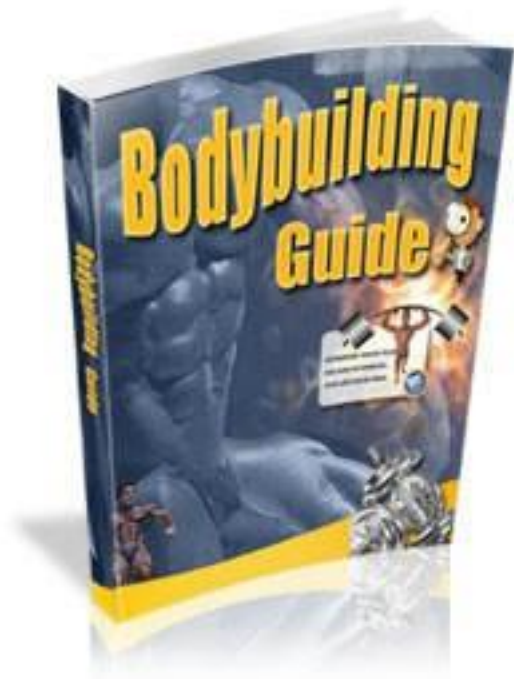


# Body Building Guide



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## Introduction

Bodybuilding is described as the process of developing your muscles by using a combination of weight training, specific caloric intake, and getting proper rest. Bodybuilding goes beyond building muscles simply to be fit, and requires more intense workouts. Some people get into “professional bodybuilding” so they can compete against others who show their physiques to a panel of judges.

People involved in competitive bodybuilding, are bodybuilders who work to develop and maintain an aesthetically pleasing (by bodybuilding standards) body and balanced physique. The bodybuilding competitors will then show off their bodies by performing a series of poses. Those involved in competitive bodybuilding will spend time practicing their pose, as this will have a big effect on how they are judged.

In competitive bodybuilding, a bodybuilder's size and shape are more important than how much he or she can lift. The sport of competitive bodybuilding should not be confused with powerlifting, where they are judged on actual physical strength, or with Olympic weightlifting, where the main objective is equally split between strength and technique. Though these sports may seem superficially similar to the casual observer, each one entails a different regimen of training, diet, and basic motivation.

While exercise is certainly a key component in bodybuilding, so is

nutrition. If the body doesn't get the proper nutrients to help the muscles grow, they will never reach their full potential. Since bodybuilders require high levels of muscle growth and repair, they require a specialized diet.

A bodybuilder needs more calories than the average person of the same height and weight, because it takes a higher number of calories, above their “maintenance level”, in order to continue to increase muscle mass. A maintenance level of food energy, combined with cardiovascular exercise, is needed to lose body fat.

Before beginning any change in your exercise or diet routines, you should consult your doctor.

### Body Building Exercise Tips

When you first begin an exercise program, regardless of whether it's weight training or cardio, your muscles immediately begin to use energy to allow them to work. For optimum health and fat burning, your bodybuilding workouts should consist of both anaerobic, and aerobic training.

Many weight training programs will tell you to do 12 repetitions of each exercise to gain muscle. The problem with that is, this approach leaves the muscles without enough tension for effective muscle gain. High-tension, such as heavy weights, provides muscle growth, which in turn allows the muscles to grow much larger than without high-tension, and also leads to a maximum gain in strength. Having longer tension time boosts the muscle size by generating the structures around the muscle fibers, which improves endurance.

The standard prescription of 8 - 12 repetitions provides a balance. But, by only using that program when you exercise, you do not generate the greater tension levels provided by the heavier weights and lesser reps, or the longer tension achieved with lighter weights and more repetitions. Change the number of reps, and adjust the weights to stimulate all types of muscle growth.

There are also those who perform the 3-Set rule, and while there's nothing wrong with the 3 sets, there is nothing amazing about it either. You see, the number of sets you perform should be based on your goals, and not on some half-century old rule. The more repetitions you do of an exercise, the fewer sets you should do, and vice versa. By using this technique, you will keep the total number of repetitions performed of an exercise equal.

Doing 3 - 4 exercises per group is also not a good idea. Here's why: Combined with 12 reps of 3 sets, the total number of reps amount to 144. If you're doing this many reps for a muscle group, you're not doing enough. Instead of doing too many different kinds of exercises, try doing 30 to 50 reps, so it should be anywhere from 2 sets of 15 reps or 5 sets of 10 reps.

Some who first start out will make the mistake of thinking the more reps you do, or the longer time you spend working on the equipment, the more muscle you build. A principal of bodybuilding says that you workout until the muscle is fatigued. Each exercise set you do is different. Depending on what your set is like, if what you do taxes the muscle, it is possible to fatigue the muscles in the first set. A good rule to follow is to create an intensity in your workout by dropping, or

breaking down sets, in which you rep out or lower the weight, and continue to do reps until you either cannot do another one, or you run out of weight.

Sorting myth from truth about bodybuilding can help you design your workout, so it will be healthier and more productive. Training your mind to follow the truth about bodybuilding is like training your body. You can have discipline on two levels: body and mind.

## Benefits of stretching

Before beginning any exercise routine, you should do some warm-up exercises. This is usually done by performing stretching exercises, which helps prepare the body for more rigorous activity. Here are some of the benefits of stretching.

### *1. Gives Your Body More Range of Movement*

If we are consistently doing the stretching exercises, the length of the muscles and tendons will increase. This helps expand the range of your movement. Therefore, the limbs and joints will be able to move more freely.

### *2. Increases Your Ability to Perform Skills*

When you have a wide range of movement, you will find yourself able to do more things. For example, you can jump high without feeling any pain when you come back down on the floor.

### *3. Helps to Prevent Injury*

By stretching, you can help prevent injury to joints, tendons and muscles. When the muscles and tendons are well flexed, they are considered to be in good working order. The muscles of the body will

be able to take on more exhausting and rigorous movements, with less probability of being injured. It will also promote faster recovery from injuries (should they occur), and you'll have fewer sore muscles.

#### *4. Helps to Reduce Muscle Tension*

If you perform regular stretching exercises, it is less likely the muscles will constrict. This will definitely relieve you of any muscle pain or problems.

#### *5. More Energy*

By stretching, you'll not only be able to move more freely, you will also have more energy. Stretching will also help enhance your mood.

Many people find it improves their overall confidence and well-being which makes you ready to tackle more things knowing your body is capable of handling it.

### **The Importance of Working Your Core Muscles**

#### *What Are Core Muscles?*

Your core muscles are those muscles found in the obliques, abdominals, lower back, and the glutes areas. These 4 areas of the body are the ones that usually frame the posture of a person.

Therefore, a good posture reflects the good condition of these muscle areas.

What many people don't know is that core muscles are actually the "core" or central part for all the strength needed to carry out different physical activities. This means if an individual's core muscles are physically fit, they will maintain equilibrium of the body, and will

stabilize the system every time the person is working out or moving around.

### *Strengthening Core Muscles*

The main responsibility of the core muscles is to provide enough power to the body to enable it to cope with the dynamic challenges of any physical activity the person encounters.

For this reason, many health and fitness experts have realized it is relatively more important to strengthen the core muscles than the other muscles in the body. Through series of experiments and research, they have found having a stronger core can reduce your risk of many posture related health problems.

For instance, well-conditioned core muscles can project good posture. It can also improve the endurance of the back, all the way through the day.

Why? Because the muscles included in the group of core muscles are actually the ones that initiate the proper stabilization of the whole upper and lower torso.

So, for those who desire to know and understand why it's important to strengthen the core muscles, here is a list of some of the benefits you can use as references:

- 1. Strengthening core muscles will improve posture, and prevent low back pain of muscular origin.*



This means, as you work stretching exercises into your routine, taking a particular focus on the muscles of the upper and front part of the trunk, including the abdominal and trunk muscles. By doing this, you will be strengthening the muscles of the back which extend to the spine.

*2. It will help tone the muscles, thereby, avoiding further back injury*

Exercising your core muscles will strengthen and tone your lower back muscles and buttocks, while stretching the hip flexors and the muscles on the front of the thighs.

When you get to this state, it will help prevent you from getting a serious lower back injury.

*3. Improves physical performance*

Exercising the core muscles, with slow, static stretching, is effective in relieving stiffness and enhancing flexibility. Once the flexibility has been improved, it stands to reason he will be able to perform his physical activities much more easily.

*4. They do not cause sore aching muscles*

Static stretching for core muscles is best for the muscles and connective tissues. Because it employs slow stretches only, it will not cause any soreness, as the quick, bouncing exercises relying on jerky muscle contractions do.

### *5. Lengthen muscles and avoid unbalanced footing as you get older*

Core muscle exercises will lengthen the muscles that have constricted as a result of pain. It also prevents pain from vigorous exercise, if they are included at the end of each workout.

Health and fitness experts highly recommend starting a core work out immediately, and repeating the routine at least twice a week. This can be done after the workout or even during the activity, for about 10 - 20 minutes only.

Indeed, core muscles are vitally important in determining good posture. Strengthening them can absolutely eliminate those annoying back pains.

### **Preventing Muscle Cramps**

Muscle cramps are something just about everyone will experience at sometime. A muscle cramp is the involuntary tightening of a muscle, which you can usually control. They most often occur in the legs and abdomen. These cramps can put a real damper on your workout, so its best to practice healthy habits, which can help prevent muscles from cramping while you exercise.

One way to help prevent a muscle cramp is to warm up your muscles before you start your workout session. Use the mat area of the gym (or mat at home) to stretch your muscles by doing some light lifting to prepare for a more intense workout. By giving your muscles a warm up, they will expand and contract better during exercise, preventing you from getting cramps.

If you are really out of shape, you will need to warm up on a larger scale. Just remember to start off slowly, and work your way up to harder and more intense exercises. If you are an athlete just returning to your sport after the off-season or an injury, you will be more prone to muscle cramps, like those just getting started. By building on the intensity of your workouts, you will build muscle mass more quickly as well, so don't overdo it from the start, and be sure to take enough time to rest between workouts.

It's also very important to keep your muscles, and the rest of your body, hydrated. Be sure to drink lots of water before, during, and after your weight training or any other workout. You should supply your body with water before you feel thirsty, so drink at regular intervals.

If you are out in the sun, or doing anything that is making you sweat, avoid water poisoning. This is where those 'sports juices' can come in very handy. By drinking sports juices, you help to replenish all the nutrients your body is losing. If you lose too many of these nutrients, you may experience muscle spasms and cramps.

If by some chance you do get a muscle cramp, don't fret. This is normal and will most likely go away in just a few minutes, although, you may be sore a bit longer. If you get a muscle cramp, stop what you're doing, and gently stretch and massage the muscle until it is no longer cramped. If you can, apply heat, which will also help relax the muscle, and if you are sore, cold compresses will help your muscles heal.

If you continue to experience cramps regularly, or it takes a long time to get rid of them, see your doctor to make sure there is not a serious medical condition present.

## Bodybuilding That Fits Your Unique Body

Everyone's body is different, so it only makes sense, not everyone should train their bodies the same way. Any professional will tell you the key to successful bodybuilding is to know your body, know your limits and know how your body will respond to certain conditions. That being said, to help optimize your bodybuilding workout, you need to determine your body type.

Everyone falls into one of 3 categories: ectomorph, mesomorph, and endomorph. By discovering the category that best fits your body, you can help find the lifestyle that will work best for you. Before engaging any lifestyle changes, you should always check with your doctor.

Ectomorphs are people who naturally have little or no fat (the lucky ones). Usually, ectomorphs body types are tall and have longer limbs as well. Due to their build, most ectomorphs will choose endurance sports, like running. But, if you fall into this category, you can still become a world-class bodybuilder.

To begin, ectomorphs will need to up their calorie count and eat more throughout the day, but in smaller proportions. You should try to increase your intake by at least 500 calories per day to help put on the weight. When we say eating more, it doesn't necessarily mean eating anything you want. You will need to have a high calorie healthy diet if you want to be successful at bodybuilding.

If you are an ectomorph, you should cut most of the cardiovascular activity from your workout, and focus mainly on intense weight training. You don't want to overtrain, but you should get to the gym every 3 - 4 days for a hard full-body workout, which involves all muscle groups. It may be difficult for ectomorphs to gain muscle mass, but with a lot of hard work and dedication, it can be accomplished.

Mesomorphs are the people everyone envies. These are the people you see who eat lots of junk food, yet still have great bodies! One trap mesomorphs easily fall prey to is the mindset that because they can skip workouts or eat pizza, without any visible effect, they think it's not affecting their bodies at all. However, this is not true. Good genes may have given you a good body, but things such as heart disease will still effect you just as easily as anyone else.

Mesomorphs shouldn't need to change the amount of food they eat. But, if you fall into this category, make an effort to eat healthy foods, and lots of good carbohydrates instead of junk food. When you workout, you may choose to do a full-body training session, but it will probably be more beneficial for you to target and define muscles in specific areas.

Endomorphs also have no problem gaining muscle mass. However, unlike mesomorphs, these people also have no problem gaining weight. Diet control is the key to successful bodybuilding for endomorphs. Eat smaller meals, spread out throughout the day, and cut out the junk food.

Be sure to drink plenty of water, and try to stop eating for the day about 3 hours before you go to bed. Endomorphs shouldn't have any problem becoming muscular, but they need to hit the gym for lots of cardiovascular workouts, if possible, on a daily basis. It will help melt the fat from your body, so you can begin to see the muscles you are working to define.

Whatever your body type, bodybuilding can be the perfect sport for you. If you are sensible about your habits, and dedicated to the sport, you will find definition and muscle growth can be accomplished.

When you know the facts about bodybuilding, you can use them in your workout plan to give you a healthier and more productive workout. You can train your mind to follow the truth about bodybuilding, just as you can have discipline regarding the training of your body. Discipline on two levels; body and mind.

### The Difference Between Powerlifting and Bodybuilding

It's not surprising that many people think power lifting, and bodybuilding, are the same thing because many of the goals are the same. However, power lifting is actually a sport evolved from bodybuilding, and is of relatively modern origin, with the first formal competitions occurring in the mid 1960s. This sport is open to both men and women.

If you are involved in bodybuilding, you can benefit from power lifting, and vice versa. The main difference comes at the competition level. When power-lifting, your goal is to lift as much weight as possible, while in bodybuilding, your goal is to look as big and well defined as possible.

Powerlifting competitions are divided into 3 parts: the squat, the bench press, and the dead weight lift. When power lifting, the winner is determined not by how big your muscles look, but rather, how much total weight you lifted. Competitors are placed into classes determined by things such as age and experience, and are asked to lift in each of the three competitions.

Regardless whether you're a powerlifter or a bodybuilder, you'll want to eat a healthy diet. It's not enough to just eat enough calories in a day to optimize muscle building; you also need to eat the right foods. You'll want to stay away from bad carbohydrates, such as potatoes, and fried foods. Instead, your diet should include lots of pasta, green vegetables, and protein. If your body type requires it, you may need to cut back on certain foods in order to lose weight.

Keep in mind though, powerlifting is not a measure of body fat or how well your muscles are defined, so packing on a few extra pounds won't effect how the judges view you. Having less body fat, though, will promote a healthier lifestyle altogether, and you will be able to feel better in the gym when you are weight training, if you cut the junk food out of your diet.

You will want to maintain a regular workout routine at the gym, just as you would if bodybuilding. While workouts are very important, it's also necessary to give your muscles some time off to rest, so they can recover and build in between workouts. You should also consider taking a full week off every 8 -12 weeks. This method is encouraged by many trainers, and has been found to be beneficial for most people because it reduces stress, allows your body to breathe, and helps you

stay committed to your sport.

If you enjoy competitive sports, such as powerlifting, you can find it to be both beneficial to your health and rewarding. To get the most out of it, you should set goals for yourself before each competition, and focus on competing against your own goals instead of simply beating the other powerlifters. If you're dedicated to your diet and training and if you keep a positive attitude, you can succeed and enjoy the powerlifting world.

## Competitive Bodybuilding

If you enjoy competitive sports, and are going to be putting a lot of time, effort, and money into building up your body, you may decide to show off your physique by participating in a bodybuilding competition.

These bodybuilding contests are held in various places all around the world and showcase some of the most physically fit bodies in the world. There are different levels of competition, so don't worry if you aren't Mr. Universe quite yet. You can still find a competition that is right for you. If you're going to get into a competitive bodybuilding contest, please be aware it will require dedication to your training, including a healthy diet and lots of exercise.

The first thing you should do, if you decide to begin competitive bodybuilding, is to find a trainer. It will be much easier to break into the competitive bodybuilding world, if you have someone with a little experience under his or her belt, to help you.

Your trainer will help you decide on a training schedule and diet plan,



and also help you decide whether or not you want to take supplements. Natural training is, of course, always the best way to go, however you may want to take vitamins or other supplements to make sure your body is getting the proper nutrients it needs, even if you cut bad foods out of your diet.

The next step will be to research some of the events that may be held near you. Local events are a good place to start, if you live in a big city. If you don't live in a big city, you may have to travel some distance to find competitive bodybuilding events, so you'll need to make plans accordingly. The fees and "rules of conduct" for these events can vary, so be sure to do your homework ahead of time. Normally, you will have an orientation session the day or morning before the event, but you need to be well prepared before this, so you don't look like a novice in front of the judges.

Prior to the competition, you should not only train, but also learn how to flex while you pose, yet still look relaxed. In order to look your best, you may want to get a tan, remove body hair, and take other measures to help your body look as lean and sculpted as possible. If your trainer has participated in competitive bodybuilding, they should be able to give you advice and pointers in these areas.

After the competition, it helps to evaluate your performance, good or bad, so you can learn from your mistakes, as no one is perfect. By learning from your past mistakes, you can perform better at future competitive bodybuilding events.

You'll want to stay focused on the staging area, and observe what the

other competitors are doing that you can apply to your own performance. Once the winners have been announced, and the applause has stopped, head over to the judges' table. These judges are the experts, and they can give you a quick verbal assessment of your body, as well as some very good advice for your next competition. Don't take offense at anything negative they may tell you. Be humble, and listen to everything they have to say, both the good and bad. Before you know it, you'll be the one in the winner's circle, and it will be your turn to give advice to the new competitive bodybuilders in your area.

For some bodybuilding competitions, such as the Arnold Classic or Mr. Olympia, a competitor is only allowed to enter once he has won a qualifying amateur competition. To be qualified as a professional you may also be required to join the membership of a professional bodybuilding organization such as the IFBB.

Many natural bodybuilding organizations such as the NPA(Natural Physique Association) and NANBF (North American Natural Bodybuilding Federation) also have professional ranks.

## **Creatine and Bodybuilding**

Creatine is a nitrogenous organic acid that naturally occurs in vertebrates, and helps supply energy to muscle cells. It is a natural substance found in some of the foods we eat, largely red meat.

In recent years, creatine has been proven to help bodybuilders in a variety of ways. Since this discovery, creatine has become one of the popular dietary supplements used by bodybuilders and powerlifters.

In the human body, creatine is synthesized mainly in the liver by the use of parts from three different amino acids - arginine, glycine, and methionine. 95% of it is later stored in the skeletal muscles, with the rest in the brain, heart, and testes.

Be sure to discuss the health risks of taking creatine supplements with your doctor, but you should be aware that there are benefits to raising your creatine levels as well.

- 1 When you are lifting, ATP (Adenosine 5'-triphosphate) helps your muscles contract. With each contraction, the amount of ATP in your system decreases until you are maxed out to the point where you can no longer lift. The only way to replenish ATP in your muscles is with creatine.
- 2 Creatine enhances your body's ability to store glycogen. Muscles use glycogen to fuel the anabolic process. Your body needs adequate glycogen to help your muscles recover after an intense workout. By doing this, your muscles grow bigger as well as faster.
- 3 If you aren't getting enough creatine in your diet, you may want to use a creatine supplement. Creatine is normally found in red meats, like steak. If you're a vegetarian, or someone who doesn't eat a lot of creatine-hearty foods, you may benefit from the use of supplements. Glycogen (a carbohydrate) is often achieved by what is called carb-loading (like eating lots of pasta). By taking a creatine supplement, you will have to do less of this.

- 4 Creatine also increases cardiovascular activity. When you take creatine supplements, you will most likely notice the effects in your anabolic workout, but it can also positively affect your cardiovascular exercise as well. Since creatine helps increase the amount of aerobic activity you can do before getting winded, you will be able to exercise longer and more intensely.

Although studies have shown it is generally safe to use, creatine is not for everyone. Unlike a lot of anabolic steroids and other supplements on the market, you should not start using creatine without first consulting with a doctor. You also want to be sure you are using creatine in the right amounts. Although the label should give you a general idea on how to use it, to use it most efficiently you should calculate the amount you want to use in accordance with your weight and percentage of body fat. The result of increased creatine in the body is the chemical *creatinine*, which is normally easily flushed out of the body through the kidneys. If you have kidney problems, however, increased amounts of creatinine can be harmful to your health. As with any substance, you must use common sense when taking creatine. If you don't abuse the use of creatine, it can help you achieve results faster.

### The Down Side of Supplements

Many people take dietary supplements to help them stay healthy, but many bodybuilders abuse supplements, in an effort to get bigger muscles faster. The most commonly abused drug among bodybuilders is the anabolic steroid. While it's true you may see results in less time than a natural bodybuilder, the disadvantages of using steroids greatly outweigh the benefits.

The first thing you should know about steroids, is they are illegal. You also need to know that competitive bodybuilders often have to undergo drug tests before they will be allowed to enter an event. If you get caught with steroids, it can ruin your reputation both in and out of the bodybuilding world. The negative side effects of steroids are not only the legal aspects. Using steroids can do some serious damage to your body, as well as your overall health.

Even though men and women may react differently to steroids, they both face the same types of dangers. For example, steroids will cause a man's testicles to shrink, sperm count to drop, have a deeper voice, hair loss, and make him develop breasts. Women too will experience deepened voices and hair loss, as well as enlargement of the clitoris, and increased growth of facial hair. In teenagers, who have not yet finished growing, it will stunt their growth. If these side effects haven't put a scare into you yet, continue reading. It can get much worse.

For one thing, steroids can damage your liver by causing you to develop jaundice; a disease with flu-like symptoms that turns your skin yellow. Steroids have also been known to cause cancer and liver tumors. Perhaps the worst side effect is the one that affects the heart. Using steroids can cause enlargement of the heart, as well as hardening of the arteries, both health issues are precursors to heart disease, and in the end heart failure.

People who abuse these supplements have also been known to develop skin spots, acne, trembling, and uncontrollable anger that makes user

become physically violent.

Truth be told, steroids are only useful if you are a dedicated bodybuilder already, so you won't gain any muscle mass simply by popping pills or injecting yourself. Steroids help your muscles recover from training, so while most body builders need at least 48 hours between sessions to see results, users are ready to train again in a few hours. Therefore, users can build muscles faster.

You must keep in mind, just because things happen faster, does not always mean its better. There are some bodybuilders who are pushing for steroids to be legal when used responsibly, but professionals generally agree that abusing steroids will result in an untimely death.

It is not necessary to use steroids to achieve the kind of body, bodybuilders admire. Healthy professional bodybuilders state that there are good training principals, which include the importance of having a nutrient-rich diet, along with the proper rest. Having both nutrition and rest will create a body others will envy.