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by Hugo Rivera, BSCE, CFT, SPN



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In the next two sections, best selling fitness author and National NPC bodybuilding competitor Hugo Rivera and fitness expert, IFBB Figure Professional, Marcy Porter join forces to finally provide an answer to the riddle on how to get the most desired and enviable muscle group in the world; the abs.

It seems like the most often asked question when it comes to the subject of getting in shape is: "What is the best exercise to get your abs?" Typically, such a question may be followed by comments like: "I do hundreds of sit-ups and crunches everyday but I still can't see them!" or "I do a lot of oblique work but I still have fat on my sides."

ABS 101

First of all, everyone in this world has abs. Ask any student of college anatomy that has opened up a human body and analyzed what is inside. They will tell you that every human subject had abs. So if we all have abs, then how come we can't see them? The reason for that is that there is a wall of fat that is preventing them from being visible. This leads to the first rule for getting abs:

Principle #1: In order to get abs, you need to decrease your body fat percentage.

There is no "if's" or "but's" about this. Too much body fat and you won't be able to see your abs. In order for men to start seeing some of their abs they need to be at 10% or below. Women, on the other hands, start to see lines at 13% since women typically store body fat in other areas such as the hips and glutes. Later in this series we will describe how to lower body fat percentage, but for now, suffice it to say, a good nutrition program in conjunction with cardiovascular exercise and a good weight training routine that exercises your whole body and includes abdominal work are the key to long term fat loss.

Principle #2: To have the best-looking abs, one needs to exercise them correctly and understand abdominal anatomy in addition to following Principle #1.

This principle is pretty much self-explanatory and it leads us

to the next topic, which is that of Abdominal Anatomy.

ABDOMINAL ANATOMY

There are four main muscle groups that make up the full abdominal wall:

1. The Rectus Abdominis (composed of upper and lower abdominals)
2. The Oblique Muscles
3. The Intercostal Muscles
4. The Serratus Anterior

Rectus Abdominis Function & Exercises

The muscle that extends from the top of the pelvis to the sternum is called the rectus abdominis. This is the primary abdominal muscle, which when properly developed (assuming that the person has low enough body fat levels) will give the illusion of a six-pack. Its function is to pull the upper torso towards the hips when the body is only slightly flexed at the waist.

This is the reason why if you are doing a sit-up, any additional torso movement done past the initial 30 degrees from the floor will not stimulate the abs; instead the hips will be the ones that will complete the movement. Because of this, partial sit-ups performed with the torso moving up to 30 degrees and crunches are great allies in our quest to achieve great abs.

However, if you really want to maximally stimulate the abdominals, prevent lower back problems and get the most "bang for your buck" so to speak, then you need to also consider the fact that the anatomy of the rectus abdominis is such that if you do not bend your torso backwards by around 15 to 20 degrees then you won't be able to accomplish these things.

Since the floor only provides a flat surface, not only your abs will not get maximal stimulation, but also they will not learn how to properly contract and protect your back when your body is bent backwards (as is often the case when advanced bodybuilders perform exercises like standing military presses).





The only way to get around this is by investing in a swiss ball (also known as exercise ball). A swiss ball is a great small investment (they run for about \$13–\$15) as this apparatus will allow you to get the necessary backwards bend that your torso needs in order to maximally stimulate your abs. So because of this, crunches performed on an exercise ball are the way in which I recommend you perform this exercise.

Since the rectus abdominis also has muscles in the lower region that help maintain proper postural alignment, it becomes necessary to include reverse crunches performed on the swiss ball (make sure that you hold to a stationary sturdy object) as this exercise will allow you to go below the neutral (flat) position. Another good lower abdominal exercise is the hanging leg raises. The key for maximal stimulation in this exercise is to roll the pelvis slightly backwards at the beginning of the movement.

Oblique Muscles Function & Exercises

The external obliques are the muscles at the sides of the waist. The external oblique complex actually consists of three layers of muscles: the internal obliques, the transverse obliques and external obliques. Together, these muscles contract to tilt the torso, as well as twist it, from side to side.

While a bodybuilder would not want massive obliques as this would take away from symmetry and give the illusion of a thick waist, these muscles do need to be trained in order to maintain ideal postural alignment. A great exercise for these muscles is the side bends performed on a swiss ball. Another exercise that also needs to be performed for these muscles in order to exercise its rotating capabilities are the Russian Twists.

The Intercostal Muscles

The intercostals are the muscles of breathing that lie between the ribs and show as bands of muscle angling downward in the sides of the rib cage and the upper abdomen. The intercostals come into play by flexing the torso and causing it to twist, so doing any type of twisting crunch on a swiss ball will stimulate this group maximally.

The Serratus Muscles

The serratus anterior muscles are the finger-like strands of

muscle on the rib cage between the front abs and the lats. Their job is to depress the rib cage and also assist in bringing the upper arms from a position pointing directly up from the shoulders to one pointing directly below the shoulders. A good exercise that will stimulate these muscles is the one-arm cable crunches (using an overhead pulley).

Principle #3: Sets and Reps are dependent upon how advanced the person is.

Initially, ab training should just consist of a couple to three movements at the most performed for 2–3 sets of as many good repetitions as the person can do with his/her body-weight. As time goes by and one progresses, more sets can be added and repetition parameters can also be manipulated by adding weights to some exercises in order to target the fast twitch muscle fibers in the abs and thus create a six pack with deeper grooves in between. Adding weight to abdominal exercises will not give you a bloated stomach look.

Principle #4: Unless you are training one day upper abs and the next day lower abs (a very advanced technique), training abs every day will typically lead to overtraining them.

While many advanced bodybuilders and figure girls can train their abs every day for a short period of time in order to shock the body part, this typically will lead to overtraining if continued for too long. Therefore, unless you are doing upper abdominals one day and lower the next, you are better off training your abdominals for no more than 20 minutes at a time, 3 times per week on alternating days, as in Mon/Wed/Fri.

Principle #5: As one gets more advanced, repetition tempo (the speed at which one performs the exercises) can also be altered in order to elicit a response.

One very neglected variable of training that never gets altered is that one of repetition speed. As one becomes more advanced, a set can always be made more challenging by altering the speed at which the positive portion of the movement is performed, the length of the contraction and the speed of the negative portion. Doing this will in turn stimulate more muscle fibers in the area which results in faster results!

Principle #6: Do not train the obliques with low repetitions.

Unless you want big sides and a wide waist, then oblique training with low reps should not be an option. High reps in the order of 25–50 are best. As a matter of fact, some people are so genetically gifted that their sides grow from little oblique work. In this case, oblique work should be completely taken out.

Principle #7: For a smaller waist, try training the TVA muscle as well.

The TVA, or transverse abdominus, is an abdominal muscle whose function is not to cause movement of the spine, but instead to keep the waist nicely tucked in. To train it, all you have to do is suck your stomach in. I'm serious; believe it or not, that is the purpose of that muscle. So by exhaling all of the air out of your lungs and bringing the navel as close as possible to your spine you will be training the TVA and thus creating the appearance of a smaller waist. Because of the nature of this muscle, it can be trained every day at any time. Three sets of 30-second contractions should get you started.

Conclusion

Now that you know the 7 principles of AbSculpting, you can start implementing them in your routines. In the next section, we will share with you some great routines that we've used to train our abs that are guaranteed to set your waist on fire. For now, remember all of these principles and that no great abdominal wall can be created without a caloric deficient diet that consists of several small meals (5–8) a day. On part 3 of this series we will cover this subject in more detail. Until then,

Take care and train hard!!!!



ABSCULPTING 101, PART 2

In Part 1, we covered the 7 principles of ab training. In Part 2, we will present routines that can be implemented, based on your individual goals: bodybuilding vs. figure.

Beginner's Ab Workout Plan

We will start by presenting a beginner abdominals routine. At this level, only one routine is presented that can be applied to both bodybuilders and figure competitors alike. The reason for this is because at this level there is not much differentiation between the two, by virtue of the fact that there won't be any weights used or any high intensity techniques. The goal of this phase is to create a nice mind to muscle connection and to increase one's strength baseline.

Also, notice that for the beginner's routine, there are no set amount of repetitions prescribed. The reason for this is because we just want you to focus on the feel and execution of the exercise at this time; not on the amount of reps.

Beginning Ab Workout Plan For Both Bodybuilders and Figure Competitors Alike

WEEKS 1–3

Monday

Lying Leg Raises—2 sets to failure
Swiss Ball Crunches—2 sets to failure
Crunches to Side—2 sets to failure
TVA training—2 sets of 30 second vacuum contractions

NOTES:

1. *Lying Leg Raises can be performed on any flat surface.*
2. *The Crunches to side can be performed on a Swiss Ball by lying sideways on top of it, placing your hands behind your head with the legs scissored so that one leg is on front of the other one (this is for better stability) and then lifting your body sideways off the ball.*

Wednesday

Knee-Ins—2 sets to failure
Partial Sit-Ups—2 sets to failure
Lateral Bridge—2 sets to failure
TVA training—2 sets of 30 second vacuum contractions

NOTES:

1. *On the Partial Sit-ups, just lift your torso from the floor till you create a 30-degree angle between the floor surface and your torso.*
2. *To perform a lateral bridge, lie on one of your right side on a flat surface with your left shoulder, hips and knees stacked directly over each other. The right forearms will be on the ground perpendicular to the torso. The movement is performed by lifting your torso and legs off the surface while using the right forearm for support. When you hit failure then you repeat with the other side.*

Friday

Modified V-Ups—3 sets to failure
Bicycle Crunches—3 sets to failure
TVA training—2 sets of 30 second vacuum contractions

NOTES:

1. *The modified V-Ups are performed with the hands behind the torso holding to the bench or a flat surface in order to provide stability. The typical V-Up does not allow for that.*

GENERAL TRAINING NOTES (APPLIES TO ALL ROUTINES):

1. Rest 30 seconds to 1 minute between sets.
2. If a superset is noted, then there will be no rest till you perform all of the exercises listed. At that time, then you can rest 1 minute before the next superset.
3. If a modified superset is prescribed, then you perform the first exercise, rest 1–1/2 minutes (90 seconds), perform the second one, rest 1–1/2 minutes (90 seconds) and then start over.
4. Use a slow tempo of 2-seconds up, 1-second contraction and 2-seconds down unless otherwise noted. The goal is to really focus on the form and on the muscle being worked not on the amount of repetitions that can be performed.

5. These routines can be performed at the beginning or end of your weight training workouts, though typically we prefer to work abs alone before doing cardio. This, in our opinion, is the optimal time to work them.

WEEKS 4–6

Monday

Swiss Ball Crunches—3 sets to failure
Lying Leg Raises—3 sets to failure
Crunches to Side—3 sets to failure
TVA training—3 sets of 30 second vacuum contractions

Wednesday

Knee-Ins—3 sets to failure
Partial Sit-Ups—3 sets to failure
Side Bends—3 sets to failure
TVA training—3 sets of 30 second vacuum contractions

Friday

Bicycle Crunches—3 sets to failure
Modified V-Ups—3 sets to failure
Crunches with Rotation—3 sets to failure
TVA training—3 sets of 30 second vacuum contractions

Intermediate Ab Workout Plan

After 6 weeks at the beginning level, it is time to step up on the intensity ladder by a notch. At the Intermediate level, there will be slight differences between a bodybuilding ab workout program and a figure based one; mainly the fact that the bodybuilding program will emphasize the use of weight and lower repetitions in order to create thicker looking abs and deeper grooves in between them. The Figure program on the other hand will emphasize a more slender looking waistline with less thickness; thus higher repetitions are used.

Use these programs for 6–8 weeks and then move on to the Advanced Routines.

NOTE on TVA Training: At this level, you can perform some TVA training by executing 5 sets of 30 second vacuum contractions every day. Also, whenever you perform the

exercises, make sure to bring your belly button in as far as possible. This also works the TVA and helps keep the waistline small.

Intermediate Ab Workout Plan For Bodybuilders

Train your abs three time a week or even every other day by alternating between Workouts (A) and (B):

WORKOUT (A)

SUPERSET:

Swiss Ball Leg Raises—4 sets of 10–15 reps
Swiss Ball Crunches with Side Rotation—4 sets of 20–25 per side
Swiss Ball Crunches—4 sets of 10–15 reps

NOTES:

1. As you get stronger on the swiss ball leg raises, start adding small amounts of weight in between your feet.
2. As you get stronger on the swiss ball crunches, start adding small amounts of resistance by holding a plate or a medicine ball right in front of you or behind your head as you get more advanced.
3. Refrain from using a large resistance (if any) for the swiss ball with side rotations exercise.
4. Keep a controlled pace at all times and focus on the contraction.

WORKOUT (B)

SUPERSET:

Knee-Ins—3 sets of 10–15 reps
Leg Lifts on Decline Bench—3 sets of 10–15 reps
Side Crunches on Bench—3 sets of 20–25 per side
Rope Crunches—3 sets of 10–15 reps

Intermediate Ab Workout Plan For Figure

Train your abs three time a week or even every other day by alternating between Workouts (A) and (B):

WORKOUT (A)

V-Ups—4 sets of 15–25 reps
Reverse Crunches—4 sets of 15–25 per side



Bicycle Crunches—4 sets of 15–25 reps

WORKOUT (B)

Roman Chair Leg Raises—3 sets of 15–25 reps
Leg Lifts on Decline Bench—3 sets of 15–25 per side
Medicine Ball Crunches—3 sets of 15–25 reps
Medicine Ball Crunches with Side Rotations—3 sets of 15–25 reps

NOTES:

For all leg raises exercises, ensure that you bring your legs up till you hit the 90-degree angle between your torso and the legs.

Advanced Ab Workout Plan

The Advanced routines make use of the toughest exercises and also the best techniques for increasing intensity. The bodybuilding program uses a periodization approach where one workout session is done using mainly high reps to target the slow twitch oxidative muscle fibers of the abs, the second sessions targets an even split of fast and slow twitch fibers and the final session just concentrates on the fast twitch fibers. Again, remember that the goal of the bodybuilding program is to create thicker looking abs and deeper groves in between them.

The figure programs will use a slight amount of resistance in order to strengthen the abs but using high repetitions in order to keep the slender look. Some resistance is needed at the advanced level as there is still a need to create some depth in between the muscles of the abdominal wall.

NOTE on TVA Training: *At this level you can train the TVA unconsciously by attempting to keep the waist line tucked in at all times at least whenever you stand. Believe it or not that works well. You can also continue to do the 5 sets of Vacuums but increase the time under tension to 60 seconds. Also, whenever you perform the exercises, make sure to bring your belly button in as far as possible. This also works the TVA.*

Advanced Ab Workout Plan For Bodybuilders

Train your abs three time a week or even every other day by alternating between Workouts (A), (B), and (C):

WORKOUT (A)

SUPERSET:

Bicycle Crunches—4 sets of 50–100 reps
Crunches on Flat Bench—4 sets of 50–100 reps
Leg Raises on Flat Bench—4 sets to failure

NOTES:

1. *All of these exercises will be performed in a sequence on a flat surface such as a bench.*
2. *For the leg raises, bring your legs up until you create a 90-degree angle between the legs and the torso. For this exercise, just concentrate on form and feel and do as many reps as you can.*

WORKOUT (B)

SUPERSET:

Hanging Leg Raises—3 sets of 10–15 reps
Hanging Knee-Ups—3 sets of 10–15 reps

SUPERSET:

Swiss Ball Crunches with Side Rotation holding Medicine Ball in your hands—sets of 20–25 per side
Weighted Swiss Ball Crunches—3 sets of 8–10 reps

SINGLE SET:

Bicycle Crunches—3 sets of 25–45 reps per side

NOTES:

For the swiss ball exercise with side rotations hold a medicine ball in front of you with your arms extended (arms will create a 90-degree angle with the torso). For the weighted crunches, you can hold the medicine ball with your arms extended over your head (in this case, both the arms and the torso create a straight line).

WORKOUT (C)

MODIFIED SUPERSET:

Weighted Knee-Ins—3 sets of 6–8 reps
Weighted Swiss Ball Crunches—3 sets of 6–8 reps

MODIFIED SUPERSET:

Weighted V-Ups—3 sets of 6–8 reps
Rope Crunches—3 sets of 6–8 reps



NOTES:

1. *Weighted knee-ins and weighted v-ups will use a dumbbell in between your feet. Just be sure to start out light with the dumbbells as you do not want to incur an injury due to too much weight. Many times, a small 5-lb dumbbell will do the job. For the more advanced up to 25-lbs.*
2. *To make the weighted knee-ins even more challenging, try also holding a medicine ball in your hands in addition to a dumbbell in between your feet. This is a super advanced form of this exercise as when you perform it in this manner you won't be able to use your arms behind you to stabilize your torso.*
3. *Remember that in a modified superset you perform the first exercise, rest 90 seconds, perform the second one, rest 90 seconds and then start over.*

Advanced Ab Workout Plan For Figure

Train your abs three time a week or even every other day by alternating between Workouts (A) and (B):

WORKOUT (A)

Hanging Leg Raises with weight—4 sets of 15–25 reps
 Jackknife—4 sets of 15–25 per side

Knee-In while holding up a medicine ball—4 sets of 15–25 reps

Knee-Ins with side rotation while holding up a medicine ball—4 sets of 15–25 per side

NOTES:

1. *Limit weight on the hanging leg raises to 5-lbs.*
2. *To perform the Jackknife you will need a swiss ball. Begin by getting into a push-up position with your feet and lower legs resting on a Swiss Ball and your hands on the floor at shoulder width. Pulling in your belly button towards your spine, bring your legs towards your chest as you exhale by bending your knees and lifting your hips into the air. Hold the top position for a second and then straighten your legs again thus bringing them to the starting position.*
3. *The Knee-In with the Medicine Ball is performed by holding a medicine ball at arms length in front of you (a 90-degree angle is created by the arms and the torso). Note that this version of the exercise, does not allow for the hands to hold your torso up as in the usual knee-ins where you place your hands behind and hold to the bench or the floor, thus making the exercise easier. This version will require some practice, but the torso will get strong enough and you will be able to perform it in no time.*



4. *The Knee–Ins with Side Rotations are performed just as the exercise before it with the difference that in every repetition you will twist the torso from one side to the next.*

WORKOUT (B)

Decline Bench Leg Raise Superset:

4 sets of 10 reps regular leg raises

4 sets of 10 reps scissor leg raises

4 sets of 10–second static contraction

Reverse Crunches on Decline Bench (Keep Feet off bench)

—3 sets of 15–25 per side

Rope Crunches with Double Impact Technique—3 sets of 15–25 reps

NOTES:

The rope crunches with double impact technique are performed by achieving the contracted position of the rope crunch, pausing for half a second, letting the torso move up a bit and then achieving full contraction again. So in fact, each rep consists of the positive portion of the movement until you achieve full contraction, a slight negative movement, another contraction (so in reality you just did a partial move), and then the negative portion of the movement that takes you to the starting position. All of this counts as 1 double impact rep.

Conclusion

After 6–8 weeks of the prescribed Advanced Routines you can start creating your own routines using the principles outlined in this booklet. Don't be afraid to experiment! Also, if you are a bodybuilder who has enough thickness on the abs, you can then switch to the figure routines in this section for maintenance purposes and to enhance the quality of the muscle. Conversely, if you are a figure competitor who needs more thickness on the abdominal wall, then a 6–week cycle of a bodybuilding routine would not be a bad idea.

Hope that this clears up a lot of the confusion on abdominal training. Now remember that there can be no abdominal definition without a good diet, which will be discussed later in this booklet.

Next to abs, arm questions seem to be the second most frequently asked ones. In this Q&A, I hope to answer the most commonly asked inquiries on how to get guns for arms.

QUESTION: How can I get big arms quickly?

ANSWER: Getting big arms quickly is a combination of factors such as how well periodized your routines are, how good is your form, how good is your nutrition program, etc. To answer your question, there are a few pointers that I can recommend for fast muscle growth:

1. Concentrate on basic movements. When training the biceps use exercises like E-Z Curls, Preacher Curls, Incline Curls, Lying Cable Curls (use overhead pulley and lie down on a bench), Reverse E-Z Curls (standing and on preacher bench), Hammer Curls and even Biceps Chins, which are performed by using a narrow underhand grip on the chin-up bar. For the Triceps, concentrate on Parallel Bar Dips, Close Grip Bench Presses, Lying E-Z Triceps Extensions (preferably on a decline bench for better effect), Overhead Extensions and Triceps Pushdowns with a bar or rope. These are all great exercises.
2. Follow a periodized routine and change your exercise selection often. In my training experience, the biggest mistake I see most people do is following the same routine all of the time. In all of my publications, I always talk about the importance of training variety in order to continually challenge the body and continue to induce gains. The more advanced you become as a bodybuilder, the more crucial this is. Since I've been at this for 15 years now, I change my routines every time I hit the gym! Just so that I don't feel like I left you hanging, the program below will work well for gaining more arm size:

QUICK ARM GAINS ROUTINE #1:

NOTES:

If you are a naturally skinny person (a hardgainer who always has abs regardless of diet), then perform only once a

week for 5 weeks before moving to routine #2. Otherwise, use a training frequency of twice a week leaving 2 or 3 days of rest in between and perform for 3 weeks before moving to routine #2).

SUPERSET:

Preacher Curls 10 sets of 10 reps
(no rest)
Triceps Dips 10 sets of 10 reps
(1 minute rest)

SUPERSET:

Hammer Curls 2 sets of 12–15 reps
(no rest)
Triceps Pushdowns 2 sets of 12–15 reps (1 minute rest)

QUICK ARM GAINS ROUTINE #2:

NOTES:

If you are a naturally skinny person (a hardgainer who always has abs regardless of diet), then perform only once a week for 5 weeks. Otherwise, use a training frequency of twice a week leaving 2 or 3 days of rest in between and perform for 3 weeks before moving to another routine).

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Biceps Chin-Ups 8 sets of 6–8 reps
(90 second rest)
Close Grip Bench Press 8 sets of 6–8 reps
(90 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Incline Curls followed by Incline Hammers with the same weight once you hit failure 3 sets of 10–12 reps
(90 second rest)
Lying Triceps Extensions 3 sets of 10–12 reps
(90 second rest)

NOTES:

In a Modified Compound Superset, you first perform one exercise, rest the recommended amount of seconds and then perform the second exercise (i.e.: For instance, first do Biceps, then do Triceps). Then rest the prescribed amount of time again and go back to the first exercise. A modified superset for Incline Curls and Lying Triceps Extensions i which you perform 3 sets of each exercise will look like the





following:

Incline Curls 1 set of 10–12 reps

(Rest 90 seconds)

Lying Triceps Extensions 1 set of 10–12 reps

(Rest 90 seconds)

Incline Curls 1 set of 10–12 reps

(Rest 90 seconds)

Lying Triceps Extensions 1 set of 10–12 reps

(Rest 90 seconds)

Incline Curls 1 set of 10–12 reps

(Rest 90 seconds)

Lying Triceps Extensions 1 set of 10–12 reps

(Rest 90 seconds)

End of modified superset

If you look at it, you will be resting 3 minutes plus the amount of time that it takes you to perform the other exercise (so you actually are resting a given muscle between 3 and 4 minutes). Using this technique of pairing exercises in a modified superset fashion not only saves time and keeps the body warm, but it also allows for faster recovery of the nervous system between sets. This allows you to lift heavier weights than if you just stay idle for 3 minutes waiting to recover.

- Remember that nutrition is key for gains. If you have an average metabolism, multiply your bodyweight times 15 to gain muscle size and use a macronutrient ratio of 40% carbs, 40% proteins, and 20% fats. If you are a hardgainer, then multiply your bodyweight by 24 and use a nutrient split of 50% carbs (even split of simple and complex), 25% proteins, and 25% good fats. Also, whether a hardgainer or average gainer, remember to have a post workout protein shake with simple carbs to spike insulin levels and induce anabolism (growth).
- Use perfect form when executing arm exercises. Utilizing less than perfect form will result in the utilization of other muscles in the body, thus taking away from arm stimulation. You need to concentrate and feel the biceps and triceps contract as you work them. Forget about using super heavy weights and jerking the weight. Practice perfect form and think isolation at all times.

QUESTION: How often can I train my arms?

ANSWER: Most people should train their arms twice a week

(with 2 to 3 days of rest in between), except if they are hardgainers, in which case once a week is best. Another exception is that of the extremely advanced bodybuilder who have so much muscle mass and strength that once a week training works best.

QUESTION: How many sets should I do for the arms?

ANSWER: For absolute beginners, 4–6 sets twice a week works best. For intermediate bodybuilders, 10–12 sets twice a week, and for advanced athletes 12–14 sets suffices. As you get more advanced into bodybuilding, you start learning more about your own individual recovery capabilities, but in my experience 10–12 sets seems to be tolerated well by most people. Again, remember that if you are an ectomorphic person with a super fast metabolism, once a week training is a better frequency.

QUESTION: How can I make my arms look wide as mine look big when I flex them but small when you see them from the front?

ANSWER: You need to train the biceps brachialis in order to create the illusion of width. The biceps brachialis is that little golf ball shaped muscle in between the biceps and triceps that is located on the outside part of the arm. By increasing the size of this muscle, not only you increase the size of your arms but also your width. This muscle is trained with hammer curl movements and reverse curl movements as well.

QUESTION: What other body parts can I train my arms with?

ANSWER: There is a multitude of splits that I have used over the years with great success. I will give you a list below of my favorite splits that I still use to this day:

TWICE A WEEK SPLITS

SPLIT #1

Monday/Thursday: Shoulders/Biceps/Triceps

Tuesday/Friday: Thighs/Hamstrings/Abs

Wednesday/Saturday: Chest/Back/Calves

SPLIT #2

Monday/Thursday: Chest/Biceps/Triceps

Tuesday/Friday: Thighs/Hamstrings/Abs

Wednesday/Saturday: Back/Shoulders/Calves

ONCE A WEEK SPLITS

SPLIT#1

Monday: Chest/Biceps

Tuesday: Thighs/Abs

Wednesday: Shoulders/Traps/Calves

Thursday: Back/Triceps

Friday: Hamstrings/Glutes

Saturday: Calves/Abs

SPLIT #2

Monday: Chest/Back

Tuesday: Thighs/Abs

Wednesday: Shoulders/Traps/Calves

Thursday: Biceps/Triceps

Friday: Hamstrings/Glutes

Saturday: Calves/Abs

NOTES:

I always seem to get better results when I train both biceps and triceps in the same workout so while I have split them on separate days many times, 90% of the time I train them together.

Aerobic training such as walking or running on a stationary bike is a good way to accelerate the fat burning process, as long as it is not overdone and as long as it is used only in addition to a good weight training program. It should never be used as a substitute for weight training since it does not permanently increase your metabolism and since it does not have the ability to re-shape your body.

In order for aerobic exercise to be effective, it needs to be performed within the fat burning zone. The fat burning zone is the zone at which you are doing enough work to burn fat. Your pulse (how fast your heart is beating per minute) determines this zone.

The Fat Burning Zone

The fat burning zone formula is the following:
$$\text{Fat burning zone} = 220 - (\text{Your Age}) \times (.75)$$

The result of your formula will give you an approximate value of how fast your heart should be beating per minute. For example, a 20-year-old would need to reach a pulse in the neighborhood of 150 beats per minute in order to be in the fat burning zone. It is important to remember that this is not an absolute figure, this is an approximation. So as long as you are plus or minus 10 beats from the number that the formula provides you with, then you can rest assured that you will be burning fat.

Another important point that needs to be raised is that in order for aerobic exercise to be an effective fat burner it needs to be performed at the appropriate times. There are only two times that aerobic exercise is effective in burning fat. The first time is first thing in the morning on an empty stomach after drinking 16 to 24oz of water in order to prevent dehydration. When performed at this time you burn 300% more body fat than at any other time in the day because your body does not have any glycogen (stored carbohydrates—sugar) in the system to burn. Therefore, it has to go directly into the fat stores in order to get the energy necessary to complete the activity. The other time where aerobic exercise is effective is immediately after the weight training session. The reason for this is that when exercise is not performed first thing in the morning it takes your body approximately anywhere be-

tween 20 to 30 minutes to start burning fat. This is because that it how long it takes the body to deplete its glycogen stores and switch to a fat burning environment. Therefore, it would not be efficient to perform aerobic exercise by itself at any other time during the day because you would need to perform it for 20–30 minutes just to get to the fat burning stage and for an additional 20 minutes just so that you burn fat. This would give a grand total of 50 minutes a day and in my opinion, I don't think that aerobic exercise should be performed for more than 45 minutes at a time since this would put you at a risk of losing muscle mass. Remember that more is not always better and this is especially true when it comes to aerobic exercise.

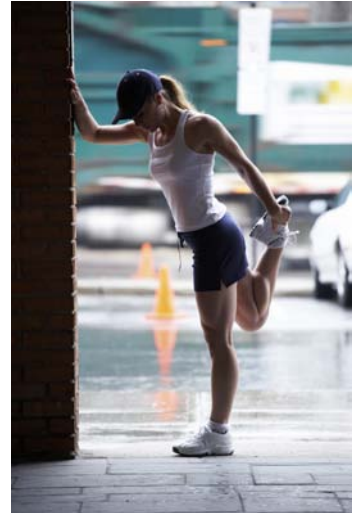
Forms of Aerobic Exercise

Good forms of aerobic exercise are: stationary bike, jogging (this can also be done on a treadmill), fast walking (also can be done on a treadmill), stair stepper, fitness rider, rowing machine, sets of sprinting, or any other form of cardiovascular activity that would raise your heartbeat to the fat burning zone.

Frequency of Aerobic Exercise

As far as frequency is concerned, I feel comfortable recommending 2 to 4 sessions of 20–30 minutes each for male bodybuilders in the off-season. If a contest is approaching, then I would gradually increase the activity to no more than two sessions per day, 7 days a week of 45 minutes each on the worst case. Remember, it is those long hours in the bike that cause bodybuilders to look like POWs in the stage the day of the show so if you are doing 2 sessions of 45 minutes every day make sure that you take plenty of glutamine (15–30 grams per day) in addition to having at least 7 meals per day.

For women, due to their higher concentrations of estrogen in the blood and due to the fact that they have less muscle mass than a male, more frequent aerobic activity is beneficial. Therefore, I recommend an off season plan of 4 sessions of



20–40 minutes and if a contest approaches, I would gradually increase the activity to no more than two sessions per day, 7 days a week of 45 minutes each on the worst case.

Cycling of Aerobic Activity

During the off season, you may choose to cycle your aerobic activity in the following manner in order to prevent your body from adjusting to a specific pattern:

1. Change the type of aerobic activity.
2. Cycle the duration of the activity. For example, a male bodybuilder that performs 3 sessions a week may do 20 minutes of aerobics on weeks 1 & 2, 25 minutes on weeks 3 & 4, and finally 30 minutes on weeks 5 & 6. A female bodybuilder can use the same pattern as well (e.g. 4 sessions performed for 20 minutes on weeks 1 & 2, 30 minutes on weeks 3 & 4, and finally 40 minutes on weeks 5 & 6). This form of cycling will not only keep the workouts interesting but it will also prevent the body from permanently adjusting to a given length of the activity. Remember, that as soon as the body adapts, it will be tougher to reach the fat burning zone and therefore it will be harder to use aerobic exercise as a weapon against fat.

HIT Cardio

High Intensity Cardio or HIT for short, has been proven in many studies to be more effective in burning body fat than traditional, less intense, cardio. Reason for this is because according to studies, HIT elevates your metabolism for hours as opposed to more traditional cardio, which only elevates it during the actual workout. While you mostly burn glycogen (stored carbohydrates) when you do HIT, you end up burning more body fat at the end of the day due to the fact that the metabolism has been revved up longer. In addition, the shorter duration of the activity is more conducive to keeping muscle mass in caloric deprived situations (such as when you are dieting).

There are many ways to implement an HIT workout. For instance, I like to sit on the recumbent bike and warm up for 5 minutes. After my warm up I then execute a hard minute sprint and then rest for 2 minutes going at a slower but challenging pace. I perform 5 sets of the 1-minute/2-minute combo (total of 15 minutes) and then I'm done. However,

there are many other ways you can play around. For instance, you can do 10 sets of 20 seconds hard and 40 seconds slow. If you notice, I like to perform the active rest for twice the amount of time it takes to perform the sprint part. If on a treadmill you can run, and then walk, or alternatively you can play with the elevation as well. Use your imagination and have fun.

HIT vs Traditional Cardio

In my opinion, HIT is better suited for more advanced trainees as it can really cause soreness and even injury if your body is not conditioned enough for it. Therefore, I always recommend people start with more traditional cardio. Once you have spent a couple of months steadily doing your cardio and working out then you can start venturing into HIT.

If you are wondering which version of cardio I practice, I do a hybrid. I typically do my cardio for 30–45 minutes. I enjoy doing cardio traditionally but a tad above the Fat Burning Zone (around 80% as opposed to 75%) as it makes me feel good and allows me to relax and meditate, but I also like the challenge of a tough HIT session. Therefore, if my session calls for 30 minutes, the first 15 minutes I perform at 80% of my heart rate and the remainder I perform implementing HIT. If the session calls for 45 minutes, then 30 I perform traditionally and the rest through HIT. In this manner, I get the best of both worlds.

Final Tips To Enjoy Your Cardio And Get The Most Out Of It

I get my best performance (in terms of calories burned or distance covered) when I have good music on my headset. I just close my eyes and go for it. For me the music that does the trick is Techno. For you, it may be something else, but whatever that is, pick a good CD and put your headset on as performing cardio to your favorite music will increase your performance, and thus the calories burned, in addition to making the session go faster and more enjoyable.

Conclusion

So there you have it. Now whenever you think about aerobic exercise, you no longer have to fear two hour sessions in a machine or losing muscle mass provided you follow the basics of aerobic training.

In the following sections I will start presenting a series of routines that—when performed in the sequence in which I present them—are guaranteed to bring you the results that you are looking for.

Our workout parameters are going to be determined by the phase we are in. There are going to be three phases that we will be repeating over and over again. The first week is an Active Recovery Phase. This phase will only be a 1 week long phase in which we will only train with weights twice a week on a full body routine. After this week, the next three weeks are going to be a high volume phase with short rest periods in between sets. We'll call this phase the Loading Phase. After this phase we will do 4 weeks of higher intensity work (heavier weights) with longer periods of rest in between sets. We will refer to this phase as the Growth Phase. The logic is the following:

The Active Recovery Phase has three main functions:

1. First, according to leading strength expert Tudor Bompa, Ph.D., "you are trying to adapt the anatomy of the body to the upcoming training so that you can create, or produce an injury free environment". Essentially, your tendons and ligaments should be strong enough to support the stressful periods that will follow.
2. Second, this phase is a great time to address any strength imbalance that your body might have. This is the reason why mostly dumbbell work will be used during this phase.
3. Finally, this phase will act as a great time in which the body will re-charge its energy stores and allow for complete physical and mental recuperation.

During the loading phase the body is stressed with an increasing high volume of work that if kept for too long will eventually result in overtraining and injury. During this phase, three things will happen:

1. The growth hormone output goes through the roof due to the short rest interval between sets and the high volume.
2. Hypertrophy (muscle growth) occurs by the body in-

creasing the levels of creatine, water and carbohydrates inside the muscle cell. This phenomenon is called muscle volumization.

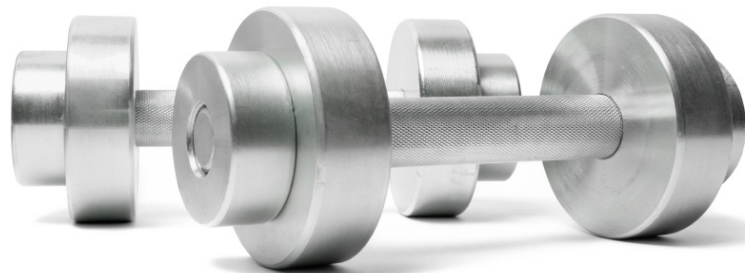
3. The body's recuperation capabilities are upgraded in response to the stress imposed by the increasing volume of work coupled with short rest intervals.

During the Growth Phase the body is not stressed by volume. This time the stimuli for growth is heavy weights. If this phase would be kept for too long eventually the body would cease to stop making strength gains and you would plateau. This is the reason why we always need to go back to a Loading Phase. During this phase the following three things will happen:

1. The testosterone levels go through the roof in response to the longer rest in between sets and the heavier weights.
2. Hypertrophy (muscle growth) occurs by the body increasing the actual diameter of the myofiber (the muscle fiber size) through increased protein synthesis.
3. Since your body's recuperation abilities were built up to the maximum by the previous phase and the volume has gone down dramatically, these extra recuperation capabilities are used to increase strength and build more muscle mass. The reason the body does this is in order to be prepared for another stressful period like the one it just went through. This adaptation mechanism is the one that ensures the survival of the species.

Putting It All Together

Taking all of the information presented above, below are the first four weeks of your periodized program. Notice how the first week is an Active Recovery Phase week and how the



volume after week 1 in increased dramatically.

(Week 1) Active Rest

Monday/Thursday

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET: (Rest 1 minute after the 1st set of exercise 1 and then do the first set of exercise 2. Then rest a minute and go back to exercise 1. Continue this pattern until both exercises are done for the prescribed amount of sets).

Incline Dumbbell Bench Press 2 sets x 10 reps
(1 minute rest)
One Arm Dumbbell Rows 2 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:
Dumbbell Bench Press 2 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)
Pulldown to Front 2 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:
Bent Over Lateral Raises 2 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)
Dumbbell Shoulder Press 2 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:
Incline Dumbbell Curls 3 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)
Overhead Dumbbell Triceps Extensions 3 sets x 10 reps
(1 minute rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:
Dumbbell Lunges 3 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)
Leg Curls 3 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)

SINGLE SETS:
Squats 2 sets x 10 reps (2 minute rest)
Calf Raise 3 sets x 10 reps (2 minute rest)

(Weeks 2, 3, & 4) Loading Phase

NOTES:

If unable to train 6 days a week, then perform Day 1 on Monday, Day 2 on Wednesday and Day 3 on Friday.

Day 1 Shoulders & Arms (Monday/Thursday)

SUPERSET:
Dumbbell Shoulder Press 4 sets x 10–12 reps
(30 second rest)
Bent Over Laterals 4 sets x 10–12 reps (30 second rest)

SUPERSET:
Dumbbell Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Lying Dumbbell Triceps Extensions 4 sets x 10–12 reps
(1 minute rest)

SUPERSET:
Incline Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Overhead Dumbbell Triceps Extensions 4 sets x 10–12 reps
(1 minute rest)

SUPERSET:
Wrist Curls 3 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)
Reverse Wrist Curls 3 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)

On Week 3, add:

SUPERSET:
Bent Over Laterals 3 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Concentration Curls 3 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Triceps Pushdowns 3 sets x 10–12 reps (1 minute rest)

On Week 4, add:

SUPERSET:
Lateral Raises 3 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Hammer Curls 3 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Triceps Dips 3 sets x 10–12 reps (1 minute rest)

Day 2 Legs (Tuesday/Friday)

SUPERSET:
Squats 4 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Lying Leg Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (1 minute rest)

SUPERSET:
Wide Stance Squats 4 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Standing Leg Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (1 minute rest)

SUPERSET:
Adductor Machine 3 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)
Abductor Machine 3 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)

SUPERSET:
Standing Calf Raises 4 sets x 10–12 reps (30 second rest)
Seated Calf Raises 4 sets x 15–20 reps (30 second rest)



On Week 3, add:

SUPERSET:

Leg Extensions 3 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Seated Leg Curls 3 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
One Legged Calf Raises with Dumbbells 3 sets x 15–20 reps (1 minute rest)

On Week 4, add:

SUPERSET:

Leg Press 3 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Dumbbell Stiff Legged Dead lifts 3 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Calf Press (on Leg Press Machine) 3 sets x 15–20 reps (1 minute rest)

Day 3 Chest & Back (Wednesday/Saturday)

SUPERSET:

Incline Dumbbell Bench Press 4 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Wide Grip Pull-up to Front (Palms facing away from you) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (1 minute rest)

SUPERSET:

Chest Dips 4 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Close Grip Pull-up (Palms facing you) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (1 minute rest)

SUPERSET:

Dumbbell Shrugs 3 sets x 10–12 reps
External Rotations (for strengthening of the rotator cuff) 3 sets x 15–20 reps

SUPERSET:

Leg Raises 4 sets x 25 reps (30 second rest)
Crunches 4 sets x 25 reps (30 second rest)

On Week 3, add:

SUPERSET:

One Arm Rows 3 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Dumbbell Bench Press 3 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Knee-Ins 3 sets x 25 reps (1 minute rest)

On Week 4, add:

SUPERSET:

Stiff Arm Pulldowns 3 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Incline Flyes 3 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Side Crunches 3 sets x 25 reps (1 minute rest)

To Fail or Not to Fail

Regarding the issue of reaching muscle failure or not in all sets, the best advice that I can give you is to perform each set to the point where it would be impossible for you to perform an additional repetition on your own with good form. This philosophy has always kept me injury free and allowed me to train by myself for years without any accidents.

Nutrition

Critical to a successful mass building campaign is nutrition. While I could write a whole article (or even a book) solely dedicated to this subject, I'll keep it simple. Eat 5–7 meals a day (It could be 3 meals and two protein shakes, or 4 meals and 3 protein shakes depending on your nutrient requirements). In order to grow, eat a total of 1 gram of protein (tuna, salmon, turkey, lean red meats, chicken, whey protein, or egg protein) per pound of bodyweight divided equally over 5–7 meals spaced out 2–3 hours apart. If you have a high metabolism eat 2 grams of carbs per pound of bodyweight while if you have a slow metabolism just do 1 gram per pound of bodyweight. Have complex carbs throughout the day such as potatoes, brown rice, oatmeal, veggies and a combination of complex and simple carbs (fruits) for your post workout meal. As far as fats, keep them as low as possible by choosing low fat protein sources. However, supplement your diet with ten grams of fish oils (4 caps with meal#1, 3 with meal#3 and 3 with meal#5) and also 1 Tablespoon of Flaxseed Oil in two of your protein shakes.

Cardio

During the mass building phase it is still important to continue to do cardio. Twenty to thirty minutes right after the workout (or first thing in the morning on an empty stomach if you wish to train twice a day) four times a week will suffice. The reasons for this are the following. Cardiovascular exercise:

- Improves cardiovascular endurance; critical when performing supersets.
- Helps remove waste created by the weight training

session and creates new capillaries that are used to provide more nutrients to the muscle, something that helps rebuild the muscles quicker as well as recover faster in between sets and workouts.

- Finally, this type of exercise prompts the body to produce fat burning enzymes; something that helps us keep the fat off while we gain muscle mass.

Conclusion

Well, there you have it. Follow this routine for this month and by the time that you are done, I guarantee that you will have enhanced size and definition. Next month I will show you how to put a great Growth Phase together that will make your strength (along with your size) skyrocket by taking advantage of your enhanced recuperation capabilities and nervous system energy. Until then, take care and train hard!



In the previous section, we discussed the importance of having Active Recovery Phases coupled with Loading and Growth Phases. In this section, our focus will be on how to properly implement a Growth Phase.

Like we previously mentioned, during the Growth Phase the body is not stressed by volume. This time the stimuli for growth is heavy weights. During this phase the following three things will happen:

1. The testosterone levels go through the roof in response to the longer rest in between sets and the heavier weights.
2. Hypertrophy (muscle growth) occurs by the body increasing the actual diameter of the myofiber (the muscle fiber size) through increased protein synthesis.
3. Since your body's recuperation abilities were built up to the maximum by the previous phase and the volume has gone down dramatically, these extra recuperation capabilities are used to increase strength and build more muscle mass. The reason the body does this is in order to be prepared for another stressful period like the one it just went through. This adaptation mechanism is the one that ensures the survival of the species.

Modified Compound Supersets

Before we present the routine, we first need to discuss what a modified compound superset is as this is the main technique that is crucial to the success of this program.

In a modified compound set, you pair exercises usually for opposing muscle groups or for opposing muscle movements (e.g. Push vs. Pull). First you perform one exercise, rest the recommended amount of seconds and then perform the second exercise (i.e.: For instance, first do Biceps, then do Triceps). Then rest the prescribed amount of time again and go back to the first exercise. A modified superset for Dumbbell Curls and Triceps Pushdowns in which you perform 4 sets of 10, 8, 6, 6 repetitions for each exercise will look like the following:

Dumbbell Curls 1 set of 10 reps

Rest 90 seconds

Triceps Pushdowns 1 set of 10 reps

Rest 90 seconds

Dumbbell Curls 1 set of 8 reps

Rest 90 seconds

Triceps Pushdowns 1 set of 8 reps

Rest 90 seconds

Dumbbell Curls 1 set of 6 reps

Rest 90 seconds

Triceps Pushdowns 1 set of 6 reps

Rest 90 seconds

Dumbbell Curls 1 set of 6 reps

Rest 90 seconds

Triceps Pushdowns 1 set of 6 reps

End of modified superset

If you look at it, you will be resting 3 minutes plus the amount of time that it takes you to perform the other exercise (so you actually are resting a given muscle between 3.5 and 4 minutes). Using this technique of pairing exercises in a modified superset fashion not only saves time and keeps the body warm, but it also allows for faster recovery of the nervous system between sets. This allows you to lift heavier weights than if you just stay idle for 3 minutes waiting to recover. An additional benefit of this technique is that it saves time plus it follows the "limit rest to a maximum of 90-seconds in between sets" rule.

Putting It All Together

Here is the recommended Growth Phase routine. For this routine, the following applies:

- If unable to train 6 days a week, then perform Day 1 on Monday, Day 2 on Wednesday and Day 3 on Friday.
- When 4 sets of 10, 8, 6, 6 reps is prescribed, choose a weight where you can perform 10 repetitions. Then on the second set for that exercise increase the weight and perform 8. Finally increase the weight once again for the third exercise and perform 6 repetitions. On the 4th set use the same weight used for the third exercise.

(Weeks 1, 2, & 3) Growth Phase

Day 1 Shoulders & Arms (Monday/Thursday)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSETS:

Military Press 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)
Rear Delt Rows (Performed on T-Bar Row Machine, elbows and upper arms away from torso in order to primarily stimulate the Rear Delts and not the Lats) 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSETS:

E-Z Curls 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)
Lying E-Z Triceps Extensions 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSETS:

E-Z Preacher Curls 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)
Triceps Dips 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)
Reverse Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)

Day 2 Legs (Tuesday/Friday)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSETS:

Squats 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)
Lying Leg Curls 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSETS:

Wide Stance Squats 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)
Standing Leg Curls 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Adductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)
Abductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)

SUPERSET:

Calf Press 4 sets x 8–10 reps (No rest)
Seated Calf Raises 4 sets x 15–20 reps (30 second rest)

Day 3 Chest & Back (Wednesday/Saturday)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSETS:

Incline Barbell Bench Press 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)
Wide Grip Pull-up (Palms facing away from you) 4

sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSETS:

Chest Dips 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)
Close Grip Pull-up (Palms facing you) 4 sets x 10, 8, 6, 6 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Dumbbell Shrugs 2 sets x 10–12 reps (No Rest)
External Rotations (for strengthening of the rotator cuff) 2 sets x 15–20 reps (No Rest)

SUPERSET:

Hanging Leg Raises 4 sets x 25 reps (No Rest)
Crunches (performed on Decline Bench) 4 sets x 25 reps (30 second rest)

(Week 4) Active Rest

Monday/Thursday

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET: (Rest 1 minute after the 1st set of exercise 1 and then do the first set of exercise 2. Then rest a minute and go back to exercise 1. Continue this pattern until both exercises are done for the prescribed amount of sets).

Incline Dumbbell Bench Press 2 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)

One Arm Dumbbell Rows 2 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Dumbbell Bench Press 2 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)
Pulldown to Front 2 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Bent Over Lateral Raises 2 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)
Dumbbell Shoulder Press 2 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Incline Dumbbell Curls 3 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)
Overhead Dumbbell Triceps Extensions 3 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Dumbbell Lunges 3 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)
Leg Curls 3 sets x 10 reps (1 minute rest)



SINGLE SETS:

Squats 2 sets x 10 reps (2 minute rest)

Calf Raise 3 sets x 10 reps (2 minute rest)

Training Routine Notes

Notice on the routine above that some exercises for body parts like forearms, traps, rotator cuff, and inner/outer thighs are still performed for high repetitions in superset fashion (one after the other with no rest in between). The reason for this is because these are auxiliary muscle groups that get enough indirect stimulation from the rest of the basic exercises. Therefore they do not need to adhere to the same cycling principles that the other muscle groups require. In addition, notice that while we do vary the volume of exercise for Abs and Calves, we still adhere to using supersets and pretty high repetitions. This is because these type of muscles are endurance type muscles and therefore respond better to heavy weights performed for a relatively high number of repetitions. This is true of the abdominals as well. As soon as you start being able to do more repetitions for the abdominal muscles than what is recommended in the routine, feel free to start adding resistance to the movement. This will bring a quality to the muscle that is not seen on bodybuilders that do not train their abs with weights. Just be cautious with how much weight you initially add as adding too much weight too soon could trigger either a lower back injury or a hernia.

Nutrition

Just as we mentioned on the previous section, nutrition is a critical component to a successful mass building campaign. Since our training volume has gone down, we won't be burning as many calories as we were burning before. For this reason, most endomorphs would benefit from lowering their carbohydrate calories just a bit in order to avoid gaining fat weight. So for endomorphs (people with a slow metabolism) I would recommend a total of 1 gram of protein (tuna, salmon, turkey, lean red meats, chicken, whey protein, or egg protein) per pound of bodyweight divided equally over 5–7 meals spaced out 2–3 hours apart with 0.8 grams of complex carbs per pound of bodyweight. Also reduce the amount of Flaxseed Oil from two Tablespoons to just 1 early in the morning (if using Fish Oils, then reduce the recommended amount from last month to two capsules taken three times a day with Meals #1, #3, and #5). If you have a high metabolism, still adhere to 2 grams of carbs and 1 gram of protein per pound

of bodyweight with the 2 Tablespoons of Flaxseed Oil (or ten capsules of Fish Oils). Again, remember that complex carbs such as potatoes, brown rice, oatmeal, veggies are to be consumed throughout the day and a combination of complex and simple carbs (fruits) are consumed for your post workout meal. Protein is consumed in all meals.

Cardio

Still continue to do cardio for twenty to thirty minutes right after the workout (or first thing in the morning on an empty stomach if you wish to train twice a day) for four times a week. Remember that when used properly, cardiovascular exercise actually aids in the recovery process as well as helping produce fat burning enzymes; something that helps us keep the fat off while we gain muscle mass.

Conclusion

So now you know how to set up a successful Growth Phase. You will be amazed at how strong you will get this month. On the following month, I will share with you how to determine which are the best exercises to choose from when you start creating your own Loading and Growth Phases. Until then, take care and train hard!

Supplements are just additions to an already good nutrition and training program. Nutrition and training are the most important components of a bodybuilding program, with rest and recovery next to them. Once all of those aspects of your program are maximized, then you can start thinking of adding supplements to your program. Please understand that supplements do not make up for improper training, or lack thereof, or a low quality diet. Supplements only work when your diet and your training program are optimal.

When it comes to gaining muscle, most people think that supplements are the most important part of the equation. However, this could not be any further from the truth.

Why use supplements?

Nutritional supplements are good because they prevent us from getting any nutritional deficiencies. The increased activity levels from your new exercise program will make your body have greater demands for vitamins and minerals, which will increase the probability of you suffering a deficiency without supplementation. Even a slight nutrient deficiency can sabotage muscle growth.

Can't we get all the nutrients we need from food alone? We cannot rely solely on food nowadays to provide us with all the vitamins and minerals that our body needs because the processing of foods before they get to the supermarket, cooking, air, and even light have already robbed your foods of most of the vitamins that they have to offer. If you are deficient in one or more nutrients your body may not be able to build muscle and burn fat properly.

Not all supplements are created equal though. Some your body always needs, others are more dependent upon what your goals are and what your budget looks like. Below you will learn what the different categories of supplements are and which ones you need to use at all times:

Basic Supplements

These are the supplements that you always need year round in order to gain muscle. If you have a limited budget, these are the only ones that you need to concern yourself with.

MULTIPLE VITAMIN AND MINERAL FORMULA

Essential to insure that your body will operate at maximum efficiency. Why? Because on a very simplistic level, without vitamins and minerals it is impossible to convert the food that we eat into hormones, tissues and energy.

Vitamins are organic compounds (produced by both animals and vegetables) whose function is to enhance the actions of proteins that cause chemical reactions such as muscle building, fat burning and energy production. There are two types of vitamins:

1. Fat soluble vitamins—they get stored in fat and therefore if taken in excessive amounts will become toxic such as A, D, E, and K.
2. Water soluble vitamins—they are not stored in the body such as the B-Complex and Vitamin C.

Minerals are inorganic compounds (not produced by either animals or vegetables). Their main function is to assure that your brain receives the correct signals from the body, balance of fluids, muscular contractions and energy production as well as for the building of muscle and bones. There are two types of minerals:

1. Bulk minerals, which are called this way as the body needs them in great quantities in the order of grams such as Calcium, magnesium, potassium, sodium and phosphorus.





2. Trace minerals, which are needed by the body in minute amounts, usually in the order of micrograms such as chromium, copper, cobalt, silicon, selenium, iron and zinc.

Where Can You Get Vitamins and Minerals From?

I like simplicity and because of that I tend to get most of my vitamins and minerals from multiple vitamin/mineral packs. The ones I personally use are the Prolab's Training Paks, which are loaded with potent levels of essential nutrients and bioactive compounds.

You have to be very careful with what type of vitamin and mineral formulas you choose as some don't always contain what the labels claim (thanks to unscrupulous manufacturers) and some come from such poor sources that they are not absorbed very well by the body. Other reputable companies on the market that I have used include Twinlabs, EAS, Weider, Labrada, Schiff, Optimum Nutrition, Advanced Nutrition, Higher Power Nutrition, and Champion Nutrition.

PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS

Because of hectic schedules it is impossible to eat the six perfectly balanced meals that are required to get in shape a day. Therefore, these supplements can be used as "fast food". They are easy to prepare (if it is a protein bar then no preparation is required) and most of the formulas that are available on the market today pay close attention to taste. Having said that, there are many categories of protein supplements, so we will cover each category and discuss the correct way to use them. However, before we cover the different categories of protein supplements, let's talk about the different sources of protein found in these supplements.

Protein Sources

There are many sources of protein from which protein powders or bars are made of. Protein quality is measured by Biological Value (BV). BV is a value that measures how well the body can absorb and utilize a protein. The higher the Biological Value of the protein you use, the more nitrogen your body can absorb, use, and retain. As a result, proteins with the highest BV promote the most lean muscle gains. Whey protein has the highest BV value, rating as a 104. Egg protein is only second to whey rating as a 100 with milk

proteins being a close third rating as 91. Beef rates as an 80 with soy proteins a distant 74. Bean proteins, due to the fact that are plant-based proteins, only rate a 49.

Now that we have discussed BV values, let's discuss each protein source in more detail.

Whey Proteins (Whey Concentrate/Whey Isolate): I feel that whey protein is a great protein source for the following reasons shown in a growing number of studies:

- a. It improves sports performance because it reduces stress and lowers cortisol levels (hormone that destroys muscle).
- b. Improved immunity by increasing glutathione (GSH), which is a water soluble antioxidant found in the body.
- c. Improved liver function in some forms of hepatitis.
- d. Reduces blood pressure.
- e. Can help fight HIV.
- f. Helps reduce overtraining (which is linked also to low levels of GSH).

In addition to the above, we need to mention that whey proteins are highly digestible and have a better amino acid profile even than egg whites. So in other words, whey protein has the highest biological value (value that measures how well the body can absorb and utilize a protein) of any protein.

Having said this, whey is not the steroid-like substance that many advertisers would like you to believe, but based on the research I've looked at and on my own use of the product, I feel it is a valuable addition to one's diet for the reasons outlined above.

Also, you need to understand that all whey is not created equal. The whey that will give you the benefits described above has to be micro-filtered. Otherwise, it is just the garbage left after pasteurizing milk. Micro-filtration has to be done at very low temperatures in order to allow for the production of high protein contents with no undenatured protein, minimum fat, minimum cholesterol and minimum lactose. In addition, there are whey isolates and whey concentrates. Whey isolates are sub-fractions of whey that are absorbed much more rapidly into the system. This is a good thing for post workout nutrition as at this time the body is in dire need of amino acids. However, whey isolate makes

a poor choice for during the day supplementation as if the body does not have a need for all of the amino acids that are released into the bloodstream, then it will use them for energy production as opposed to muscle building. Also, it is important to mention that whey isolate does not have many of the health enhancing properties that are described above, as the expensive process required to produce whey isolate destroys many of the health/immune system enhancing sub-fractions such as lactoferrin, beta-lactoglobulin, and immunoglobulins. Therefore, for during the day use, a product consisting mainly of whey concentrate is your best bet while for after the workout, a whey isolate product would be a better choice.

Egg Protein: Egg protein is a super bioavailable protein second only to whey, as previously discussed. It is a slower released protein than whey, which makes it perfect for throughout the day use. One thing that I like to do is mix some egg and whey protein for the most bio-available protein shake in the planet!

Milk Proteins (Calcium Caseinate/Micellar Casein): Milk proteins, just like egg proteins, are a highly bioavailable protein source (slightly less BV than egg) that is slowly released into the blood stream. Calcium Caseinate is the regular protein that is found in regular milk and other dairy products. Miscellar casein is the natural, undenatured form of casein found in milk. It is separated from milk by means of ultrafiltration, without the use of chemicals, which increases the amount of bioactive milk peptides that support immune function as well as enhance muscle growth. A property of micellar casein is that it may have the ability to provide a steady release of amino acids into the blood stream, which makes it an excellent choice for a long lasting anti-catabolic (muscle protecting) protein.

Beef Proteins: Beef proteins are slow released proteins that rate an 80 on the BV scale. While I don't know of any protein supplement in powder on the market that is made from beef proteins, there are beef liver tablets out there that do provide the benefits from beef proteins. Beef proteins are abundant in blood building iron and also on B-vitamins, all factors that contribute to better nutrient utilization and energy production.

Soy Proteins: Soy has been shown to exhibit positive health benefits for both men and women. Studies have shown they

may reduce the risk of hormone-dependent cancers (breast, prostate, etc), and other cancers as well. Soy's primary health benefits include reducing high cholesterol and easing the symptoms of menopause (due to the fact that it contains estrogen like substances called phytoestrogens). Soy has also been shown to help with osteoporosis by building up bone mass. Because of this, I like to recommend 1 serving of soy protein per day for women but only for its health benefits. However, in the muscle building department, I don't feel that soy is very useful, especially for men. First of all, its BV value is a distant 49, and second of all, since it has estrogen like substances, it could potentially reduce the utilization of testosterone through the binding of phytoestrogens to the testosterone receptors.

Now that we have covered the main proteins present in protein supplements, let's discuss the different types of protein supplements on the market.

- a. **Weight Gainers:** Weight gainers are protein shakes whose protein source consists mainly of whey proteins (mostly concentrate with some isolate as well). Some also include other proteins such as milk proteins and/or egg. These products are characterized by their extremely high carbohydrate content; typically in the form of maltodextrin (a high glycemic complex carb) and fructose (simple sugar originating from fruits). Weight gainers were very popular back in the 90s but their popularity has died mainly because most people do not have the fast metabolism of a hardgainer; so as a result, a high carbohydrate diet applied on a person with over 10% body fat typically leads mostly to fat gains instead of muscle mass gains. For hardgainers however, and bodybuilders who are below 10% body fat, these products be very useful for getting in the amount of quality calories required to gain quality muscle. They are best when used for the mid-morning, mid-afternoon and post workout meals as the carbohydrate content is of a fast released nature. They can be mixed with fruit juice or skim milk, and in order to increase the calorie content the use of flaxseed oil and fruits is invaluable. My favorite weight gainers on the market are Prolab's N-Large II (the most popular one on the market), Beverly International's Mass Maker, Twinlab's Gainers Fuel 2500, Champion Nutrition's Heavyweight Gainer 900, Weider's Mega Mass 4000, Clark Bartram's X-Treme Size, and EAS Mass Factor. This is not a comprehensive



list by any means, but rather a list of the products that I know are good. The fact that a product is not on this list does not mean that it is not a good one.

- b. **Meal Replacement Powders (MRPs):** These powders are lower in calories due to the fact that they have way less carbohydrates than weight gainers. They were created after the realization that most of the population does not have a weight gain problem and therefore the weight gainers on the market were of little use to them.

Protein-wise, most are composed of whey proteins but there are many new formulas now on the market that consist of a protein blend of whey and milk proteins. Typically, the carbohydrate component used to be maltodextrin, yielding around 25–27 grams of carbohydrate per serving, but the newer generation formulas consist of slower released carbohydrates like brown rice and oats in order to make the product lower glycemic in nature. Also, essential fatty acids have been added as well as a vitamin and mineral profile.

While these products are too low in calories for most Hardgainers, they can use these as long as they add other ingredients such as fruit, skim milk and essential fats in order to increase the caloric base. My favorite MRP on the market by far is Prolab's Lean Mass Complex, as it is instantized (you can mix with liquid and a spoon), and has a unique cinnamon oatmeal flavor. In addition it contains essential fats, a slow released carbohydrate matrix and a protein blend of whey proteins and miscellar casein. Other good products I like are Beverly International's Ultra Size, Champion Nutrition's Ultramet (the vanilla flavor is excellent), EAS' Myoplex (though it is very hard to mix), and Labrada's Lean Body. Any of these products can be used throughout the day in between meals or after the workout.

- c. **Protein Powders:** Protein powders are just powders that consist mainly of protein (typically whey protein is what is sold these days but you can also find blends). Typically, they contain no more than 5 grams of carbohydrates and 20–25 grams of protein (per scoop). Calorie wise they consist of anywhere from 100–125 calories. Good sources of these powders are Prolab's Pure Whey (available now also in Cinnamon Oatmeal flavor), EAS MyoPro (chocolate being my favorite flavor), Next Nutrition De-

signer Protein, and IronTek's Essential Protein. The powders just mentioned are mainly whey protein concentrate. The best isolates in the market are Natures Best Zero Carb Isopure and Prolab's Isolate. My favorite blends in the market of whey proteins with slower released proteins are Beverly International's Muscle Provider (whey and egg blend) and Prolab's Protein Component (also available in my favorite Cinnamon Oatmeal flavor).

I love protein supplements because of the many uses that they have. For instance in the morning I like to have oatmeal with Cinnamon flavored protein powder. One can also use them to add more protein to either a meal replacement powder or a weight gainer. Alternatively, one can also use them for creating a homemade weight gain formula.

So now, which protein product should you choose? If trying to gain weight then a weight gainer for sure. If you are looking to have a full meal consisting of carbs, proteins and some fats then an MRP is your best bet. If on a budget then the best way to go is to buy a 5-lb tub of protein powder.

- d. **Protein Bars:** These are bars made out of any of the protein sources listed above. The carbohydrate mix is usually a combination of glycerin (which is not really a carbohydrate but a sugar alcohol) and sugars. They are low in calories compared to a weight gain shake and typically contain less than desirable fats. If trying to lose fat, then limit their use to once per day at the most. If doing a competition then I would not touch them. The ones I like most in the market today are Premiere 1 Odyssey Bars, Labrada's Lean Body Bars, Met Rx Protein Plus Food Bars, Worldwide Pure Protein Bars, and EAS' Myoplex Deluxe Bars.
- e. **Beef Liver Tablets:** These tablets are a great source of beef liver and bodybuilders have been using them for decades in order to obtain the values offered by beef proteins. The key thing for liver tablets to be useful is that they need to be manufactured with the highest grade of beef liver and they also need to be purified from the fat, cholesterol and other impurities that are contained in the liver. When it comes to beef liver tablets the best ones in the market, in my opinion, are Beverly International's Ultra 40 because they contain the highest grade of beef liver and have been purified and processed to

contain forty–five times the nutritional amount of whole beef liver. The way to use them is to add 3–4 tablets per meal. Each tablet adds an additional 2 grams of protein from beef liver to your meals.

ESSENTIAL FATTY ACIDS

Essential fatty acids, Alpha Linoleic Acid (Omega–3s) and Linoleic Acid (Omega–6s), are fats that need to be consumed through one's diet as the body cannot manufacture them. They are most important as they are involved in several key body functions such as energy production, fat burning, brain and nerve tissue development, mood regulation, insulin metabolism, hemoglobin production, etc. In addition, these fats have some interesting properties such as anti–inflammatory properties, anti–lipogenic properties (prevention of extra calories being stored as fat), reduction in allergies, and immune system strengthening.

So having said that, where can one find EFA's? Salmon and flax seeds are high on the Omega–3s. If you do not consume any of these items, then either flax seed oil, flax seed oil capsules or fish oil capsules would be a good idea to add to your supplements program. Omega–6 fats typically do not need to be supplemented as they are easily found in poultry, eggs and whole–grain breads. Typically, one's diet is abundant on the Omega–6 but lacking on the Omega–3's.

My favorite EFA product is manufactured by a company called Pride Nutrition which has a blend called Premium EFA. In addition to Essential Fats, this blend also has CLA (conjugated linoleic acid) and GLA (gamma linolenic acid). These two fatty acids are showing very promising studies for weight loss and joint lubrication. What I like the most about this product is the fact that they added the Lipase enzyme, which helps with the absorption and digestion of the fats. This product is the only one I have ever tried where you do not end up burping the oil a few minutes after you take the capsules.

Other products I like are Serrano Labs Alpha Omega–3s, which is also an excellent product. For CLA only capsules I like Prolab's Enhanced CLA which also has some flaxseed oil in order to provide some Omega 3's.

VITAMIN C

Vitamin C is a water–soluble vitamin that improves your immune system and helps you recover faster from your workouts by suppressing the amount of cortisol (hormone that kills muscle and aids in the accumulation of fat) that is released by your body during a workout. This is the only Vitamin that I recommend to be taken in mega doses quantities. Remember that since it is a water–soluble vitamin, it will not get stored by the body. Research shows that if taken an hour before a workout (1000mg dose) it significantly reduces muscle soreness and speeds recovery after a workout.

I recommend a total of 3000 mg per day of Vitamin C. If your multiple vitamin pack already has 1000 mg, and you take this in the morning, then all you need is an extra 1000 mg at lunch and 1000 mg at dinner.

A good Vitamin C that comes in 1000 mg capsules at a super awesome price (250 caps at \$10.49) are produced by Higher Power Nutrition.

CHROMIUM PICOLINATE

Chromium Picolinate is a mineral that may enhance the effects of insulin, the hormone that pushes amino acids (protein) and carbohydrates into the muscle cell. As we have previously discussed, insulin is one of the most anabolic hormones in the body; it determines if the food that you eat is going to be used for muscle production, energy production or fat production. When insulin is secreted in moderate levels, it aids in muscle and energy production. In excessive levels it only promotes fat storage. Chromium Picolinate may upgrade insulin's capability to produce muscle and energy by making the cells in the body more prone towards accepting this hormone (in other words, enhancing insulin sensitivity). In doing so, it may help you to gain muscle and lose fat faster as insulin will now be able to deliver the desired nutrients to the muscle cell. Chromium may also keep blood sugar levels stable, thereby preventing insulin levels from going high enough to begin promoting fat storage. Again, chromium only works if we follow a proper diet. Also, while it is not the magic bullet that it was claimed to be for building muscle back in the early 90's I still feel that it is useful for ensuring that our insulin sensitivity is at its peak



Sources:

Again, I like Higher Power's Chromium Picolinate due to the quality and awesome price.

Quantity:

200 mcg with the post workout meal and with breakfast on days off.

Supplement Recommendations Summary

Essential To Take:

- MultiVitamin/Mineral Complex taken with breakfast.
- Essential Oils, at least 14 grams per every 100lbs of bodyweight.
- 1 gram Vitamin C taken with breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- Weight Gain, Whey Protein Powder or Meal Replacement Powder for mixing with skim milk or water in order to make protein shakes. (Needs vary depending on diet).

That's it for Part 1. In Part 2 we will take a look at Performance Enhancing Supplements and Testosterone Boosting Supplements.

Supplements are just additions to an already good nutrition and training program. Nutrition and training are the most important components of a bodybuilding program, with rest and recovery next to them. Once all of those aspects of your program are maximized, then you can start thinking of adding supplements to your program. Please understand that supplements do not make up for improper training, or lack thereof, or a low quality diet. Supplements only work when your diet and your training program are optimal.

In this installment, we will cover supplements that once can add to the basic ones described in Part 1. The addition of this supplements will depend on what your goals are, how serious you are about your training, and what your supplements budget looks like.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCING SUPPLEMENTS (Highly Recommended For The Serious Trainer)

These are the kind of supplements that you take if you are really serious about your training, and if you can afford them.

CREATINE MONOHYDRATE

Creatine is a metabolite produced in the body composed of three amino acids: L-methionine, L-arginine and L-glycine. Approximately 95% of the concentration is found in skeletal muscle in two forms: creatine phosphate and free chemically unbound creatine. The remaining 5% of the creatine stored in the body is found in the brain, heart and testes. The body of a sedentary person metabolizes and average of 2 grams of creatine a day. Bodybuilders due to their high intensity training metabolize higher amounts than that.

Creatine is generally found in red meats, and to some extent, in certain types of fish. However it would be hard to get the amount of creatine necessary for performance enhancement as even though 2.2lbs of red meat or tuna contain approximately between 4 to 5 grams of creatine, the compound is destroyed with cooking. Therefore, the best way to get creatine is by taking it in powder form.

How does it work?

While there is still much debate as to how creatine exerts its performance enhancing benefits, it is commonly accepted by now that most of its effects are due to two mechanisms:

1. Intra-cellular water retention.
2. Creatine's ability to enhance ATP production.

Basically, once the creatine is stored inside the muscle cell, it attracts the water surrounding such cell thereby enlarging it. This super hydrated state of the cell causes nice side effects such as the increase of strength and it also gives the appearance of a fuller muscle. Some studies suggest that a super hydrated cell may also trigger protein synthesis and minimize catabolism.

In addition, creatine provides for faster recovery in between sets and increased tolerance to high volume work. The way it does this is by enhancing the body's ability to produce Adenosine Triphosphate (ATP). ATP is the compound that your muscles use for fuel whenever they contract. ATP provides its energy by releasing one of its phosphate molecules (it has three phosphate molecules). After the release of such molecule, ATP becomes ADP (Adenosine Diphosphate) as it now only has two molecules. The problem is that after 10 seconds of contraction time the ATP fuel extinguishes and in order to support further muscle contraction glycolysis (glycogen burning) has to kick in. That is fine and well except for the fact that as a byproduct of that mechanism lactic acid is produced. Lactic acid is what causes the burning sensation at the end of the set. When too much lactic acid is produced, your muscle contractions stop, thereby forcing you to stop the set. However, by taking creatine, you can extend the 10 second limit of your ATP system as creatine provides ADP the phosphate molecule that it is missing (recall that creatine is stored in the muscle as creatine phosphate). By upgrading your body's ability of regenerating ATP, you can exercise longer and harder as you will minimize your lactic acid production and you will be able to take your sets to the next level and reduce fatigue levels. More volume, strength and recovery equals more muscle (assuming nutrition and rest are dialed in).

Creatine also seems to also allow for better pumps during a workout. This may be due to the fact that it possibly improves glycogen synthesis. In addition, studies have shown that creatine helps lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels. The mechanisms by which it exerts such benefits remain



unknown.

In my own experimentation with creatine I have found that provided your training, rest and nutrition are in order, you will get results out of it.

How to Use It

If you read the bottle, most companies recommend a loading phase of 20 grams for 5 days and 5–10 grams thereafter. While that is the commonly accepted way to use it, in my own experimentation I have found no benefit to loading. I have even gone as far as loading for 7 days with 40 grams a day and found no difference. There is only so much creatine that the body can store. Recall that the creatine is stored every time that you take it. So by taking it every day before and after the workout, eventually, you will reach the upper levels that provide the performance enhancement. After you reach that level, you could get away with just taking it on your weight training days as it takes two weeks of no use for the body's creatine levels to get back to normal.

Another point to talk about is the issue of cycling creatine. If creatine would be a supplement that loses its effectiveness as time goes by then I would recommend cycling. For example, it was beneficial to cycle fat burning supplements containing caffeine and ephedrine as the body's receptors began to attenuate after 2 to 3 weeks of continual use. Once the body would get used to them, you needed to either increase the dosage or stop their use so that the body begins to respond once again. However, that is not the way that creatine works. Basically, creatine gets stored into your muscles and you get the effects mentioned above, period. It is really straightforward. As far as the initial weight gain that you may experience when you start taking it, whether you cycle it or not, you will get the same amount of initial weight gain as that extra weight is determined by the amount of intracellular fluid retention that your muscle cells can store (something that remains a static figure). The reason I say "the weight gain that you may experience" is because if once you start taking it you concurrently increase the volume of your workouts and remain at the same caloric intake level you may lose fat as you gain your added muscle volume and because of that the scale might not register any weight gain (this is what happened to my training partner). However, the lack of "registered" initial weight gain by the scale does not mean that you are a "non-responder". To gauge creatine's

efficacy on you judge it by the muscle appearance effects and the performance enhancement in the gym.

Side Effects

The only adverse side effect that I have experienced in my over two years of continual use is the gastric upset at the beginning of use. After a couple of weeks or so my system adapted to absorbing the powder. Other than that, I have not observed any other side effects. Keep in mind however that the liver and kidneys have to process this compound. Therefore, I would not recommend it for someone with kidney problems or liver problems. Also, even if you are completely healthy ensure more than adequate hydration levels (body-weight x 0.66 = total ounces of water to drink per day) and if you drink coffee, add an extra 16 ounces of water for every cup that you drink over the day.

A side effect that I have read happened, but I am unable to quantify, is the fact that your body's production of creatine shuts down. However, after cessation of use, according to all of the literature your body's production kicks in again. No adverse effects have been documented due to the creatine shutdown created by the body.

Good Brands

Good brands of creatine that I have used are Prolab, EAS, Champion Nutrition, Labrada, Beverly International, BSN, and Met-Rx.

GLUTAMINE

L-Glutamine the most abundant amino acid in muscle cells. It is released from the muscle during times of stress (such as hard weight training workouts) and dieting. This amino acid not only has been shown to be a great anti-catabolic agent (protects the muscle from the catabolic activities of the hormone cortisol), to be a contributor to muscle cell volume, and to have immune system enhancing properties but also to help in the following ways:

- Regulation of protein synthesis (this is one of the ways in which steroids exert their muscle building effects).
- Accelerating glycogen synthesis after a workout.
- Sparing the use of the glycogen stored in the muscle cell (recall that the glycogen stored in the muscle cell

is what gives the cell the healthy volume and firmness that you seek).

- Faster recuperation from weight training workouts.

How to Use It

Due to its anti-catabolic properties and the fact that it accelerates glycogen synthesis after a workout, glutamine is best taken 20–30 minutes after a workout with a protein shake. On days that you don't workout, just take it with your last protein shake of the day. While there is much debate amongst experts as far as dosage is concerned, I always like to remain on the conservative side. Therefore, I feel that 3–5 grams is a sufficient dosage to start with and as your stomach gets used to it you can increase it to as much as 10–15 grams.

As far as cycling this supplement, there is no evidence that suggests cycling would improve its efficacy.

Side Effects

As far as side effects we only experienced a slight stomach discomfort during the first week of use (I took the straight powder form). Other than that, I did not experience any other side effects while using the compound and I have not found any literature that links its use to anything bad. As usual, we recommend that you start with a low dosage (such as only 3 grams a day) in order to assess your tolerance. From there you can build up to 10–15 grams.

By looking at the effects that this supplement can provide you with, along with the fact that these days it can be purchased for a very cheap price, we wonder why more athletes don't use it. This is especially important during dieting, as a way to protect the muscle from being cannibalized by the effects of cortisol. On a final note, please remember that like any supplement you need to stick to high quality brands. Good brands of Glutamine that I have used are Prolab, EAS, Champion Nutrition, Beverly International, Met-Rx, and Labrada.

Testosterone Boosting Supplements (Not Recommended for Teenagers)

These are the type of supplements that you can take if you plan to compete, if you have the budget to try them, and only

if you are older than 25 when the hormonal production begins to decline. Teenagers, in my opinion, should stay away from any supplement that has an effect on hormonal levels as there is no need to upset a teen's delicate hormonal balance. Besides, teenagers produce approximately the equivalent of a 300 mg shot of testosterone per week anyway so there is no need to attempt to increase the production of testosterone in a system that is already producing at peak levels.

The efficacy of some of these supplements is still under debate by some of the experts in the field, but in my opinion as a competitive athlete I have seen an edge by using them. Also, I would like to mention that by increasing your hormonal levels you may experience some acne and slightly increased aggression. Finally, if you have a propensity for male pattern baldness and/or an increased prostate you should monitor these things if you still decide to use some of these products.

ZMA

A scientifically designed anabolic mineral formula. This formula consists of Zinc Monomethionine Aspartate, Magnesium Aspartate and vitamin B-6. This all-natural product has been clinically proven to significantly increase anabolic hormone levels and muscle strength in trained athletes. Hard training athletes typically deplete the body from these essential minerals. Studies have shown that supplementing with 30mg of Zinc and 450mg of Magnesium per day can elevate testosterone levels up to 30%!

TRIBULUS TERRESTRIS

A Bulgarian herb that tends to increase both free and total testosterone levels enhancing, as a result, your sex drive and muscle building capabilities. It is believed that it exerts its effects through an increase in Luteinizing hormone (LH) levels, a hormone which in turn signals the body to increase its testosterone production. In addition, this herb has been used for centuries for ailments such as headaches, premature ejaculation, water retention, and dizziness. Also, some research indicates that it has properties that enable it to protect the liver and the cardiovascular system as well. I get this herb from a product produced by Biotest labs called Tribex 500. This product also contains a very useful herb called Avena Sativa, which we will discuss below.



AVENA SATIVA

Avena Sativa, better known as wild oat, is an annual grass, which is cultivated for its edible grain. It has the effect of increasing free testosterone levels (the testosterone that can be used by the body). While the mechanism under which it exerts this benefit is not clear, it is suspected that it occurs through an increase in LH levels, just like Tribulus. Because there seems to be a synergism between Tribulus and Avena Sativa, Biotest Labs included both herbs in their product Tribex 500. I take in 3 capsules twice a day on an empty stomach only from Monday through Friday.

6-OXO

6-OXO, which is short for 3,6,17-androstenetrione, is a very powerful androgen metabolite that increases testosterone levels naturally through a suppression of estrogen levels (the hormone that females produce in high amounts and that gives them their female characteristics). Believe it or not, males produce this hormone as well, mainly through the work of the aromatase enzyme which aromatizes (converts) the testosterone we produce into estrogen. 6-OXO works by binding to the aromatase enzyme and rendering it ineffective, something that corresponds in an increase in testosterone levels. I take 3 capsules of 6-OXO with my ZMA at night with the last meal. The product I take is made by ErgoPharm.

Fat Burning Stacks

Before I discuss my favorite stacks for fat burning, keep in mind that in order to lose fat, one needs to follow a nutrition plan and workout program that is designed for that. Otherwise, these supplements will exert very little effects on your body composition. If you need help designing a program, be sure to check out "Hugo's Rules For Getting Lean In 8 Weeks."

STACK #1: Good For People Sensitive To Stimulants

1. Metabolic Thyrolean from Prolab

When you go on a caloric restricted diet, your metabolism begins to slow down in an effort to maintain homeostasis (constant state) in the body. The body accomplishes this through a reduction in active

thyroid (T3) production and through a reduction of certain neurotransmitters in the brain like epinephrine and norepinephrine which play a role in keeping our metabolic rate high.

This formula from Prolab contains a clinically tested combination of ingredients that preserve or increase thyroid output and also provides the substrates needed for the production of neurotransmitters.

It is stimulant free so it can be used year-round. I like to take 3 caps twice a day, first thing in the morning and then at around 3pm, when I take my thermogenics of choice.

2. Hot Rox from Biotest

Hot Rox delivers six compounds that were stacked to increase thyroid levels naturally while maximizing fat mobilization, appetite suppression and mood enhancement; all things that contribute to the successful loss of body fat while keeping the energy levels optimal.

This formula has 50 mg of caffeine per serving (2 capsules) so it is another good choice for those of you who do not like stimulants.

I've stacked it with the Metabolic Thyrolean with good results and since I like stimulants, I take a 200mg tablet of Prolab Caffeine along with it. So in other words, my stack consists of 1 tablet of Prolab caffeine, 2 caps of Hot Rox and 3 Metabolic Thyroleans twice a day (1st thing in the morning and at around 3pm).

Because the formula does not down regulate your beta adrenergic receptors (these are the receptors where stimulants like caffeine and ephedrine operate at) the formula can be used year round as well.

STACK #2: Good For People That Love Stimulants

1. Lipo-6 from NUTREX

This formula is a combination of several stimulants, which work by increasing your metabolism by stimulating an increase in noradrenaline. An increase in noradrenaline is favorable as fat cells and muscles have an abundance of adrenoreceptors, which are the receptors to which noradrenaline binds to. Once noradrenaline binds to the adrenoreceptors in the fat cells, a chain of chemical reactions occur (I won't bore you with the details) that result in the liberation

of fatty acids (fat loss).

In addition, this formula contains guggulsterones, which help support healthy thyroid metabolism and bioperine which aids in increasing the absorption of nutrients and thus enhancing the effectiveness of the formula.

I like this product the most because it utilizes the HCL forms of the ingredients (as opposed to herbal forms) and in addition, it comes in a liquid capsule that releases the ingredients faster into the bloodstream. This is a strong thermogenic!

2. Thyrocuts II from S.A.N

This is an actual form of thyroid (T2), which when taken, has a less adverse effect on the body's own thyroid production (it does not shut it down as badly as prescription T3), and penetrates into the inner membrane of brown-fat tissue and uncouples it. Brown fat is the most stubborn fat in the body as the body likes to save it for cases of famine.

3. Metabolic Thyrolean from Prolab

This product is also useful for this stack, and I particularly like to include it here to protect from any small thyroid shutdown that may occur from supplementing with T2.

The way I take this stack is a serving of Lipo 6 first thing in the morning and at around 3pm along with 3 caps of Metabolic Thyrolean and 1 cap of Thyrocuts II.

NOTE: I do not use this stack for more than 6 weeks as the body begins to get used to the stimulant based thermogenics after this period and also to prevent the body from getting used to needing T2 supplementation. After 6 weeks of use, I go to Stack #1 and stay on that one for at least 8 weeks before using Stack #2 again.

Pre Workout Supplements

When training for mass gains there are a couple of supplements that I alternate every month that have proven to deliver results in the form of more focus, energy and intensity in the gym along with faster recuperation in between sets and workouts:

1. Labrada's Super Charge

I take a serving of super charge 15–20 minutes before my workout when building mass and believe me that once it kicks in you feel it! Super charge has a variety of ingredients that

enhance energy, strength, endurance, focus and recovery. If you have the money it is certainly worth a try.

2. BSN NO-Xplode

Once I finish up with a can of the Super Charge then I switch to NO-Xplode. The goal of this formula is also to increase your focus, energy, pump and intensity in the gym. I notice that by alternating between both formulas I keep getting the same effect from them. I take NO-Xplode 15–20 minutes before my workout and I am more than ready to go once it is time to lift. You won't be disappointed with the results you will get.

Supplement Recommendations Summary

Essential To Take:

- MultiVitamin/Mineral Complex taken with breakfast.
- Essential Oils and Monounsaturated oils as per nutrition section.
- 1 gram Vitamin C taken with breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- Weight Gain, Whey Protein Powder or Meal Replacement Powder for mixing with skim milk or water in order to make protein shakes.
- 200mcg of Chromium Picolinate taken with protein shake after the workout.

Highly Recommended (Only useful if you are really pushing your workouts to the limit):

- 2.5 grams of creatine before and after the workout.
- 3 grams of glutamine after the workout or at night-time before bed on non-workout days.

For Over 25 Year Old Trainees Who Wish To Increase Their Testosterone Levels:

- ZMA (1 serving with evening meal)
- Tribex 500 (3 capsules twice daily—AM/PM—on empty stomach from Mon–Fri)
- 6–OXO (3 capsules at night every day)

NOTE:

There is no need to take all of these testosterone-boosting supplements at the same time. You could get great benefit from doing 6 weeks of one, 6 weeks of another and so on. But if you have the finances to use them all there is no adverse effects from doing so.



Fat Burning Supplements (To be used when losing fat is the main goal):

STACK #1

- Prolab's Metabolic Thyrolean (3 caps first thing in the morning and around 3pm)
- Biotest's Hot Rox (2 caps first thing in the morning and around 3pm)

STACK #2

- Nutrex's Lipo-6 (2 caps first thing in the morning and around 3pm)
- SAN's ThyroCuts II (1 cap first thing in the morning and around 3pm)
- Prolab's Metabolic Thyrolean (3 caps first thing in the morning and around 3pm)

Pre-Workout Supplements:

- Labrada's Super Charge one month alternated with
- BSN's NO-Xplode the next.

Conclusion

I hope that this discussion has cleared the confusion as to what supplements to take. The key point that I want you to remember and I cannot emphasize enough is that the most important variables for making gains are your training, nutrition and recovery. Once you have these variables dialed in then you will be amazed at the gains that you can make once you add the right supplements into your training program.

The rules presented in this section will describe how to create a plan to get lean while retaining all of the hard earned muscle that you worked so hard to attain.

Summer is the time when the temperature and climate are just right to hit the beach and show off. This is the time for those of us who follow the bodybuilding lifestyle, whether competitive or not, to shine and get our props for all of our efforts in the gym. In order to look the part, we now have to shed the excess body fat that was gained during the winter bulking up period in order to display the muscularity that lies beneath. So the question is: How do you go about doing that? Follow these simple rules:

RULE #1: Weight Training, not cardio needs to be emphasized.

Why is this? Because weight training elevates your metabolism for 24–36 hours. Breaking down and re-building muscle has a metabolic cost associated with it. In other words, you not only burn calories as you are doing the weight training but also after as your body scrambles to access the nutrients it needs to re-build the tissue. Traditional Aerobic exercise, with the heart rate between 65%–85% of Maximum, on the other hand, only burns calories as you perform the activity (NOTE: High Intensity Cardio has been shown to also burn calories afterwards due to the severity of the activity).

RULE #2: Cardiovascular exercise needs to be used as a tool to burn extra calories and thus facilitate fat loss.

At the end of the day, losing fat is a matter of creating a slight (notice the word SLIGHT) caloric deficit in order to start losing weight in the form of fat. This caloric deficit can be created through either an increase of activity, a decrease in caloric intake or both. My strategy to save muscle as I go down is to do the minimum amount of cardiovascular activity that I can get away with at the time while keeping the calories as high as possible. When I plateau, then I either reduce calories slightly again or increase the cardio a bit more to get things rolling once more.

Best times to perform cardio are first thing in the morning on an empty stomach and right after the workout as at both



of these times glycogen (stored carbohydrates) levels are low in the body. While I have read many articles recently disputing that this is not really a good idea as it can lead to muscle loss, I have found that this is only true if the person has an unusually fast metabolism (a hardgainer). Everyone else will be fine, especially if supplements like creatine and glutamine are taken which help preserve muscle tissue.

RULE #3: Establish a Baseline Diet with a High Caloric Base and with the right ratios of Complex Carbs, Low Fat Proteins and Good Fats.

This is really important as if you start too low, once your body gets used to that low caloric intake, you have nowhere else to go. In addition, too low of a caloric intake will sacrifice muscle tissue. Therefore, a high caloric base may be in the order of your bodyweight multiplied by 15. So for instance, since I am 210 right now, my caloric intake will be in the order of 3150 calories per day (210 x 15). The ratios that I feel work best to start with (and for the off-season) are a 40% carbs, 40% proteins, 20% good fats ratio. So in my case, I would need

$$\begin{aligned}(3150 \times 0.4) / 4 &= 315 \text{ grams of carbs} \\ (3150 \times 0.4) / 4 &= 315 \text{ grams of protein} \\ (3150 \times 0.2) / 9 &= 70 \text{ grams of good fats}\end{aligned}$$

My starchy carb sources will come mostly from oatmeal, grits, brown rice, potatoes, sweet potatoes, and my fibrous carbs come from vegetables like green beans and broccoli. My protein sources will come from egg whites, chicken, turkey, lean red meats, salmon and tuna. My fats will come from extra virgin olive oil, flaxseed oil, some CLA, and the incidental fats found in lean sources of meat.



Rule #4: Eat Several Small Meals (5–8) Per Day Spaced Out Every 2–3 hours. Make sure that each meal has protein in it.

Because of my high caloric needs, I eat 8 meals a day each composed of around 40 grams of protein. I like to have my starchy carbs on all my meals prior to 7pm (unless I train later than 7pm in which case I will have carbs after the workout). The fats that I add, such as Flax Oil and Olive Oil, I like to have on my low carb meals (meals that either only contain vegetables or just no carbs at all). So therefore here is how my meal plan looks like:

(Meal 1 = POST AM CARDIO MEAL)

Meal 1 (7:30am): 40 grams of protein, 55 grams of starchy carbs

Meal 2 (9:30am): 40 grams of protein, 40 grams of starchy carbs

(Meal 3 = POST WORKOUT MEAL)

Meal 3 (12:30pm): 40 grams of protein, 55 grams of starchy carbs, 15 grams of fibrous

Meal 4 (2:00pm): 40 grams of protein, 40 grams of starchy carbs

Meal 5 (4:00pm): 40 grams of protein, 40 grams of starchy carbs

Meal 6 (6:00pm): 40 grams of protein, 40 grams of starchy carbs, 15 grams of fibrous

Meal 7 (8:00pm): 40 grams of protein, 15 grams of fibrous, 14 grams Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Meal 8 (10:00pm): 40 grams of protein, 14 grams of flax oil

***NOTE 1:** The remainder of the fats I get from my CLA caps and also a couple of servings of lean red meats.*

***NOTE 2:** If I work out at 7pm, then I flip Meal 7 with Meal 6 so that I can have some starchy carbs after the workout.*

Rule #5: Establish a Baseline Routine that Includes 6 Weight Training sessions per week of 1 hour each and 30 minutes of cardio either first thing on the morning

on an empty stomach or right after the workout.

Your baseline routine should be designed to gain muscle and the repetition ranges should be cycles in order to avoid stagnation. Later in this section, a full routine will be presented that will take care of these goals.

Rule #6: Increase calories from carbs by 500 on Sunday.

That means that on Sunday, you take in an extra 125 grams of carbs spaced out through the day in order to prevent your body from getting used to a specific caloric intake. As I get leaner, I may increase this to 700 calories.

Rule #7: The maximum amount of fat one should lose per week is 1–2lbs.

Use calipers to see if the numbers are going down (don't worry about calculating the BF%, instead concentrate on the readings). If your caliper readings are going down, then you know that body fat is being lost. If weight goes down but caliper readings remain unchanged, then you may be losing muscle. Conversely, you will only adjust your cardio upwards by a factor of five minutes per session or you will decrease your caloric intake slightly if no fat loss is experienced after two weeks.

Too fast, too soon only leads to muscle loss and loss of strength. So what you want to do is lose no more than 2 lbs per week. The first week will be the exception as typically anywhere between 5–10lbs can be lost due to extra glycogen and water that the body is getting rid off. After the first week however, only 2 lbs should be the max amount.

If no fat loss is experienced for a couple of weeks, then my recommendation would be to increase cardio to a session of 30 minutes every day and decrease 200–300 calories from carbohydrate sources. I will elaborate further on this later on.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Now that we have some basic rules to follow, let's go over our eight-week plan on a weekly basis.

WEEK 1—BASELINE WEEK

WEEK 1 TRAINING

The strategy for training will be to implement a periodized plan with a focus on fat loss while keeping or increasing

muscle. Following the principles laid out on The Body Sculpting Bible for Men, we will reduce the rest times and increase the volume every couple of weeks.

Day 1—Shoulders & Arms (Monday/Thursday)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Wide Grip Upright Rows 3 sets x 10–12 reps
(60 second rest)

Military Press 3 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

Rear Delt Rows (Performed on T-Bar Row Machine, elbows and upper arms away from torso in order to primarily stimulate the Rear Delts and not the Lats) 3 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

E–Z Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

Lying E–Z Triceps Extensions 4 sets x 10–12 reps
(90 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

E–Z Preacher Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps
(90 second rest)

Triceps Dips 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)

Reverse Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)

Day 2—Legs (Tuesday/Friday)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Squats 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

Lying Leg Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Wide Stance Squats 4 sets x 10–12 reps
(90 second rest)

Standing Leg Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps
(90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Adductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)

Abductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)

SUPERSET:

Calf Press 4 sets x 15–20 reps (No rest)

Seated Calf Raises 4 sets x 15–20 reps
(30 second rest)

Day 3—Chest & Back (Wednesday/Saturday)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Incline Barbell Bench Press 4 sets x 10–12 reps
(90 second rest)

Wide Grip Pull-up to Front (Palms facing away from you) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Chest Dips 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

Close Grip Pull-up (Palms facing you) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Dumbbell Shrugs 2 sets x 10–12 reps (No Rest)

External Rotations (for strengthening of the rotator cuff) 2 sets x 15–20 reps (No Rest)

SUPERSET:

Hanging Leg Raises 4 sets x 20–25 reps (No Rest)

Crunches (performed on Swiss Ball) 4 sets x 20–25 reps
(30 second rest)

WEEK 1 CARDIO

Perform 30 minutes of cardio for four days a week either first thing in the morning on an empty stomach or right after the workout. My favorite cardio activities in order of favoritism (first one being my favorite) are: Elliptical machine (using the handles on the side for more of a caloric burning effect), Recumbent Bike, Power Walking on the Treadmill, Gauntlet, Stair Stepper. Work hard and try to bring your heart rate to 85% of your maximum: $(220 - \text{age}) \times .85 = \text{beats per minute at 85\% of max}$. Try to get better at the activity and burn more calories every time you do it. When you hit a plateau then you can increase the intensity of the machine. If you approach the cardio with the same enthusiasm and work ethic as your weight training, you will get the most out of it. If you can read something as you perform your cardio then you are certainly not working hard enough.

WEEK 1 DIET

Calculate your nutrient requirements by using the following formulas:



STEP 1: Calculate Calories

Bodyweight x 15 = calories per day

STEP 2: Calculate Macronutrient Requirements Per Day

(calories per day x 0.4) / 4 = grams of carbs/day
(calories per day x 0.4) / 4 = grams of protein/day
(calories per day x 0.2) / 9 = grams of good fats/day

STEP 3: Calculate Total Amounts Of Protein Per Meal.

Total grams of protein per day divided by 6. If the amount of protein is larger than 50 grams per meal, then divide by 7 to make the protein amount per meal more bearable. In this case, you will need to consume 7 meals per day.

STEP 4: Calculate The Amount Of Carbohydrates Per Meal.

While there is conflicting research on the value of eliminating starches after 7pm, I tend to assume that there is some value in it, so what I do is that after 7pm I have no more starchy carbs, unless I have one of those days where 7pm is when I train, in which case, I do have starches for my post workout meal. Having said that, the first thing I want you to do is to take the total amounts of carbs that you will consume per day and deduct 30 grams from that. Why? Because I want you to allocate a minimum of 30 grams of your total carb daily allowance to fibrous sources. Fibrous carbs not only help reduce appetite, but also increase your metabolism by virtue of the fact that it takes the body more calories to digest them than what the caloric value of these carbs is. So for instance, at 30 grams of these carbs per day you are looking to take in 120 calories from fibrous sources. Believe it or not, your body may burn 150 calories just to digest them so by eating these carbs you burned an extra 20 calories per day, which at the end of the week adds up to 140 calories burned! As my diet gets more intense, I find myself substituting starchy carbs by fibrous ones and eating up to 90 grams of carbs from fibrous sources per day. In addition, fibrous carbs aid in the digestion of protein, so please do not neglect them as you will achieve better results by eating them. When can you eat your fibrous carbs? You can either choose to have them at every meal or you can choose to have them in the

later meals, or split between your noon-time meal (meal 3) and your later afternoon meal (meal 5). It's up to you. The remainder of the carbs will be starchy complex carbs.

Now that you know what your total number for starchy carbs per day is, if you have 5 meals per day then divide that number by 4. If you have 6 meals per day, divide the number by 5. If you have 7 or eight meals per day, divide that number by 6. In this manner, all of your starches fall before 7pm. Now, like I said, if you workout at 7pm, then make sure that you have starches for the post workout meal. In this case, just move one of the starch free meals before your workout. By the way, typically what I do for convenience purposes is that I use these starch free meals to get the bulk of my vegetables in.

Now, "Where are the fruits?" you may ask. Since we are concentrating on fat loss, our choice of carbs will be geared towards low glycemic complex carbs and fibrous carbs. While fruits are very healthy, the fructose in them slows down fat loss so they are better left for bulk up periods.

STEP 5: Calculate the Amount of Fat Per Meal.

For fats, just divide the total amount that your formula gave you by 14. This will give you the number of tablespoons of fat that you need to add to your diet. However, let's recall that there are incidental, naturally occurring, fats that are found in clean items like oatmeal, skinless chicken, lean meats, etc. Therefore, eliminate one tablespoon from your number if the number is larger than 2. Otherwise, eliminate just half a tablespoon.

So for instance, if your formula indicates that you need 2.5 tablespoons of fats, then take one tablespoon out to adjust for the naturally occurring ones and that will yield 1.5 tablespoons. If on the other hand, your formula indicates to take 1.5 tablespoons, only reduce by half a tablespoon, thus yielding a value of 1.

When do you consume these fats? I like to consume them on my starch free meals. Again, there is conflicting research as to whether fats and carbs can be consumed in the same meal. Because the jury is still out on that, I err on the side of caution and assume that they can only be consumed when the carbohydrates on the meal come only from fibrous sources. As a result, have your fats with your fibrous carb

(starch free) meals. I like to take in no more than 1.5 table-
spoons in one sitting so split your fats accordingly.

STEP 6: Choose Your Protein Sources.

Since now you know how much protein you need, below you
will find a list of the approved protein sources and the protein
provided per serving (weighted before cooking):

Protein Sources

Chicken 3.5 oz: 33 grams; Turkey 3.5 oz: 28 grams; Top
Round Sirloin 4 oz: 35 grams; Egg Whites (10 egg whites):
35 grams; Tuna 3.5 oz: 35 grams; Salmon 3.5 oz: 31 grams;
Grouper 3.5 oz: 31 grams; Red Snapper 3.5 oz: 31 grams;
whey protein 1 scoop: between 20 to 25 grams depending
on product chosen.

STEP 7: Choose Your Carbohydrates.

This is the easy part. For the starchy carbs, concentrate on
slow released type like the ones below:

Starchy Carbohydrate Sources

Oatmeal (1/2 cup measured dry=27 grams of carbs); Grits
(1/2 cup measured dry=27 grams of carbs); Potatoes (4
oz=28 grams); Sweet Potatoes (4oz=28 grams); Brown Rice
(2/3 cup measured cooked=30 grams of carbs).

Fibrous Carbohydrate Sources

For fibrous vegetables, concentrate on green beans and
broccoli for the brunt of your fibrous intake and add to it
lettuce, green peppers, spinach, onions, mushrooms, ar-
tichokes, zucchini, and asparagus. Typically, 5 ounces of
green beans or broccoli yield around 13 grams of fibrous
carbs. The rest of the fibrous sources presented here, re-
quire a pretty large amount to yield anything significant so
what I do is that I concentrate on the green beans and broc-
coli for my main fibrous sources and then use the rest of the
veggies as a supplementary addition.

Step 8: Choose Your Fats.

Evenly divide the fats between canned extra virgin olive oil (1
tablespoon = 14 grams of fat) and flax seed oil (1 tablespoon
= 14 grams of fat). If you have a serving of wild salmon,
then you can eliminate the flax oil for that day as salmon is
a very good source of Omega 3s.

Step 9: Fill In The Charts Below Using The Values That You Have Obtained From The Calculations Above.

NOTE:

*Charts are provided for 5 meal, 6 meal, 7 meal and 8 meal
scenarios. Charts assume that training happens before 7pm
but if not, as explained above, just have a non starchy carb
meal 1–2 hours before the workout and have the starchy
carb meal afterwards. Also, I split the fibrous carbs in two
meals (one at mid day and another closer to night time) but
you can change that if you'd like as explained above. Finally,
meal times can be moved as long as they are spaced 2 to
3 hours apart.*

8 Meal Chart

Meal 1 (7:30am): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 2 (9:30am): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 3 (12:30pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs,
15 grams of fibrous carbs

Meal 4 (2:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 5 (4:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 6 (6:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 7 (8:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
15 grams of fibrous carbs,
_____ grams Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Meal 8 (10:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of flax oil

7 Meal Chart

Meal 1 (7:30am): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs



Meal 2 (9:30am): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 3 (12:30pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs,
15 grams of fibrous carbs

Meal 4 (3:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 5 (5:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 6 (7:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
15 grams of fibrous carbs, _____ grams of flax oil

Meal 7 (9:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams Extra Virgin Olive Oil

6 Meal Chart

Meal 1 (8:00am): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 2 (10:00am): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 3 (12:30pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs,
15 grams of fibrous carbs

Meal 4 (:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 5 (6:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 6 (9:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
15 grams of fibrous carbs, _____ grams of oil

(NOTE: Do one day of Extra Virgin Olive Oil and another day of Flax Oil)

5 Meal Chart

Meal 1 (9:00am): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 2 (12:00noon): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs,
15 grams of fibrous carbs

Meal 3 (3:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs,
15 grams of fibrous carbs

Meal 4 (5:00pm): _____ grams of protein,
_____ grams of starchy carbs

Meal 5 (8:00pm): _____ grams of protein, 1
5 grams of fibrous carbs, _____ grams of oil

NOTE: Do one day of Extra Virgin Olive Oil and another day of Flax Oil

Step 10: Create your meals by choosing from the food sources tables.

Protein Sources

Chicken 3.5 oz: 33 grams; Turkey 3.5 oz: 28 grams; Top Round Sirloin 4 oz: 35 grams; Egg Whites (10 egg whites): 35 grams; Tuna 3.5 oz: 35 grams; Salmon 3.5 oz: 31 grams; Grouper 3.5 oz: 31 grams; Red Snapper 3.5 oz: 31 grams; whey protein 1 scoop: between 20 to 25 grams depending on product chosen.

Starchy Carbohydrate Sources

Oatmeal (1/2 cup measured dry=27 grams of carbs); Grits (1/2 cup measured dry=27 grams of carbs); Potatoes (4 oz=28 grams); Sweet Potatoes (4oz=28 grams); Brown Rice (2/3 cup measured cooked=30 grams of carbs).

Fibrous Carbohydrate Sources

For fibrous vegetables, concentrate on green beans and broccoli for the brunt of your fibrous intake and add to it lettuce, green peppers, spinach, onions, mushrooms, artichokes, zucchini, and asparagus. Typically, 5 ounces of green beans or broccoli yield around 13 grams of fibrous carbs. The rest of the fibrous sources presented here, require a pretty large amount to yield anything significant so what I do is that I concentrate on the green beans and broccoli for my main fibrous sources and then use the rest of the veggies as a supplementary addition.

Fats

1 Tablespoon of Canned Extra Virgin Olive Oil=14 grams of fat; 1 Tablespoon of Flax Oil=14 grams of fat

SUPPLEMENTATION

Now that you have the basics covered, let's talk about supplements that will help you in your quest to achieving your fitness goals in 8 weeks. The goal of the supplement stack below is not only to prevent any nutritional deficiencies, but also to preserve muscle tissue and strength as you diet down and to speed up your metabolism to prevent any slowdown in the process.

Multiple Vitamins And Minerals

Essential to insure that our body will operate at maximum efficiency. Why? Because on a very simplistic level, without vitamins and minerals it would be impossible to convert the food that we eat into hormones, tissues and energy.

Vitamins are organic compounds (produced by both animals and vegetables) whose function is to enhance the actions of proteins that cause chemical reactions such as muscle building, fat burning and energy production.

Minerals are inorganic compounds (not produced by neither animals nor vegetables) whose main function is to assure that your brain receive the correct signals from the body, balance of fluids, muscular contractions and energy production as well as for the building of muscle and bones.

A deficiency of any of these will prevent you from losing fat, gaining muscle and producing energy efficiently. Because of this, I make sure that I get my fair share of these items.

To ensure I get enough of these, I take 1 packet with Meal 1 of Prolab's Training Paks. I also take in 200 mcg of Higher Power's Chromium Picolinate with Meal 1 and an extra gram (1000 mg) of Natrol's Ester C at Meals 3 and 5.

Meal Replacement Powders (Mrps)

These powders are convenient way to get a meal when on the run. Always try to get as many real meals in as you can, but when you cannot have a real one, then an MRP can be your savior. Protein-wise, most are composed of whey proteins but there are many new formulas now on the market that consist of a protein blend of whey and milk proteins. Typically, the carbohydrate component used to be

maltodextrin, yielding around 25–27 grams of carbohydrate per serving, but the newer generation formulas consist of slower released carbohydrates like brown rice and oats in order to make the product lower glycemic in nature. Also, essential fatty acids have been added as well as a vitamin and mineral profile.

My favorite MRP on the market, BY FAR, is Prolab's Lean Mass Matrix as it is instantized (you can mix with liquid and a spoon) and has a unique cinnamon oatmeal flavor. In addition it contains essential fats, the slow released carbohydrate matrix and a protein blend of whey proteins and miscellar casein. Many times I mix it with real oats and I swear that I feel like I am cheating on my diet.

Other good products I like are Beverly International's Ultra Size, Labrada's Lean Body, Champion Nutrition's Ultramet, and EAS' MyoPlex.

Protein Powders

Protein powders are just powders that consist mainly of protein (typically whey protein is what is sold these days but you can also find blends). These can also be used when in a rush and you can either mix them with a high carb source such as oatmeal or just have them at night as a starch free meal. Typically, they contain no more than 5 grams of carbohydrates per scoop and 20–25 grams of protein (per scoop). Calorie wise they consist of anywhere from 100–125 calories. Good sources of these powders are Prolab's Pure Whey (which will soon come also in Cinnamon Oatmeal Flavor), EAS MyoPro, IronTek's Essential Protein. The powders just mentioned are mainly whey protein concentrate which can be used anytime throughout the day. The best isolates in the market are Natures Best Zero Carb Isopure and Prolab's Isolate. Isolates are best used right after the workout due to its fast release in the blood stream. The best blends in the market of whey proteins with slower released proteins are Beverly International's Muscle Provider (whey and egg blend) and Prolab's Protein Component (also available in Cinnamon Oatmeal). These blends are best used at night before going to bed or anytime throughout the day as well.

Creatine

Creatine is a metabolite produced in the liver composed of three amino acids: L-methionine, L-arginine and L-glycine. Its benefits as far as increasing strength, lean body mass and pumps have been widely documented. Creatine is a great aid when losing body fat as it helps to maintain the cell



superhydrated, thus protecting it from catabolism. I take 5 grams of Prolab's Creatine before and after the workout.

Glutamine

L-Glutamine the most abundant amino acid in muscle cells. It is released from the muscle during times of stress (such as hard weight training workouts) and dieting. This amino acid not only has been shown to be a great anti-catabolic agent (protects the muscle from the catabolic activities of the hormone cortisol), to be a contributor to muscle cell volume, and to have immune system enhancing properties but also to help in the following ways:

- Regulation of protein synthesis (this is one of the ways in which steroids exert their muscle building effects).
- Accelerating glycogen synthesis after a workout.
- Sparing the use of the glycogen stored in the muscle cell (recall that the glycogen stored in the muscle cell is what gives the cell the healthy volume and firmness that you seek).
- Faster recuperation from weight training workouts. I take 10 grams with Meal 1, 10 before and after the workout and 10 more at night from Prolab's Glutamine. You will need to start with only 5 grams after the workout and work your way up as if you start too high dosages then it will upset your stomach.

Biotest Hot Rox

Hot Rox delivers six compounds that were stacked to increase thyroid levels (without shutting down TSH) while maximizing fat mobilization, appetite suppression and mood enhancement; all things that contribute to the successful loss of body fat while keeping the energy levels optimal. I really love it plus I love the fact that I can use it year round and it continues to work.

This formula has 50 mg of caffeine per serving (2 capsules) so it is another good choice for those of you who do not like stimulants. I stack 2 caps of Hot Rox with 6 caps of Prolab's Metabolic Thyrolean, and since I like stimulants, I take a 200mg tablet of Prolab Caffeine along with it as well. I take this before my Meal 1 around 5:30am and before my weight training around 11:30 am (without the caffeine tab at this time since I stack it with Labrada's Super Charge).

NOTE:

Start out with 1 cap in the AM and increase as your body

learns how to handle it.

NO

The only NO product that I have tried and really enjoyed is Labrada's Super Charge. It is an awesome pre-workout stimulant loaded not only with NO, but also creatine, glutamine, BCAAs, caffeine, growth factors, etc. It tastes great and you can feel it working almost immediately.

SUMMARY OF HUGO'S PERSONAL GET LEAN IN 8 WEEKS STACK

VITAMINS/MINERALS

- Prolab's Training Paks at Meal 1.
- 200 mcg of Higher Power's Chromium Picolinate at Meal 1.
- 1 gram (1000 mg) of Natrol's Ester C at Meals 3 and 5.

MRP's/PROTEIN POWDERS

- Prolab's Isolate after training.
- Prolab's Lean Mass Matrix when on a hurry (1–2 per day).

CREATINE/GLUTAMINE/NO

- Prolab's Creatine (5 grams before and after the workout)
- Prolab's Glutamine (10 grams before and after the weight training workout, upon awakening and before bedtime)
- Labrada's Super Charge (2 scoops 10–15 minutes before the workout).

METABOLIC ENHANCERS

- 6 caps of Prolab's Metabolic Thyrolean before Meal 1 and six hours later before the weight training workout.
- 2 caps of Biotest Hot Rox before Meal 1 and six hours later before the weight training workout.

Conclusion

Well, there you have it. Follow the steps above and you will have in your hands a system that if applied correctly will take you to the destination that you want.

In Part 1, we discussed the steps necessary to get on your way to a lean physique. In Part 2 we will finish discussing the steps necessary in order to continue making progress from week to week.

WEEK 2

WEIGHT TRAINING

Training this week will not be much different than the first week except for the fact that a few of the exercises will be changed in order to continue to shock the body into growth.

Day 1—Shoulders & Arms (Monday/Thursday)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Lateral Raises 3 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)
DB Shoulder Press 3 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)
Bent Over Laterals 3 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Incline Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)
Lying Dumbbell Triceps Extensions 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Concentration Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)
Close grip Bench Press 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)
Reverse Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)

Day 2—Legs (Tuesday/Friday)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Leg Press 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)
Seated Leg Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Wide Stance Leg Press 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

Lying Leg Curls (Toes In) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Adductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)
Abductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)

SUPERSET:

Standing Calf Raises 4 sets x 15–20 reps (No rest)
Donkey Calf Raises 4 sets x 15–20 reps (30 second rest)

Day 3 – Chest, Back & Abs (Wednesday/Saturday)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Incline Dumbbell Bench Press 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)
Close Grip Pull-up to Front (Palms facing away from you) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

MODIFIED COMPOUND SUPERSET:

Flat Dumbbell Press 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)
Medium Grip Pull-up (Palms facing you) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Barbell Shrugs 2 sets x 10–12 reps (No Rest)
External Rotations (for strengthening of the rotator cuff) 2 sets x 15–20 reps (No Rest)

SUPERSET:

Knee-Ins (if strong enough, use dumbbell in between feet) 4 sets x 20–25 reps (No Rest)
Rope Crunches (Performed using overhead pulley) 4 sets x 20–25 reps (30 second rest)

CARDIO

Keep cardio to the four 30 minute sessions prescribed last week. Remember to work hard and try to bring your heart rate to 85% of your maximum: $(220 - \text{age}) \times .85 = \text{beats per minute at 85\% of max}$. Try to get better at the activity and burn more calories every time you do it. When you hit a plateau then you can increase the intensity of the machine. If you approach the cardio with the same enthusiasm and work ethic as your weight training, you will get the most out of it. If you can read something as you perform your cardio then you are certainly not working hard enough.



DIET

If you lost 1–2 lbs last week, then keep the diet the same for this week and do not change a thing. If you are not losing at least one pound bodyweight per week it's time for a calorie adjustment in the neighborhood of a 200–300 reduction. These calories will come from the starchy carbohydrate department so we are looking to reduce between 50–75 grams of carbs per day. Stay on the lower end if you are on the 5 or 6 meal plan. Higher end for those following the 6 and 7 meal plan. Still keep the 500 calorie increase on Sunday from carbohydrates.

SUPPLEMENTATION

This part of the plan remains constant throughout the 8 weeks. Below is my personal supplementation program.

VITAMINS/MINERALS

- Prolab's Training Paks at Meal 1.
- 200 mcg of Higher Power's Chromium Picolinate at Meal 1.
- 1 gram (1000 mg) of Natrol's Ester C at Meals 3 and 5.

MRP's/PROTEIN POWDERS

- Prolab's Isolate after training.
- Prolab's Lean Mass Matrix when on a hurry (1–2 per day).

CREATINE/GLUTAMINE/NO2

- Prolab's Creatine (5 grams before and after the workout)
- Prolab's Glutamine (10 grams before and after the weight training workout, upon awakening and before bedtime)
- Labrada's Super Charge (2 scoops 10–15 minutes before the workout).

METABOLIC ENHANCERS

- 6 caps of Prolab's Metabolic Thyrolean before Meal 1 and six hours later before the weight training workout.
- 2 caps of Biotest Hot Rox before Meal 1 and six hours later before the weight training workout.

WEEK 3

WEIGHT TRAINING

This week, we will start increasing the pace of the routine by

incorporating supersets; in other words, one exercise after the other with no rest in between.

Day 1—Shoulders & Arms (Monday/Thursday)

SUPERSET:

One Arm Cable Laterals 3 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Smith Machine Military Press 3 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Incline Bent Over Laterals (Performed facing down on an incline bench) 3 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Standing Dumbbell Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Overhead Dumbbell Triceps Extensions 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Hammer Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Triceps Pushdowns (use straight bar) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)
Reverse Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)

Day 2—Legs (Tuesday/Friday)

SUPERSET:

Hack Squats 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Lying Leg Curls (Toes Out) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Wide Stance Smith Machine Squats 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
DB Lunges (press with heels) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Adductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)
Abductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)

SUPERSET:

One Legged Dumbbell Calf Raises 4 sets x 15–20 reps (No rest)
Calf Press 4 sets x 15–20 reps (30 second rest)

Day 3—Chest, Back & Abs (Wednesday/Saturday)

SUPERSET:

35-Degree Incline Bench Press 4 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
T-Bar Rows 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

45-degree Incline Dumbbell Press (Palms facing each other) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Neutral Grip Pull-up (Palms facing each other) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (90 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Barbell Shrugs 2 sets x 10–12 reps (No Rest)
External Rotations (for strengthening of the rotator cuff) 2 sets x 15–20 reps (No Rest)

SUPERSET:

V-Ups (if strong enough, use dumbbell in between feet) 4 sets x 20–25 reps (No Rest)
Partial Sit-Ups (go up to a 30 degree angle only) 4 sets x 20–25 reps (30 second rest)

CARDIO

Perform a couple of extra cardio sessions, thus bringing your sessions to six 30-minute sessions. Again, remember to work hard and try to bring your heart rate to 85% of your maximum: $(220 - \text{age}) \times .85 = \text{beats per minute at 85\% of max}$. Try to get better at the activity and burn more calories every time you do it. When you hit a plateau then you can increase the intensity of the machine. If you can read something as you perform your cardio then you are certainly not working hard enough.

DIET

If you lost 1–2 lbs last week, then keep the diet the same for this week and do not change a thing. If you are not losing at least one pound bodyweight per week it's time for another calorie adjustment in the neighborhood of a 100–200 reduction. These calories will come from the starchy carbohydrate department so we are looking to reduce between 25–50 grams of carbs per day. Stay on the lower end if you are on the 5 or 6 meal plan. Higher end for those following the 6 and 7 meal plan. Still keep the 500 calorie increase on Sunday from carbohydrates.

WEEK 4

WEIGHT TRAINING

This week, we will keep increasing the pace of the routine by slightly lowering the rest in between supersets.

Day 1—Shoulders & Arms (Monday/Thursday)

SUPERSET:

Dumbbell Upright Rows 3 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Military Press 3 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Rear Delt Machine 3 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Cable Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Rope Triceps Extensions 4 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Reverse E-Z Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Triceps Dips on Parallel Bars 4 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)
Reverse Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)

Day 2—Legs (Tuesday/Friday)

SUPERSET:

Close Stance Smith Machine Squats 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Standing Leg Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Leg Extensions 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Wide Stance Squats (press with heels) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Adductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)
Abductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)

SUPERSET:

Standing Calf Raises (Toes In) 4 sets x 15–20 reps (No rest)



Standing Calf Raises (Toes Out) 4 sets x 15–20 reps
(30 second rest)

Day 3 – Chest, Back & Abs (Wednesday/Saturday)

SUPERSET:

75–Degree Incline Dumbbell Bench Press 4 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)

Two Arm DB Rows laying face down on a 30 degree incline bench 4 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

SUPERSET:

45–degree Incline Flyes (palms facing forward) followed by Incline Dumbbell Press using the same weight 4 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)

Wide Grip Pull-up to Front (Palms facing each other) 4 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Barbell Shrugs 2 sets x 10–12 reps (No Rest)

External Rotations (for strengthening of the rotator cuff) 2 sets x 15–20 reps (No Rest)

SUPERSET:

Lying Leg Raises on Swiss 4 sets x 20–25 reps (No Rest)

Ball Bicycle Crunches (go up to a 30 degree angle only) 4 sets x 20–25 reps (30 second rest)

CARDIO

If you lost 1–2 lbs last week, then keep the cardio the same; six 30–minute sessions. Otherwise, you will need to up it to 45 minutes everyday. Again, remember to work hard and try to bring your heart rate to 85% of your maximum: $(220 - \text{age}) \times .85 = \text{beats per minute at 85\% of max}$. Try to get better at the activity and burn more calories every time you do it. When you hit a plateau then you can increase the intensity of the machine. If you can read something as you perform your cardio then you are certainly not working hard enough.

DIET

If you lost 1–2 lbs last week, then keep the diet the same for this week and do not change a thing. If you are not losing at least one pound bodyweight per week it's time for another calorie adjustment in the neighborhood of a 100–200 reduction. These calories will come from the starchy carbohydrate department so we are looking to reduce between 25–50

grams of carbs per day. Stay on the lower end if you are on the 5 or 6 meal plan. Higher end for those following the 6 and 7 meal plan. Still keep the 500 calorie increase on Sunday from carbohydrates.

WEEK 5

WEIGHT TRAINING

This week, we will slightly increase the volume of training by adding a few exercises to the program and in some instances also decreasing the rest.

Day 1—Shoulders & Arms (Monday/Thursday)

SUPERSET:

Lateral Raises 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)

DB Shoulder Press 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)

Bent Over Laterals 4 sets x 10–12 reps (45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Close Grip E–Z Curls 5 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)

Close Grip Bench Press 5 sets x 10–12 reps
(45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Low Pulley Rope Hammer Curls 4 sets x
10–12 reps (no rest)

Lying E–Z Triceps Extensions on Decline Bench 4 sets x
10–12 reps (45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)

Reverse Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)

Day 2—Legs (Tuesday/Friday)

SUPERSET:

Barbell Lunges (press with toes) 5 sets x
10–12 reps (no rest)

Seated Leg Curls 5 sets x 10–12 reps (45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Leg Extensions (Toes In) 5 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)

Wide Stance Leg Press (press with heels) 5 sets x
10–12 reps (45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Adductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)
Abductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)

SUPERSET:

Calf Press (Toes In) 5 sets x 15–20 reps (No rest)
Calf Press (Toes Out) 5 sets x 15–20 reps
(30 second rest)

Day 3 – Chest, Back & Abs (Wednesday/Saturday)

SUPERSET:

75–Degree Incline Dumbbell Bench Press 5 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Two Arm DB Rows laying face down on a 30 degree incline bench 5 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

SUPERSET:

45–degree Incline Flyes (palms facing forward) followed by Incline Dumbbell Press using the same weight 5 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Wide Grip Pull–up to Front (Palms facing each other) 5 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Barbell Shrugs 2 sets x 10–12 reps (No Rest)
External Rotations (for strengthening of the rotator cuff) 2 sets x 15–20 reps (No Rest)

SUPERSET:

Lying Leg Raises on Swiss 5 sets x 20–25 reps (No Rest)
Ball Bicycle Crunches (go up to a 30 degree angle only) 5 sets x 20–25 reps (30 second rest)

CARDIO

If you lost 1–2 lbs last week, then keep the cardio the same; six 30–minute sessions. Otherwise, you will need to up it to 45 minutes everyday. Again, remember to work hard and try to bring your heart rate to 85% of your maximum: $(220 - \text{age}) \times .85 = \text{beats per minute at 85\% of max}$. Try to get better at the activity and burn more calories every time you do it. When you hit a plateau then you can increase the intensity of the machine. If you can read something as you perform your cardio then you are certainly not working hard enough.

DIET

If you lost 1–2 lbs last week, then keep the diet the same for this week and do not change a thing. If you are not losing at least one pound bodyweight per week it's time for another calorie adjustment in the neighborhood of a 100–200 reduction. These calories will come from the starchy carbohydrate department so we are looking to reduce between 25–50 grams of carbs per day. Stay on the lower end if you are on the 5 or 6 meal plan. Higher end for those following the 6 and 7 meal plan. Still keep the 500 calorie increase on Sunday from carbohydrates.

WEEK 6

WEIGHT TRAINING

This week, we will keep the volume of training and rest the same. Only change will be the exercise selection.

Day 1—Shoulders & Arms (Monday/Thursday)

SUPERSET:

One Arm DB Laterals 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Military Press 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Rear Delt Rows on T–Bar Machine 4 sets x 10–12 reps (45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Concentration Curls 5 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Triceps Dips on Parallel Bars 5 sets x 10–12 reps (45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Hammer Curls Sitting on Incline Bench 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Overhead Db Triceps Extensions 4 sets x 10–12 reps (45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)
Reverse Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)

Day 2—Legs (Tuesday/Friday)

SUPERSET:

Leg Extensions (Toes Neutral) 5 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Lying Leg Curls (Toes In) 5 sets x 10–12 reps



(45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Medium Stance Squats 5 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Wide Stance Squats (press with heels) 5 sets x 10–12 reps (45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Adductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)
Abductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)

SUPERSET:

Single Legged Calf Press 5 sets x 15–20 reps (No rest)
Standing Calf Raises 5 sets x 15–20 reps (30 second rest)

Day 3 – Chest, Back & Abs (Wednesday/Saturday)

SUPERSET:

30–degree Incline DB Bench Press (Palms facing each other) 5 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Two Arm Reverse Grip DB Rows laying face down on a 30 degree incline bench 5 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Decline Bench Press 5 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Reverse Close Grip Pull-up (Palms facing you) 5 sets x 10–12 reps (60 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Smith Machine Shrugs to Back 2 sets x 10–12 reps (No Rest)
External Rotations (for strengthening of the rotator cuff) 2 sets x 15–20 reps (No Rest)

SUPERSET:

Lying Leg Raises on Decline Bench 5 sets x 20–25 reps (No Rest)
Rope Crunches 5 sets x 20–25 reps (30 second rest)

CARDIO

If you lost 1–2 lbs last week, and are at six 30–minute sessions then keep the same. Otherwise, you will need to up it to 45 minutes everyday. If you already are at 45 minutes everyday, then you will need to increase it further to 45 minutes before meal 1, seven days a week and 30 minutes after the workout. Again, remember to work hard and try to bring your heart rate to 85% of your maximum: $(220 - \text{age}) \times .85$

= beats per minute at 85% of max. Try to get better at the activity and burn more calories every time you do it. When you hit a plateau then you can increase the intensity of the machine. If you can read something as you perform your cardio then you are certainly not working hard enough.

DIET

If you lost 1–2 lbs last week, then keep the diet the same for this week and do not change a thing. If you are not losing at least one pound bodyweight per week it's time for another calorie adjustment in the neighborhood of a 50–100 reduction. These calories will come from the starchy carbohydrate department so we are looking to reduce between 12.5–50 grams of carbs per day. Stay on the lower end if you are on the 5 or 6 meal plan. Higher end for those following the 6 and 7 meal plan. Still keep the 500 calorie increase on Sunday from carbohydrates.

WEEKS 7 & 8

WEIGHT TRAINING

These two weeks, we will keep the volume of training the same and exercises the same for the two week period but introduce Giant Sets.

Day 1—Shoulders & Arms (Monday/Thursday)

GIANTSET:

Wide Grip Upright Rows 3 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
DB Laterals 3 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Smith Machine Military Press 3 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Bent Over Laterals 3 sets x 10–12 reps (45 second rest)

GIANTSET:

Barbell Curls 5 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Triceps Pushdowns (use straight bar) 5 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Reverse E–Z Curls 4 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Triceps Dips on Parallel Bars 4 sets x 10–12 reps (45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)
Reverse Wrist Curls 2 sets x 15–30 reps (No rest)

Day 2—Legs (Tuesday/Friday)

GIANTSET:

Leg Extensions (Toes In) 5 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
Standing Leg Curls 5 sets x 10–12 reps (45 second rest)
Close Stance Leg Press 5 sets x 10–12 reps (no rest)
DB Lunges (press with heels) 5 sets x 10–12 reps (45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Adductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)
Abductor Machine 2 sets x 12–15 reps (No rest)

SUPERSET:

Donkey Calf Raises 5 sets x 15–20 reps (No rest)
Seated Calf Raises 5 sets x 15–20 reps (30 second rest)

Day 3—Chest, Back & Abs (Wednesday/Saturday)

GIANTSET:

45-degree Incline Bench Press 5 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Wide grip Pull-ups to Front 5 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Bench Press 5 sets x 10–12 reps (No rest)
Low Pulley Rows 5 sets x 10–12 reps (45 second rest)

SUPERSET:

Smith Machine Shrugs to Front 2 sets x 10–12 reps (No Rest)
External Rotations (for strengthening of the rotator cuff) 2 sets x 15–20 reps (No Rest)

SUPERSET:

Hanging Leg Raises 5 sets x 20–25 reps (No Rest)
Swiss Ball Crunches 5 sets x 20–25 reps (30 second rest)

CARDIO

If you lost 1–2 lbs last week, and are at six 30-minute sessions then keep the same. Otherwise, you will need to up it to 45 minutes everyday. If you already are at 45 minutes everyday, then you will need to increase it further to 45 minutes before meal 1, seven days a week and 30 minutes after the workout. If you are at 45 before meal 1 and 30 after the workout already and still need to lose some more then increase to 45/45 everyday (except for Sunday where one of 45 in the AM will suffice). Again, remember to work hard and try to bring your heart rate to 85% of your maximum:

$(220 - \text{age}) \times .85 = \text{beats per minute at 85\% of max.}$ Try to get better at the activity and burn more calories every time you do it. When you hit a plateau then you can increase the intensity of the machine. If you can read something as you perform your cardio then you are certainly not working hard enough.

DIET

If you lost 1–2 lbs last week, then keep the diet the same for this week and do not change a thing. If you are not losing at least one pound bodyweight per week, keep diet the same this time and let the extra cardio take care of the rest.

So What's Next?

If you were at a low percentage of body fat like 12% or less (a male) or 15% or less (a female) then by now you should have attained your goals. If you were at higher body fat levels, I would keep the 45/45 min of extra cardio for an extra 4 weeks and keep changing the exercises of the fast paced routine presented for weeks 7 & 8. After 12 weeks of hardcore dieting/training it's best to increase calories and decrease cardio and training to baseline levels again. Reason for this is because too much dieting and training can lower your metabolism by shutting down your thyroid. Also, a concurrent increase in cortisol caused by the hard training/dieting can start robbing you away from muscle. So what I would do, even if you have not reached your ultimate low body fat percentage goal, is increase your calories to baseline levels, lower your cardio to the levels prescribed for the first week, and follow a training program like the one advertised in the "Mass Training Tactics" sections for 8 weeks or so. In this manner, you add some muscle while keeping the new low % of body fat, you re-set your metabolism and then after 8 weeks, you are ready to do another cutting cycle.

I hope I have provided you with a pretty specific roadmap on how to get lean. Remember that the main ingredient for getting lean is determination. Without it, it will be impossible for you to make the sacrifices that are required in order to achieve an ultra lean physique.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Hugo Rivera, CFT, SPN, BSCE. is a lifetime natural body-builder, multi certified personal trainer, industry consultant and fitness expert who not only knows training and nutrition theory, but also applies it on a daily basis as evidenced by the fact that he's always in shape and by his awards and high placings at numerous national level bodybuilding competitions.

He is also an internationally known best selling fitness author with a very successful franchise of books called "The Body Sculpting Bibles" which collectively have sold over a million copies.

Hugo is also the author of the very popular "Body Re-Engineering" e-book, which teaches you how to gain lean muscle mass and get lean without drugs, or fancy expensive supplements, using the secrets he devised after many years of weight problems as a child.

For more information on Hugo's Body Re-Engineering Program please visit www.losefatandgainmuscle.com.

If you enjoyed this FREE e-book, then take a look at my full Body Re-Engineering System
www.losefatandgainmuscle.com

