

Using the Rock Prodigy Training Center

Hangboard training is the most effective way to safely increase finger strength for rock climbing. There are several ways to use a hangboard and many different training protocols. The following training method is based on the highly successful Rock Prodigy method, developed by Mark and Mike Anderson, and detailed in Fixed Pin Publishing's *The Rock Climber's Training Manual*. Ideally, hangboard training should be used as just one piece of a comprehensive training program that includes Skill Development, Base-Fitness, Power, and Power Endurance Training.

This routine involves only "dead hangs," which means hanging straight-armed, with a slight bend in the elbows, throughout the entire workout. That means no pull-ups and no lock offs. Additionally, this routine is designed to be used with two hands on the hangboard for every repetition (no one-arm hangs). See Fig. 1 for proper technique. Hangboard workouts should only be done after a *thorough* warm-up. Warm up by climbing for 20 minutes, beginning with easy terrain and gradually progressing to more difficult terrain, working through all the grip positions that will be used during the workout. If you do not have access to a warm-up wall, stand on a chair or stool below the Training Center, supporting most of your body weight with your legs, and cycle your hands through the jug, sloper, and large-edge positions for ten minutes, shaking as needed. Rest, then continue for another five minutes, including some more difficult grips.

Figure 1: The proper posture for hangboarding: Arms straight, with elbows slightly bent, head up. Note the pulley-system for removing weight, mounted stopwatch, and chalk bag.



The Process

Timing for a Single Set:				
Set	Rep	Start Time	End Time	Activity
1	1	0:00	0:07	Deadhang
		0:07	0:10	Rest
1	2	0:10	0:17	Deadhang
		0:17	0:20	Rest
1	3	0:20	0:27	Deadhang
		0:27	0:30	Rest
1	4	0:30	0:37	Deadhang
		0:37	0:40	Rest
1	5	0:40	0:47	Deadhang
		0:47	0:50	Rest
1	6	0:50	0:57	Deadhang
		0:57	1:00	Rest
1	7	1:00	1:07	Deadhang
		1:07	4:00	Rest

1. Select the **grips** you want to train (approximately 5-10).
2. For each grip, complete one to three **sets**. A set is a succession of distinct repetitions (reps) followed by a three-minute rest period.
3. A single **rep** is a dead-hang of a short, timed duration, followed by a brief, timed rest period (standing below the board with hands relaxed, but often still touching the grip in use).
4. Rest three minutes between each set.
5. Complete all sets of a given grip before moving to the next.
6. Avoid any additional climbing or other finger training for at least 48 hours following each hangboard workout. Complete 6-10 hangboard workouts, and then transition to the next phase in your training plan.

The key to this routine is the **resistance**, or the amount of weight hanging from your fingers during each set. The proper amount of resistance varies greatly for different climbers and grip positions, and it usually takes some trial and error to perfect. For many climbers the proper resistance for difficult grips will be *less* than bodyweight. Install a simple pulley system (see Fig. 1) to *remove* weight during the workout. Eventually, it may be necessary to add weight to your harness to increase the resistance on certain grips.

Begin the first set of each grip position with relatively low resistance and gradually increase it between sets and between workouts. Strive for near-failure at the end of the last set of each grip. A good rule of thumb is to add 10 lbs. of resistance between each set of a given grip position, and strive to add 5 lbs. to like-sets from workout to workout (assuming you are able to complete each set of the previous workout).

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH INDIVIDUAL CLIMBER TO DETERMINE A SAFE LEVEL OF RESISTANCE FOR EACH GRIP POSITION. ALWAYS INCREASE RESISTANCE SLOWLY. USING EXCESSIVE RESISTANCE CAN RESULT IN INJURY.

The following intermediate-difficulty workout calls for two sets of each grip, consisting of seven, then six reps. Each rep is comprised of a 7-second hang followed by 3 seconds of rest.

Intermediate Hangboard Routine						
Exercise	Grip	Set	Reps	Resistance	Total Set Time	Activity
1	Warmup Jug	1	7	Baseline	67 s	Deadhang
					3 min	Rest
2	Large Open-Hand Edge	1	7	Baseline	67 s	Deadhang
					3 min	Rest
		2	6	Baseline +10	57 s	Deadhang
					3 min	Rest
3	Deep 2 Finger Pocket	1	7	Baseline	67 s	Deadhang
					3 min	Rest
		2	6	Baseline +10	57 s	Deadhang
					3 min	Rest
4	Small Semi-Closed Crimp	1	7	Baseline	67 s	Deadhang
					3 min	Rest
		2	6	Baseline +10	57 s	Deadhang
					3 min	Rest
5	Shallow 3 Finger Pocket	1	7	Baseline	67 s	Deadhang
					3 min	Rest
		2	6	Baseline +10	57 s	Deadhang
					3 min	Rest
6	Wide Pinch	1	7	Baseline	67 s	Deadhang
					3 min	Rest
		2	6	Baseline +10	57 s	Deadhang
					3 min	Rest
7	Sloper	1	7	Baseline	67 s	Deadhang
					3 min	Rest
		2	6	Baseline +10	57 s	Deadhang

Note: "Baseline" Resistance is NOT body weight! It is whatever resistance is appropriate for your ability and the given grip. Often Baseline Resistance will vary between grips, and it is often *LESS* than body weight.

Printable training material is available at http://trango.com/rock_prodigy