

"The Ultimate Guide To Building *Shirt-Ripping* Muscles and Melting Fat Fast!"

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1. How To Choose The Right Gym

Choosing the right gym is a very important step that you will need to take if you want to get into shape and become a bodybuilder. Gyms vary greatly, in terms of price, equipment and type of members. A great way to find a good gym is to ask your friends for recommendations, but remember that what might be right for your friends might be unsuitable for you. Have a look around and try and find the best place to suit your training needs. Think about price, what you get for your membership, the equipment, its location, special training options and how well the gym is run.

What Are The Costs?

Once you've found a good potential gym, look at its cost. Many gyms offer reduced rates and discounts if you sign up for long periods of time, however don't be rushed into a deal. Visit the gym for a few sessions or weeks and see how it goes before you commit to anything. Do you get any extras, such as fitness classes like yoga or circuit training or smaller things such as towels? Remember, cost is not always the same as value. Evaluate the value you get at different gyms and try and identify where you will get the most value for money.

Get Inside The Gym

Once you've decided on a gym worth considering, have a look around and inspect the equipment and see what is available to you. Visit the gym on different days and different times of day, so you can see how busy it gets and if you will have to wait to use equipment. Look at how clean the equipment is and if there are spray bottles to clean up the equipment after it has been used. Also check the cleanliness of the changing and shower facilities, and also see how secure the lockers are. With any gym there are going to be problems and breakdowns, but these should always be fixed quickly.

Location, Location, Location

Don't forget to consider the location; ideally you want it to be close to your house or on route from work or school, so that you can stop by easily. Finally, check out the opening hours and operations of the gym. Do they suit your schedule? You may also want to consider joining a specialized gym which caters specifically for certain types of people. You're going to be spending a lot of time in the gym so be careful when choosing one and ideally try and find one that caters to all your needs and also has a friendly, but serious training environment.

2. Rules Of The Gym -What You Must Know Before You Enter A Gym

If you are really new to bodybuilding and I mean really new, so new in fact that you've never set foot in a gym, then you need to know that there are many accepted rules of behaviour in the gym.

Following these unwritten rules is almost as simple as having good manners and being considerate to other gym users, but there are a number of things that you might not deem rude until you've actually regularly go to your gym. Here are some essential tips to keep you on the good side of other gym users.

Gym Etiquette

Don't be dirty and keep it clean. This means everything, yourself, the clothes you wear and the equipment you use. Most gyms have showers so make use of them, remember to put on some effective deodorant, there's nothing worse than having to train near to someone with repulsive body odour. Wash your training gear regularly to stop it from becoming smelly, if you leave them bacteria will grow in them and make them really rancid. Also it could make you ill. Carry a towel with you as you workout, everyone sweats so you'll need it. Once you've used a piece of equipment wipe it down and spray it with antibacterial spray if your gym has it, so that it's safe and clean for other users.

Don't Hog The Machines

Don't lose track of time, remember you are not the only person in the gym; other gym goers want to use the same machines and weights as you, so try to use one piece of equipment at a time, rather than skipping from one to another without regard for other users. Also don't be surprised to find the machine or equipment you were using in use if you leave it for a minute, everyone has a routine to stick to. Don't ask strangers to spot you as you lift; it's not fair on them and their schedule, if you can, train with a partner or friend so you can help each other out or ask a member of staff.

Leave It As You Found It

That's right; leave everything in the gym as you found it. Clean and wipe down the equipment you've used, replace any weights or other equipment back to where you found them, and if you're not sure ask. If you find any broken equipment report it to a member of staff immediately, if something breaks while you're using it, don't worry, report it, most equipment breaks as it ages at some point.

Overall, just use your common sense and be thoughtful and considerate towards other gym users. You are at the gym to train, so help make it an optimum training environment for yourself and other users. That way you'll get the most out of it and your training will benefit as a result.

3. The Importance of Goal Setting

Before you step in the gym you have some important tasks to do. You need to sit down and think about what you want to achieve and where you want to be and give yourself a time frame to achieve it in. You see, you need to be setting goals, not just for bodybuilding but for all aspects of you life. You won't see results if you don't set goals. The most successful bodybuilders around the world all have goals and keep records of them and those they've achieved. This is a great way to stay motivated on a day to day basis and track your progress over the years.

Your Goals Should Be...

Get yourself a training diary to write your goals in and to keep track of your progression. Remember the SMART analogy? When you write your goals they should be Specific, Measurable, Realistic and Time-related. By writing down each goal you make them real instead of some vague hope for the future.

Set long, short and medium term goals, so you are setting deadlines to achieve your goals which will help you keep on target and dedicated. I recommend you set weekly goals and aim to have successful weeks which move you towards your targets. It doesn't take long for those successful weeks to add up to successful years; you'll hit those longer term goals with ease. Also having strict deadlines or timelines will make you feel guilty for missing sessions or eating unhealthy foods.

You Must Have A Training Diary

Apart from keeping you motivated, your training diary is also a great place to record what you do in the gym, in terms of the weights you use and the reps you do, so that you can track your progress and gradually increase the intensity of your training. If you find that your training hits a plateau and you can't seem to improve further then you know it's time to take a rest or change your routine to keep your muscles challenged.

Find A Friend

There are a lot of people who can push you to achieve your goals; however most of it has to come from you wanting it bad enough. You can draw on the support of your friends and family when the going gets tough, and having a training partner or coach will certainly help you achieve your goals. If your ultimate goal is to compete in competitions then you should really find a coach.

If you fail to achieve any of your goals by the time you set, don't give up. You should be constantly re-evaluating your goals all the time and monitoring your progress. Then you can adjust your goals and your training program appropriately. Bodybuilding is not an easy sport and it takes a lot hard work and effort, by

setting yourself goals you make the task a lot easier.

4. Adapt Your Bodybuilding Routines for Your Body Type

It's fairly obvious that no two humans beings are exactly the same, thus it should come as no surprise that different people need to train in different ways and have different bodybuilding routines. One of the primary factors that will help you become a successful bodybuilder is to understand your own body, to realize what your limits are and to appreciate how your body will react under stress. Therefore in order to make the most of your bodybuilding routines and workouts you must know your body type and understand how it will affect your training.

Scientists have developed a body type classification system based on a number of factors and everybody falls into one of the following three categories (you may fall in-between, as these are quite generalized): endomorph, mesomorph and ectomorph. Once you have established your body type, you can then adjust your bodybuilding routine, training program and lifestyle accordingly. You should also speak to your doctor to get their advice before you start training and to get a check up.

The first category we shall look at is the endomorph body type. Endomorphs usually find it really quite easy to gain muscle mass, but also they find it very easy to put on weight. Thus having a great deal of self discipline is required to control your diet if you're to be a successful bodybuilder. A great tip for endomorphs is to eat 6 small meals at regular intervals throughout the day to ward off hunger and snacking on junk food. Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated and don't eat anything for at least a few hours before going to bed to facilitate fat loss. Endomorphs tend not to have too much difficulty putting on muscle mass, however if you want good definition in your muscles you'll need to do plenty of cardiovascular training such as running. Doing this should increase your muscular definition by burning off excess fat. If you can, do your cardio training after your weights to burn off even more fat.

The next category we shall look at is the ectomorph body type. These are people who are generally tall, thin and have long arms and legs; they naturally have virtually no fat. Most ectomorphs often find themselves in endurance sports such as x-country running or athletics (high jump), however they can and do also become professional bodybuilders. The main thing that ectomorphs need to do is to start eating more of the right healthy foods, thus increasing the calorie intake to put on weight and build muscle. They should focus on weight training as opposed to cardiovascular training and train to failure so you can't lift the last

weight of a set. Make sure that you're lifting weights at least 3-4 days a week, with a rest day between sessions to allow optimum recovery and muscle growth.

The final category are the mesomorphs, which fall in between the other two categories and are often the envy of the other two body types, as mesomorphs find it easy to build muscle and keep off fat. However, this can often lead to a false sense of security as having this mindset leads to missed training sessions, which eventually catches up with them. If you are a mesomorph just starting bodybuilding, don't change the amount you eat, but eat healthier and make sure you are eating enough protein to facilitate muscle growth. Mix up your training sessions to incorporate both full body work out sessions and those to target specific muscle groups to improve definition.

It doesn't matter what your body type is if you want to be a successful bodybuilder, just adjust your training routines and your eating habits accordingly. Be dedicated and passionate and you will achieve your goals.

5. A Beginners Guide to Bodybuilding – The Basics

As a beginner to bodybuilding there are few basics you need to know before you head off head first down the gym to start training to ensure that you maximize the effects of your work outs and minimize the risks of injury.

One of the biggest mistakes many people do when they are starting out in bodybuilding is to fail to do any research and so they don't see the results they want, so if you're reading this you're a step ahead of the game. A failure to see results causes serious frustration and many people stop training, so do your research first.

You need to learn the most effective and efficient methods to build muscle, burn fat and tone your body, plus learning how to live a healthy lifestyle is essential especially in terms of your nutrition.

One of the first things you need to do before you start any new training program or exercise regime is to get in touch with your doctor and get a full check up. If you are in your teens, a young adult or have had any health problems in the past this is especially important. Also your doctor should be able to give you advice about training programs, your diet and do general checks to ensure your body is in good order. Plus your doctor may be able to recommend good gyms to join.

As a beginner bodybuilder you should make a concerted effort too learn as much about your body and bodybuilding as possible, as it'll help you in your efforts to get that perfect body if you

know what you're training and why you're doing it. A good way to get started is to do train your entire body first by working the largest muscle groups, and then focus on specific areas that you want to tone and define. So don't just go down the gym every day and do a few hundred sit ups and expect to get a six pack, it won't happen. Don't forget to warm up before and after you session and stretch thoroughly to encourage muscle growth, keep you flexible and avoid injury.

If you don't eat healthy you won't build the quantity of muscle you could do otherwise and you'll never get the definition you want. Self discipline is essential. You also should speak to a nutritionist and learn the difference between good fats and carbs and bad fats and carbs; also you need to identify the optimum amount of protein you need in you diet.

When you are training make sure that you drink plenty of water to ward off dehydration. If you eat the correct foods and live a healthy lifestyle, such as not smoking, not drinking and ensuring you get enough sleep, you'll maximize all your training efforts significantly.

Finally speak to other gym goers and find a coach to teach you how to use the equipment properly and to design you a personalized training program to optimize you efforts. If there're professional bodybuilders at your gym, speak to them and ask them about how they did it. Follow your training program carefully to avoid overtraining and learn your body's limits so you don't injure yourself. If you eat and live healthy and stick to your training program you'll have the lean and toned body you desire in no time.

6. Simple Tips for Starting Competitive Bodybuilding

As a bodybuilder you should be aiming to enter into the competitive bodybuilding area and show off your body in a bodybuilding fitness competition, especially given the amount of time, effort and money you are putting into your training. Competitive bodybuilding fitness competitions take place all over the world and display some of the finest, athletic bodies on the planet.

Each competition has numerous categories and levels, so even if you are still a novice you can still find a competition that is at your level. However, if you are going to enter you're going to have to put in a lot of training before hand, so you'll need lots of self discipline and dedication in terms of actually getting down the gym and training and also your diet.

If you are serious about taking up competitive bodybuilding you should really try to find your self a training partner and coach.

As having the guidance and support of an experienced coach and the support from a training partner will definitely help improve your chances of success in the competitive bodybuilding arena. You and your coach need to determine your training programme, your diet and what competitions or events you want to train up to compete in. Also you need to decide whether you are going to be a 'natural' bodybuilder or whether you will use performance enhancing supplements such as steroids. The natural route is best for your body, but there is no reason why you shouldn't supplement your diet with essential vitamins and nutrients to help optimum growth and repair of your muscles, especially if you have to eliminate some foods from your diet to lose weight.

The next step is to put some time into investigate and find local competitive bodybuilding competitions near to home, as they are a great place to 'dip your toe' in and get started. If you can't find any locally you might have to travel to further a field to find competitions, so you'll need to schedule this into your training plans.

Competitive bodybuilding and fitness competitions often vary in terms of the price to enter and the competition rules and regulations, so make sure you do your research carefully. Usually you'll have a tour or guide the day before or on the morning of the event, so the more prepared you are, the more professional you will appear to the other competitors and judges.

Prior to the event, make sure that you have covered and mastered in training all the poses that you need to be able to do for the competition, and learn how to tense up your muscles for each pose while appearing relaxed. Other things you might want to do or take into consideration are tanning and removing excess hair and anything else that might improve your chances of winning. Ask your coach for advice on this or ask other bodybuilders you have met through your training.

Once you've done the competition, critically assess how well you have done, both positives and negatives, if you try and learn from your mistakes you'll continually increase your chances of winning in future events. See what the other competitors are doing and ask them questions too. You should also try and speak to the judges after the event to get their opinion on how you did and get some tips for your next competition. Listen carefully to all their hints and tips and sooner than you think you'll be the one winning all the prizes!

7. The Importance of a Healthy Diet for Bodybuilders

As a bodybuilder you lift heavy weights, you do loads of cardio exercise and you should have even cut out the booze. So you ask, "Why am I still struggling for definition?" well the simple answer

if your doing all the above is, your diet.

If your muscles are covered under a mass of fat it doesn't matter how many weights you lift or miles you run, you still won't get the definition you want if you don't have the proper diet.

Increasing your cardio exercise such as running will help you to some extent and will prevent you putting on more weight, however on it's own it won't be enough, you need to get into a routine of eating healthily. Don't think diet, think healthy lifestyle changes that you make in your eating habits, it doesn't take long to completely eliminate unhealthy food from your diet forever.

Here's How To Start

If you are serious about getting definition and being a bodybuilder, you're going to have to 'bite the bullet' and start counting your calories. Simply workout how many calories you are eating a day and slowly reduce this amount, for example cut down by 100 calories for a month and see how it goes, if necessary cut down further. Make sure you cut down only on the bad foods; as if you are weight training you need plenty of high protein nutritious meals to build and maintain your muscle. Use your brain and use your common sense.

What You Must Know

It is essential that you know the difference between foods which are good for you and foods which are bad for you, most importantly which carbohydrates and fats are good for you and which are bad. Carbohydrates and fat are essential for your body's survival, however they are not all created equal, some fats and carbohydrates are better for you than others.

Carbohydrates, such as pasta are made up of complex carbohydrates which take your body longer to digest and leave you feeling fuller for longer and are low in fat. Whereas fatty or fried foods such as chips are full of bad saturated fats which your body can't break down properly and simple carbohydrates which are digested quickly and stored as fat. So you need to avoid foods containing saturated fats (especially trans fats) and simple carbohydrates, such as chips.

Eat More?

Try to eat lots of green vegetables, as you won't get fat eating your greens, so eat as much of these as you want. They also contain lots of nutrients and essential vitamins and minerals. You should also try changing you eating routine, as many bodybuilders find it beneficial to eat 6 smaller meals a day rather than 3 large meals, as it keeps the body constantly fuelled and you are less likely to succumb to eating bad foods in your break. It will also help keep your metabolism raised, so you'll burn more fat as a side effect, plus you'll have more energy. Stick to your training program and try keeping a meal diary to track your food intake and you'll be seeing your results in no time. Fat burning and muscle building can be really easy if you follow a simple

plan.

8. Competitive Bodybuilding - How To Pose

If you are really serious about your bodybuilding and want to compete, it is essential that you take some time to learn how to pose properly and show off your muscles. In bodybuilding competitions, judges can only judge you on what they can see, so it is essential that you learn how to show off your muscles in the best way possible. It's not uncommon for people to win competitions due to having better posing skills than the other competitors with similar bodies.

The 8 Poses You Must Know

Generally speaking there are 8 poses which are usually used in bodybuilding competitions. However, whether you do them all or not depends on the length of the competition and the number of competitors present, as well as the level of the competition. Learn the difference between them and try to maximize each pose so that you look as big and as toned as possible.

The Quarter Turn

The pose that you must learn and you will more than likely have to do in competitions is the quarter turn. It is usually used for first evaluation of you and so you need to be able to do it well. Remember first impressions count big and the judges and audience will be watching closely.

Here's how to do the quarter turn:

- Begin with a semi-relaxed front on pose facing the judges, your arms should be at your sides and you can tense a little but the try to look as relaxed as possible.
- Then turn and face to the right.
- Technically you should face to the right full on, however the majority of bodybuilders twist their upper bodies a little to show off their abs, chest and shoulder muscles. Once you've done this, turn and face to the back to show off the muscles in your back and legs, use this chance to show off and flex your calves.
- To finish rotate to your right one final time to show off the other side of your body. Once again you might want to twist a bit to show off your torso.
- Finish the quarter turn in the position in which you started, the judges will then ask you to leave and the next competitor will take their turn.

The other poses that you might want to learn are: the front and rear double biceps, the front and rear lat spreads, the side

triceps, the side chest and finally the front abdominal and thigh pose. In most competitions you will probably be asked to give your most muscular pose, this is basically the pose which shows you off in the best light to impress the judges. Depending on the type of competition you enter, you might have to do a free posing round, where you have to perform a posing routine to music of your choice.

If you do decide to take up competitive bodybuilding make sure that you check the rules and regulations of the event before you sign up and make sure you prepare appropriately and practice your posing regularly. Should you need help and advice I recommend you speak to the bodybuilding pros down your gym or find a coach to help you with your posing.

9. Bodybuilders - You Must Avoid Getting These

Some bodybuilders can get something which you would usually hear only women talking about after fast weight gain due to pregnancy. However bodybuilders can also suffer the same affliction. What is this problem? Well it's stretch marks, and bodybuilders can get them from bulking up too quickly from doing lots of weight training. These blemishes can be a real pain, especially when you are trying to look as good as possible, and if you are competing they can be a big downfall for you.

What Are Stretch Marks?

As a human you have three layers of skin, these are the hypodermis, dermis and epidermis. The layer in which stretch marks occur is the dermis layer. Most of the time your skin has sufficient elasticity in it to be able to cope with your growth, unfortunately, during major growth spurts, such as during puberty, pregnancy and rapid muscle growth, you overcome your skin's elastic potential. This causes the elastic fibres of the dermis to rupture, thus causing the stretch marks.

Bodybuilders get stretch marks by building muscle mass too fast and thus putting on weight too quickly. To some extent they will disappear eventually. However when they first appear, the stretch marks can appear in a range of colour from pink to brown, and also darker shades of purple. In time your stretch marks will gradually become less noticeable and fade to a lighter colour. Often this will be a few shades lighter than your normal skin colour.

How To Stop Stretch Marks

There are a number of creams and products available that claim to reduce the appearance of stretch marks, however a lot like wrinkle creams, few if any actually do any good or work. There are other solutions which are believed to work such as fish oil and vitamin

E; however, you're probably better going without. If you are serious about bodybuilding and bulking up BIG, then you should really take preventative measures to stop stretch marks appearing in the first place.

Prevention Tips

There are a number of ways to prevent getting stretch marks, primarily by building yourself up slowly and not trying to get massive fast. Slow and steady wins the race. When you are building muscle, try to lose weight at the same time, as to some extent this will help balance for some of the muscle growth and reduce the stress on the dermis. If you smoke, quit. As smoking reduces the elasticity of your skin, plus it is really bad for your health and training efforts. As an extreme measure you can get your stretch marks reduced by laser treatment, but you should speak to your doctor about this and only consider it if they are really bad.

10. How Stress Can Make You Fat

If you are like most people you've probably gone through difficult periods in your life, if you have, you may have noticed that you put on weight, even if you were actually eating less. The fact is that stress can make you fat.

Here's Why...

Research scientists have discovered that the hormone cortisol, loves stress and basically the main job of cortisol is to degrade your muscles and cause you to put on weight. It is impossible to stop cortisol from being released from your body and it would be unwise to do so. However there are a few things that you can do to help keep cortisol levels in check and under control.

So What Is Cortisol?

Cortisol is actually released from the pituitary gland in the brain; its primary role is to help regulate your blood pressure. So when you get stressed, cortisol is released in large levels to help keep your blood pressure under check. The bad thing however is that it also breaks down protein and converts it into fat. It does so by breaking down the protein to amino acids, these are then broken down to give you energy. The problem is, if you are stressed over nothing, then you aren't using the energy, so it gets converted to fat and you lose muscle as well.

Ways To Control Cortisol Levels

There are a number of ways in which you can control cortisol levels; the easiest is simply by thinking positive and thinking happy thoughts. Don't forget that stress is physical as well as mental, so if you are overtraining you are putting extra stress on

your body and muscles which can induce your body to release more cortisol.

It is quite uncommon for your body not to be able to control cortisol levels or to consistently produce too much. However you can get medicines to help control cortisol levels for people who blame their weight gain on cortisol. But before you try these, give the natural methods a try first as you'll be much healthier for it. Just relax, chill out or even try yoga or meditation.

It is almost impossible to avoid stress and if you do find yourself stressed don't stop eating. Eat healthy snacks to provide your body with the energy it needs in these stressful situations, which should help reduce excessive cortisol release. If you maintain healthy eating and sleeping habits you should be able to reduce your stress levels. If you still think that your cortisol levels might be excessively high, speak to your doctor and get a proper consultation.

11. Why Children Should Undertake Strength Training

Children from 6 years old and above can benefit from doing light strength and weight training. The majority of parents however are cynical as to how healthy it is for children to do strength training, the fact is though, that children who start strength training early do not suffer from the common myth of stunted growth. Children who take up strength training have few if any disadvantages and it is a positive step for most children. As it will encourage your child to be active and learn the importance of exercise. You can also use it for extra family time and it will teach your child healthy habits for life.

Don't Start Them Too Early

Your children shouldn't start strength training until they are both emotionally and physically mature enough to deal with it. Generally this is at around age 6 for the majority of children, if in doubt speak to a doctor first. However as the child's parent you will no as well as anyone if your child is ready. They must be able to listen carefully and follow instructions to prevent injury or accidents, but the exercises you do should be fun, easy to do and not to technical or intense.

Remember your child is not an adult and their strength training shouldn't be anywhere near as intense or demanding as you might do. It's more important that you use the opportunity to teach your child healthy lifestyle habits than to try to get them to build up muscle. Only once they have gone through puberty, should they think about trying to build up muscle mass. Instead you should aim to improve basic endurance and strength, so that the child feels

better and fitter. This is especially important for overweight children who want to participate in sports and get healthy.

Here's What You Should Be Doing

Ideally you should consult a trainer to help you make proper training routine for your child, but you should just aim to make sure that they work out their whole body at least 3 times a week, remembering to include a proper warm up and cool down. For example you could have them do 20 minutes of cardio, broken into ten minutes of skipping, and ten minutes of running (or playing tag). Once they've done that you could do some strength training exercises without weights, such as a circuit; including press ups, star jumps, sit ups, squats, squat thrusts, burpees and leg raises for example. Once they've built up a basic level of strength and endurance you can start to introduce some light weights exercises.

Remember your child is a child and not an adult, so don't push them too hard, you're not aiming for them to bulk up so you should keep the weights light and only slowly increase them over a long period of time. Don't forget to finish with a proper cool down and stretching session.

Children are not perfect and they may not always do what you ask, and you may have bad days with them, but remember they are only children; you can always bribe them with healthy treats or bonus pocket money for behaving well. If you decide to take your child to a gym make sure you clear it with them first or find one that caters for children, alternatively join a circuit training class which would be ideal. Strength training can be fun and a great way to spend more quality time with your child so give it a try.

12. Here's Why You're Fat - And It's Not Your Parents Fault

Your bum's too big, your arms are puny and your belly's bulging; in life there's always going to be aspects of your body that you're not happy with. Most of these things are easy to change, however if you're an adult you can't make yourself taller, change your body type or make your shoulders wider. Accept the fact that some aspects of yourself you can never change, and instead focus on the things you can change, like losing the belly or putting some muscle on to your arms.

Genetics Are Not To Blame

Many people try to use genetics as a lame excuse for not having the body they want. For example if your stomach is a problem area, it is easy to blame your parents by saying it was a problem for them too and so you ignore the problem. This is not an excuse. It is exactly what you shouldn't do. Instead begin your workout targeting these problem areas, spend longer and be more intense in

your training.

Are You Just A Quitter?

Research has shown that many people such as yourself are simply quitting and moving on to other exercises to train other muscle groups where results come quickly and easily. Be persistent and keep training your problem areas, accept the fact that the gains may be slower and smaller than in other parts of your body. Seek guidance from the professional trainers in your gym to help improve your training program to hit those muscle groups that are troubling you, and remember to stick to your limits and don't over train, it will only inhibit your results.

The Solution To Your Problems

However as I mentioned before there are some things that you can not change about your body. Most men want to have broad shoulders, but if you were born with narrow shoulders there's not much you can do about it. But you can train in certain ways to create the impression that your shoulders are broader than they actually are, by proportioning your body appropriately. Work out your abs and do extra cardio to give yourself a lean, toned stomach, and build up your shoulders and your lats to give your body the sought after V shape. This will give the impression that your shoulders are nice and broad.

If your problem is too much fat on a particular area of your body then the solution is easy and there is no blaming your genetics here. You are going to have to cut down on your calories and do a lot more cardiovascular exercise. You will have to work hard and you may feel like quitting, but the final results will be well worth it.

Stop blaming your genetics, it's an easy excuse but it's not the real reason you don't have the body you want. Of course some things you can't change, like your height, but there is absolutely nothing stopping you from toning up, building muscle and losing weight. If you stick to and follow a proven training and nutrition program you cannot fail. The question is, "how much do you want it?"

13. Why Your Bodybuilding Efforts Could Go Up In Smoke

Smoking; it's one of the worst habits that you can have if you want to build muscle and get fit as a bodybuilder. If you smoke you put yourself at serious risk from a 'bucket load' of horrible health problems, including cancer, and as a bodybuilder you'll find that smoking is detrimental to your performance. Smoking cigarettes is highly addictive because of the nicotine content and is a difficult habit for new bodybuilders to give up. However if

you are truly committed to reaching your goals and enhancing your health, you need to make every effort to give them up.

The Negative Impacts of Smoking

The primary means in which smoking damages your training performance and health is by decreasing your lung capacity. When you workout, you need oxygen which you take from the air through your lungs, smoking decreases your lung capacity and thus less oxygen is transported to your muscles, inhibiting their ability to work hard. This means that bodybuilders who smoke can not train as hard or as long as non-smokers, thus reducing their ability to build bigger muscles.

If you are a competitive bodybuilder, long term smoking has bad effects on your appearance. As well as blocking up your lungs, tar from cigarettes turns your teeth yellow and although you may not be judged on your teeth, every aspect of your overall appearance can make a difference. If you smoke it gives the idea to the judges that you don't really care. Smoking also has the side effect of making your skin less elastic, causing you an increased likelihood of getting stretch marks, which can be very costly to remove.

You Must Quit

Quitting smoking is not an easy process, no matter what anyone tells you, but if you are determined to be a top bodybuilder you must quit. There are many programs out there to help you quit smoking, get your family and friends to help and support you. Tell everyone you know that you are going to quit; this will commit yourself to quitting, as you won't want to let them down. Once you've quit smoking you'll soon start to notice the benefits and you'll increase your ability to build muscle, plus you'll increase your overall health.

14. The Dangers of Bodybuilding Supplements

Nutritional supplements can be great in helping you stay healthy and ensuring you get all the necessary vitamins and minerals your body requires. However many bodybuilders take and misuse 'bodybuilding supplements', with goal of bulking up faster. The bodybuilding supplement which is most often misused by bodybuilders is anabolic steroids. Anabolic steroids will help you get bigger much faster than a natural bodybuilder, but the negative effects of such bodybuilding supplements seriously outweigh the benefits.

Bodybuilders Beware..

As a bodybuilder you must know that steroids are illegal, and most competitive bodybuilders have to take drug test before competing. The damage you will do to yourself by being caught out doing steroids will destroy your reputation within bodybuilding circles and outside them. Plus the damage you might do to your body is potentially very bad.

You'll Stop Being A "Real" Man

Here's What Steroids Might Do To You (as a man):

- They will cause men's testicles to shrink
- Steroids have been shown to lower men's sperm count
- Cause breasts to develop
- Induce you voice to deepen
- Trigger your hair to fall out

Who's the man now then?

Women also are effected; by a deepening of the voice, hair loss and also the development of facial hair. Teenagers who take steroids might have their growth stunted. And if all this isn't enough, it can get much worse.

Anabolic steroids can cause damage to your liver, with the side effect of jaundice. They are also believed to cause tumours in the liver and cancer. However the worst effect is found on the heart, as steroids can cause the heart to enlarge and the arteries to harden, with the result being heart disease and eventually heart failure.

Even More Side Effects

Other bodybuilding supplements have been found to cause spots, acne, shaking, and uncontrollable anger, also known as roid rage that causes the user to be extremely aggressive and violent.

I'm not going to touch in detail on the reasons why steroids help you bulk up, because I don't believe you should be taking them. All you need it hard work, dedication, good nutrition and a proven training program, and if you stick to it all you'll have the body of your dreams in no time.

15. The Number One Enemy of All Bodybuilders

Alcohol is the real enemy of all bodybuilders, as drinking alcohol makes it easy to get distracted from your training program and your healthy eating lifestyle. Most people like to have a few drinks at the weekend and it is hard to say no, especially if going out with the lads is one of your favourite pastimes.

The problem with this is that drinking alcohol will make you put on weight, as it has a high calorie content, it will also inhibit your ability to put on and build muscle mass. The thing you need to realise though is that you don't have to give up your fun

lifestyle; you just need to be more responsible and disciplined with regards what you put into your body. Trade in your pint of ale for a bottle of water, or sugar free drink.

Alcohol is Bad..

You need to think of your body as a machine that you need to keep well oiled. By putting alcohol (or junk food) into your body you are clogging up your machine and reducing it's effectiveness to run properly. Alcohol has no real nutritional value and contains a lot of calories which have no benefit to you or your body. It is easy to consume in excess of a thousand calories in just a few drinks.

If you are serious about getting a ripped, lean body then you seriously need to give the booze the boot. As it doesn't matter how healthy you eat in the day if you go and drink a days worth of calories in liquid form on a night out. Plus alcohol actually slows down your metabolism, which will help you grow a beer belly, and seriously limits your muscle growth and fat loss efforts.

The Final Straw..

I'm sure you've had a hangover, I absolutely hate them and they put me off drinking along time ago. The problem with hangovers is that they ruin the whole of your next day, they wreck your schedule, they destroy your motivation to do any work never mind get down the gym and train. Even if it's your rest day, it's likely you'll skip meals, stay in bed too long and not get the right nutrients and food. Alcohol also dehydrates you and depletes your body of key nutrients further exacerbating the effects.

Alcohol also lowers the natural levels of testosterone in your body, which as a bodybuilder is a big "no no", as testosterone is a key hormone in helping you build muscle. Also alcohol lowers your inhibitions, thus making it more likely that you'll stop for a kebab or pizza on the way home, which you wouldn't touch with a barge pole in normal circumstances.

Having a beer every now and again won't do you too much harm, especially if you are only bodybuilding for fun, however if you want to compete in competitions then alcohol is out of the question. Sorry. If you are going out on a night, try to position yourself as the designated driver, you won't be able to drink and you won't get grief from your mates for not having a beer. If you do have a drink, schedule an extra 30 minutes of cardio into your training plan to make sure you burn off the extra calories.

16. Build Muscle Faster By Thinking Positive

In bodybuilding and any fitness endeavor for that matter, your mindset is one of the most important aspects. If you don't have the mental strength to think positive when you are struggling your

are likely to get frustrated, give up more easily, miss sessions or become slack on your nutrition. If you can take control of your mind, you will be more disciplined and determined to stick to your routines, and as a result you will build muscle and burn fat faster.

How To Think Positive

To start off with you need to get motivated, take a few minutes to think about what you want to achieve and why, write it all down so you commit yourself. What is your motivation? If you want to compete that's great, write it down. Many people don't want to compete or become professional bodybuilders, if so that's great too, it might be that you just want to slim down and bulk up, whatever it is, just write down your personal goals.

You need to set yourself long term goals and also short term, smaller goals for week to week. Reassess your progress and your goals weekly and adjust them as necessary, keep them SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-related. Follow this formula and you will not go far wrong. Always keep an eye on your goals when you are training, this will help you stay motivated when the going gets tough.

Stay Positive

Whatever you do, don't get frustrated, bodybuilding is one of the toughest activities you can do and it can become annoying when you don't see results immediately. The fact is, it takes time to build your perfect body, and it doesn't happen over night. And depending on your body type, fitness levels and eating habits prior to starting training your results will be faster or slower to achieve, so you have to set your goals appropriately.

If you follow a proven training plan, do the proper exercises and stick to a healthy diet and lifestyle, you will noticeably lose weight and build muscle within 3 weeks. If you are a real beginner you should speak to a personal trainer or do some research and find an appropriate plan to follow. They will be able to show you proper form and also give you tips to help you hit your goals. Once you start to see results you won't look back, so don't get discouraged early on.

Finally stay dedicated and if you find that bodybuilding is not for, look for something that you enjoy for example I also enjoy martial arts and hill running, you may find that swimming is better for you. To stay dedicated, find a training partner and work with them to stay on track and motivated, having a training partner makes a big difference. You can compete with each other and really push yourselves, and you'll be much less likely to skip a session.

In conclusion you should enjoy your training, it maybe hard and sometimes you might feel like giving up, but if you keep your goals in sight and stay dedicated you'll see improvements. And once you start to see your muscles bulging and your six-pack

appearing, it will inspire you to work harder. Stick to your training program and go for your goals and you'll have the body of your dreams in no time.

17. How To Prevent Bodybuilding Injuries

As a bodybuilder you are going to be training hard, so it is essential that you do your utmost to take care of your muscles and prevent injury. Before you do anything you should read up on safe bodybuilding practices such as proper lifting techniques, warming up and cooling down. Here we shall discuss some tips on how to stay safe down the gym.

This Is Essential...

The most important thing that you should do is a proper warm up followed by a warm down at the end of you session. Spend at least 15 minutes warming up; 5 minutes of light aerobic exercise such as jogging then 10 minutes of stretching to loosen off and prepare your body for activity. Lift some light weights before you get started on the serious stuff to prepare your muscles for the stress you're about to put them under.

Know Your Limits

The next important thing you should know is your limits for each exercise, everyone is different, so don't try to lift more than you feasibly can, as you could get injured. Make sure that your workout is intense, but never sacrifice good form to try and lift heavier weights, as this is a recipe for disaster. If you are lifting weights you should be able to do at least eight reps, if you can't, reduce the weight until you build up your strength. You'll get better results by pushing yourself close to your max than you will if you overexert yourself. You'll find you'll get better definition and muscle increase by being close to this threshold than trying in vain to train above it.

Spot This...

When you are lifting large amounts of weights you need to have a spotter, especially for when you are doing exercises such as the bench press. Ideally your spotter should be someone of a similar strength as you, as they will be able to help you out if you get in trouble. Make sure that you help them by returning the favour once you've finished on the machine. Ideally your spotter should be your training partner as if anything were to happen to you they would know you, and be able to help staff contact the necessary people. Plus your training partner will help you hit your goals and keep you motivated.

Once you know your training program and have been shown the proper form, try working out in front of a mirror to keep your form in check, as it is easy to pick up injuries by not maintaining the

correct form. If you have a training partner ask them to keep an eye on your form too, if not, ask a gym trainer to help you out. Follow the basic fundamentals and use your common sense and you shouldn't go to far wrong. Finally, make sure you have a solid and proven training program, don't just try and 'wing it' as you go or you'll come unstuck, get injured and won't get the results you want.

18. Human Growth Hormone (HGH) and Muscle Building

Human growth hormone or HGH as it is also known has been the talk of bodybuilding and muscle building circles for a number of years now. Research has shown that having high levels of human growth hormone can be beneficial if you are trying to build muscle especially as you get older (you produce less HGH as you age). However, the use of human growth hormone via injections is a contentious issue as there are a number of side effects associated with injecting human growth hormones.

Before you do anything consult your doctor, find out the advantages and disadvantages and take their advice. If you can, avoid injecting human growth hormones, there are ways to raise your HGH levels naturally and safely which this article will discuss.

So What Is Human Growth Hormone?

Human growth hormone is found in all of us, it is most prevalent when we are children, as it is required for the rapid tissue growth that occurs at this stage in life. HGH also plays a role in regulating our metabolism. You should never use HGH as you are growing as it can be very dangerous, after puberty though HGH levels start to decline in the body and continues to do so as we become adults. This is why bodybuilders see HGH injections as a means to build bigger muscles, as usually their natural HGH levels will have fallen. However there are effective natural ways to raise the level of HGH in your body.

Natural Ways To Raise Levels Of HGH

The most effective is to get an early night and get into a strict sleep routine. The human growth hormone is released naturally in your body in the first part of your sleep. So by ensuring you get a good night sleep you'll optimize the release of HGH and increase tissue growth and repair. If you aren't getting enough sleep, you're 'shooting yourself in the foot', as you're actually inhibiting the release of HGH and thus the growth of your muscles.

Here's What Arnie Did..

It is reported that Arnie would get up at 3 am and do a weights training session, so that his HGH levels were at their highest, he

would then go back to bed and have a proper sleep ensuring more HGH would be released and thus increasing muscle growth.

HGH levels are also increased naturally when you workout, as weight training has a beneficial effect on the HGH levels, so getting down the gym will help in itself. As you get older counteract lower HGH levels by training harder and getting more sleep, also ensure that you have a good diet and you should never need to consider HGH injections, because you don't need them. If you have a proven training program stick to it, you shouldn't need to use HGH.

19. Discover How To Stop and Prevent Muscle Cramps

No-One is Safe From Muscle Cramps

When you are training to get fit or build muscle you are going to get muscle cramps at some stage in your training program, it happens to everyone. Believe it or not people who don't train also get muscle cramps, so no-one is safe!

Simply, muscle cramps are just muscle contractions which happen completely involuntarily and usually occur in your leg and stomach muscles. Muscle cramps are a real pain, and can really disrupt your training workout, but there are a number of things you can do to help reduce the frequency and probability of muscle cramps.

Tips To Prevent Muscle Cramps

There are a number of reasons for muscle cramps; the main one is that they are induced by dehydration, low salt and ion levels in the body. So make sure that you carry a good energy drink with you to training, preferably an isotonic drink which has the correct composition of sugars, salts and other ions.

Make sure that you warm up properly before you start training, do at least five minutes of light jogging or skipping to get your blood flowing and cardiovascular system ready. Follow this with some dynamic and static stretching to loosen off your muscles before you do any lifting or intense exercise, as this will also help prevent injuries and allow you a full range of motion in your exercises.

If you have been out of training for a while make sure you place more emphasis on warming up and warming down than you would normally as you are more prone to getting muscle cramps when you've out for a while, the same applies to beginners. Gradually build up the intensity and ensure the muscle groups which you are training have 48 hours to recover before working them again especially if you are doing weights.

The most important thing that you can do to reduce muscle cramps

is to stay well hydrated, sip water or your energy drink regularly throughout your training session to keep on top of it. If it is hotter or more humid than normal, drink more as you will lose extra fluid through sweat, so it's important that you constantly replace it.

Key Points:

- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated
- Carry a sports drink to replace ions and nutrients lost through sweat
- Warm up and warm down properly

Muscle cramps are normal, every athlete gets them at some point, they usually go away after a minute or so, or quicker if you can stretch the muscle out, however the muscle may remain painful afterwards. If it does, softly massage and stretch the muscle to help it relax, then ice it and rest it for a few days.

20. The Hidden Benefits Of Creatine For Muscle Building

The muscle building supplement creatine is actually a natural substance which is most commonly found in foods such as red meat. However it has become a staple supplement for many bodybuilders who use creatine for building muscle, as it has been shown to help bodybuilders in a number of ways. Before you think about taking creatine make sure you speak to your doctor.

Benefits of Creatine

The first major benefit of creatine is to aid the rebuilding of adenosine triphosphate (ATP), which is used to power your muscles while lifting weights. ATP levels in your muscles reduce each time you lift so by taking creating supplements it allows you keep lifting for longer as your ATP levels will be higher. Thus you can train harder for longer and as a result get better training results.

Secondly, creatine enhances your body's ability to store glycogen; glycogen is the principle storage form of glucose. Thus creatine helps your body store more glycogen in the muscles, so allowing you to train harder and longer. Creatine supplements are also beneficial if you don't get sufficient quantities of it in your normal diet. For example vegetarians often don't get enough creatine in their diets as it is mainly found in red meats.

Are You Going To Use Creatine?

Whether you decide to use creatine or not is really down to you, don't take the decision lightly as creatine is not for all bodybuilders. Most research has shown that creatine is safe to

use, however you should always consult your doctor before starting to take creatine supplements.

Make sure that you follow the dosage guidelines carefully so that you get the best results. Also you will need to drink extra water, as one of the side products is increased levels of creatinine which is filtered from the body by the kidneys, so you need to drink extra water especially if you have kidney problems, as creatinine is not good for your health and body. Use your common sense and use your brain and you too can see how creatine, when combined with a proven training program, can help you build bigger muscles fast.

21. Carbohydrate Counting - Is It Really Necessary?

New diet fads spring up seemingly everyday, well maybe not quite everyday, but every couple of years a new diet fad pops up that grabs everybody's attention. It doesn't matter who you are, eating a healthy diet is an essential part of your daily routine and money making diet fads don't have to be part of that.

Most diets encourage you to start carbohydrate counting; with the premise that cutting out carbohydrates will help you burn fat and build muscle. However this is not entirely correct, as not all carbohydrates are created equal. So before you start carbohydrate counting and cutting your carbs, you need learn the difference between good carbohydrates and bad carbohydrates and the easiest way to do this is with the glycemic index.

Your body requires carbohydrates to survive, to enable it to carry out its normal daily functions. So steer clear of any diet that recommends you cut carbohydrates out of your diet completely. But you should avoid bad carbohydrates which carry a high glycemic index rating and ideally you should aim to eat foods with a low glycemic index rating, foods such as pasta, green vegetables, whole grain foods and oats.

Doctors and nutritionists regularly use the glycemic index to help explain in simple terms how carbohydrates are broken down and used by the body. It is an easy to understand rating system, which uses a scale of zero to one hundred. If you are serious about burning off fat and losing weight it essential you understand the glycemic index and how foods are rated.

So how is the Glycemic Index Rating Calculated?

The ratings are calculated based on the rate of digestion of the particular food. For example foods which are digested quickly have a high rating, while foods which are digested slowly are assigned a lower rating.

This is important because foods which are digested quickly cause a

spike in blood sugar levels as the sugars from the foods are absorbed into the blood stream fast. This stimulates a release of insulin causing the sugars to be stored in the body as fat. It also has implication for diabetics who can not control their blood sugars levels. In contrast foods with a lower rating cause a gradual rise and fall of blood sugar levels, which is much safer and healthier for the body and thus less sugar is stored as fat. Therefore these types of food are ideal after a workout to reload your muscles with carbohydrates before your next session.

In an ideal world it would be useful to have the glycemic index rating published on all food labels to raise awareness among the general public. However you need to take it up on yourself to do your own research. There is nothing to stop you carbohydrate counting, however don't ever cut out carbohydrates completely. With the right goals, training advice and nutrition plan you really can get the body of your dreams.

22. How To Get Six Pack Abs

Everybody wants to learn how to get six pack abs; you know what I mean, those rock solid stomach muscles that everyone dreams of having. Learning how to get six pack abs is easier than you think, but getting them is the hard part. The abdominal muscles which make up the six pack are like any other muscle group and as such you should not focus just on working out your abs, instead you should be training your whole body. There are a number of strategies you can use to optimize your training to develop your abs to another level.

You Must Remember This...

The first thing that you must remember is that the abdominal muscles that make up your six pack are like any other muscles in your body. They need hard work and high intensity exercises that push them to the limit if you want to see maximum growth and definition.

A lot of people who are content with keeping toned to look healthy will find that simply doing crunches each day will achieve what they want, however if you are serious about getting a six pack you are going to have to do an awful lot more to really get rock hard six pack abs. Until you start working out with high intensity exercises that really challenge your abs you won't see the results you want.

Here's What You Should Be Doing

Don't fall into the same old trap that most people do; instead kick the routine of doing hundreds of crunches because we are going to take your abdominal workout to the next level and you're

going to learn how to get six pack abs!

Start off by intensifying your abs workout by doing them on an incline, do the same as you were doing on the floor but take your last set to failure, until you physically can't do anymore. As you improve gradually increase the incline you workout on and aim to increase the number of reps you do until failure.

Once you've mastered this you can get on to the serious stuff. While incline crunches are a great start, it is not until you start to use weights in your abdominal workouts that you will start to see the results you want. You can do this by simply holding a weight plate across your chest as you do your abs workout, but your need to build up to it slowly. Doing weight training is really beneficial and will help you build the abs that most people dream off.

You Will Fail If You Don't Do This..

However if you don't maintain a healthy diet, do cardio vascular training and train the rest of your body, you won't get six pack abs. It is the cumulative effect of all these factors that will give you the abs of your dreams.

Don't Be Fooled

Whatever you do don't be drawn into buying the abs machines you see advertised on TV, the bottom line is that people with rock solid six pack abs don't use them. Save your money for a gym membership and be prepared to train hard and live a healthy lifestyle, educate yourself as much as possible and try and follow a proven training plan, only then will you get the abs of your dreams.

23. How To Build Muscle and Lose Fat While Travelling

As a bodybuilder travelling is one of the most testing times, as travelling and bodybuilding don't go hand in hand. As the majority of people have to travel at some point, whether it's for business or pleasure, even if you are in the minority of professional bodybuilders you'll still have to travel between competitions. Travelling can create some serious problems for bodybuilders as it can very difficult to travel and maintain your discipline and training while travelling. While it's difficult to continue training and sticking to your diet, with a bit of discipline you can keep pumped and lean all year round even if you are a regular traveller.

Go to the gym before..

Whenever you are about to travel, get down the gym the day before

or on in the morning before you leave. Ideally try and stay somewhere with a weight room, however more than likely if there is a weight room the opening hours will be varied and the equipment limited. If there isn't a weight room or the equipment is lacking there is no reason why you can not do plenty of cardio training, such as running. If you do a heavy weight session before you leave your body will have some time to recover while you travel, ideally try and schedule your travel so that they coincide with your normal rest days.

Pack your protein shakes and healthy snacks

One of the biggest challenges which bodybuilders have during travel is having the right nutrition and eating the right foods. Always aim to eat healthy and if you can stick to the foods you eat normally, don't let yourself be tempted into eating junk foods it's not worth it. If you are faced with a long flight make sure that you pack healthy snacks and protein shakes so that your nutritional needs are met, as airplane food is not designed for bodybuilders, make up a packed meal if necessary. Remember always to take a bottle or two of water when you fly as it's easy to become dehydrated on flights and paying for drinks can quickly become expensive.

Think strategically

Once you arrive in your destination, think strategically. Speak to your reception and find out where the nearest supermarket or grocery store is and buy in some good, nutritious healthy food, and then find out about your hotel's gym facilities or local what gyms there are locally if your hotel doesn't have one.

Don't overindulge

If you eat out don't over indulge, as you bodybuilder you should know what foods are good for you and which are bad, try to stick to your diet plan and if you do over indulge, put in some extra cardio work to burn it off. In conclusion if plan ahead, be disciplined and do everything you can to ensure that you stick to your training and diet plan, there is no reason why you cannot travel and maintain the body of your dreams.

24. 5 Tips for Bodybuilding at College

When you come to move into college it can be an exciting and some testing time, especially if you are serious about your weight training and bodybuilding. As you'll no longer have access to your favourite gym or all the healthy food you'd normally be able to have at home and you'll probably find that sharing fridges and kitchens can be a headache.

You'll need to be dedicated and motivated

It might take you a week or two to get settled in and it can be daunting starting at college, however once you find your feet, if you have high levels of commitment and drive you'll have no problems keeping in shape and getting that perfect toned body. However there are a number of essentials tips that'll help you on your way.

Set goals and plan ahead

Before you start college it is essential that you set out clear and specific goals and devise a training program for the year and make a commitment to stick to it. Don't forget this includes your nutrition and diet as well as your workouts.

Get the right nutrition

If possible try and stay in self catered accommodation so that you can have maximum control over your nutrition and ensure that you're eating the right foods. If not you are going to have more of a difficult job, as college food in catered accommodation is average at best and most certainly not ideal for packing on muscle and burning off fat. If you find yourself in this situation don't over do your eating on the college food, especially if its food your body isn't used to, instead save up for a small fridge for your room. Budget for some healthy food week and stock up your fridge with good nutritious food which your body will thank you for.

Stock up on protein shakes and healthy snacks

Before you go to your lectures or classes each day, make up a healthy lunch for yourself so that you can avoid the canteen, take some protein shakes or snakes as well to ensure you don't go hungry and your body stays fuelled. If you have to go into the canteen, don't be tempted by the unhealthy food, it'll just undo all the good work you've been doing down the gym. Try to stick to the food options you'd normally go for such as chicken, eggs, pasta, tuna, salads and cottage cheese.

Find your local gyms

As soon as you get there spend some time orientating yourself with the area you are staying, find the local gyms, have a look around and see which ones are best suited to your needs. Speak to some of the instructors and find out the best routes for running so you can get your cardio training in. Don't forget to check the opening times of the gyms and their prices, many will give you a student discount on membership, so make sure you ask.

Form good habits and avoid the booze

Watch your habits and try and form good ones, make sure you get enough sleep and organise your time so that you get your work and training done, as well as making the most of the social activities. Try to avoid the drinking as you'll be throwing your training away; if you are just bodybuilding for fun and to look and feel good don't feel bad about having a few drinks at the week

end, but remember drink in moderation and be responsible. If you are bodybuilding for competition then there is no way any alcoholic drinks should be getting past your lips. As alcohol lowers your testosterone, dehydrates and will cause you to put on fat. Abstain from drinking and your friends will soon respect your for discipline and commitment.

25. Bodybuilding Training or Powerlifting Training?

The sport of powerlifting is one that was spawned from bodybuilding training as many of the desired outcomes are essentially the same for both sports. The techniques and practices in bodybuilding training and powerlifting training can benefit each other, however the major difference is in the competitions which powerlifters and bodybuilders enter. As a bodybuilder the aim is to look as big and as defined as possible, whereas in powerlifting the aim is to lift as much weight as possible.

If you want to enter powerlifting competitions you'll have to compete over three sections, the squat, the bench press and the dead lift. The winner of the competition unlike bodybuilding is no based on how good you muscles look but how much weight you can lift in total. If you enter a competition you'll be put in a certain category or class depending on a number of factors such as age and experience. You don't have to worry about your body's aesthetics as you do in bodybuilding, so you can focus 100% on training your strength instead.

Like bodybuilding, powerlifters still need to eat well balanced healthy diets incorporating plenty of protein and enough calories to ensure optimum muscle growth. Avoid fried foods, fast foods and other sources of bad fats and bad carbohydrates. Try and eat plenty of vegetables, pasta and high protein sources such as turkey and chicken. Don't forget that powerlifting is not about having the lowest body fat percentage or having the highest muscular definition, so you don't have to worry about a bit of extra fat.

If you want to power lift you need to follow a strict training program as you would if you were training to be a bodybuilder. Make sure that you schedule rest days into your training program to allow your body and muscles to grow and repair between training sessions. Many serious powerlifters and bodybuilders often take a rest week, every twelve weeks or so to reduce stress and allow the body to rest and recover which will enable you to keep training harder and longer and give you a chance to properly reassess your goals and training routine.

Like any sport, you need to set goals and have a detailed training program as a power lifter to keep you focused and on track.

Reassess your goals often; stay positive and dedicated and you'll be winning competitions in no time.

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