELS AGAINST THE WALL/TOES POINTED

- 1. Kick or cartwheel up to the wall with your hands at the proper distance.
- 2. Lock yourself into the hollow body position.

Do:

★ 10 sec. hold for multiple sets (up to 8 sets)

Once, you can do that comfortably, increase the hold time by an additional 5 seconds. Again, the goal is to work up to comfortably holding the wall assisted handstand for 30 seconds (8 sets at a time). Use the following progression as your guide.

WITH HEELS AGAINST THE WALL AND TOES POINTED, DO:

- ★ 10 second hold x 8 sets
- ★ 15 second hold x 8 sets
- ★ 20 second hold x 8 sets
- ★ 25 second hold x 8 sets
- ★ 30 second hold x 8 sets

Just as in your earlier training (Facing the Wall), rest appropriately between sets and be sure to stretch your wrists and shoulders. Be patient with your training while progressing through this phase. You may be at a particular level for a few sessions. Don't worry about that, just hold your handstands in perfect form and you'll get to the next level.

Practice the 30 second hold for at least three sessions before moving on to L-Stand and Wall Push Work.

CONDITIONING COOL Down

Hollow Body Conditioning

Perform these directly after the Wall Work.

Do the hollow body hold (at your level):

- ★ Hold for 1 min, and rest for 30 sec.
 - Do a total of 3 sets

Lock Outs

This exercise ends the session.

Do:

- ★ 10 reps
- ★ A total of 3 sets

6. L-STAND AND WALL PUSH WORK

Welcome to the start of the Freestanding Handstand! These two exercises will do wonders for increasing your strength and skill.

THE L-STAND

- Begin the L-Stand with both feet against the wall for 8 sets of 30 seconds. (This is done only on your first session of L-Stand work. This session will help you learn and perform the exercise correctly).
- Remember to get your butt up over your shoulders and legs on the wall at 90 degrees.

AFTER YOUR FIRST SESSION YOU'LL START SIN-GLE LEG WORK AS FOLLOWS:

- ★ L-Stand with right leg in air for 10 seconds
- ★ L-Stand with left leg in air for 10 seconds
- ★ Rest, and repeat for a total of 8 sets
- ★ Do not bring your legs to the floor for the switch. Bring both feet together on the wall before raising the other leg.

Just as with everything previously, once you've mastered the position for the allotted time, increase the hold by 5 seconds, working up to 30 seconds per leg.

Once you are comfortable holding 30 seconds for each leg, begin pushing slightly away from the wall with your support leg during that 30 second period. Maintain proper form!

WALL PUSHES

This exercise will help you obtain strength and balance while utilizing the wall as a brace, when needed.

- 1. Begin in a full handstand position facing away from the wall.
- 2. Have the top of your toes resting against the wall.
- Push your feet slightly away from the wall and work on holding a freestanding handstand for as long as possible.
- Do:

★

- 8 sets of Wall Pushes
- ★ Hold freestanding handstand as long as you can (there is no set time period)

If you can only hold a freestanding handstand for 1-2 seconds, perform a couple of wall pushes in one set as long as you don't fall out of the handstand. Review the "controlling falling" section so you're prepared in case you over-push and fall away from the wall. Give yourself enough rest time between sets and never sacrifice form just to try and hold a freestanding handstand for a little bit longer.

COOL DOWN CONDI-TIONING

Hollow Body Conditioning

Perform these directly after the L-Stand and Wall Push work.

Do the Full Hollow Body hold :

- ★ Hold for 1 min, and rest for 30 sec.
- ★ Do a total of 3 sets

7. FREESTANDING HANDSTAND WORK

Now all of the very important prep work is done, and you are ready to begin freestanding handstands!

Congratulations for working so hard to get to this point, all of it will pay off and you'll soon reach your goal. But please be mindful - this is the point in your training where accidents can start to happen! Review the techniques for rolling or cartwheeling out of a handstand.

HANDSTAND WARM UP

- 1. Practice the wrist and shoulder warm ups.
- Practice "bail out" maneuver #1
 Do some forward rolls (a few reps until you feel comfort-able).
- Practice "bail out" maneuver #2

 Work on repetitions of cartwheels from a handstand.
 (Don't worry about how long you hold your handstands now, this is simply a warmup and practice of your bailing techniques).
- Hold the hollow body position handstand against a wall (up to 30 seconds).
- Do wall handstands between freestanding handstands to check your form and adjust as needed.

After that brief warmup, it's time for the meat of the training.

ENTERING THE HAND-STAND

TIPS TO REMEMBER:

- ★ Always start with practicing your entries into the freestanding handstand. (At this point you've hopefully mastered your preferred entry earlier while you were working with the wall).
- ★ Entries should be smooth and under control so that you don't over kick into your handstand and lose balance before you even start.
- ★ The best way to practice freestanding handstands is to spend as much time on your hands as possible for a given period of time.

DURING THE HAND-STAND

- ★ Hold your freestanding handstand as long as possible per rep (with the initial goal of 10 minutes).
- ★ Remember to take breaks between reps.
- ★ Keep rest periods brief.
- ★ After the end of 10 minutes, go back to the wall and hold a few handstands facing out for up to 30 seconds.

In the beginning, you may only be able to hold it for a few seconds. That's fine. Take a short break and then kick back up again.

Don't rush into your handstands. Stay relaxed, and focus on performing beautiful straight body handstands even if you can only hold them for a couple of seconds.

If you feel your form breaking down, go back to the wall and hold a good hollow body handstand for 30 seconds. Then go back to your freestanding handstand work once again. Remember this is all within a span of 10 minutes.

Once you're able to to hold a freestanding handstand for a solid 10 seconds at a time, you're well on your way to handstand proficiency. It's now time to start working on handstand walking.



Alpha Posse member Brian B. shows off his freestanding handstand skills

8. WALKING ON YOUR HANDS

You are now at the point where your freestanding handstand is strong and stable. So now it's time to go somewhere with your handstand!

Rather than go for endless times in a static handstand, you'll be moving on to dynamic work. This doesn't mean that you'll stop practicing holding your handstand. Handstand walking challenges your balance and strength further, and will help your performance in the static holds.

Walking is often described as a "controlled fall." There is essentially a point when everyone walks where you would fall forward if your foot wasn't there to catch you. Walking on your hands is just like walking on your feet, except instead of catching yourself with your feet as you fall forward, you use your hands. In the beginning, walking on your hands can be quite intimidating, a spotter here can be very useful. Otherwise, be prepared to bail out every step or so in the beginning.

- ★ Start off in a straight handstand and allow your straight legs to teeter forward a bit.
- ★ Take small steps forward with your hands while keeping a strong and tight body position. You've spent a lot of time working on a proper handstand and want to keep that when you walk on your hands as well.

In the beginning you may find yourself reaching out too far for the next step. This causes your body to twist and disrupts your optimal balance. Don't be in a hurry when walking on your hands. Take it slow and focus on everything that you've learned up until now, and enjoy the walk!

SAMPLE DAILY CHARTS

	Monday	
Wrist Warm Up	Conditioning Work	RPE:
Shoulder Warm Up:	- Lock Outs or Jump Tucks	RPD:
- Exercise 1	Do: 3 - 5 reps. x 5 sets with 1-2 min. rest	RPT:
- Exercise 2	Hollow Body Work	
- Exercise 3	- AT YOUR CURRENT LEVEL HOLD	
	Do: Hold for 10 sec. with 20 sec. rest x 5 sets	5
	Tuesday (Rest Day - Take A Break!)	
	Wednesday	
Wrist Warm Up	Conditioning Work	RPE:
Shoulder Warm Up:	- Lock Outs or Jump Tucks	RPD:
- Exercise 1	Do: 3 - 5 reps. x 5 sets with 1-2 min. rest	RPT:
- Exercise 2	Hollow Body Work	
- Exercise 3	- AT YOUR CURRENT LEVEL HOLD	
	Do: Hold for 10 sec. with 20 sec. rest x 5 sets	;
	Thursday (Rest Day - Take A Break!)	
	Friday	
Wrist Warm Up	Conditioning Work	RPE:
Shoulder Warm Up:	- Lock Outs or Jump Tucks	RPD:
- Exercise 1	Do: 3 - 5 reps. x 5 sets with 1-2 min. rest	RPT:
- Exercise 2	Hollow Body Work	
- Exercise 3	- At Your Current Level Hold	
	Do: Hold for 10 sec. with 20 sec. rest x 5 sets	;

	Monday	
Warm Up	Conditioning Cool Down	RPE:
Wrist & Shoulder Warm Up	- Hollow Body Hold (At Current Level)	RPD:
Lock Outs And Jump Tucks	Do: Hold 1 min. with 30 sec. rest x 3 sets	RPT:
Do: 10 reps. with 1-2 min. rest	- Lock Outs	
Ankles Flexed At 90 Degrees' or 'Toes Point- ing' Wall Handstands	Do: 10 REPS. X 3 SETS	
Do: Hold for 5 sec. x 8 sets (work up to 30 sec. hold)		
Tuesday (I	Rest Day - Take A Break!)	
	Wednesday	
Warm Up	Conditioning Cool Down	RPE:
Wrist & Shoulder Warm Up	- Hollow Body Hold (At Current Level)	RPD:
Lock Outs And Jump Tucks	Do: Hold 1 min. with 30 sec. rest x 3 sets	RPT:
Do: 10 reps. with 1-2 min. rest	- Lock Outs	
Ankles Flexed At 90 Degrees' or 'Toes Point- ing' Wall Handstands	Do: 10 REPS. X 3 SETS	
Do: Hold for 5 sec. x 8 sets (work up to 30 sec. hold)		
Thursday	(Rest Day - Take A Break!)	
	Friday	
Warm Up	Conditioning Cool Down	RPE:
Wrist & Shoulder Warm Up	- Hollow Body Hold (At Current Level)	RPD:
Lock Outs And Jump Tucks	Do: Hold 1 min. with 30 sec. rest x 3 sets	RPT:
Do: 10 reps. with 1-2 min. rest	- Lock Outs	
Ankles Flexed At 90 Degrees' or 'Toes Point- ing' Wall Handstands	Do: 10 REPS. X 3 SETS	

Example Cha	rt - Wall Work - Facing Out	
	Monday	
Warm Up	Conditioning Cool Down	RPE:
- Wrist & Shoulder Warm Up	- Hollow Body Hold (At Current Level)	RPD:
- Lock Outs And Jump Tucks	Do: Hold 1 min. with 30 sec. rest x 3 sets	RPT:
Do: 10 reps. with 1-2 min. rest	- Lock Outs	
'Heels Against Wall/Toes Pointed' Wall Hand- stands	Do: 10 REPS. X 3 SETS	
Do: Hold for 10 sec. x 8 sets (work up to 30 sec. hold)		
Tuesday (R	est Day - Take A Break!)	
	Wednesday	
Warm Up	Conditioning Cool Down	RPE:
- Wrist & Shoulder Warm Up	- Hollow Body Hold (At Current Level)	RPD:
- Lock Outs And Jump Tucks	Do: Hold 1 min. with 30 sec. rest x 3 sets	RPT:
Do: 10 reps. with 1-2 min. rest	- Lock Outs	
'Heels Against Wall/Toes Pointed' Wall Hand- stands	Do: 10 REPS. X 3 SETS	
Do: Hold for 10 sec. x 8 sets (work up to 30 sec. hold)		
Thursday (F	Rest Day - Take A Break!)	
	Friday	
Warm Up	Conditioning Cool Down	RPE:
- Wrist & Shoulder Warm Up	- Hollow Body Hold (At Current Level)	RPD:
- Lock Outs And Jump Tucks	Do: Hold 1 min. with 30 sec. rest x 3 sets	RPT:
Do: 10 reps. with 1-2 min. rest	- Lock Outs	
'Heels Against Wall/Toes Pointed' Wall Hand- stands	Do: 10 REPS. X 3 SETS	
Do: Hold for 10 sec. x 8 sets (work up to 30 sec. hold)		
Saturday & Sund	ау (Rest Days - Таке А Break!)	

Monday	
 Wall Pushes Do: Hold freestanding handstand as long as possible x 8 sets 	RPE: RPD:
 Conditioning Cool Down Full Hollow Body Hold 	RPT:
Do: Hold 1 min. with 30 sec. rest x 3 sets	
Rest Day - Take A Break!)	
WEDNESDAY	
possible x 8 sets Conditioning Cool Down FULL HOLLOW BODY HOLD Do: Hold 1 min. with 30 sec. rest x 3 sets Rest Day - Take A Break!)	RPD: RPT:
	RPE:
 Do: Hold freestanding handstand as long as possible x 8 sets Conditioning Cool Down FULL HOLLOW BODY HOLD Do: Hold 1 min. with 30 sec. rest x 3 sets 	RPD: RPT:
	 Wall Pushes Do: Hold freestanding handstand as long as possible x 8 sets Conditioning Cool Down FULL HOLLOW BODY HOLD Do: Hold 1 min. with 30 sec. rest x 3 sets WEDNESDAY Wall Pushes Do: Hold freestanding handstand as long as possible x 8 sets Conditioning Cool Down FULL HOLLOW BODY HOLD Do: Hold freestanding handstand as long as possible x 8 sets Conditioning Cool Down

	Monday	-
Varm Up	Facing Out Handstands	RPE:
Wrist & Shoulder Warm Up	Do: Hold handstand up to 30 sec. x 3 sets	RPD:
Forward Rolls		RPT:
Handstand to Cartwheel		
Hollow Body Position Against Wall		
Do: Hold up to 30 sec.		
Freestanding Handstand		
Do: Hold as long as you can. Goal is 10 min.		
Tuesday (F	Rest Day - Τακε Α Βreak!)	
	WEDNESDAY	
Warm Up	Facing Out Handstands	RPE:
Wrist & Shoulder Warm Up	Do: Hold handstand up to 30 sec. x 3 sets	RPD:
Forward Rolls		RPT:
Handstand to Cartwheel		
Hollow Body Position Against Wall		
Do: Hold up to 30 sec.		
Freestanding Handstand		
Do: Hold as long as you can. Goal is 10 min.		
Thursday (Rest Day - Τακε Α Βreak!)	
	Friday	
Warm Up	Facing Out Handstands	RPE:
Wrist & Shoulder Warm Up	Do: Hold handstand up to 30 sec. x 3 sets	RPD:
Forward Rolls		RPT:
Handstand to Cartwheel		
Hollow Body Position Against Wall		
Do: Hold up to 30 sec.		
Freestanding Handstand		
Do: Hold as long as you can. Goal is 10 min.		