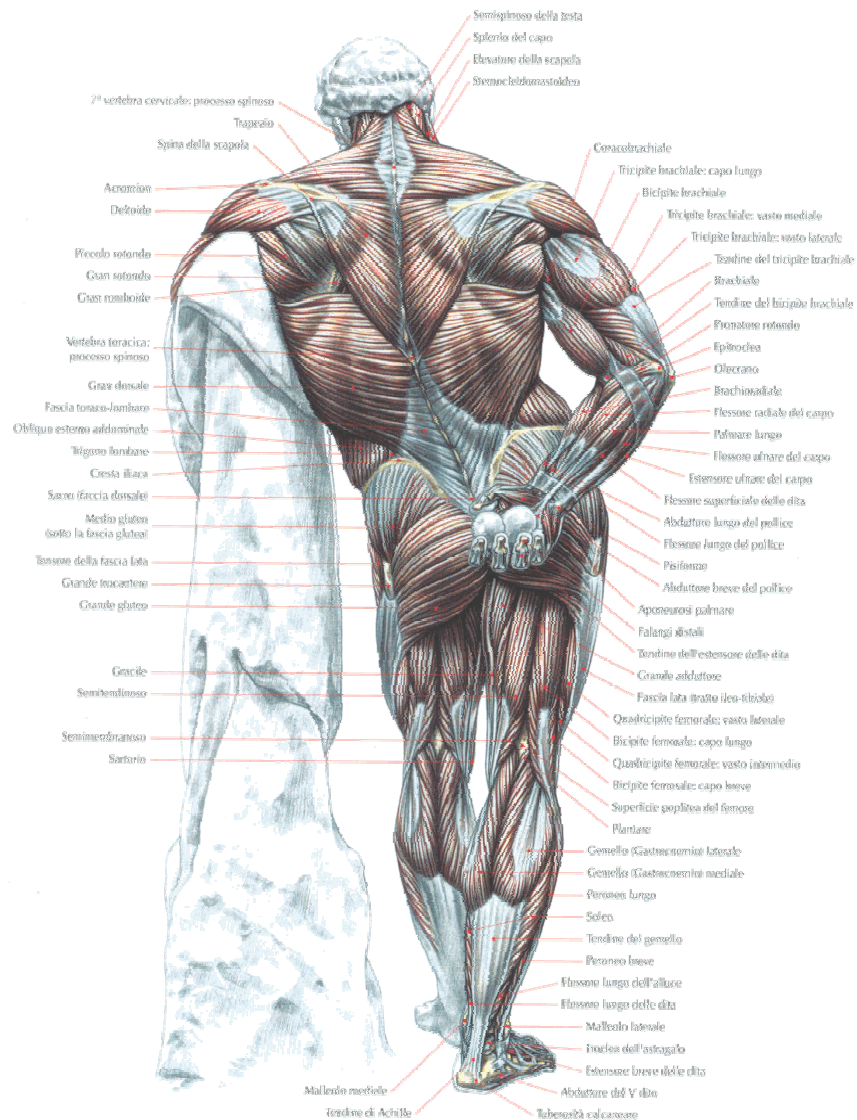


Turn your body into a muscle building fat burning furnace

ZASports



by Guida agli Esercizi di Muscolazione
- Arcadia edizioni -

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Introduction

Right. Lets get one thing straight from the start: As a man, you purchased this document because you want to get ripped, defined & BIG.

As a woman, you purchased this document because you want to get rid of all that body fat that's accumulated round your waist, bum, thighs, stomach etc, and you want to achieve a superbly slender slim figure with pure definition.

During the course of the various chapters in this e-book you will experience a totally new training approach that will guarantee a lifetime of results. This is exciting new territory and I am thrilled to be bringing this to you.

The ZASports Fitness Training Course is designed to teach you the ZASports principles. This is the most effective way to get a full understanding on how to implement the most effective muscle-building training method. This training course is not just a workout program, it's an educational course that teaches you how to implement the principles and the science behind the effectiveness of this unique training approach.

Throughout this e-book there will be numerous ZASports training program examples. This is designed to give you a comfortable understanding of the structure of various workouts. By the end of this e-book you will have the tools and the knowledge to implement and structure the workouts on your own.

Remember, this is a course designed to teach you the realm of hardcore training. Don't just blindly follow the workouts. Learn the whys and hows of building muscle the Ultimate way.

The Ultimate Muscle Building Approach

We are about to embark on a journey that will change the way you approach building muscle forever. The goal here is to teach you the principles and techniques involved in Ultimate training. Learning these techniques and how to apply them will give you the most efficient tools for building the maximum amount of muscle in the shortest amount of time.

Ultimate Training is for everyone

If you're not the most genetically gifted person, Ultimate will accelerate muscle growth and strength faster than any other training method. If you are one the few genetic elites Ultimate will take advantage of your genetics and propel muscle growth much faster than "normal" training methods. Male or female - it doesn't matter. Simply put, for building muscle Ultimate is the most effective way to train.

Whether you're looking to pack on a massive 50 pounds of muscle or a trim and tight 5 pounds, Ultimate is the most effective way to accomplish this. From the highest level competitor to the most casual lifter, Ultimate is the most sensible approach to reaching your goals in the shortest amount of time.

Not only will I cover training methods extensively, but I will also unravel the mental aspect of building muscle. I will dissect the psychological road blocks that are responsible for derailing most people that train from ultimately reaching their goals. We will get rid of bad habits and condition ourselves for efficiency, making everything we do a means to an end.

This will not be a "positive-thinking / positive attitude" brainwashing, but programming your mind for success can't be ignored. The last thing I want to do is build a following of positive thinkers that spend all their time, energy, and money "learning" how to be positive, but never producing. However, I want you to get results. I will present the psychological portion in a manner that will invoke action and produce these results.

Training For Results

Ultimate is all about training and getting results; making the most progress in the least amount of time. I'm sure all will agree that if you were given the choice of gaining 10 pounds of muscle in 2 months or in 2 years you would opt for the 2 months. Working out is fun, but let's not kid ourselves, what really makes it all worth it are the results it produces. More results - more enjoyment. Less results - less enjoyment, frustration, lost motivation, missed workouts, and many times, quitting all together.

Breaking this down even further, if you can fully stimulate a muscle for maximum growth in 30 minutes verses 90 minutes, which would you rather do? Let me tell you, I like working out, but if I can get better results in 1/3 the time - that's what I'm going to do. That is Ultimate. That is what it's all about.

One thing unique about this program is that it will be 12 weeks long. Just like a class in college. Each week you will read a new chapter that will further expand on the Ultimate principles and techniques. This approach will break down the entire program step by step for easy digestion. This way you have a greater chance of completing this course. It will be interactive in a way that will make you accountable to the most important person - yourself.

Now don't get antsy. We will dive right into training - even in this first session. But as you proceed through the course you'll progressively learn more and more about how to make Ultimate work for you. How to get bigger, stronger, leaner, and smarter the fastest way possible.

The things you are about to learn, no matter how experienced you may be, will bring about an entire new outlook on training and building muscle as well as how you prioritize the activities of your life to achieve the results you're looking for.



Forget What You Think You Know About Working Out

Ultimate is different, but it's not a bunch of new exercises that have never been done before. The approach is new and unique, but you'll be doing many of the same exercise you've always done - just differently. You will approach training with a new mindset, a new vigor, and most importantly a new "certainty".

Time to go right back...

Now I want you to think for a minute. In all the time that you have been training, at what point did you make the most impressive gains?

My guess is that you made your most impressive gains when you first started. Or should I say, when you first committed yourself to training on a regular basis. It's not uncommon for someone to gain 10 pounds of muscle the first month they start training. And another 25 to 30 pounds their first year! Why is this?

Let's analyze this. When you are a beginner you certainly don't know "how to" train. Your form sucks, you're cheating in most exercises, and chances are you are always trying to see "how much" you can lift. Not only that, in most cases, you want results yesterday. You probably have some serious motivation working for you. Crude, but serious.

So, if you didn't know how to train and you did most of the exercises wrong, why did you make such impressive gains? But wait, let's look deeper into this question. Why do your gains slow down as you become more experienced at training? Shouldn't it be just the opposite? Shouldn't the more you learn about training mean the more progress you make?



Learn More - Get Less Results

It's kind of funny and kind of sad. For awhile you're content doing the basic movements - bench press, straight bar curls, squats and leg presses. You're making great gains and everybody is taking notice. Well, as you become more "experienced" you decide to read up a little - first mistake. You grab the latest magazine - and I use that term very loosely - and start learning all about the "training methods" the pro bodybuilders use.

Now, I'm here to tell you it's not a coincidence that right about the same time you started "getting smarter" and using the advanced training programs, was just about the same time gaining muscle became a lot more difficult, a much slower process. It's also the same time the nagging injuries started to happen more often too. That's right, it's not a coincidence that the more "intelligently" you approached your training the less effective it became.

Now it's not the fact that you tried to increase your knowledge of training that is the problem. It's more of a combination of where you obtained your educational material and your abandonment of the basic training methods for a more "sophisticated" training approach that has suddenly stalled your gains.

As crazy as this sounds, this is the primary reason most people stop making gains. They deviate from the basic, most effective training methods and start using "advanced" training methods.

Friends - Trainers - Magazines

Where do most people learn about "how to workout"? Chances are you learned from one or all of these three sources - friends, a trainer at a gym, or, God forbid, out of the bodybuilding magazines. You're not any different than anyone else. That's just how it is.

You see, working out is not an organized sport with coaches and assistant coaches and organized practices and training drills. It doesn't work like that. You have to learn it on your own and the resources available to learn from are pretty slim and just about all are wrong (well maybe not wrong, but certainly not right). In fact, the "experts" that write the learning material were educated the same way you were, they were just articulate enough (this can be argued) to write about it in an organized format.

Sad to say, chances are you have been taught and are training wrong. And if not "wrong" certainly not the best way to maximize muscle growth. Ultimate will change this.

The most difficult part about Ultimate is ridding yourself of all the bad training knowledge that you have learned over the years

You have to not only re-educate yourself, but forget all the "bad" methods and approaches that you have done for so long. If you're new to working out then you are lucky. You will be learning the best training method right from the start. You will be fortunate enough not to have to break all the "bad" training habits.

An Open Mind And A Little Desire

So I'm asking you to approach Ultimate with a fresh and open mind. You want to really avoid the "shouldn't I do this", and "what about that" comments. Especially during these first few weeks. I am the teacher and no matter how long you have been training or how big and strong you are or how much "experience" you have, you are the student. This is critical in extracting the most from this program. Most people who train with weights, at one time or another, have gone through an ego driven phase. Now is the time to set that aside.

With this hierarchy understood, it will allow you to establish the best foundation for learning and practicing Ultimate principles and techniques that I guarantee will allow you to build muscle and strength at a rate and to an extent you never knew possible.



The Ultimate Training Basics

Ultimate follows a specific and proven set of parameters that are key to maximizing muscle growth. These specific parameters are the underlying core of Ultimate's physiological impact on muscle.

If you remember one thing from this lesson remember this - a muscle will only adapt (grow) if it is forced to do so. The mechanics of Ultimate's are designed to force muscle to grow each and every workout. As far as I am concerned, if you aren't growing from each workout you're wasting your time.

In a nut shell, but nowhere near complete, you can summarize Ultimate like this:

1. Train only 1 or 2 muscle groups per workout/day.
2. Do 4 to 6 reps per set.
3. Do 6 to 9 total heavy sets per muscle group.
4. Rest 2 to 3 minutes between sets. (STR)
5. Each workout should last approximately 30 to 40 minutes.
6. Train each muscle group once every 5 to 7 days. (ITR)
7. Take a 1 week break from training every 8 to 10 weeks.

As you can see there is a small bit of leeway in each of these rules. A very small bit. Ultimate is designed specifically around these parameters.

To be completely successful and get the maximum benefits from Ultimate, you must follow these rules exactly as they are presented

You cannot adapt the rules you like and discard the ones you don't. Each parameter depends on and works with the other parameters.

Each workout should last approximately 30 to 40 minutes

If your workouts are lasting more than 40 minutes something is wrong. In fact, they should be much closer to 30 minutes than 40 minutes.

Now I understand there are situations at certain gyms - crowds - that make this a tough proposition, but it's very important that your workout is completed in this duration of time. If that means finding another gym to train at then start looking. If you are training with more than one workout partner and this extra man is stretching your workout then you need to make adjustments - lose the third wheel.

The 30 to 40 minute workout offers the following benefits:

- It's much more feasible to maintain maximum mental and physical intensity for 30 to 40 minutes than for 90 minutes. In fact, after 30 minutes mental focus and intensity start to decline rapidly.
- Training for 30 to 40 minutes maximizes hormonal spikes related to high-intensity training. Ultimate training maximizes key hormonal output based on intensity and duration.
- Training for 30 to 40 minutes optimizes the "anabolic-window" high-intensity training provides. Going beyond the 40 minute threshold places you outside the optimum hormonal response time.

- Training beyond 40 minutes increases the risk of over-training and increases catabolic hormone secretion. As you drift outside the "anabolic-window" you enter a detrimental "catabolic" phase. Training beyond 40 minutes decreases anabolic activity.

So as you can see, there are physiological advantages to keeping your workout in the 30 to 40 minute range. And there are definite physiological disadvantages to training beyond 40 minutes.

Ultimate is all about **efficiency**. You'll see the word efficiency used many times throughout this course.

Train only 1 or 2 muscle groups per workout each day

Ultimate training involves maximum muscle fiber stimulation and overload in a minimum amount of time. In order to accomplish this, adjustments must be made to achieve these objectives within the desired "optimal-time" parameter.

Training one muscle group per workout is paramount to the Ultimate principles as it optimizes key physiological and psychological high-points designed to extract the greatest effect from your training. Every time you train the Ultimate way, you leave the gym fully confident that you performed a workout that will result in muscle growth.

The Ultimate "one body-part per day" principle takes advantage of the "duration of maximum intensity" that occurs both physically and mentally when you train. By pre-establishing in your mind that you will only be training 1 muscle group you are able to generate much greater mental focus and intensity. This psychological "edge" directly and favorably impacts physical intensity output. Bottom line, you train each muscle group much harder, achieve greater muscle fiber contraction, greater overload, and spark more muscle growth by establishing 100% physical intensity and 100% mental focus.

Do 6 to 9 total heavy sets per muscle group

6 to 9 Sets

For each muscle group you train Ultimate principles stipulate between 6 and 9 total "heavy" sets. That's total heavy sets. No matter how many exercises you do, you will only do between 6 and 9 total heavy sets per muscle group.

What's a Ultimate "heavy" set?

A Ultimate heavy set is a set done with a weight that will allow **at least 4 reps, but no more than 6 reps**. This is very important and fundamental to Ultimate.

What's a Ultimate set?

A Ultimate set is a set performed to "positive-failure" with a heavy weight for 4 to 6 reps. In other words, a warm-up set is not a "Ultimate set". It is a warm-up set and that's it. So don't count your warm-up sets as part of your 6 to 9 sets per body part. This is important.

What's "Positive-Failure"?

Positive failure is when a set is performed to the positive limit of muscle exhaustion. In other words, you are done with a set when you are no longer able to complete a rep on your own.

Positive-failure should occur between the fourth and sixth rep

Ultimate does not employ forced reps beyond maybe partial help on the last rep of a set.

Contrary to what most have been led to believe, forced reps are counter productive to building muscle. They artificially fatigue the muscle, deplete muscle energy stores, and produce non-progressive overload just to name a few.

How many times have you seen people in the gym training and one guy's spotting another and yelling in his face to do two more reps when he really should have stopped two reps ago. Do not do forced reps.

Do 4 to 6 reps per set

This is the heart of Ultimate. You will do 4 to 6 reps on virtually all lifts. There will be some lifts that you will do a little more reps on, but only a few. The 4 to 6 rep range is important and critical to success of Ultimate. We will go deeper into the understanding of this further in the course, but for right now you need to ingrain this "**4 to 6 reps**" into your mind.

What is meant by 4 to 6?

When I say to do between 4 and 6 reps, this means that you will use a weight that is light enough to allow you to get **at least 4 reps**, but is also heavy enough to where you **cannot do any more than 6 reps**. If you can't do 4 reps, then the weight is too heavy. If you can do more than 6 reps, then the weight is too light.

This is important and is critical component of Ultimate. 4 to 6 reps is the "ideal" rep scheme for building muscle. It allows maximum muscle fiber overload and maximum muscle fiber recruitment.

Intensity

A big advantage (aside from the physiological benefits) is that it's much easier to mentally focus your energy on a set of 4 to 6 reps than it is on a set of 10 to 12 reps. Knowing that your set will be short and intense will allow you to generate maximum mental intensity, maximum muscle contraction, and maximum muscular force. Ultimate, in itself, is a more productive muscle building approach that literally acts synergistically with each technique, component, and principle to exponentially accelerate your results.

Once you understand that heavy weight is the most influential stimulus for muscle growth, you will continue to strive for greater overload. You will continue to get bigger and stronger in less time.

Rest 2 to 3 minutes between sets - STR

Ultimate, as its name inspires, is all about maximum intensity and maximum overload for maximum results. Building on the principle of lifting with maximum intensity and overload for 4 to 6 reps, between set recovery is very important. I call this "Short Term Recovery" - STR.

As you perform reps with heavy weight many physiological reactions are taking place to make all this happen. Muscle contraction takes cellular energy, oxygen, chemical reactions within the cells, and a host of other molecular activities. As each rep is performed you deplete your muscles' capacity to contract with the same force as with the first rep. By the time you get to the 5th rep you have tapped out your muscle intra-cellular energy capacity.

This is Ultimate. It's pushing a muscle to this extreme that produces results. Recovery between sets allows you to repeat this process until enough overload volume has been performed to stimulate and force new

muscle growth. The idea of maximum recovery between sets is to maximize your muscles ability to lift maximum weight during the next set. Notice the word "maximum" used a lot here?

Between set recovery should last about 2 to 3 minutes. This amount of time allows the muscle to recover its intra-cellular energy stores and flush any lactate out of the muscle that's hanging around from the previous set to restore its anaerobic capacity.

Now between set recovery will vary between individuals. Some people just recover much faster than others. As I pointed out earlier you want to strive for is recovery that will allow you to lift the maximum amount of weight for your next set. For some this is 90 seconds, for others it's the entire 3 minutes - sometimes even longer.

It's important to be fully recovered before your next set because your ability to maximize the overload on the muscle will directly reflect in the muscle growth it produces

This critical between set recovery phase (STR) is exactly why Ultimate does not incorporate "super-sets", "pre-exhaustion", or other fatigue inducing techniques. We'll get deeper into later, but realize right now that **fatigue does not build muscle - overload builds muscle**. Fatigue simply fatigues. Once a muscle is fatigued it can't be properly overloaded.

Most all lifters confuse fatigue with overload. This will take some logical thinking on your part to separate the two - again because of all the miss-information published in the magazines. Things like "feel the burn" are not what building muscle is about.

Train each muscle group once every 5 to 7 days

Here we go from "immediate" between set muscle recovery (STR) to "intermediate" recovery (ITR) - the recovery between training sessions of the same muscle group. Example: The time between one leg workout until your next leg workout.

This is very, very important and one of the major components responsible for facilitating the muscle growth process. **Recovery**. How many times have you heard this word? Do you really understand what it means and what impact it has on muscle growth? I can answer that with one word - **everything**. Complete recovery of each muscle group after a Ultimate training session before the same muscle group is subjected to overload again is of equal importance to the overall results as the actual training itself. **Recuperation is everything**.

There are many things you can do to enhance recovery. Nutritional advances have made this a "no-brainer" and almost foolproof process. We will get into that in greater detail later. Right now we are primarily concerned with the "time" between workouts to allow for full muscle recovery. Most training programs have you training way too often. This habit is to hard break. Building muscle is an "excess-endeavor". You always want more. This being a major motivation, it's against normal thought to - do less to get more.

The muscle growth process does not occur in the gym. Let me repeat, **muscle growth does not occur in the gym**. Muscle growth occurs during the recovery period - the critical time between workouts of the same muscle groups. As a result of overload, muscle must adapt to compensate for future overload.

The recovery period is the time when muscle is recuperating, growing, and becoming stronger in preparation for more overload - adapting

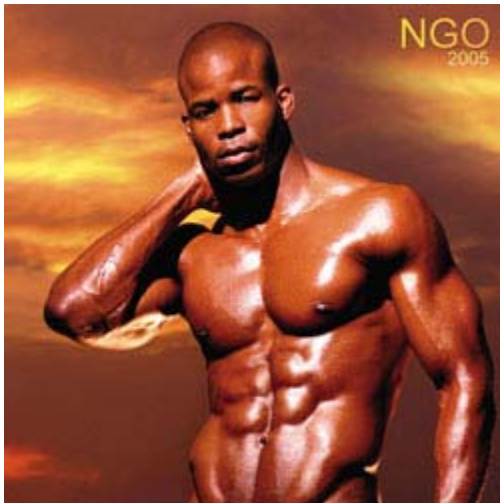
If a muscle is not allowed to fully recover between workouts muscle growth will be impeded, over-training will occur, and muscle breakdown will be inevitable. You will become stagnated. Muscle mass and strength will more than likely decrease. Energy levels will dwindle, appetite will lessen, and motivation will disappear.

Recuperation

As you can see, recovery between workouts is absolutely critical for muscle growth success as well as for optimal health and well being. This is why a major component of Ultimate training is to optimize recovery between workouts. Allowing **5 to 6 full days** between training of the same muscle group is essential for full and complete recuperation. Recuperating fully leads to maximum muscle growth. Incomplete recuperation leads to muscle and strength breakdown.

As I said earlier, most training programs have you training far too much. The days of training the same muscle group on Thursday that you trained on Monday are long gone. Ultimate takes the elements of **intensity** and **overload** and maximizes the recovery the implementation of these two growth promoting elements requires.

Every element of Ultimate is designed to potentiate and synergistically work with the program as a whole. The longer recovery time is necessary to allow for full recovery from the **higher than normal muscle fiber stimulation** that Ultimate generates. Ultimate style training places much greater demands on muscle recovery. Greater muscle fiber stimulation and maximum recovery will lead to maximum muscle growth and strength increases. This is what Ultimate is all about.



Take a 1 week break from training every 8 to 10 weeks

Make no mistake about it. Ultimate is a brutal form of training. It's heavy. It's intense. It's result producing. It encompasses a **total** approach. It's not just the training part of the equation. It's the mental approach, the nutritional approach, the timing aspect, the exercise techniques all rolled into one.

Understand that muscle growth and strength enhancement doesn't happen by accident. All in all, muscles beyond maturity do not want to grow. **You must force a muscle to grow.** It must be subjected to a stimulus that compels it to adapt and grow. There must be a reason for a muscle to grow or it won't. And, the more effectively you nurture this growth the greater the results you will experience.

As I discussed earlier, recuperation is of vital importance to muscle growth. Recuperation will determine how well your muscles respond to Ultimate training. There are 4 important "time-spans" of recuperation:

1. Short Term Recuperation (STR) - Between sets
2. Intermediate Term Recuperation (ITR) - Between workouts
3. Muscle Specific Recuperation (MSR) - Between identical workouts
4. Cyclical Recuperation (CR) - Between Ultimate Training cycles

Taking a week off from training every 8 to 10 weeks is very important for overall recuperation and muscle growth.

Many people have a psychological barrier to taking time off from training

They feel like they are going to shrink. Not so. In fact, with Ultimate, after your week off for CR you will usually come back bigger and stronger.

This week off allows your body to repair and grow. It is literally recovering from 8 or 10 straight weeks of heavy training. Fed properly, your body during this CR phase will be in a very high "anabolic" state. Muscle growth and repair will be constant 24 hours a day.

One very important thing, well, actually two. Do not do any type of strenuous aerobic or anaerobic activity during this week. You don't have to be a slug, but refrain from any exhausting or physically taxing activities. This is a recuperation week that is a key element in Ultimate.

Also, you should consume plenty of lean protein during this CR as well. When you take a week off from training you still need to eat and supplement properly for growth to occur. In fact, is vitally import during this phase.



An Ultimate Routine Example

I know everyone is very anxious to get started with the training, but understanding the complete Ultimate approach is paramount to getting the most from this program. Over the length of this course we will go much more in depth into the various elements of Ultimate so you will be able to extract every drop from your training, your nutrition, and your determination.

As you're finding out, building muscle goes way beyond reps and sets. Ultimate incorporates the most effective set and rep scheme and integrates it with precise nutrition, recuperation, intensity, and mental focusing techniques that, when correctly combined, will produce muscle and strength enhancement like no other program in existence. Ultimate is a program containing different elements with

each one depending upon the other to form what I like to call "Ultimate Synergy".

This program is designed to educate and not just instruct. I want to build an understanding as to why each element of Ultimate exists. After you complete this course you'll no longer just go through the movements and hope for the best. You'll know exactly why you do everything.

The next few pages will detail a very effective Ultimate routine to get you accustomed to training the Ultimate way. Follow it to a "T". This is a very effective Ultimate routine. I will detail exact Ultimate mechanics of each exercise to show you how to get more overload - more muscle growth - from each rep you do.

Now lets proceed to the first Ultimate routine.

Monday: Legs

You guessed it. Squats. I recommend doing legs on Monday mainly because at most gyms everyone does chest on Mondays. This leaves free reign of the leg equipment. No waiting.

First you need to make sure you warm-up properly. This is very, very important. It's important to prevent injury and it's important for Ultimate as it is an area everyone gets wrong. Learning to warm-up properly will have a major impact on muscle growth. Next week I will detail proper warm-up techniques that will add up to 30 pounds to your bench - the first day!

Make sure that your warm-up sets are just that, warm-up sets. **Do not warm-up to exhaustion.** Never do a set that approaches failure before you get to your "heavy" sets. We will go deeper into this a bit later. It's very important. The sets listed in the workout below do not include warm-up sets.

Exercise	Sets	Reps *
Squats	3	4 to 6
Leg Press	2	4 to 6
Stiff Leg Deadlifts	2	6
Standing Machine calf raises	2	6 to 8
45° Leg Press calf raises	2	6 to 8

* Remember, the weight you use should be light enough to do four reps, but heavy enough so you can't do more than 6 reps. Each set should be done to positive failure.

Tuesday: Arms and Abs

Here you will train both biceps and triceps during the same workout. There will be other routines where you split these two muscles up, but this routine trains them together. There are advantages both ways. We'll go into more detail on these advantages later.

On bicep movements you want to lower the weight twice as slow as you raise the weight. In other words the resistance portion of the movement should be twice as slow as the contraction portion. The same applies to triceps. The resistance portion of the movement should be twice as slow as the contraction portion. The overall pace on both should be moderate and the contraction portion should be explosive and forceful.

Biceps	Sets	Reps *
Straight Bar Curls	2	4 to 6
Alternating Dumbbell Curls	2	4 to 6
Cable Curls	1	6
Triceps		
Cable Push-downs	2	6
Lying Tricep Extensions	2	4 to 6
Dumbbell Kick-backs	1	6
Forearms		
Barbell Wrist Curls	2	6 to 8
Dumbbell Wrist Curls	1	6 to 8
Abs		
Leg Raises (with added weight to ankles)	2	12 to 15
Cable Rope Crunches	2	8 to 10
Crunches (weighted)	1	8 to 10

* Remember, the weight you use should be light enough to do four reps, but heavy enough so you can't do more than 6 reps. Each set should be done to positive failure.

Wednesday: Shoulders/Traps

Notice the extensive use of "basic" compound movements. This allows for maximum weight to be used. Shoulders are an impressive muscle group and respond very well to Ultimate training.

Shoulders	Sets	Reps *
Military Barbell Press (in front)	3	4 to 6
Seated Dumbbell Press (Palms facing in at bottom of the movement and rotated forward at the top)	2	4 to 6
Standing Side Lateral Dumbbell Raises	2	6 to 8
Traps		
Barbell Shrugs	2	4 to 6
Upright Rows (close grip)	2	4 to 6

* Remember, the weight you use should be light enough to do four reps, but heavy enough so you can't do more than 6 reps. Each set should be done to positive failure.

Thursday: Back

There are many different machines that are available for training back that suit Ultimate style training very well. However, not everyone has access to these different machines. It's no big deal. Free weight still remains king. I will keep this workout slanted toward commonly available equipment.

Exercise	Sets	Reps *
Lat Pull-downs (in front)	3	4 to 6
Seated Cable Rows (There are many different shaped attachments you can use. The most effective - the straight bar)	2	4 to 6
Good Mornings	2	4 to 6
Hyper Extensions (Weighted)	2	4 to 6

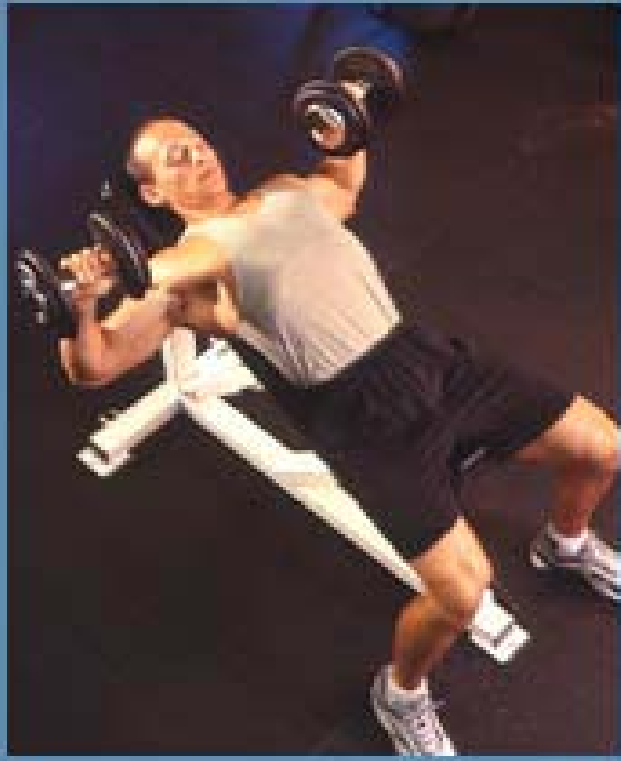
* Remember, the weight you use should be light enough to do four reps, but heavy enough so you can't do more than 6 reps. Each set should be done to positive failure.

Friday: Chest

Chest training is very Ultimate friendly. You can employ several very effective compound movements that fit right in to the Ultimate training techniques.

Exercise	Sets	Reps *
Flat Barbell Bench Press	3	4 to 6
Incline Dumbbell Bench Press (incline should be about 25 to 30 degrees)	3	4 to 6
Dips (Weighted)	2	4 to 6

* Remember, the weight you use should be light enough to do four reps, but heavy enough so you can't do more than 6 reps. Each set should be done to positive failure.



Conclusion

By now you should have a good understanding of the basics of Ultimate training. You certainly have the tools to get you started and headed in the right direction. Like I've said before, the exercises are not new, but the application, mechanics, and theory behind Ultimate are original and exciting.

The Surface Has Just Been Scratched

In the coming chapters I will reveal many new approaches to building muscle that most people have never thought of - at least not long enough to make an impression. I am going to list the most effective movements for each muscle group and why they are so. I will discuss exercises that you should avoid and why you should avoid them. I will reveal many simple techniques to increase overload intensity that will ignite new muscle growth. I will explain what it means to train with intensity. I will reveal techniques to guarantee each workout is better than the one before.

The purpose of this course is give you a full and complete understanding of the inner and outer workings of Ultimate: to provide you with real-world information that you can use immediately to accelerate your training results. I will break down every aspect of Ultimate in vivid detail. My goal when this course is finished is to have 4000 Ultimate experts and 40,000 extra solid pounds of muscle in the gyms around the world.

You've taken the first step, this will get you started.

The real power is the total concept and synergy that comes from the following chapters

It's important to stick with this program week by week as the coming courses will make revelations like you wouldn't believe.

Please read this over several times. Study it. I want you to have a full understanding of this material before you proceed to the next chapter. Train hard and heavy. Follow each principle, technique, and workout exactly as it is presented. Do this and you're on your way to making the gains of your life.

Warming up the Ultimate way

Well you've made it through the first week. That's an excellent sign. There is much more to come. As the weeks progress we are going to get deep into the nitty-gritty and formulate a master Ultimate plan of attack that you will be able to implement from here forward.

The first lesson produced a lot of feedback from everyone. This is good. I want everyone to get very involved and learn as much as possible. It's important to understand that this is a 12 week course and many of your immediate questions will get answered as things progress.

This week I am going to explain the importance of warming up properly - the Ultimate way - and also talk about one of the most often used training mistakes - the burnout set.

Now we are not just talking about warming up so you won't injure yourself. That is only part of it. Just about every training program I have ever seen is wrong. And one of the main areas that these programs fail is the improper approach to warming up. I'm going to show you a way to warm-up that will make you stronger the very first day you implement it.

I want you to remember the following. Ultimate is all about building muscle. Ultimate takes the approach that every rep, every set and every workout is done for one reason - **to build muscle and strength**. This is very important. If you do a rep, set, or entire workout with weights for any other reason then you need to seriously question just why you are training in the first place.

Any time you wrap your hands around a bar and start a set it should be approached with the mindset of building muscle and strength. You should be able to quantify why you do each rep. What other physiological reason is there for lifting weights? So every time you do a rep you know that that rep is either directly involved in building muscle or is a necessary prerequisite to the muscle building reps.

How most lifters fail to take the right approach from the very start

Efficiency is one of the main attributes of Ultimate training. The more efficient you train the more effective your workout is going to be, the more muscle you are going to build and the quicker you are going to build that muscle.

Why expend precious energy without using maximum efficiency? Warming-up properly is an area of training that should be performed with the utmost efficiency because it is the prelude to building muscle.

Warming up improperly will impede your ability to maximize muscle overload, total muscle fiber stimulation, and growth

Warming up correctly will allow you to expend the maximum physical mental intensity on the sets that count the most - the muscle building sets.

Warming Up The Wrong Way - Are You Guilty?

I would say that 99% of the people that train warm-up wrong. And in doing so, it reduces their ability to produce maximum overload for maximum growth. Again, as I discussed in the last section, this incorrect technique has been and continues to be passed along from gym to gym, coach to athlete, magazine to subscriber, etc., etc. It's like a weed you can't get rid of.

A somewhat unfortunate thing about building muscle is that there is no definite "right" or "wrong" way to go about it. What I mean is, you can train wrong and still build muscle. Ultimate is about building maximum muscle and strength in the shortest amount of time. Ultimate extracts all the physiological understanding of what stimulates muscle growth and wraps it all up into a systematic, step-by-step plan that will maximize the muscle growth parameters and eliminate the regression caused by typical training programs.

How NOT to warm-up

Let's use the Bench Press as an example here. For sake of description we'll say that 275 is the maximum for 3 reps. Here is how most people do a bench workout.

They load the bar with 135 pounds and do about 10 or 15 reps. They'll rest a few minutes and then go to 185 pounds. Here they do another 10 reps. Then they go to 205 pounds and do about 10 reps. After a little rest, they go to 225 pounds and do 7 or 8 reps depending on how good they feel.

So far that is 4 sets. Now throw on 20 pounds to 245 and do about 7 reps. That's set number 6 and they haven't even started to build muscle yet. From here they take the 10's off and put on some 25's. At 275 pounds they barely knock out 3 reps.

Can you point out the mistakes here? They warmed up. No question about that, but they did so at the expense of strength and overload. In other words, their technique for warming up resulted in poor or inadequate muscle fiber stimulation and overload due to **premature muscle fatigue**.



Warming up is warming up

Understand that warming-up is nothing more than "warming-up". What this means is that you should warm-up the muscle group you are training in a fashion that will allow you to infuse the right amount of blood into the muscle and connective tissue and progressively introduce the increasing overload to this muscle group.

This warm-up process should not fatigue the muscle. I repeat, the warm-up process should not fatigue the muscle. If you generate any muscle fatigue whatsoever during your warm-up sets you will compromise muscle overload and growth.

Proper Ultimate warm-up techniques introduce blood into the muscle group, progressively acclimate the muscle and soft tissue to the heavy weight and does not fatigue the muscle

A fatigued muscle is a weak muscle. A muscle not "ready" for heavy weight is an injury prone muscle. The key is to warm-up the muscle being trained so it can handle maximum overload without injury, while at the same time not fatiguing the muscle in the process.

I am going to show you how to implement a technique into your training that will provide immediate results in the amount of weight you use. Remember, muscle growth is dictated by overload. The greater the overload placed on a muscle, the greater the growth response from that muscle.

We are going to take the same weight scenario on the Bench Press as used before, but we'll use the Ultimate warm-up technique. This technique will allow you to lift more weight for more overload and more growth.

Understand that the only sets that actually induce muscle growth are the heavy sets - the sets using maximum weight for 4 to 6 reps. All other sets besides these will not produce overload needed to induce growth. These sets are merely preludes to the muscle-building sets. With this known, now you can see why it's critical to intelligently warm-up so you can maximize the growth producing sets.

Warming up the right way

Here we are going to take the Bench Press and show you a proper warm-up technique that will allow you to lift more weight on your heavy sets. Remember, more weight - more overload - more muscle.

Again we'll use 275 as your heavy weight. If you typically warm-up and train like I pointed out earlier the 275 will feel a lot lighter this time.

- **First Set:**

135 x 12 reps (warm-up)

These should be good smooth reps. Not too slow and not too fast. Your main goal is to increase blood flow and get the feel of the movement and the weight. After this first set you should rest about 2 minutes.

- **Second Set:**

135 x 10 reps (warm-up)

Same weight as before. Rhythm should be a little faster this time. Not much faster. Rest about 2 minutes.

- **Third Set:**

185 x 6 reps (warm-up)

This should be a deliberate set done at a moderate pace. This is the next step in weight acclimation. It should feel light and 4 reps should be very easy. Rest about 2 to 3 minutes before the next set.

- **Fourth Set:**

225 x 3 reps (weight acclimation)

You should follow the same rhythm as in the last set. 3 strong reps. Rest 2 minutes before next set.

- **Fifth Set:**

255 x 1 rep (weight acclimation)

That's right, just 1 rep. The purpose here is weight acclimation. This should be a strong, powerful and deliberate rep.

- **Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Sets:**

285 x 4 to 6 reps (muscle-building)

These are the muscle building sets. Very important. These are the only sets that produce muscle growth. All the sets leading up to these heavy sets are merely warm-up sets and are treated as just that and nothing more.

Notice we went to 285 instead of 275. Warming up the Ultimate allows you to use heavier weight during the most important muscle building sets.

Eliminating and avoiding unnecessary sets

Anytime you do a set it should be performed for a defined purpose. In essence there are only three types of sets - warm-up sets, weight acclimation sets, and muscle building sets. There are no in-betweens. No other set should exist and from the standpoint of building muscle, no other set does exist. Each set you do should be clearly defined and fall into one of these 3 categories.

Think about your typical workout. How many sets do you do that have no clear definition? You know the sets that fall somewhere between a warm-up set, a weight acclimation set and a muscle building set. These sets should be eliminated and a structured Ultimate workout does just that.

A set that is neither a warm-up set, a weight acclimation set, or a muscle building set does nothing for muscle growth.

In fact, these undefined sets rob the muscle of maximum growth by inducing fatigue. Fatigue is muscle growth's worst enemy.

Here is an example of unnecessary sets typically done during most non Ultimate workouts

Let's say you just finished your Flat Bench Press routine. Now it's time to move over to Incline Bench Press. Most people will follow another inefficient warm-up routine for Incline Bench Press like they did on their Flat Bench Press routine. *Why?* Your chest muscles are certainly warm and able to handle maximum weight. *Why* would you go through the entire warm-up scenario again when you're training essentially the same muscle?

Think about the training you have done in the past and add up all the unnecessary sets you do in a typical routine. Imagine how much this has robbed you of muscle growth.

Wasted warm-up sets apply to every muscle group being trained. There is no need for repetitive warm-up sets for the same muscle group within different exercises. This only adds further fatigue and depletes muscle energy substrates that ultimately rob your muscle's ability to handle maximum overload.

"Do Not" Specifics:

1. Do not pyramid unnecessarily.

One of the worst training methods ever introduced is pyramid training. This is where you start out light and then add small increments of weight with each set - going to failure each set until you get to your heaviest set. After the heavy set you then lighten the weight just opposite to how you increased it on the way up. Then you complete reps to failure for each set on the way down.

As I said, this is probably the least efficient way possible to build muscle yet it is the most common training approach used today. So if you are training this way the first thing you should ask yourself is - Why do I do this?

When you structure your sets like this, for whatever muscle group you are training, you deprive them of not only the overload they are capable of, but also the overload needed to induce efficient muscle growth.

2. Never go to failure on a warm-up set.

This is the ultimate training sin. Never, ever, ever, ever, go to failure with a warm-up set. This is the perfect way to sabotage a workout and stop muscle growth dead in its tracks.

3. Do not warm-up the same muscle group twice.

Never re-warm a muscle group just because you have proceeded to a different exercise.

Examples: There is no need to warm-up on the Leg Press after a squat routine. There is no need to start out light on Barbell Curls after finishing Dumbbell Curls. Likewise, there is no need to start out light on Cable Rows after Barbell Rows.

It's very important to never do unnecessary reps, sets, or exercises when trying to build muscle. This is why warming up properly is so critical. In Ultimate training the heavy sets for 4 to 6 reps is where everything happens. All sets preceding these heavy sets are just performed to get the muscle groups ready for the 4 to 6 rep sets.

Doing any preceding sets in a manner that will impede in any way the execution of the heavy sets will be counter-productive to building muscle. It's imperative that you understand the difference between the three different types of sets in Ultimate training.

Weight acclimation sets

Just what is a weight acclimation set? Weight acclimation sets are a form of warm-up sets that are done to allow your muscles, tendons, joints, and ligaments to become accustomed to the increasing weight overload.

A warm-up set pumps blood into the muscle and surrounding and supporting soft tissue. This enhances flexibility and elasticity of the muscle. A weight acclimation set is performed to progressively introduce the increasing overload to the muscle, joints, and supporting soft tissue in preparation for the high-intensity, heavy sets.

Weight acclimation sets are very important in preventing injury. These sets condition the muscle and soft tissue for the upcoming heavy sets. Neither warm-up sets nor weight acclimation sets build muscle, but they are integral to building muscle by preparing the muscle and supporting soft tissue for the heavy weight.

Because warm-up sets and weight acclimation sets don't build muscle, they must be done in a manner that does not impede, but enhances the muscle building sets. This is the essence of weight acclimation.

Weight acclimation sets allow your muscles to "prepare" for upcoming heavy sets without fatiguing the muscle being worked. Proper warm-up techniques utilizing weight acclimation sets will enhance your muscle's ability to maximize nerve-muscle contraction and lift heavier weights for maximum overload generation.

Ultimate "Set-Synergy"

As you can tell by now, Ultimate incorporates a strategy that encompasses total synergy between the different types of sets all leading to the ultimate heavy, muscle building 4 to 6 rep sets. It is the 4 to 6 rep sets that are responsible for inducing muscle growth and strength, but without proper techniques in the warm-up and acclimation sets, maximum weight and intensity can't be used during the heavy sets.

The importance of warming up correctly can't be overstated. It's essential in staying injury free and critical to your performance during the muscle-building sets. Understanding why you do each specific set that you do will shed light on the overall science behind Ultimate.

Remember, in Ultimate the only sets that build muscle are the 4-6 rep sets. All other sets are done in preparation for these sets. These prior sets are designed to promote maximum muscular energy and strength with minimal risk to injury. This way the muscle-building sets can be performed with maximum overload and maximum mental and physical intensity.

Muscle Burn - Muscle Pump

I want to talk about another grossly mistaken fallacy in weight training and building muscle. You often hear people screaming at their training partners in the gym things like "Come on, make it burn.", "No pain, no gain.", "Give me another rep!" and other silly gym lingo that make them feel as if they are training with ultimate intensity. And don't get me wrong, some train quite hard and these outbursts seem to help them with their intensity. What I'm leading to are training myths that have become accepted as muscle building indicators.

Muscle Burn

The burning sensation that certain types of training bring on is believed by most to be a sign of a successful growth promoting workout. Many seek it out and strive to achieve this burning sensation as an indicator to a good workout.

Well let me tell you, that muscle "burn" is not an indicator of an optimum workout. This burn is caused by infusion of lactic acid. Lactic acid is a byproduct of glycogen metabolism in muscle tissue. Lactic acid is not good for muscle growth. In fact, it impairs growth. Where does this burning sensation come from? It comes from lactic acid due to high reps. Not only does high rep training supply insufficient overload for growth it also causes high muscle lactic acid levels that lead to tissue catabolism, oxidative stress and delayed muscle recovery.

Muscle Pump

The muscle pump you feel when training is a result of blood actually being "trapped" in the muscles being worked. The muscle pump is certainly a good psychological boost during training and accompanies just about all resistance exercise. And as your muscles become larger so will the pump you get while you train. Now while this muscle pump is not really a bad thing, it is not necessarily an indicator of optimum muscle overload. As you progress in your development you will find that achieving a noticeable pump even during your warm-up sets to be much easier and more prominent. More muscle - more "trapped" blood - bigger pump.

Muscle Overload

Muscle overload is what you are after. The entire concept behind Ultimate is to tap into the underlying physiological adaptation processes that stimulate muscle growth. Overload is the stimulus that induces a muscle to grow. Muscle "burn" does not stimulate growth. Muscle "pump" does not stimulate muscle growth. Overload stimulates growth.

Once into adulthood, muscle growth is not a natural process. It has to be ignited through overload adaptation. In order for a muscle to grow it must have a reason. From a pure training standpoint muscle overload is the only stimulus that can generate muscle growth. The greater the overload, the greater the need for the muscle to adapt. A muscle adapts to overload by growing in size and strength.

As you are well aware, Ultimate is centered completely around achieving progressively increasing muscular overload at every workout. In fact, each time you train you should attempt to increase the overload from the previous training session. If this is not attempted there will be no need for the muscles being trained to adapt and grow.

Ultimate always seeks to force muscle to grow. Progressive increases in overload and intensity are what are required for muscle growth.

This leads me to the final subject in this week's lesson - Muscle Memory.

Muscle Memory

A common training mistake that I see people doing all the time and even promoted through other training programs is the "burnout" set.

This is usually the last set in an exercise that consists of a lighter weight done with high reps to failure. This my friends is very counter-productive to muscle growth from several standpoints and should never be performed.

To get a better understanding as to why you should never do this "burnout" set you must ask yourself why you are doing it in the first place. I've heard answers like, "To feel the burn.", "To stimulate every last muscle fiber.", "To get the burn and the pump.", "To finish off the exercise." to name a few. As you can see all these explanations either make no sense, have no reasoning behind them, or go against the physiological pathways of muscle growth.

Here is an area that little formal research has been done, but enough has been completed to clearly indicate where "muscle memory" plays a prominent role in final overload adaptation, muscle growth, and muscle strength as a result of overload. There is even evidence that this muscle memory is exercise specific.

What this tells me, and is confirmed in the gym, is that your muscles have a "memory-like" effect that dictates the growth resulting from a workout. Strength appears to be even more prominently effected by this "muscle memory."

Your muscles appear to have a memory effect that is significantly influenced by the last set that you do

If you finish each set with a heavy 4 to 6 rep exercise your muscles remember this and adapt accordingly. This memory effect is an important physiological phenomenon and should be used to your advantage in gaining strength and muscle size. And conversely, this memory effect should be manipulated so it will not impede the muscle growth process.

This muscle memory phenomenon is another reason, and probably the most important, to never do a high rep set as the last set in an exercise or a workout. That last thing you want is for this muscle memory to be linked to a light, high rep set.

Once you start implementing Ultimate you'll quickly notice the muscle memory effect. Using this knowledge to your advantage and following the structured Ultimate workout plans it will become very evident how potent this muscle-building muscle memory effect can be.

This memory effect is an integrated part of Ultimate and is used to tie one workout to the next. By taking advantage of the Ultimate techniques - from warming up to final set - you will be able harness and maximize the physiological processes that occur to magnify the adaptation in the form of muscle growth as a result.

Conclusion

This week I want you to use the warm-up procedure we covered here. Your workout this week is the same as previous.

I've covered some very important points to Ultimate training. It's important to understand that each aspect of Ultimate is critical and dependant upon every other aspect. Ultimate is a total way to train. It's a not program were you just implement the parts and theories that fit your current style or likes. It's a complete mental and physical approach to building muscle that incorporates the science of muscle physiology as well gut intensity.

I want you read and re-read this section so you will garner a full understanding of these techniques and theories. This course is designed so that you will have plenty of time to digest the weekly information and incorporate the techniques as you learn them. I can't stress enough the importance of following this information exactly as it is presented.

Intensity

This week I am going to discuss **training intensity** and how Ultimate works in synergy with your body's own physiological mechanisms to enhance intensity output. I am also going to detail a different Ultimate workout and describe the mechanics of each exercise and how to do them the Ultimate way.

Intensity - What Does it Mean?

I will start off by saying intensity is what separates those that make modest gains over the years from the ones that make massive gains year in and year out.

Intensity! Understanding and being able to train with maximum intensity will literally force your muscles to grow. It leaves them no choice. They have to adapt. They have to grow.

What I find most prevalent is that most people do not train with maximum intensity. They think they do, but they really don't. Not even close. This is important.

Intensity and overload is the Ultimate key to muscle growth

They go together. They depend on one another. When combined they exponentially enhance the important physiological triggers for muscle growth.

Intensity without overload is not sufficient to build appreciable muscle. And overload without intensity, not only limits muscle growth, but it increases the chance of an injury occurring. Injuries are not good and will certainly keep you from building any muscle. With Ultimate, the more intensely you train the less your chance of injury.

A major technique of Ultimate is the blending of intensity and overload to get the maximum growth stimulating effect from each and every rep. You must realize that intensity is not just a "hard" workout. Intensity is both mental and physical and the connection between the two. You have to hone your mental intensity to make it all happen. Ultimate is much more than just doing heavy weight for 4 to 6 reps. It's doing the 4 to 6 reps with maximum mental and physical intensity.

How to know if you're training with maximum intensity

As I said earlier, very few people train with maximum intensity. And if you think you do, that can be a problem. If you're comfortable with the intensity you train with then what's going to motivate you to improve on it? Let me be the first to tell you, no matter how hard you train or how intense you think your training may be, you can always train harder with more intensity. Always!

If you're an experienced lifter you know the difference between good and great workouts. You know when you have slacked and you know when everything thing goes perfectly. You know when you have trained as hard as you possibly can for that given workout. There is an unmistakable physical and mental feedback that occurs.

Think for a moment about some of your truly great workouts. You know the ones - where every lift you do feels light. Where nothing distracts you. The ones where you're so focused mentally that nothing could break your concentration. The workouts where you can feel every fiber in your muscles engorge with blood. You're muscles achieve that extra pump. You feel big. You feel strong. Everything is perfect. Every rep, every set.

This is synergistic intensity. Intensity that feeds on itself. It's like perpetual motion. When you can harness this type of intensity continuously - the "mind-muscle" link - big things will happen. Your training will start to payoff with serious dividends in muscle growth.

Ultimate is designed, not only from a physiological advantageous standpoint, but also from a psychological one as well.

Ultimate combines the physical advantage of muscle overload with what I like to call the "time-sensitive" maximum intensity threshold. This mental and physical synergy produces a unique training environment that generates maximum intensity capabilities.

The very structure and physical mechanics of Ultimate are designed to capitalize on the physiological kinetics of muscle growth while creating optimum mental parameters for maximum intensity.

Ultimate is designed for intensity

Ultimate intensity is a short-term, extremely focused and concentrated exertion of energy involving 100% mental and physical effort. The Ultimate program makes training with maximum intensity much more effective and much easier. It's designed to capture and focus this intensity in each workout.

By now you know that building maximum muscle requires maximum intensity. You know that Ultimate is designed to harness this intensity. Here is how Ultimate will allow you to enhance your intensity levels by tapping into physiological pathways for intensity enhancement where other training programs will not. In fact, most training programs, by their very design, discourage intensity.

Ultimate Encourages and Develops Intensity

A large part of the intensity you exert comes from desire. It comes from your ability to put forth 100% physical effort while pinpointing 100% mental focus during your training. Ultimate's design is centered around research done on attention span and mental intensity longevity as well as the physiological science of muscle energy and muscle hypertrophy. Here is a list of important physiological advantages Ultimate training generates that other training programs do not.

1. A Ultimate set consists of only 4 to 6 reps. A single Ultimate set lasts between 16 and 20 seconds. Generating short term, highly concentrated and focused mental intensity is a much easier task for the short duration of a Ultimate set than it is for a set with higher reps. Maximum high-energy intensity can only be generated and maintained for very short periods of time. Ultimate is designed to coincide with this time limited intensity threshold.
2. A Ultimate workout is only 30 to 40 minutes long. This allows for maximum intensity generation and mental focus the entire workout. Again, working on time limited intensity threshold. You can only generate maximum high-energy intensity for very short periods only so many times during a workout. Ultimate is designed to capture this intensity for the duration of the workout.
3. Each Ultimate workout consists of training only one major muscle group. You are able to apply maximum high-energy intensity without the concern for training additional muscle groups during each workout. When you train more than 1 major muscle group per workout intensity suffers. Maximum muscle fiber stimulation is compromised. Each Ultimate workout enables you to exert maximum intensity for each and every set during the entire workout.
4. Ultimate training heavily recruits glycolytic muscle fibers which promotes a higher level of glycogen synthase activity than normal training methods. This stimulates rapid muscle glycogen re-synthesis rates for optimum mental concentration and physical energy output.
5. Ultimate training stimulates an increase in levels of epinephrine (adrenaline) and norepinephrine which increase nerve-muscle contraction force. This has a profound physiological effect on strength. Not only does Ultimate build strength quickly, but it also promotes instant muscle contraction strength through this intricate, but natural chemical release. Increased epinephrine also stimulates enhanced glycogenolysis in the muscle tissue for increased muscle energy.
6. Ultimate training reduces the rate of lactate accumulation lowering the need to efflux lactate and hydrogen ions from the working muscles. This creates a cellular atmosphere suitable for higher rates of ATP generation, increased muscle energy substrate turnover, and increased anaerobic power output.

7. Ultimate training increases vascular flow and capillary exchange capacity enhancing muscle nutrient and energy substrate transport and increasing muscle energy by-product liberation.
8. GH release is significantly higher with Ultimate training than normal training methods. An increase in GH release is substantial within just 10 minutes. Other training methods actually blunt GH release.

As you can see, Ultimate is designed to synergistically increase intensity while it physiologically optimizes muscle growth and strength. This is the only training method ever developed that is designed to foster and avail the combined synergy between muscle energy substrate activity, adrenaline release, increased GH output, increase in nerve-muscle contraction force, and enhanced mental focus ability.

Ultimate training feeds on itself. Each element of Ultimate capitalizes off the other elements of the program. The very design of Ultimate ignites this myriad of physiological, biochemical, hormonal, and psychological activities that have a dramatic impact on intensity creation during training.

Ultimate enhances one's ability to train with maximum intensity thereby increasing the muscle growth and strength response to weight training. That is how Ultimate helps to generate training intensity within itself.

There are other intensity generating issues that you have control over and can manipulate to help take advantage of Ultimate. Let's take a look at these.

Mental Approach to Enhance Motivation

Motivation to train hard and heavy is something that needs to be cultivated. Sometimes you just don't want to train. What do you do then? How can you make it to where you always want to train? You always want to test your limits. You always want to make your next workout better than the last. How can you create an intense desire to give it 100% and more every time you train?

The very structure of Ultimate makes this a more achievable endeavor, but there is a mindset to training that must come from within.

You have to want the results you are after bad enough to go through the pain and work it takes to get there

You have to sacrifice. Building muscle doesn't happen by accident. Building maximum muscle takes a unique synergy between mind and body. Developing this link of mind and muscle takes some practice and refinement, but the truly awesome athletes work on this daily. The more you can hone and refine this link the greater development you'll achieve.

I wish I had the talent to be able put into words the passion I have for the fitness industry, for the science of muscle dynamics, for the science of human performance enhancement and for my desire to help people succeed. . It's actually frustrating as the passion runs through my mind, but my fingers just can't quite convey the overwhelming enthusiasm. Anyway, maybe some of you can tap into this emotion with me and if I can reach and share this with just a handful of you, then I will have succeeded.

Okay, so now you know what intensity is. It goes hand in hand with overload in building muscle. Ultimate is intensity. You need to work on training with maximum and ever increasing intensity each and every workout. I am going to outline a few techniques here to help you with this process.

Techniques For Generating And Increasing Mental And Physical Intensity

1. Before each workout I want you to mentally envision your entire routine. Picture each set and each rep you are going to do. Focus heavily on the muscles that you will be training as you play your workout in your mind. Envision the weight you will use and even picture loading it on the bar.
2. Define your goal. Establish a weight you want to lift for each movement. Envision successful execution of this weight in your exercises. Focus. This will generate mental energy, mental intensity.
3. Define your physical goal. How much muscle do you want to develop? How big do you want your arms? How wide do you want your back and shoulders? How thick do you want your chest? Brand this image of yourself in your mind.
4. Keep this focused mindset through your entire workout. Continue to create these images during and between sets. Again, focus.
5. Finally, after each workout I want you to write down a reflection on how you felt while you trained. Could you have trained harder? Did your mind wonder? Were you distracted? Did you get the most you possibly could from each and every rep? What could you have done better?

By keeping a workout summary you make yourself accountable for each workout. This is important. If you don't concentrate on maximizing each workout you're very unlikely to maximize your gains. So take ten minutes in private after each workout to write down your reflection of how well things went and how you can improve.

Ultimate intensity is a level of mental and physical concentration, focus, and exertion that ultimately dictates the success of workout. Training with sub par intensity will yield nothing more than sub par results. The higher the intensity level while you train results in greater stimulation of muscle growth and greater increases in muscle strength. Refining your ability to train with maximum intensity workout after workout will virtually guarantee that you'll move closer to your goal of optimum muscle growth.

Confusing the muscle builds muscle

I will be outlining another Ultimate routine here. One aspect of Ultimate that I feel is very important is a "muscle-confusing" technique. I believe that to stimulate continuous muscle growth you need to continuously change the overload stimulation. I feel strongly that this change does not have to be drastic. It can be as simple as changing the order you do your exercises for each muscle group. It can be the simple addition of one set for a particular exercise and one less for another exercise.

What does not change are the basic Ultimate principles. No matter how you change your routines, the basic rules apply. Overload is the primary objective. Never change a routine if it results in diminished overload. Never, ever decrease overload as part of a change in your training. Muscle-confusion is not an excuse for reducing muscle overload.

Conclusion

I hope I was able to instill on you the importance of intensity and what it means to muscle growth. Ultimate is unique in that the very design and structure of the program actually increases your ability to harness intensity while you train. It does this from both a physiological standpoint with key biochemical releases associated with short duration high-intensity movements, as well as from a psychological angle by tapping into short term mental concentration and focusing abilities.

Intensity coupled with overload is one of the most significant qualities needed for muscle growth

Ultimate allows for maximum intensity and overload to synergistically work together with the biochemical and physiological responses resulting from this unique training method. Ultimate imparts a "domino-effect" on muscle growth. Each aspect of Ultimate feeds upon each other aspect creating a unique and immensely effective muscle building stimuli. This is why it is so important to follow Ultimate to the letter. It's designed as a total program with each component related to the next.

Remember, Overload and Intensity!

I hope I have enlightened you a bit more this week on this awesome training approach. The emails I have received so far tell me that everyone is really stoked and already seeing and feeling the gains that Ultimate is giving them. That's just awesome. As time progresses and you begin to master the techniques and theories of Ultimate you will really start to appreciate the power this type of training has on building muscle size and strength.



Ultimate Nutrition Basics

Welcome back. First I want to thank everyone for all the overwhelming positive feedback I am getting on Ultimate. It's very apparent that shown the proper use of the right tools you can totally change the way you think and approach building muscle and strength. As you are finding out, building muscle takes just as much intelligence as it does brawn and determination. Ultimate is about strengthening the mind to help strengthen the body.

It gets me very excited to read the emails I get daily telling me how they wish they had known about this program 5 years ago. Well, there's a lot more to come so keep returning each week as this program builds on itself. One week leads to the next so don't miss a single week.

Nutrition is a very big part of building muscle. It's said that nutrition is 80% of the puzzle. I say it's 100%. That's right, 100%. The actual lifting, the muscle overload, is also 100% of the equation. Intensity is 100% of the equation. Hydration is another 100% of the equation. Mental attitude is 100% of the equation. So far we are at 600%.

Do you get where I am coming from? You can't break down the importance of each component of building muscle and tag a value to it as it relates to the total picture because each aspect is not only important, they are interrelated to the significance of all the other aspects of building muscle.

One is no more important than the other. You can't build muscle if you don't train. Muscle will not grow if you don't train with intensity. Muscle will not grow if your body is not properly hydrated. Muscle will not grow if you lack the proper mental attitude.

No matter how hard, heavy, and intensely you train, muscle will not grow without proper nutrition reinforcement. Not a chance.

And let me be the first to tell you that your nutritional reinforcement is much more than taking the latest supplement that becomes available. It's about a structured and consistent plan to feed your muscles the nutrients they need to take full advantage of the key and incredibly intricate physiological episodes that happen as a result of training.

The more intelligently you approach your body's nutritional needs the quicker you will maximize your muscular growth. Nutrition plus supplementation is indeed 100% of the equation.

I'm not going to get too elementary nor am I going to get overly scientific about nutrition here. I am going to show you an effective way to calculate your calorie, protein, carbohydrate, and fat requirements for maximum muscle growth. This will lead into next week's course detailing how to eat, when to eat, what to eat, what supplements to take, when to take them, what supplements to avoid, which ones work, which ones don't, and finally how you can design a diet and supplement program tailored to you as an individual.

I'm going to remove the guesswork and provide a clear path for you to follow. I will specify several different supplement and diet programs that will allow you to take advantage of the specific cellular environment each Ultimate workout puts you in.

A major misunderstanding about muscle growth is that it occurs in the gym. This is not correct at all. Muscle growth occurs not in the gym, but during the recuperation period - the time that you are not training. Ultimate training "sets up" the process for muscular growth. This is important to understand as it has a direct impact on how you structure your supplement and diet program. You're not growing while you are in the gym. You are just "preparing" to grow.

This bit of understanding contributes to specific diet and supplement structures that will provide the nutrients

your muscles need when they need them and when they can be utilized most effectively and efficiently. It only makes sense to work with your body and the physiological pathways that Ultimate training creates to optimize nutrient utilization.

A haphazard supplement program coupled with a haphazard diet will make building muscle a next to impossible task no matter how you train

You don't want this. In fact, you want to take advantage of every possible opportunity the molecular environment within your muscles presents to encourage rapid muscle growth.

You spend hours and hours in the gym literally punishing your muscles and yourself, so compromising your results because of a misguided nutritional approach is nothing more than self-abomination. You owe it to yourself to extract the most from your efforts. The more you understand what proper nutrition provides to muscle growth the more prepared you'll be to maximize your muscle growth.

The Five Nutritional Elements

You have five major nutritional elements that are of primary concern and have significant contribution to building muscle and minimizing fat. Calories, Protein, Carbohydrates, Fats and Water. Except for calories, which is a measurement of the total energy value of the food you eat, these are the macro-nutrients. How you structure your intake of these five major contributors to muscle growth is important to your overall success and will dictate the results you get from your training.

I want to enlighten your understanding of these basic nutrients and what impact they have on muscle growth.

Calories

Calories are fuel. Whether from protein, carbohydrates, or fat, calories provide fuel your body needs to function. Each day you expend a certain amount of energy. This energy is fueled from the calories you consume. The more active you are the more calories you will burn. Synthesizing protein into new muscle is a caloric fueled activity.

Other factors contribute to the total calories burned such as total body mass, body temperature, thermal effect of foods you eat, and thermal activity of various supplements. Also, the bigger you are the more calories you will burn.

The more lean muscle mass you have the more calories you will burn

All these things must be considered when determining caloric intake.

Calories come from 3 dietary sources - protein, carbohydrates, and fat. One gram of protein contains 4 calories, one gram of carbohydrate contains 4 calories, and one gram of fat contains 9 calories.

As you can see, fat contains 2.25 times as many calories as either protein or carbohydrates. In other words, you can eat 2.25 times as much protein and carbohydrates as you can fat while still maintaining the same caloric intake. This is an important illustration as to how fat can add significantly to your daily caloric intake.

What do you think will provide more muscle building nutrition, 225 grams of protein or 100 grams of fat? They both provide an identical amount of calories. Knowing the breakdown of your total daily caloric intake is very important and will contribute directly to the results of your training.

Protein

Protein is needed by your body for virtually all growth promoting processes. Protein is a "builder" of cells. Protein is the single most abundant substance in your body next to water. Protein is present in every organ in your body. Protein is essential for blood, hormone, and enzyme production. Protein is also essential for optimal immune system function. And, protein is absolutely essential for muscle repair and growth.

As you can see, improper protein consumption effects much more than just direct protein synthesis. It effects all the trigger mechanisms that control muscle growth.

Weight lifting places a considerable increase in demand for protein by your body. And the more muscle you develop the more protein you will need. Muscle tissue is the major dumping site if you will for protein. It's like a huge protein reservoir. And when you are supplying insufficient protein your body will steal it from muscle tissue whenever it needs it. Muscle breakdown.

Delivering your body a constant supply of protein throughout the entire day is essential for optimum muscle growth

You never, ever want to have your body steal protein from muscle tissue to suffice any of these other functions. This will result in muscle loss.

To maximize muscle growth you want protein available for synthesis at all times. This is of vital importance and is why supplying protein to your body every 3 hours is essential to maximize growth. Anytime your body has to steal protein from muscle you stall and even regress the muscle growth process.

The last thing you ever want is to be protein deficient when your body needs it. You can even consume more than your required amount of protein daily and still be "time-deficient" in your protein needs. This is why timing protein and nutrient intake is so important. You never want your hard earned muscle tissue to have to sacrifice protein to meet demand from other systems in your body.

The importance of protein cannot be overstated. Understanding the need for a continuous supply of protein will certainly set you in the right direction for building muscle.

Protein Sources

I like to breakdown protein into two categories: Whole Food Protein and Protein Supplements.

Whole Food Protein

The best whole food protein sources are chicken, turkey, lean red meat, fish, eggs, and milk. These are the protein sources that nature supplies and they are excellent forms of protein that certainly should be included in your daily diet.

Protein Supplements

Protein supplements are a completely different story. The advances made in food science and protein technology over the past 5 years has revolutionized the supplement industry. And nowhere has the advancement been greater than in protein supplementation.

In 1992 we started doing an extensive amount of research into whey protein and the emerging science on its effect on nitrogen retention, weight gain, and protein deposition. The information extracted from this research was revolutionary in what it resulted in.

Although whey protein had been used in the past, the processing techniques used and the resulting end product were very crude. To make whey protein more viable, we sought out new processing techniques in an effort to yield a higher protein concentration and more efficient, higher quality whey protein supplement. What we came up with revitalized and revolutionized protein supplements and set a new standard in whey protein development.

Whey Protein was the first protein to incorporate advanced processing techniques. This enabled us to produce a highly concentrated whey protein without denaturing the delicate protein fractions. The result was a protein source with the highest nitrogen retention capabilities of any other protein made.

Since 1992 Whey Protein has been updated and refined no less than 9 times. As protein technology advances in the lab and through research, Whey Protein has incorporated these advances to provide the latest in protein science. I can't think of any other product available that has continued in refinement. In fact, what you currently have in the whey protein market is a regression in protein refinement, quality, and certainly muscle building effects in lieu of lower costs.

Whey protein is more or less a commodity now. Because of our country's patent laws you cannot be awarded patents for ingredients such as whey. You can patent certain procedures used in the manufacturing process, but you can't patent the product itself. Unfortunately this leads to a huge distortion in product quality and effectiveness that can still capitalize on the name of the main component - whey protein.

To illustrate my point, as a raw ingredient, you can purchase whey protein for as little as 34 cents a pound or as much as \$8.00 a pound. And basically you are getting exactly what you are paying for with each price increment. In most cases, when you buy a 5 pound container of whey protein for \$30.00 the company is making much more profit off you than a company selling you 2 pounds of a high-quality, properly processed whey protein for \$40.00. You can bet your ass that the protein used in the \$30.00 - 5 pound whey protein is much closer to the 34 cent per pound range. This is the same protein used in cake mixes, potato chips, gravy mixes, and even low cost cattle feed.

Just because a container says "whey protein", it's no guarantee you're getting a suitable protein for building muscle

We have performed a number of tests on different whey protein supplements and found some to contain less than half the protein as claimed on the label. This is not uncommon and with the proliferation of the low cost whey protein being offered you can bet it will just become more widespread.

Bottom line is that whey protein is not created equal by any sense of the imagination. Skip on the quality of the whey protein you use and you're doing nothing but robbing your muscles of the growth potential that is available to them. Think about the pain, the dedication, the sacrifices, and everything you give up to train as hard as you do. Why would you diminish the results of those efforts by skimping on protein?

We have established, and by now you should be keenly aware, that protein is the most important nutrient for muscle growth. This is a "no-compromise" area of supplementation. What I'm trying to say is if you forgo quality for price (like you see in the \$30 - 5 pound tubs of whey) then you will certainly pay the price in poor protein utilization, poor muscle growth, and poor results.

The first question that most will ask is, "How much protein should I be consuming each day?". This is important and over the years I have refined what has shown to be the most effective protein intake levels for building muscle.

Your daily protein intake should account for no less than 53% of your total caloric intake. This caloric intake percentage is important as it will also effect the protein intake level depending on the individual and their specific caloric needs. Everyone is different and although two people may have the same physical build and weight, they could differ drastically in the amount of calories they require to maintain a steady bodyweight.

So if you are 200 pounds and eat 4000 calories per day then your protein intake will be 530 grams per day ($4000 \times 53\% / 4 = 530$). If you are 200 pounds and eat 3100 calories per day then your protein intake will be 411 grams per day ($3100 \times 53\% / 4 = 411$).

There are individuals who have ultra-slow metabolisms and eat fewer calories per day. Less total calories will mean less total protein intake. When trying to gain muscle mass you never want to go below 2 grams of protein per pound of bodyweight per day. If you weigh 200 pounds and you're trying to gain muscle mass you want to make sure you are getting at least 400 grams of protein per day.

To some of you this may sound excessive, but believe me it's not. If you need to consume 4000 calories per day in order to fuel muscle growth, you need to realize that the calories have to come from somewhere. If you lower your protein intake or don't meet the 53% level, but you are still taking in 4000 calories, then those other calories are coming from somewhere else - either carbohydrates or fat. And let me tell you, carbohydrates don't build muscle and fat certainly does not build muscle. **Only protein builds muscle.**

To put this protein level into perspective, 400 grams of protein is only 1600 calories. So though the total number may seem large it's really not.

Remember, only protein builds muscle. **No other anabolic stimulus can build muscle without protein to supply the building material.** The more efficient the protein and the higher the quality, the more effectively it will contribute to muscle growth.

Again, **quality of the protein is of utmost importance.** If you're consuming 400 grams of a cheap, low quality whey protein, you'll still be cheating your body out of the muscle building material it needs to grow optimally. It's like using a cheap paint to paint your house. You might initially save money, but before the job is done you will have spent more money and much more time and effort applying the extra coats of paint just to get the desired results.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are a very misunderstood nutrient and because of this there are many misguided diet plans and suggestions floating around, lately however, even mainstream diets are starting to realize carbohydrates contribution to weight maintenance and body composition.

Carbohydrates are a fancy name for sugar. This may be a bit confusing, but the end result of a baked potato and a spoon of sugar are the same - glucose. In other words, a baked potato and a spoon of sugar, when both are processed in the body, the final result is the same - they both turn into glucose.

Carbohydrates, once converted to glucose, are used to fuel muscle energy and brain function

Carbohydrates come in essentially two forms - simple and complex. Simple carbohydrates are things like fruit, honey, and table sugar. Complex carbohydrates are things like potatoes, pasta, vegetables such as corn (carbohydrate powders are derived from corn), rice, and grains.

The main difference between simple and complex carbohydrates is the time it takes for the body to convert them into glucose. This is important and is the reason complex carbohydrates are favored over simple carbohydrates. Complex carbohydrates tend to give a more gradual and sustained energy release. Simple carbohydrates give a sharp energy increase usually accompanied by a sharp decline in energy as well.

One thing to realize is that once the carbohydrates you have eaten have been converted to glucose, what is not used to fuel body functions and replenish muscle glycogen is shuttled into fat stores. This is the nemesis of overeating carbohydrates. Unused carbohydrates will make you fat.

Carbohydrate consumption should be viewed as an energy source to provide glycogen to fuel muscle activity. Your primary goal with carbohydrates is to provide enough for this task each day and no more.

Now to the question, "How many carbohydrates should I consume per day?". Carbohydrates should total about 37% of your total calorie intake. If you eat 3100 calories per day 1147 of those calories or 287 grams should come from carbohydrates. ($3100 \times .37 / 4 = 287$)

I prefer (and your body prefers) to derive the majority of these carbohydrates from complex carbohydrate sources. The only simple carbohydrates should come from some fruit or from engineered dextrose. As you know you want to keep the junk food to a very minimum. I have to admit though, there's nothing like a nice chocolate cake, or Little Debbie Snack Cakes, but these must be avoided.

By keeping your carbohydrate intake around 37% of your total calories, you are providing enough fuel for your muscles and other body functions while keeping excess carbohydrates from converting to body fat. And consuming mainly complex carbohydrates you are supplying a steady energy source without peaks and valleys associated with high simple carbohydrate consumption.

Fats

Fats are the most dense energy source available. Each gram of fat contains 9 calories. Over 2 times that of protein or carbohydrates. This energy density means that you can eat a much less amount of foods high in fat and hit your calorie limit very quickly.

Fats are a necessary nutrient essential to the body for many vital functions. The thing is you just don't need very much and most people consume far more than is needed from a functionality standpoint.

Aside from saturated fat and trans fatty acids, all fat is not bad, it's the excess calories that come with it that

are bad.

Fat does not make you fat. Excess calories make you fat. If you burn 3000 calories a day yet you consume 4000 calories, you're going to increase your body fat. It doesn't matter how low your fat intake is. If your caloric consumption exceeds your caloric expenditure, you add body fat.

The key thing here, as I stated earlier, is that fat is very calorie dense. You can eat twice the amount of protein as fat and still consume less calories and the protein, as you know, fuels muscle growth and repair.

Structured Lipids

We know that some fats are essential, and lately research has uncovered some really unique and interesting traits certain fats possess. One fat in particular, CLA - conjugated linoleic acid - has a unique ability to decrease body fat levels and increase muscle mass. CLA is a very interesting lipid and has also been shown to have anti-cancer properties.

CLA is found in beef, cheese, and milk, but only in small amounts. By conjugating linoleic acid, scientists can produce CLA in supplement form, allowing you to extract the nutrient-partition effects of CLA without the unwanted calories that would come from the foods rich in CLA.

Many people supplement with fats such as borage oil and flaxseed oil. Not a good idea. People just need to stop running out and buying a supplement just because they read an article on praising its effects.

Other than CLA, supplementing with fats has no real place in building muscle. If you keep your whole food intake varied and include fish several times a week and maybe add a teaspoon of olive or safflower oil to salad every now and then, you can leave the fat pills for someone else to buy.

How Much Fat to consume??

Now to the question, "How much fat I should consume per day?". Keeping fat intake to about 10 percent of your total caloric intake is optimum. This is plenty of fat for all necessary functions it provides in the body and limits the empty calories associated with fat intake.

**If you eat 3100 calories per day 310 of those
calories or 34 to 35 grams should come from fat**

$$(3100 \times .10) / 9 = 34.4$$

When following a lean diet high in protein and moderate in carbohydrates, your fat intake typically takes care of itself. But it is essential that you read labels and study up on the nutritional breakdown of various foods so you will have a sound understanding of which foods are high in fat and which ones are not.

It would be wise to purchase a book that lists all the foods and the nutritional values to have handy when you need it. I recommend Nutrition Almanac. This is an excellent reference source that gives a listing and breaks down the complete nutritional contents of just about every food you can imagine. This is certainly a worthwhile purchase.

Water

Water is an essential part of life and a very integral part of building muscle. After all, your body is 2/3's water and your muscles are approximately 70% water. It's the most abundant element in your body. Nutrient digestion, transport, and absorption is dependent on proper fluid intake. Water effects cellular nutrient uptake and circulation. Water is critical for flushing toxins from the body. Every physiological activity is negatively effected when hydration is compromised.

Water also helps properly regulate body temperature and is responsible for the utilization of all the water soluble vitamins your body needs to survive.

Water is essential, cheap, and can have a very big impact on how well your body is able to build muscle

Water helps prevent injuries while training by cushioning joints and other critical soft tissue areas. I can't stress enough the importance of drinking abundant amounts of clear, clean water.

And one important thing about water is that it's non-caloric. You can drink as much as you want and it will not add to your caloric intake. It will not make you fat. There is no downside to water so drink it in abundance.

I highly recommend drinking at least 1 gallon of pure water every day.

It's not as difficult to drink a gallon a day as you may think. People have different ways of doing this. Here are a few tips:

- Keep a quart of bottled water at all the places you spend most of your time
- In your car
- At your desk at work
- Carry one with you when you train
- Even on your night table

This allows you to have continual access to water all the time and you can drink continually throughout the entire day and even night.

I actually keep a Brita filtering pitcher at my desk that allows me to have filtered water at arms reach all day long. I know I need to empty this pitcher each day and this allows me to visually see where I'm at at any point during the day. You can get these at Asda and I would certainly recommend getting one for both at home and work.

Calculating Your Caloric Requirements

Okay, now you have a good understanding of the essential nutrients and their importance in building muscle. Now let's calculate how many calories you should be consuming each day in an effort to build maximum muscle.

This is just a guideline you understand. Every person has what I call "metabolic-individuality". Two people may weigh the same and have the same build yet one could require 500 more calories a day to maintain his current body weight than the other. This is "metabolic-individuality".

Your body requires energy - calories - just to exist. Even sleeping your body burns calories at a rate 70 to 100 calories per hour. This is called Basal Metabolic Rate - BMR. BMR estimates can be calculated with decent accuracy, but there are variables such as sex, age, body size, body weight, and of course "metabolic-individuality". Even so, you can get a good number using the BMR Variable .42 multiplied by your bodyweight to find the calories per pound of bodyweight per hour. Women should use the BMR Variable .35.

So using the above formula, if you weigh 200 pounds your BMR would be $200 \times .42 \times 24 = 2016$. That's 2016 calories per day or about 252 calories every 3 hours. Now remember this is just to sustain your bodyweight as it is with no activity at all.

To figure out your total caloric needs you would have to factor in the activities you perform during the day and how long you perform them and then add the calories burned to your calculated BMR. This is not difficult and only requires a chart that lists calories burned during specific activities for your bodyweight.

If you are a moderately active person I have found that to structure a caloric level for gaining muscle mass you take the BMR formula above and substitute BMR Variable .65 for .42. If you weigh 200 pounds your caloric level you want to set would be $200 \times .65 \times 24 = 3120$. That's 3120 calories per day or about 390 calories every 3 hours.

Calculating Your Protein, Carbohydrate and Fat Requirements

Once you have your daily calorie target figured out then you can calculate your protein, carbohydrate, and fat requirements.

Using the calories calculated for 200 pounds we will first find your protein target. Your protein intake would be 413 grams - $(3120 \times .53)/4 = 413$.

To calculate your carbohydrate intake you will use the multiple .37. Your carbohydrate target will be 289 grams - $(3120 \times .35)/4 = 289$.

Fat intake will be 35 grams - $(3120 \times .10)/9 = 35$.

It's pretty simple and an excellent guideline to follow. Now remember "metabolic-individuality". Everyone is different, but all that you will need to change is the BMR Variable number to derive a higher or lower caloric figure. After a month or so you should be able to get this number right on the money. And after a few Ultimate training cycles and Ultimate diet programs you'll be able to fine tune your caloric intake with razor precision.

You'll no longer have to guess at what, when, and how much you need to eat to get where you want to be.

Here's a calculation recap for a body weight of 200 pounds.

- **Calories:** 3120
 $(200 \times .65) \times 24 = 3120$
- **Protein:** 413 grams (1654 calories, 53%)
 $(3120 \times .53)/4 = 413$
- **Carbohydrates:** 289 grams (1156 calories, 37%)
 $(3120 \times .35)/4 = 289$
- **Fat:** 35 grams (315 calories, 10%)
 $(3120 \times .10)/9 = 35$

To get your caloric needs all you need to do is replace 200 with your actual bodyweight in pounds. If you are working in kilograms then multiply your bodyweight by 2.2 and replace 200 with the result.

Best exercises to stimulate maximum muscle growth

Chapter 12 already. Where does the time go? It seems like I just started this program last week. Congratulations to all of you who have dared to venture into the world of Ultimate and are now reaping the benefits. It's a great feeling and a sense of certainty when know that every rep you do has a purpose. There is no reason to cross your fingers and train - not with Ultimate available. When you have a grasp of the basic physiological understanding of what causes a muscle to grow, then all you have to do is follow the plan through, feed your muscles, recuperate, and grow.

The fundamentals of Ultimate guarantee muscle growth as quickly as your body, your muscles will allow. Training the Ultimate way will provide you with maximum muscle growth potential.

You can train other ways and make gains in muscle mass, but there is no other training method that will produce muscle and strength gains to the extent of or as fast as Ultimate will. Why is this? Ultimate takes the very elements responsible for inducing a muscle to grow and extracts the maximum efficiency from these elements for accelerated muscle growth.

Ultimate Power Tip:

Any time you want to do an exercise or training routine outside of the Ultimate parameters you need to ask yourself this question: "Is what I am about to do the most efficient way to build muscle?" You don't do a new exercise just to "do" a new exercise. Anytime you do an exercise you must make sure that that exercise is the most effective exercise you can do. Otherwise, why would you do it?

This week I am going to detail the chest and bicep exercises most suitable for Ultimate training and the chest and bicep exercises that are not suitable. I am also going to detail 2 more Ultimate routines that will add flexibility to accommodate schedule and time constraints that many people face.

Not everyone has the time to train 5 days a week and you don't have to. Ultimate parameters are designed to maximize muscle gains, but you can still benefit from Ultimate and the muscle building power it produces even if you cannot follow it letter by letter.

In the following pages I will organize two very effective Ultimate routines that offer the flexibility to those that need it. Remember however, the overload and intensity parameters, the backbone of Ultimate, still apply.

There are literally thousands of different exercises that you can do in the gym. Thousands! But in reality, only a select few are responsible for the majority of the muscle gains you achieve. Knowing this, doesn't it only makes sense to dedicate your time and effort to the exercises that produce the greatest results and avoid the ones that don't? By learning the exercises that are the most productive you'll now have no excuse for doing the ones that are not.

Ultimate Efficiency

The definition of Ultimate Efficiency is: **the ratio of muscular overload achieved to the time and energy applied to achieve this overload.** Efficiency is the name of the game.

The idea of Ultimate is to achieve maximum overload in minimal time

Which is more efficient, achieving maximum muscle fiber stimulation and overload in 10 minutes or achieving this in 20 minutes? 10 minutes of course.

There are certain exercises that induce muscle overload much more efficiently than others. And since you've made it this far in the course I'm sure you can pretty much guess which ones they are. You see, the Ultimate routines are not just a collection of my favorite exercises. They are structured programs designed to maximize muscle overload and muscle fiber stimulation as effectively as possible in the least amount of time.

There are many exercises that are done religiously throughout gyms around the world that are basically a complete waste of time. At most they provide minimal efficient overload and certainly don't come close to approaching Ultimate Efficiency. In fact, the list of "don't do" exercises is much longer than the Ultimate approved list of exercises.

Why take the long road when you can take the short road? Ultimate is a heavy and intense training method, but this is what builds maximum muscle size and strength. Light weight doesn't do it. Moderate weight does not do it. Overload is the only method that will force a muscle to grow. The degree of this overload ultimately determines the degree of muscle growth.

Though light and moderate weights are overload stimuli they are not "sufficient" overload to signal significant growth responses. Ultimate uses maximum overload, low rep, short duration training parameters that provide maximum muscle fiber stimulation. And it provides this "maximum" stimulation in much less time.

By doing the "right" exercises and avoiding the "wrong" ones you can build more muscle mass and strength in less time.

As it has become apparent, Ultimate relies heavily on compound exercises. A compound exercise is a movement that involves more than one major muscle group. A compound exercise involves a "primary" muscle and one or more "secondary" muscles. Ultimate incorporates compound movements for the primary muscle involved. The overload benefits to the secondary muscles are a part of Ultimate, but only from a volume standpoint.

Here is a listing of Compound Exercises:

- Bench Press
- Incline Bench Press
- Shoulder Press
- Pull-ups
- Pull Downs
- Barbell Rows
- Cable Rows
- Squats
- Deadlifts

With compound exercises much more weight can be lifted. More weight - more overload. In fact, compound exercises allow far much greater weight to be used than non-compound or isolation exercises. This enhances efficiency. More weight, more overload, more muscle.

It's important to take advantage of the increased power available with compound exercises

A major mistake I see many people make is trying to make an exercise more difficult. They do everything they can to work against the mechanics of their own body. They are under the false impression that the more difficult you make an exercise the more effective it is. Wrong!

Here are some examples of what people do to make an exercise more difficult:

- Bench pressing with their feet in the air
- Doing curls with their back against a wall
- Ultra slow reps
- Super strict form

The idea is not to make lifting the weight more difficult, the goal is to make lifting the weight more effective and more efficient at muscle fiber stimulation.

Do you ever wonder why even the most advanced weight equipment doesn't produce the same effects as free weights?

Since the inception of Nautilus equipment back in the seventies most weight equipment manufacturers have been going in the wrong direction with the machine development. They have continued to design and develop weight equipment that is more focused on muscle isolation. This is the wrong approach. This is why, even with the most advanced weight equipment, free weights are still the most effective weight lifting equipment for building muscle.

The equipment designers have yet to figure this out. Building muscle is a blend of common sense thinking and rigid science. You must understand the physiological science that is involved in building muscle and how to apply this science in the real world. This is where the equipment manufacturers fall short.

Just as the equipment manufacturers have come up short, so do all the "training gurus" and exercise physiologists. Like the high-tech result-less machines, this is a good example of why performing exercises in an ultra strict manner is less effective than using your body's natural mechanics. Using ultra-strict form simulates a machine. It locks you into a rigid range of motion that limits overload and limits muscle fiber stimulation.

Muscle Isolation – WRONG!!

Isolating a muscle during training sounds like a good idea, but if it limits muscle overload it is certainly not the most effective training method

Muscle isolation exercises sound like they would be more effective, but they are not. Isolating a muscle during resistance training limits overload, limits muscle fiber stimulation, and limits growth. I do not know of a single isolation movement that does not limit overload. There are only a few exceptions where muscle isolation can be used with effectiveness and I will detail these later.

Here are popular isolation exercises that you should avoid.

- Dumbbell Flys
- Cable Flys
- Concentration Curls
- Preacher Curls
- Any exercise machine or exercise that is designed to isolate a muscle

In the next pages you'll find a rundown of the most effective chest and bicep exercises in Ultimate training. I will explain the most effective way to perform the movements, what primary muscle they overload, and the secondary muscles involved.

Chest

Barbell Bench Press

This is the undisputed king of all upper body exercises. The primary muscles involved are the chest muscles - mid, upper, and lower pectorals. Secondary muscles used are the front delts, triceps, upper back, traps, and lower back. Performed correctly, you'll also use your glutes, quads, hamstrings, and calf muscles. (Though these are mainly stabilizing muscle groups).

Make no mistake about it, even with all the other muscles involved the bench press is a chest exercise. And it's the best chest exercise by far. What makes the barbell bench press so effective are the mechanics involved and the large amount of weight that can be used. Maximum overload can be achieved very easily and the other muscles involved assist in meeting this overload.

Execution

Most people think the bench press is a straight forward exercise and it is. There are however, certain things you can do to increase your bench for greater overload and increased muscle growth.

To correctly perform a Ultimate bench press you need to properly position yourself on the bench. You have 4 connect points from the ground to the bar.

1. Your feet
2. Your butt
3. Your shoulders
4. Your hands

Your feet should be firmly planted on the floor. Not just placed on the floor, but more like glued to the floor. Your power in the bench starts here.

The next connect point is your butt. Your butt should be firmly planted on the bench.

The next connect point are your shoulders. From your butt to your shoulders your back should be comfortably arched.

The next connect point are your hands on the bar.

When you are ready to start your set your feet should be planted, your butt should be planted, your back should be arched and your shoulders should be planted. Your hands should be gripping the bar tightly. In this setup your body is like a coiled spring.

Remove the weight from the rack and lower it at a moderate speed. Not too fast and not too slow. Do not hesitate with the weight at the top. This wastes energy and speeds fatigue. Descend with the weight immediately. Lower the weight to just above the bottom of your sternum. As the weight touches your sternum allow it to sink into your ribcage 1 to 2 inches. From here explode up and back with the weight.

Ultimate Power Tip:

The explosion from the bottom of the movement is important. The explosive force from the bottom signals high contraction force and is believe to induce muscle cell hyperplasia.

Incline Barbell Bench Press

This is the king of all upper chest exercises. The primary muscles worked here are the upper chest. Secondary muscles are the middle and lower chest, front deltoids, upper back, and triceps.

Execution

The incline does not need to be very steep. 35 degrees is perfect for upper chest work. You follow the same technique for this movement as you do for the flat barbell bench press. Firmly position your feet, butt, and shoulders. Lower the bar at a moderate pace to the very center of your sternum. Let the weight sink into your chest slightly and power up and slightly back explosively. Lower the weight twice as slow as your raise the weight.

Flat Dumbbell Bench Press

Dumbbells are very effective for training chest. You cannot use the same amount of weight due mainly to the limitations of the dumbbells and the effort needed to get into position and handle the dumbbells. However, the increased range of motion makes them a very worthy addition to the Ultimate arsenal of exercises.

The primary muscles involved are the chest muscles - mid, upper, and lower pectorals. Secondary muscles used are the front delts, triceps, upper back, traps, and lower back.

Execution

The most difficult thing about heavy dumbbell exercises is getting them into position. Here is a technique that makes this almost effortless. While sitting on the end of a flat bench with the dumbbells resting vertically of the end of your thighs rock backwards into a lying position on the bench. As you rock backwards into the lying position you bring your knees up with you. This sets you into a perfect position with your arms extended straight above your chest ready to do your first rep.

Lower the weight at a moderate pace while rotating your palms in toward your body. You want to stretch deep at the bottom of the movement. Power the weight upward with explosiveness while rotating your palms back to their original starting position.

Now you also have to be able to put the dumbbells down when you are done. Here's an effortless way to do this as well. When you complete your last rep raise your knees back up so they are close to the dumbbells you are holding. Lower the dumbbells to meet the ends of your thighs. This motion with the dumbbells to your knees will cause you to rock back up into the seated position. It takes a little practice, but once you get it down then handling even the heaviest dumbbells by yourself will be no problem.

Incline Dumbbell Bench Press

This is a very effective exercise for upper chest. The primary muscles worked here are the upper chest. Secondary muscles are the middle and lower chest, front deltoids, upper back, and triceps.

Execution

As with flat dumbbell bench press, the most difficult thing here is getting the dumbbells into position. Unlike the flat bench you cannot rock into position. No problem. As you are sitting on the incline bench with the dumbbells resting on the end of your thighs kick each dumbbell into position one at a time by lifting your knee toward your chest. This places the dumbbells into the bottom position of the exercise ready to start your set.

Lower the weight at a moderate pace while rotating your palms 90 degrees clockwise. You want to stretch deep at the bottom of the movement. Power the weight upward with explosiveness while rotating your palms 90 degrees counter clockwise.

You finish the set with the dumbbells at the bottom position. You then raise your knees up to meet the dumbbells and rock yourself back into the seated position. Piece of cake. Once you master these techniques for handling dumbbells this will be your preferred method. Even if you have a training partner this is how you'll want to do it. It's that easy.

Decline Barbell Bench Press

This is a very effective exercise for your lower chest. The primary muscles worked here are the lower chest. Secondary muscles are the middle chest, front deltoids, upper back, and triceps.

Execution

The decline should be about 30 degrees. Lower the bar at a moderate pace to the very bottom of your sternum. Let the weight sink into your chest slightly and power up and slightly back explosively. Lower the weight twice as slow as your raise the weight. If your are not accustomed to doing decline bench presses it may take a bit of getting used to. You may be quite surprised by how much weight you can lift in this movement.

Dips

Now this is a great exercise for overall chest development with primary overload directed to the lower chest. Secondary muscles used are your triceps, middle and upper chest, front delts, and upper back.

Execution

Most people will need extra weight added to increase the overload. This can be awkward and uncomfortable and will take some getting used to. Following Ultimate for even the shortest time will mean that you'll need to get used to adding weight.

To correctly perform the dip you need to direct the overload to the chest and away from the triceps as much as possible. This is done by dipping in an arch motion - almost like a 1/4 circle. Dip slowly and power up with force. Make sure you stretch deep at the bottom.

Chest Exercises Not To Do

Dumbbell Flyes (incline, decline, flat)

The first thing you need to ask yourself before choosing an exercise is: Will this provide maximum overload?

Flyes are an isolation movement for the chest because they remove the triceps and shoulders out of the movement. However, isolation reduces overload. Less overload means less muscle fiber stimulation.

Another reason people mistakenly do flyes is to shape the muscle. Let me make this perfectly clear, you cannot change the genetic shape of your muscles. You can make them bigger which may appear to change the shape, but you cannot change the genetically predetermined shape of your muscles.

Flyes are basically a worthless exercise in my book. You expend a lot of energy for a little overload. Remember, Ultimate Efficiency. Flyes are not efficient.

Cable Cross Over

This falls into the same category as flyes. Worthless. A lot of effort for a little overload. Cable Cross Overs do not build muscle, they do not shape the muscle. All they do is exhaust the muscle.

Pec Deck

This is the same as flyes only they have made a machine to do them on. A waste of time. Too much effort for too little overload. Leave this one to the Saturday morning fitness crowd.

Biceps

Straight Bar Bicep Curls

Who doesn't want big muscular biceps? Well straight bar curls are the most effective way to achieve this. This is a Ultimate exercise if there ever was one. The primary muscles worked are the biceps. Secondary muscles are the forearms, shoulders, and traps.

Execution

Grip the bar about half a hand wider than shoulder width. Curl upward until you reach the top of the movement. Make sure that you keep constant tension on the biceps at the top of the movement. This is accomplished by never crossing the perpendicular plane at the top of the exercise.

Your form can be relatively loose on this movement. This will allow you to use heavier weight for greater overload and work with your body's mechanical motions to help lift heavier weight and at the same time help to prevent injuries. As with any other exercise you should never get too sloppy. You know when you are cheating yourself out of maximum overload. Controlled cheating increases muscle overload. If you're cheating in a manner that does not enhance overload then you are doing this incorrectly.

Lower the weight twice as slowly as you raise it. I find most people do not go as heavy as they are able to with barbell curls. Step it up and increase the weight. Remember, you should use a weight that will allow at least 4 reps and no more than 6. If you can do more than 6 reps you need to increase the weight.

Ultimate Power Tip:

Here is a guaranteed way to enhance bicep intensity when you train. It's called Ultimate Stretch and Flex. At the bottom of each rep lock your elbows and at the same time flex your biceps for 1 second. Try this and see if it doesn't give you the bicep workout of your life.

Curl Bar Curls

These are the same as straight bar curls, but they put more overload on the outer biceps. Also they reduce the stress to the wrists by putting them in a more favorable angle.

Execution

Other than grip, you follow the same execution parameter as with straight bar curls.

Alternate Dumbbell Curls

This is an excellent bicep exercise that offers an attribute that straight bar curls or curl bar curls can't match. Alternate Dumbbell Curls allow you to supinate your wrist as you curl. The primary muscles worked are the biceps. Secondary muscles are the forearms and shoulders.

Execution

Alternate Dumbbell Curls should be done standing. Curl the weight up one at a time. Supinate (rotate from palm facing your side to palm facing up) your wrist on the way up. On the way down keep your palms facing up the entire way. One thing about curls that's important is that at the top of the movement you do not cross the perpendicular plane to the floor. Always keep constant tension on the bicep through the entire movement.

Ultimate Tip:

Ultimate training tries to limit the number of movements involving only 1 arm, 1 leg, etc. These types of exercises are not efficient. You expend almost twice the energy and it takes twice as long when you do these types of exercises. This is why we limit the number of exercises like this.

Straight Bar Cable Curls

Straight Bar Cable Curls are quite an effective movement. Using a cable and a weight stack places constant tension on the biceps. It feels different from regular straight bar curls because of this. Also the stretch and flex technique can be utilized real effectively here. The primary muscles worked are the biceps. Secondary muscles are the forearms and shoulders.

Execution

Grip the bar about half a hand wider than shoulder width. Curl upward until you reach the top of the movement. Make sure that you keep constant tension on the bicep at the top of the movement. This is accomplished by never crossing the perpendicular plane at the top of the exercise. Lower the bar slowly and under control. Stretch and flex at the bottom of the movement.

Bicep Exercises Not To Do

Seated Dumbbell Curls

Seated Dumbbell Curls tend to increase the isolation of the biceps. They will limit the weight you can use and therefore limit the overload.

Concentration Curls

What's the first thing you do when you start concentration curls? I'll tell you, you go for the lighter dumbbells. Red flag number one. Concentration curls are not an effective muscle building exercise. They limit overload.

Preacher Curls

Same thing here as with concentration curls. Isolation limits overload. Limited overload limits growth.

One Arm Cable Curls

Twice the effort for minimal overload. Again, not efficient. One Arm Cable Curls take twice as long, almost twice the energy and effort, and produce less muscle overload.

The biggest reaction I seem to get from people is somewhat of an awe as to how effective Ultimate is. This awe is usually coupled with a frustration or regret that they have been training for so long and getting little results by not using Ultimate.

Well, don't waste energy on frustration. You can't change the past, but you can mold your future. You are now learning the tools, the training methods that will be with you forever. Now there is never a reason to waste a workout from here forward. Your goal from now on is to make every rep a muscle-building rep.

Building muscle isn't complicated. It's not easy, but it's not complicated. There are basic principles involved and your goal is to structure your training parameters to allow you to maximize the effects from these basic principles. Any time and effort spent doing exercises in a manner that does not maximize these effects is time wasted and its a distraction from your ultimate goal of building muscle and strength.

Ultimate Tip:

One very important thing you must realize is that a botched or missed workout can never be made up. How many times have you took an unscheduled day off and "made it up" your next workout? Who are you kidding? When you miss a workout that's it. It can never be made up.

You are now a workout less in your quest for meeting your goal of building muscle. The same holds true for a workout that is not performed correctly - non Ultimate. That day, that workout, is gone. Sure you can train that muscle group the next day or week or whatever, but the fact remains that the time can never be replaced. A day of time has moved forward with no muscle fiber overload and no growth.

This is why you need to make every workout the most effective it can possibly be and this is the very foundation of Ultimate. A muscle grows only if stimulated with overload. A muscle responds to a degree related directly to the overload applied. The greater the overload the greater the growth response.

Ultimate Tip:

There is no such thing as a light workout with Ultimate. How many times have you gone to the gym for a light workout? Why did you do that? If your goal is to build muscle you completely wasted your time. If a workout is not designed to build muscle why would you even waste your time doing it? And I ask you again - who are you kidding? The reason I ask this is that so many people have a way of justifying why they do certain things when they know good and well they are wrong. Doing this only impedes your progress and no one else's.

Building muscle is a combination of training (overload), intensity, mental focus, recuperation, nutrition, and time. Time is the key element that most never consider in the broad scope of things. In one month you'll train each muscle group 4 times. You'll also have approximately 26 days of total recovery time for each muscle group evenly spaced for maximum recuperation. If you miss a workout you reduce muscle fiber stimulation by 25%. If you "make up" a workout (which 9 out of 10 times never happens) you impede recuperation by 20%, thus reducing muscle growth by a theoretical 20 percent.

Can you see now why training correctly during each and every workout is so important? Time is not on your side, but you can maximize the use of your time so you don't create a "time trap". Time is the critical factor and it's important to realize that any time you train in a manner that does not use maximum overload, that does not induce maximum muscle growth, or you skip a workout, you are in essence taking two steps backwards from reaching your goal. A missed workout can never be made up. A workout short of maximum overload can never be made up.

The purpose of this program is to show you the best and most effective way to weight train to add muscle mass and strength. It's designed to give you the knowledge and create a better understanding of how to train so that you will ignite results every time your in the gym.

I can share the knowledge with you. I can give you the whys, whens, and hows, but I can't force the discipline. I can't make you train this way. You have to believe in this approach enough to let it work. The great thing about it is results come quick. And when you start seeing dramatic results far greater than what you are used to, it then begins to feed on itself. You begin to derive energy and intensity from the results. This is when things really start to happen. You "zone in". You can literally "feel" muscle growth with each rep.

Back

Through the rest of this lesson I am going to detail the proper exercises for training back and triceps. I will show you what exercises work with the most efficiency and how to do these exercises the Ultimate way so you will extract the most muscle growth effects from them.

I will also show you which exercises to avoid and why. There's no reason to do an exercise unless it's the most effective exercise. Why settle for second best? It should not be in your vocabulary and I'm going to make sure that it is not.

Upper Back - Lats

Pull-ups

Pull-ups are the king of all lat exercises and fit nicely into the Ultimate training protocol. Primary muscles involved are the lats. Secondary muscles used are the biceps, forearms, shoulders, and a little bit of chest.

Pull-ups are a body weight exercise meaning the overload used is the weight of your body. For beginners starting out this sometimes too heavy. For advanced weight trainers this can be way too light.

Execution

Pull-ups are straight forward, but even so many people miss out on the total effect by not using the correct form for maximum overload.

The bar and your grip are two of the most important areas and also the main aspect people perform incorrectly. **You should use a straight bar and not a bar that is angled at the ends. Your grip on the bar should be about 6 to 8 inches wider than your shoulders.** A perfect way to tell if you are using the correct grip width is as follows: When you are at the top of the movement and your chin is over the bar your forearms should be perpendicular (straight up and down) to the ground. If your forearms are at an angle at the top of the movement then your grip is either too wide or too narrow.

Most people use a grip that is too wide. In fact, most pull-up bars encourage a grip that is too wide by angling and knurling the ends to designate grip location. **Do not grip a pull-up bar on the angled portion.** This angle can invite serious shoulder joint injury. Even a minor shoulder injury can all but shut down your training completely.

Ultimate Tip:

If you are unable to do more than a couple of pull-ups here is a way to complete six reps with a bit of assistance that you can control. Have your training partner stand behind you with his hands cupped together like he is giving you a boost onto a ledge or over a fence. As you are in the pull-up position bend your legs and put the tip of your feet into his cupped hands. When you get to where you can't complete a full rep on your own use your legs to press against your partners cupped hands to provide only the assistance you need to complete the reps. Your partner should not help. He is only there to provide a base for you to assist yourself. This is one of the few situations were Ultimate will use forced reps. Chances are you will not need this assistance very long.

As you begin the pull-up look at the ceiling. Pull yourself up with force and touch or try to touch the top of your chest to the bar. Descend slowly about half the speed you went on the way up. At the bottom of the movement stretch your lats briefly (1 second) and repeat. On the last rep, stretch your lats for about 3 seconds.

Ultimate Tip:

As you get stronger, and you will, you can consider adding weight with a special weight belt designed to hang weights off it. This will allow you increase the overload and stay within the 6 rep range. Weighted pull-ups can be a little tricky and awkward. Make sure you get familiar with them before you really start pilling on the weight.

Pull Downs - In Front

These are also called Lat Pull Downs. This is basically a pull-up performed on a machine that lets you easily adjust the resistance (amount of weight) used. Primary muscles involved are the lats. Secondary muscles used are the biceps, forearms, shoulders, and a little bit of chest.

Execution

A pull down machine is standard equipment in virtually every gym. As with all machines some are better than others. Most machines force you into a seated position that locks or holds you down in place. This allows you to use a weight heavier than your body weight and remain in a secure position.

Pull downs are virtually identical to pull-ups, but offer several distinct advantages - the ability to easily adjust the resistance and the ability to more effectively alter the angle at which you pull the weight down. All pull down movements should be done in front and not behind your neck.

To effectively target the lat muscles with maximum overload you need to lean back during this movement at about a 45 or 55 degree angle to the floor. This is a more favorable position to allow for greater overload, more direct lat stimulation, and drastically decrease chance of injury to the shoulder joint (You're working with your body's natural mechanical movements).

As you begin the pull-down look at the ceiling. Pull the bar down with force and touch or try to touch the top of your chest to the bar. Allow the bar to ascend slowly about half the speed you went on the way down. At the top of the movement stretch your lats briefly (1 second) and repeat. On the last rep, stretch your lats for about 3 seconds.

Ultimate Tip:

As you noticed Ultimate takes a different approach on form. Ultimate uses your body's natural biomechanical movements to target the muscle with more overload while decreasing chance of injury. Ultimate does not hold you into an unnatural ridge position that most mistake for "good form".

Close Grip - "V" - Bar Pull Downs

This is a great exercise for both lat thickness and width. This is done on a Lat Pull Down Machine. Primary muscles involved are the lats. Secondary muscles used are the biceps, forearms, shoulders, and a little bit of chest.

Execution

There is only one way to grip his bar so you can't make a mistake here. As you begin the pull-up look at the ceiling. Pull the V bar down with force. Arch your back and thrust your chest forward as the bar approaches your chest and touch or try to touch the bar to bottom of your sternum. Allow the bar to ascend slowly about half the speed you went on the way down. At the top of the movement stretch your lats briefly (1 second) and repeat. On the last rep, stretch your lats for about 3 seconds.

Low Cable Rows

This is one of the best exercises for both lat thickness and width. It's performed on a low cable row machine. Primary muscles involved are the lats. Secondary muscles used are the biceps, forearms, shoulders, lower back, quads, hamstrings, and a little bit of chest.

The Low Cable Row is definitely a power exercise and a perfect one for Ultimate. You can use a variety of different bar attachments for variation and generally handle a lot of weight with good form. Personally I like the straight bar with a shoulder width grip.

Execution

Grip a straight bar with a shoulder width grip. Sit into position with your knees slightly bent. Pull the bar to the bottom of your sternum. As the bar approaches your ribcage arch your back and thrust your chest forward. At the top of the movement do not lean back past parallel more than 10 to 15 degrees. Pause slightly when the bar touches your ribcage. As you lower the bar back to the starting position bend at the waste and stretch your lats fully. Make sure you do not jerk the weight and cause slack in the cable at the top of the movement. This invites injury.

Barbell Rows

If there is one exercise as physically demanding as squats this is it. Barbell rows separate the men from the boys. It's demanding and very effective. Primary muscles involved are the lats. Secondary muscles used are the biceps, forearms, shoulders, lower back, quads, hamstrings, and a little bit of chest.

Execution

You can do these on a platform or a regular flat bench used for barbell bench press. Grip a straight barbell with a shoulder width grip. Take the bar off the rack and bend forward with your back parallel to the floor and slightly arched. Do not round your lower back. Pull the bar up with force to the bottom of your ribcage. Make sure you keep your elbow close to your sides and flex your back when the bar touches your chest. Lower the bar twice as slowly as you raise it. At the bottom of the movement stretch your lats fully.

Ultimate Tip:

Wrist straps are very helpful when doing back. They allow you to handle much heavier weight without worrying about grip fatigue

T-Bar Rows

This movement is similar to barbell rows in effect. T-Bar rows are an excellent exercise for back thickness. Primary muscles involved are the lats. Secondary muscles used are the biceps, forearms, shoulders, lower back, quads, hamstrings, and a little bit of chest.

Execution

There are many different T-Bar row machines - if you want to call it a machine. Some are real good and some really suck. The movement should be natural. This is key. If the T-Bar row puts you into a position that is awkward it will probably do more harm than good. Remember, Ultimate works with the natural biomechanics of your body and not against them.

Grip the handle (I like a close grip with my palms facing each other) and pull the handle toward the bottom of your ribcage. Keep your head up. At the top of the movement - expand your chest and flex your back. Keep your knees bent and your lower back straight - do not "round" your lower back. Lower the weight twice as slowly as you raise it and stretch at the bottom

One Arm Dumbbell Rows

Typically one arm movements are considered very inefficient. They require almost twice the energy and take twice as long to complete. So from an overload and efficiency standpoint I would certainly choose Barbell Rows over One Arm Dumbbell Rows. However, Dumbbell Rows are such a good exercise I will at times make an exception. Primary muscles involved are the lats. Secondary muscles used are the biceps, forearms, shoulders, lower back, and a little bit of chest.

Execution

Use a flat bench and place one knee on the bench and one hand on the bench so that your back is flat and parallel to the floor. Grip the dumbbell and pull it to the lower part of your ribcage. Make sure you pull the dumbbell to your lower ribcage and keep your elbows in close to your side the entire movement. Flex your lats at the top and stretch them at the bottom.

Ultimate Tip:

On all rowing movements pull the weight to your lower ribcage and not to your chest. This directs most all the overload to your lats and away from your shoulders

These are the most effective movements for building a thick, wide, and strong, upper back. There are many different machines available for training back, but none are better than the exercises I just outlined. We do have two pieces of equipment in our performance lab that stand out. One is a Magnum plate load bi-angular pull down machine that simulates pull-ups very closely. The other is a bi-angular plate loaded row machine that's pretty good.

Remember, overload, intensity, contract and flex, and stretch. You can pack a lot of muscle and size on your upper back, but it takes overload. Ultimate overload.

Lower Back

Deadlifts

The key to strong and muscular lower back and powerful overall physique. The Deadlift is a serious exercise that produces serious results. Deadlifts not only develop a strong lower back, like squats, they build the entire body. Primary muscles involved are the lower back muscles. Secondary muscles used are the biceps, forearms, shoulders, traps, upper back quads, and hamstrings.

Developing the proper technique in the Deadlift will result in some mind-boggling weight that can be used. You must learn this proper technique to build strength quickly and avoid injury.

Execution

The Deadlift is an exercise where you lift the weight from the floor to your mid thighs. With the bar on the ground, stand with your feet about a hand narrower than shoulder width. Grip the bar about shoulder width with one hand in and one hand out. Keep the bar close to your shins and get into a squat position. With your head up and back straight drive with your legs as you lift the bar. About 2/3's the way through the movement you'll be using all lower back. Lock out your back by standing in an upright position.

Do not "round" your lower back. Drive with your legs from the bottom while keeping your lower back straight. this is important to prevent injury. You don't want to use a sloppy technique in the Deadlift.

Good Mornings

Good Mornings are a direct lower back movement. This exercise gets its name from the movement. It's a bowing movement that is used as a greeting in many far eastern countries. The primary muscles used are the lower back (spinal erectors). Secondary muscles are the shoulders, upper back and hamstrings.

This exercise will produce lower back muscles like steel cables.

Execution

Position the barbell just as you would when doing squats - across the rear delts and not the base of your neck. With the bar secure bend forward at the waist. Keep your back straight and your knees slightly bent and descend until your back is parallel to the floor. Return to the upright position and repeat. Perform this exercise under complete control. Don't get sloppy and don't go too fast.

Weighted Hyper-Extensions

Weighted Hyper-Extensions are a very effective lower back exercise. They target the lower back directly. The primary muscles used are the lower back (spinal erectors). Secondary muscles are the upper back and hamstrings.

Execution

Weighted Hyper-Extensions are done on a Hyper-Extension bench. Makes sense huh? The movement is kind of like a reverse sit-up. The Hyper-extension bench is typically designed on a 45 degree angle and secures your ankles or lower leg and positions your pelvis face down on a padded section that stops at the waist. This allows you to bend forward and raise back up to starting position using only your lower back muscles. A weight is held at chest level or behind the neck to increase the overload.

Bend at the waist slowly for about a 70 degree angle then raise up until your upper and lower body are in a straight line. Some people will "hyper-extend" past this point somewhat. That's fine, but don't get carried away here. Flex your lower back muscle hard at the completion of each rep.

Back Exercises Not To Do

Pull Downs or Pull-Ups Behind the Neck

These movements allow for less overload, but significantly stress the shoulder joint. Less overload - more chance for injury. Let the squids do these.

One Arm Cable Rows

Why? I saw this in a Muscle Media back training article once and just had to laugh. There is no purpose for this. Your objective is to create maximum overload in minimum time. This is minimum overload, expends twice the energy, and takes twice as long. Truly a moron movement. Don't do it.

Underhand Pull-Ups

Too much bicep and not enough back in this movement.

Any Silly Machine That Promises Isolation

Training back is a compound endeavor. The back does not move alone and should not be trained alone. Other muscles assist in back development, let them.

Triceps

Tricep Presses

Some people call these "Skull Crushers", but I've never liked that name. This is without a doubt the most effective mass building tricep movement when done correctly - the Ultimate way. Primary muscles involved are the triceps. Secondary muscles are the shoulders, traps, chest, back, and forearms.

Execution

Most people do this exercise wrong. Most trainers, books, and magazines teach this exercise wrong. Let's clear things up and show you how to really pack on some muscle by doing Tricep Extensions the Ultimate way.

Start off by lying on a flat bench. Now the difference here is that you want to hang your head over the end of the bench. I like to lock the heels of my feet on the other end of the bench for stability. Either have your training partner hand you the bar (I highly suggest using a curl bar as it reduces the stress to your wrists) or grab it from the floor and pull it over your head. With the bar extending over your chest lower the bar down and back by bending your elbows. Let the bar go behind your head. From this position you power the weight up with your triceps to the original starting position above your chest with your arms extended.

The key to doing Tricep Extensions the Ultimate way is the stretch involved by going behind your head with the bar. And, most importantly, performing Tricep Extensions this way allows you to handle significantly heavier weights while reducing the stress to your elbows.

Cable Press Downs

Here is another awesome tricep exercise that when done correctly will produce maximum overload and a great stretch on the triceps muscles. Primary muscles involved are the triceps. Secondary muscles are the shoulders, traps, chest, back, and forearms.

Execution

Again, most people do this exercise wrong as well. The key here is to lean into the exercise and allow the bar to break the parallel plane by about 45 degrees at the top of the movement.

Start off by gripping the bar slightly narrower than shoulder width. Press the weight down to your waist and lock your elbows. This is the starting position. Raise the weight while keeping your elbows close to your sides. As you are leaning into the exercise raise the weight up toward your face or forehead. When your forearms have broken the parallel plane by about 45 degrees drive the weight down to the starting position and flex your triceps for about 1 second.

By allowing the weight to travel past parallel you increase the range of motion and increase the stretch. By increasing the range of motion you increase the total muscle fiber recruitment and you reduce the stress on the elbows.

Close Grip Bench Presses

Close Grip Bench Presses are a serious mass builder for the triceps. Primary muscles involved are the triceps. Secondary muscles are the chest, shoulders, and forearms.

Execution

Lying on a regular Bench Press bench take a narrow grip on the bar. Your thumbs should be about 8 inches apart. Lower the bar slowly to the middle of your chest. Keep your elbows out. Drive the weight straight upward and flex your triceps at the top of the movement.

Seated Tricep Extensions

This is a very effective mass builder that maximizes the range of motion in the triceps. Primary muscles involved are the triceps. Secondary muscles are the shoulders, traps, chest, and forearms.

Execution

This exercise can be performed sitting straight up on a flat bench or sitting back on an incline bench. You can change them up for variety. Have your training partner hand you a loaded curl bar. Lower the weight from above your head to behind your head. Go as deep as possible then drive the weight back up to the starting position with explosiveness. Lower the weight twice as slowly as you drive it up.

Cable Press Downs Behind the Back

This is an exercise you don't see many people doing. Let me tell you it's very effective. It allows for plenty of overload and gives a great tricep stretch. Primary muscles involved are the triceps. Secondary muscles are the chest, shoulders, and forearms.

Execution

You will definitely need a training partner with this one. Using a cable press down machine turn and face away from the cable. Have your training partner grab the bar and lower it in a position behind your lower back. Grip the bar behind your back with a grip slightly narrower than shoulder width. Raise the bar up as high as possible toward your upper back. Press the weight down with explosive force. Flex your triceps at the bottom of the movement for about 1 second.

This exercise is a little tricky at first, but you'll catch on quick.

Dumbbell Press Downs Behind the Back

This exercise is similar to curl bar presses behind the neck except you use a dumbbell. Because of your hand position on the dumbbell it works the triceps a little differently while still allowing for maximum overload and maximum stretch.

Execution

Hold the dumbbell vertically by grabbing the handle with both hands at one end. Holding the weight over and behind your head, lower it as far as possible while keeping your upper arms perpendicular to the

floor. Raise forcefully and contract your triceps at the top. Lower the weight twice as slowly as you raise it.

Tricep Exercises Not To Do

I'm going to list three tricep exercises that are not necessarily the most effective. I want to point out however, that the tricep muscle is relatively easy to overload. There is hardly a tricep movement that does not generate sufficient overload for maximum muscle growth if done correctly. Of these three, Dumbbell Kick Backs can certainly generate maximum overload. Only the fact that it is a one arm movement does it get a downgrade.

Dumbbell Kickbacks

This a good tricep movement when done correctly. Only drawback is that it is a one arm movement.

Cable Kickbacks

Cable Kickbacks do not allow the use maximum overload and is performed one arm at a time. There is not sufficient overload and the one arm approach is inefficient.

Overhead One Arm Dumbbell Extensions

Overhead One Arm Dumbbell Extensions do not allow the use maximum overload and is performed one arm at a time. There is not sufficient overload and the one arm approach is inefficient.

What it boils down to with these movements is the whole "inefficient energy expenditure" problem and the fact that they do not produce maximum overload. Remember, you don't do an exercise for the sake of doing an exercise. You carefully choose the exercises that will produce the most overload in the least amount of time. That's what Ultimate does.

Conclusion

I covered the most effective upper back, lower back, and tricep exercises. I told you how to do them the Ultimate way to get the most muscle growth response in the least amount of time. That's what it's all about. The more you can extract from each and every rep the greater your results will be.

Ultimate does a lot of exercises - a little different. Ultimate certainly does not follow the usual cookie cutter mold you see in all the differently worded, but essentially the same training books that are for sale out there. Ultimate is not a rehash of old training ideas. Ultimate is a completely new approach.

It's not so much that Ultimate is a total innovation, rather a rethinking of the concept of building muscle. You see, the problem in strength training and bodybuilding is that the innovative thinking has become stagnated. As this stagnation propagated over the years it has bred an era of "perpetuated stagnation" and general acceptance of the status quo.

Ultimate takes another path, a more logical path based on the fundamental physiology of muscle growth. By understanding the essence of what causes (forces) a muscle to grow, Ultimate structures a defined plan of attack to efficiently ignite muscle growth workout after workout.

The Legs

This chapter, I am going to detail the leg and calf exercises most suitable for Ultimate training and the leg and calf exercises that are not suitable..

I would like to start this week off with a little review of the understandings and misunderstandings of building muscle and how it either stalls your progress or propels it forward.

No matter how structured our training programs are, over time we always seem to stray from what works. All in search of more. More size, more strength, more results. Unfortunately, as time goes on and training experience increases most people regress their training effectiveness. They work harder and longer for less returns.

How many times have you trained with someone new and did a different exercise from your normal routine? Afterwards you reflect back and think how awesome that exercise was. You also wonder how long it's been since you last did it and why it's been so long.

In the quest to build muscle, most people that train are their own worst enemy.

It's very easy to get carried away with your training. And unfortunately it's human nature to train in a manner that's counterproductive to muscle growth.

"More is better". At least that's how it is in just about every aspect of life. The more you study and learn the smarter you become. The more you practice at a particular activity or sport the more skilled you become. The more money you accumulate the richer your become. In weight training however, the more you train the less muscle you will build.

Now these are broad statements that have many contributing factors, but the underlying foundation of these statements is rock solid. When you are trying to build muscle more is not better.

Building muscle and strength is a simple process of overload, recuperation, adaptation - overload, recuperation, adaptation - overload, recuperation, adaptation . . .

Ultimate Tip:

Building muscle is a simple process. Far too many people make it way too complicated. The more complex you believe building muscle is, the more complex you'll make it. And the more complex you make it the less muscle you will build.

You must understand and accept that when building muscle "more" (volume) is not better.

Why are so many people so inclined not to accept this? Why do so many people that train increase their workout volume as the years go by in hopes of making more gains? Why are so many willing to accept less and less progress the more years they train yet spend more time in the gym?

My answer is - direction, or should I say, lack of the right direction. Unfortunately, there are very few "thinking" minds in this sport. As I stated before, the primary source of training and nutrition information comes from the magazines. And that's a bad thing.

If the only information you receive is the monthly regurgitation spewed from the magazines then you don't stand a chance. You're going to train wrong and your nutrition and supplementation will be guided by what makes the magazine/supplement companies' owners the most money.

Now don't get me wrong, every now and then you can find a bit of useful information that somehow accidentally made its way into a magazine. But the problem is you have to wade through all the mind polluting bullshit before you ever reach it. By then your mind is so tarnished, stained with self serving propaganda. Your training suffers, your nutrition is way out of whack, and your supplementation program has left you broke with no added muscle to show for it. Sound familiar?

I was just recently asked this question:

Question: Do you recommend using heavy weights and low reps all of the time? If so, do you disagree with Hatfield, Costa, Platz, etc. who recommend periodization training? (Periodization Training rotates the weight and rep patterns every few weeks.)

Answer: I recommend training heavy and with high intensity anytime and every time you train. Ultimate philosophy is quite simple. Anytime you wrap your hands around a bar there should be one purpose that directs how you execute from that moment forward - to build muscle.

With this understood, I have to also answer this question with a question. If overload is what ignites muscle growth then how will periodizing with lighter weights and higher reps build maximum muscle?

Periodization training will not build maximum muscle and strength because it does not incorporate maximum overload. If your muscles don't receive maximum overload they have no reason to adapt and no reason to grow. It's as simple as that.

A muscle needs a reason to grow. If a muscle is not given just cause to adapt to a demanding situation then it will not. Why should it?

Anytime you train with less than maximum overload you actually give your muscles a reason **NOT** to grow. And you create an adaptation environment that's counter productive to muscle growth. If a muscle is called upon for less than full power and full contraction it will tend to adapt to this lesser overload - an adaptation that will actually lead to muscle and strength loss.

Are you beginning to see the importance of maximum overload - Ultimate? Your muscles need a constant challenge. You need to continually seek greater overload and greater intensity for continual muscle growth to occur. Any workout using less than maximum overload is a counterproductive workout. Not only does it stall progress, but it may actually impede muscle growth.

When structuring a training program it must have purpose. You must have an answer for each movement you do. You must be able to answer truthfully,

"Why did I do that set?" and "Will the way I did it contribute to maximum muscle growth?"

And your answer must be, "Yes this set will contribute to maximum muscle growth because the set was done with maximum overload and maximum intensity."

Weight training to build muscle is a very individual sport. When you screw up the team doesn't lose, you lose. When miss a workout the team doesn't suffer you suffer. Building muscle is merciless. It will not happen unless you make it happen. Stray from the path and you certainly impede your progress.

Squats

You've heard me say this time and time again and I'm going to repeat it. If there is one exercise that produces the most dramatic gains in muscle size and strength squats are it. No other exercise even comes close to matching the effectiveness of squats.

The primary muscles involved are the quads, hamstrings, glutes, and lower back. Secondary muscles used - just about every muscle in the body.

I find than many people will make up every excuse possible to avoid doing squats. This is not a habit you should get into. You need to make it a priority to learn to love squats.

Ultimate Tip:

It's impossible to maximize your leg development without squats. Don't kid yourself. In fact, it's impossible to maximize overall whole body development without squats. Squats should be the cornerstone, the foundation of any muscle building program.

Execution

Good form on squats is very important for maximum development and to prevent injuries. Also, good form on squats works with your body's natural biomechanics. When your form is right you will be able to lift more generating greater overload and more muscle growth and strength.

Using an adjustable or pegged squat rack set the bar at the proper height. The height of the bar should allow you to take the bar off and put the bar back on the rack with no problem. You should never have to struggle racking the weight. This accounts for many of the injuries experienced while squatting.

Step under the bar and position it below your traps and on your rear delts. This position may be a little awkward at first, but once you get used to it you'll find it to be the most comfortable and secure. Don't rest the bar on the top of your traps. This is not only painful on your traps, but it is not secure and certainly not a good idea when the weight gets heavy.

With the bar positioned correctly take it off the rack. You should take one step back into position with your feet about shoulder width with your toes pointing straight ahead.

Ultimate Tip:

You should expend as little energy and time as possible getting into position once the weight is on your back. It should be a one step process. I see so many people, even experienced powerlifters, that take the bar off the rack and walk two or three steps back, then move their feet into the right position and then take a couple of deep breaths. This is not what you want to do.

When you have three, four, five, or six hundred pounds on your back the last thing you want to do is waste a bunch of energy before you even start squatting. And you certainly don't want to be taking several steps to get into position.

Once in position keep your head up and descend slowly. Now here is another very important part about squatting - how low should you go down? You want to squat down until your quads are parallel to the floor. For some it's difficult to tell when their quads are parallel to the floor. A good rule of thumb is, you are not sure if you are going to parallel or not then most likely you are not. Go deeper.

As with most all movements, full range of motion in the squat is very important for maximum muscle fiber recruitment and full muscle development.

When you reach parallel drive the weight up with explosive force. Remember to keep your head up. You might want to find a spot on the wall a foot above your height. Keep looking at this spot the entire movement. This helps keep you balanced and prevents you from going forward. Never look down during the movement as this may cause you to fall forward.

How not to squat

Here is a list of "do nots" while squatting.

- Do not bounce off your calves at the bottom of a rep
- Do not lean too far forward
- Do not bow your knees in during the upward portion of the movement
- Do not place a block under your heels while squatting. This is a bad habit to get in to
- Do not go so heavy that you can't squat to parallel
- Do not place a bench behind you to gauge your squatting depth. This is another bad habit you want to avoid

Ultimate Tip:

One thing to note, even squats done outside the Ultimate parameters (4 to 6 rep range to positive failure) are more effective for muscle growth than leg presses or any other leg movement done within Ultimate rules. Squats have such a dramatic effect on muscle fiber stimulation that I would recommend them even if you have to decrease the overload or weight used for whatever reason. This is the only exercise exception to the 4 to 6 rep rule where this applies. Squats are that important for building muscle.

Leg Press

You'll usually find some sort of leg press machine in just about every gym. There are many different types with the most common being a 45 degree leg press.

The primary muscles involved are the quads, hamstrings, and glutes. Secondary muscles used - like squats, just about every muscle in the body is used during leg presses however, not close to the extent that squats stress these muscles.

On a leg press machine, you load the weights on the sled portion (the sled is the part you push with your legs).

Execution

While sitting in the leg press place your feet on the sled platform about shoulder width with your toes pointed forward. Release the stops and lower the weight slowly. To make this movement effective you must go very deep. Lower the weight as far as you can. Drive the weight up with explosive force.

Ultimate Tip:

Maximum depth is very important when doing leg presses. Don't load the leg press up with so much weight that you can only do half reps. This is common in gyms across the world. Typically a leg

press can be loaded with an impressive amount of weight and half reps can be done by even the weakest pair of legs. For maximum muscle fiber stimulation a full range of motion must be used.

Ultimate is all about maximum overload, but not at the expense of the range of movement.

At the top of the movement do not lock out your knees. Keep your knees slightly bent at the top of the movement. This is important for constant tension on the muscles as well as a safeguard to prevent hyper-extending the knees during heavy overload.

Lunges

Lunges are an awesome movement for hamstrings. You always know the next day after you have done lunges. The primary muscles involved are the hamstrings, glutes, quads, and lower back. Secondary muscles used - just about every muscle in the body.

Execution

Lunges are done one leg at a time in an alternating fashion. Position the bar on your back exactly as if you were doing squats. Take the bar off the rack and step back far enough to allow room in front of you for a giant step forward. Standing with feet as wide as they would be if you were just standing normal. With your left foot take a step forward and slowly go into a lunge position. Keep your back straight during the entire movement. Lunge until your quad is slightly lower than parallel to the floor. Next, drive up and back until you are in the standing position again. Repeat the same movement with your right leg. Alternate between each leg for the desired number of reps - 4 to 6.

Ultimate Tip:

It's more effective to lunge onto a platform or block that's about 4 to 6 inches high. This dramatically adds to the intensity by providing a greater stretch and increased range of motion.

Stiff Leg Deadlifts

This is another very effective hamstring exercise. The primary muscles involved are the hamstrings, glutes, and lower back. Secondary muscles used are the arms, shoulders, traps, and upper back.

Execution

Stiff leg deadlifts can be done off of a regular bench press bench or a deadlift platform that will allow for an extended stretch. I recommend using straps for this movement to alleviate any concern for your grip so that you can concentrate fully on hitting the hamstrings with maximum intensity.

Grip the bar about 6 inches wider than shoulder width. Raise the bar into a standing position - as you would be at the top of regular deadlift movement. Bend at the waist and lower the bar to the top of your feet. Keep the bar close to your legs the entire movement. Your knees should be slightly bent and not locked out. This makes sure no unnecessary pressure is knee joint. Raise the bar back to the start of the movement and repeat.

Ultimate Tip:

To increase the intensity of this exercise do not fully lock out your back and hips at the top of the movement. Raise the weight to just before you are fully upright and then descend again for the next rep. This keeps constant tension on the hamstrings and maximizes the intensity levels.

With stiff leg deadlifts the stretch is of utmost importance. The wider you grip on the bar the greater the stretch your hamstrings will receive. Experiment with grip width to maximize the stretch while maintaining full control.

Leg Curls and Leg Extensions

Leg curls are a direct hamstring movement with few other muscles involved. The primary muscles involved are the hamstrings, and a bit of lower back.

Leg Extensions are a direct quadriceps exercise with few other muscles involved. The primary muscles involved are the quadriceps and hip flexors.

I don't get overly excited about leg curls or leg extensions simply because they are not very effective muscle building movements. I actually like them better for leg warm up more than anything else.

Leg Curls and Leg Extensions are both isolation movements and because of this isolation factor, only limited overload can be used.

Execution

These are both straight forward movements. You simply sit in the machine and follow the movement of the apparatus. There are of course better machines than others, but most everyone is limited by what is in the particular gym they train at. I certainly wouldn't seek out another gym based solely on their leg curl and leg extension machines. They are not that important.

Ultimate Tip:

Leg Curls and Leg Extensions make great warm-up movements prior to the heavy stuff. I would recommend doing them first at medium intensity before squats.

Leg Exercises Not To Do

In the previous sections I have outlined the most effective leg movements for building muscle mass and strength. Now I'm going to list a few movements that are common in many routines that you should avoid mainly for lack of effectiveness.

Hack Squats

I've never seen significant benefit in Hack Squats. They are designed to isolate the quads, but in doing so limit overload and severely stress the knees. Limited overload and increased joint stress is not a formula that fits into Ultimate.

Sissy Squats

Sissy Squats are just that, sissy squats. This is where you hold weight next to your chest and lean back and squat at the same time while your heels are elevated. It's basically a free weight hack squat.

Adduction and Abduction Machine

These are the machines that you sit in and spread your legs with resistance on the spreading portion and resistance on the closing portion of the movement. Why? These machines were designed to pacify many women that feel they need to target specific areas in their training as a way of losing fat or spot reducing. It's flawed in conception and is flawed in design. It's basically a Thighmaster in commercial form.

The Calves

The calf is a somewhat stubborn muscle mainly because it is used so often every day through normal activity. Most people don't train their calves with the same intensity they train other "ego" muscles. Nothing looks more silly than big quads and small calves. Make it a point to train your calves with the same intensity that you train other major muscle groups because in the same token, nothing looks better than a proportional set of muscular calves.

Standing Calf Raises

This is one of the best overall calf exercises. The primary muscles involved are the calf muscles. Little if any significant secondary muscle involvement.

Execution

The Standing Calf machine allows you to train calves in a standing position. You step on to an elevated block and bring your shoulders into two padded arms that are attached to weights via a lever arm. The machines are typically selectorized, but there are plate loaded versions as well. Most all variations of Standing Calf machines offer the same movement and overload to the calves.

Step on to the block or foot stand with the balls of your feet just behind your toes. You then extend your calves (as if you were standing on your toes to see over a crowd) and slowly lower your heel until your calves are in the fully stretched position.

When doing standing calf raises make sure your body is kept straight through the entire movement. Do not rock your hips forward or backward during the movement.

Ultimate Tip:

When training calves it's very important to fully contract and fully stretch the muscles during each rep.

Seated Calf Raises

The Seated Calf raises are an excellent calf exercise. The primary muscles involved are the calf muscles and primarily the soleus muscle. Little if any significant secondary muscle involvement.

Execution

In a Seated Calf Raise machine place the padded bar over the top of your knees. Place the ball of your feet on the foot pad. Raise and lower the weight slowly. Fully contract your calves at the top of the movement and fully stretch your calves at the bottom of the movement.

45 Degree Calf Raise

This is an awesome calf movement that fits nicely in the Ultimate program. The primary muscles involved are the calf muscles. Little if any significant secondary muscle involvement.

Execution

Seated in a 45 Degree Leg Press place the balls of your feet on the edge of the platform of the sled. Press the sled forward with the balls of your feet and fully contract your calves. Lower the weight slowly and fully stretch the calf muscle.

Hack Machine Calf Raises

This is a calf movement can be done on many hack squat machines. In fact, that's all I find a hack machine good for. The primary muscles involved are the calf muscles. Secondary muscles involved are the quads, hamstrings, and glutes.

Execution

Step into a hack squat machine facing the padded portion of the sled with your chest. Raise the sled and place the heels of your feet on an elevated foot rest. Extend your feet and fully contract your calves. Lower your heels slowly and fully stretch your calves. Make sure your pelvis stays pressed on the pad.

Calve movements are very straight forward. It's important that you fully stretch and fully contract each rep. This is the secret to maximum calf development. Make them a priority in your workout and not an afterthought.

Missing Workouts

When building muscle time is an important consideration. It's an important factor in the physiological activities that occur as a result of training. Time is required to workout. Time is key in the rest between sets. Time between workouts is a fundamental requirement for recuperation and growth. And time is something we don't have much of.

This brings me to an important subject that has yet to be properly addressed and explained - the detriments of missing workouts.

How many times have you missed a workout and "made it up" later in the week? Everything is fine right? You made up the workout. No harm done. Wrong! You didn't "make up" the workout. What you did was missed the workout. You missed the opportunity to ignite muscle growth. And then you screwed up your entire rhythm and recovery process by throwing the workout in where it wasn't scheduled.

There is no such thing as making up a missed workout

Why? Time. Time has passed and you can't get it back. When you miss a workout and make it up three days later you have lost 3 days of recovery and growth that you will never get back. Those three days of growth opportunity are gone forever and you'll never have them again.

So if you think you can just "make up" a missed workout, forget it. It can't be done. Time is both your friend and your enemy. Time management is an essential element in Ultimate for maximizing muscle growth. Structured properly and Ultimate will squeeze all the recovery and growth potential out of every minute of the day. Mismanaged or disrupted and time is muscle growth's worst enemy.

Ultimate Tip:

Never miss a scheduled workout and don't kid yourself into thinking you can make it up later. A missed workout can never, ever be made up. Miss workouts and you'll never reach you maximum physical potential.

To make significant and continual gains in muscle size and strength you need to be consistent. Missing workouts will only delay or retard your progress. Ultimate is designed in such a way that it creates a training atmosphere that encourages commitment. So not only is Ultimate the most effective way to build muscle, but its structure acts to feed the desire to train.

Training with high intensity and low volume makes your workouts short and very effective so you train less and make more gains. There's no excuse to miss a workout with Ultimate. If you can spare 40 minutes a day 5 days a week, you can then be on your way to making maximum gains in muscle size and strength. More gains than any other training method.

Remember the definition of Ultimate Efficiency - the ratio of muscular overload achieved to the time and energy applied to achieve this overload.

Ultimate is maximum overload in minimum time. Now this definition is referring to the actual workout, but the same philosophy applies to the long term mechanics of Ultimate. Look at your long term Ultimate schedule in the same manner you do each Ultimate workout. Efficiency is one of the most important components of Ultimate both short term and long term.

Don't Talk Yourself Into Missing a Workout

Over the years I've found that in most cases missed workouts are self created. You have to create a mental approach to training that ignites motivation. Eliminate negativity. Eliminate justification for what you know is unjustifiable.

Ask yourself, the last time you missed a workout, "Did I really need to miss that workout?". Look, when you miss a workout there is only one person that suffers the consequences - you.

Shoulders (Deltoids)

If one muscle group catches the eye more than any other it has to be shoulders. A wide pair of shoulders creates an impact on your physique unlike any other muscle group. Shoulders are not a complicated muscle group. They are used to raise the arms in front and to the side and they are used in all overhead pressing movements.

Training shoulders is straightforward and when done right, very rewarding.

Rarely does someone's shoulders respond slowly to overload. Typically, shoulders respond with quick growth and strength increases. The main thing you need to be careful with are shoulder injuries. Ironically, most shoulder injuries are caused when training another muscle group and not when training shoulders. And even more shoulder injuries occur when not training at all, but when subjecting the shoulder joint area to unusual stress.

The shoulder is the most complex and versatile joint in the body. This complexity and versatility leads to the extensive mobility this joint provides. It's because of this immense mobility that also leads to joint fragility as well. A shoulder injury, even minor, can be a big set back.

Strong shoulders provide strong protection to injuries. Not only do you benefit visually from well developed shoulders, but you benefit structurally as well. The negative here is finding shirts that will fit. A problem I'm sure all of you are more than willing to live with.

Traps tie the shoulders, neck and back together. Do not ignore this important muscle. And do not over-develop this muscle. Over developed traps will make the widest pair of shoulders look pitifully narrow. You want even development between the traps and the shoulders.

Military Press (Barbell Shoulder Press)

A classic compound movement that is also the most effective overall shoulder exercise you can do. Primary muscles involved are the deltoids. Secondary muscles used are the triceps, traps, forearms, and a little bit of upper chest.

Execution

Shoulder presses should be performed in front and behind the neck. This is important. Shoulder presses behind the neck put undo stress on the shoulder joint's tendons, and ligaments.

Your grip on the bar should be determined in the following manner: As you press the bar up, when your upper arms are parallel to the floor your forearms should be perpendicular.

With your grip determined press the bar up with explosive power. Lower the bar twice as slowly as you raise it.

Ultimate Tip:

To add extra intensity to this movement do not lock your triceps out at the top of the movement. You're training shoulders and not triceps. Past a certain point most of the muscular load is shifted to the triceps and away from the shoulders. You want to stop your ascent right before this happens. This keeps more overload directed at the shoulders.

Make sure you don't lean too far back during military presses. This will take overload away from the shoulders and direct it more to the upper chest. You want to keep your back straight. To help keep it straight you can use a seated bench with a back rest or you can use a regular flat bench and have your training partner allow you to use his knee for support.

Shoulder presses can be done seated or standing. If you do the standing don't waste energy and strength cleaning the bar to your shoulders. Use a squat rack so you can walk under the bar.

Deltoids Continued...

Dumbbell Shoulder Press

This is similar in execution to the military press, but dumbbells are used instead. Primary muscles involved are the deltoids. Secondary muscles used are the triceps, traps, forearms, and a little bit of upper chest.

Execution

These can also be performed seated or standing. With the dumbbells at shoulder level, drive upward with explosive force. Lower the weight twice as slowly as you raise it.

Dumbbells allow flexibility in wrist movement and increased range of motion. To take advantage of this extra flexibility at the bottom of the movement, the start, your palms should be facing inward. As you press the dumbbells up rotate your palms forward. On the way down rotate your palms inward to starting position. This allows for greater range of motion at the bottom of the movement.

As with military press, do not lock out your triceps at the top of the movement. Keep the tension fully on the deltoids.

Ultimate Tip:

Notice how I'm always advocating explosive movements at the start of the exercises. This explosiveness is key to maximizing overload and there is some speculation that this explosive movement can create a hyperplasia effect in muscle cells effectively increasing muscle cell count.

Dumbbell Side Laterals

Dumbbell Side Laterals are somewhat of an isolation movement for the deltoids, but the very execution of this movement does not limit overload even though it isolates. Primary muscles involved are the deltoids (medial). Secondary muscles involved are the forearms and traps.

Execution

Most people don't take full advantage of the overload that side laterals can provide. It's so easy to do this movement just slightly different, but in doing so you can dramatically increase or decrease the overload to the muscle. You need find the "sweet spot" with this exercise that allows for maximum weight and maximum overload for full muscle fiber stimulation.

Grip the dumbbells and hold them in front of your waist with your palms facing each other. With your elbows slightly bent, raise the dumbbells laterally with explosive force to slightly higher than shoulder height. At the top of the movement your pinkies should be pointing up slightly and your thumbs should be pointing down slightly. Lower the weight back to the starting position twice as slow as you raised it.

Ultimate Tip:

In most cases you can use more weight here than you think you can. Your form should not be rigid. You should be fluid throughout the entire movement. It's better to use momentum during side laterals to increase overload and reduce direct joint stress.

Alternate Dumbbell Front Raises

Like Dumbbell Side Laterals, Dumbbell Front Raises are also somewhat of an isolation movement for the front deltoids, but the very execution of this movement does not limit overload even though it isolates the deltoids. Primary muscles involved are the deltoids (front). Secondary muscles involved are the forearms and traps.

Execution

Grip the dumbbells and hold them in front of your waist with your palms facing your legs. With your elbows slightly bent, raise the dumbbells directly in front of you with explosive force to slightly higher than shoulder height. At the top of the movement your wrist should be directly in front of your face arm's length away. Lower the weight back to the starting position twice as slow as you raised it. Keep your palms facing down during the full movement.

Ultimate Tip:

Never lock your elbows during side laterals or front raises. Keep them slightly bent to remove stress the the elbow joint.

Bent Over Dumbbell Raises

Bent Over Dumbbell Raises are an excellent rear delt movement. Primary muscles involved are the deltoids (rear). Secondary muscles involved are the forearms and traps.

Execution

These can be performed sitting on the edge of a bench. Sitting on the edge of a bench with just your butt, lean forward and grip a pair of dumbbells behind your feet. Remaining in the forward leaning position, with your elbows bent about 40 degrees, laterally raise the dumbbells with explosive force until your upper arms are slightly higher than your shoulders. Lower the weight back to the starting position twice as slow as you raise them.

Traps

Barbell Upright Rows

This is a compound movement involving the deltoids and the traps. Primary muscles involved are the deltoids and the traps. Secondary muscles are the forearms and lats.

Execution

Grip width determines the primary direction of the overload. A wide grip directs the overload to the deltoids. A narrow grip directs the overload more toward the traps.

With your grip (palms facing in) determined start with the bar at your waist. Raise the bar upward to right below your chin. Lower the weight twice as slowly as you raise.

Ultimate Tip:

A curl bar works well with this exercise and is more manageable because the shorter length allows for better balance.

Barbell Shrugs

The ultimate trap exercise. Heavy barbell shrugs provide direct stimulation and overload to the trap muscles. Primary muscles used are the traps. Secondary muscles used are the deltoids, upper back, and forearms.

Execution

This is a very straightforward movement that is done only one way. Grip a loaded barbell about shoulder width with your palms facing in. With the barbell held at your waist lift the weight upward by shrugging your shoulders. Imagine trying to touch your ears with your shoulders. Lower the weight slowly back to the starting position.

Do not rotate your shoulders when doing shrugs. This movement is straight up and down. Rotating or rolling your shoulders can set you up for serious injury.

Ultimate Tip:

To increase the intensity with shrugs you should pause for 1 second at the top of the movement and stretch your traps fully at the bottom of each rep.

I highly recommend using straps for both Barbell Upright Rows and Barbell Shrugs. Using straps allows you to use more weight without the concern for your grip slipping.

Conclusion

These are the most effective shoulder and trap movements for building size and strength as quickly as possible. Nothing fancy, just straight forward, high intensity overload. Forget the machines. Heavy and intense barbell and dumbbell movements are what deliver maximum overload for wide and strong shoulders.

Assess your current time management habits

Are you missing workouts? If you are, reevaluate why you are training. What are you looking to accomplish? Remember, you are the only one who suffers as a result of you missing a workout. Building muscle and strength is as individual of an activity as they come. You're the only one who reaps the benefits of weight training and the only who suffers the consequences as a result of straying from the path of sure results.

Ultimate is not only the most effective training method it is also the least complicated and easiest to structure

The fundamentals of Ultimate training encourage greater commitment and less vacillation. Results are fast and steady. This tends to feed the motivation to train.

Nothing is worse than busting your ass in the gym month in and month out with no results. Ultimate delivers results month in and month out. If you apply the Ultimate training principles you will gain muscle size and strength faster than any other training approach. If you stray from the principles you slow your progress and reduce your results as time steadily passes you by. Time waits for no one.

Remember, time is not on your side. You should maximize each and every workout. Train with maximum overload and maximum intensity, never miss a scheduled workout, and maximize your nutrition and supplementation.

Follow the Ultimate training and nutrition approach and you'll maximize your results.

Forearms

Ultimate Tip:

A muscle that responds less requires overload the most. In other words, if a muscle group appears to grow at a slower rate than others, maximum overload is the only stimulation that will produce growth from this muscle group.

Overload

People tend to be more receptive to trying illogical approaches to building muscle than they are to implementing the one fundamental stimulus required for a muscle to grow - overload.

Anytime you consider training in manner different than Ultimate you need to ask yourself why you should train that way. If you know that overload is the only thing that stimulates muscle growth why would you train in a way that does not involve maximum overload? That does not promote maximum muscle growth?

Ultimate Tip:

A very simple way to rank the effectiveness of a training program without wasting time using it is to evaluate whether or not it incorporates maximum overload. If it does not it's certainly not going to provide maximum growth stimulation. If it's not going to provide maximum growth stimulation, it's not worth your time. In fact, it's a complete waste of time and effort.

This brings me to another fallacy used to backup many training programs and techniques. "Shocking the muscle". What the hell is this? Every time someone tries to introduce a new training program or justify training techniques that don't produce maximum overload they spin this justification by saying you are "shocking the muscle". Can I say it? Bullshit!

What they mean by "shocking the muscle" is introducing an unfamiliar exercise, rep scheme, training routine, or whatever in hopes ("Hope" is all this is based on. Not the science of muscle physiology.) that the change will "shock" the muscle into new growth.

Let me emphasize, the only way to "shock" a muscle into new growth is with greater overload combined with greater intensity. Overload and intensity is what forces a muscle to grow. So if a routine does not maximize the overload to the muscle it will not promote maximum muscle growth.

Okay, that's my overload reinforcement sermon for this week. Now let's get on to constructing the tools and a plan for building maximum forearms and abs.

Forearms

Your forearms are the links between the weight/overload and every upper body muscle group you train. Weak forearms will effect just about every upper body movement and could possibly limit the overload needed for optimum muscle growth. This along with the visual symmetry are why proper forearm training is critical.

Your forearm muscles curl, extend, and rotates your wrists. Your forearm muscles are also primarily used in all gripping activities. Your forearms are used in all upper body exercises to grip the bars and dumbbells and receive a good bit of stimulation as secondary effects of these upper body movements.

Because the stimulation the forearms receive is indirect, full range of motion during overload resistance is

needed for maximum growth and strength development. There are several direct movements that stimulate forearm strength and growth effectively.

Wrist Curls

The primary muscles involved are the flexor and extensor muscles of the forearm. Secondary muscles used are the various superficial flexor muscles of the wrist and fingers.

Execution

Grip a straight barbell with an underhand grip with your little fingers about 3 inches apart. While sitting on a bench rest your forearms on the bench with your wrists facing up and hanging over the end of the bench. Curl the bar upward explosively with your wrists. Pause briefly at the top with your forearms flexed and then lower the weight all the way to the starting position twice as slowly as you curled it. Repeat for required number of reps.

Ultimate Tip:

If you have access to a shorter straight bar I would recommend using that over a standard Olympic bar. The shorter bar allows for better balance and control allowing you to concentrate more on working the muscle and less on the mechanics of the movement.

Forearms continued

Reverse Wrist Curls

The primary muscles involved are the extensor muscles of the forearm. Secondary muscles used are the flexor muscles of the forearm and various superficial flexor muscles of the wrist and fingers.

Execution

Grip a straight barbell with an overhand grip with your thumbs about 3 inches apart. While sitting on a bench rest your forearms on the bench with your wrists facing down and hanging over the end of the bench. Curl the bar upward explosively with your wrists. Pause briefly at the top with the extensor muscles* of your forearms flexed and then lower the weight all the way to the starting position twice as slowly as you curled it. Repeat for required number of reps.

* The extensor muscles are the top muscles of the forearm. The flexor muscles are the bottom muscles of the forearm.

Standing Dumbbell Wrist Curls

This is a very effective total forearm muscle building exercise that is rarely done.

The primary muscles involved are the extensor and flexor muscles of the forearm. Secondary muscles used are the various superficial flexor muscles of the wrist and fingers.

Execution

Standing straight with your arms by your side and palms facing in grip a dumbbell in each hand. Using just your wrist, curl the dumbbell up toward your side. Pause briefly at the top of the movement and flex the flexor muscles of the forearm. Curl the weight back down and away from your side. Pause briefly while flexing the extensor muscles of the forearm. Repeat for a desired number of reps.

Abdominal muscles

Not only does a well developed set of abdominals add an aesthetic appeal to a physique unlike any other body part, but your abdominal muscles assist in virtually every movement your body makes both during training and just about every other conceivable activity.

Abdominals should be treated as a major muscle group. They should not be trained as an afterthought at the end of a workout. They should be methodically trained as you would train your chest, back, legs, etc. It's important to view your abs in the same manner as you do the fore mentioned muscle groups and apply the same intensity principles.

Like calves, but much more so, your abdominals are called upon for their strength all the time. From sitting to standing to running, your abs assist and help power each of these activities. When you lie down you use your abs. When you get up you use your abs. When laugh, sneeze, cough, burp, you name it, you use your abdominal muscles.

It's very important to have well developed and strong abdominals

A strong set of abdominals will help protect you from many common weight training injuries. In fact, most lower back injuries are due in part to weak abdominals. I would venture to say that 50 percent of all lower back injuries are related to underdeveloped and weak abdominals.

I recommend training abdominals once and sometimes twice weekly. And your abs can be trained with the Ultimate training principles. Understand that your abs are muscles and should be developed through overload.

I want to clear a misunderstanding that most people have about abdominal training. No matter how many sit-ups, crunches, or leg lifts you do you will not be able to have a well defined midsection until the fat in this area is reduced. And no matter how much you train your abs you will not reduce the fat in this area unless a proper nutrition diet is followed that will allow your body to burn the excess definition blurring body fat.

Ultimate Tip:

There is no such thing as "spot reducing" body fat. In other words, doing abdominal exercises does not burn fat specifically in the abdominal region. In order to lose fat in the mid section you must burn more calories than you consume on a daily basis. When you burn more calories than you consume your body derives these extra calories from stored body fat. When this happens you lose body fat.

Understanding What Abdominal Muscles Do

The abdominal muscles and how they function are generally misunderstood by even the most astute trainers. Your abdominal muscles connect the bottom of your ribcage to the top portion of your pubic bone. Contracting your abdominals shortens the distance between your sternum and your pelvis while rounding the lower back.

Many people are just not fully aware of the true function of the abdominal muscles. Your abdominal muscles do not bend you at the hip. Your abdominal muscles are responsible for the movement of your upper torso towards your pelvis a grand total of 30 to 35 degrees. That's it.

Developing strong, well defined abs is not difficult if you know how. Most people and trainers however, do not. Most abdominal exercises are about 30% efficient. Ultimate ab routine is closer to 100% efficient. Remember efficiency is a key part of Ultimate. The more efficient you can make an exercise the more effective it will be.

When you understand the biomechanical aspects of certain muscles used to complete many abdominal movements you can then begin to isolate the abdominal region for more effective and efficient abdominal overload.

Remember that your abdominal muscles are used to shorten the distance between your sternum and your pelvis about 30 degrees. With this understood you can eliminate many common abdominal exercises such as traditional sit-ups.

The Problem With Sit-ups

The problem with sit-ups is just that, they are an exercise that causes you to sit up. This motion goes way beyond the 30 degree abdominal involvement. In doing so it brings into play a set of muscles call the psoas. The psoas muscles attach to your lower back and travel down and around to attach to the front of your femur (upper leg).

The psoas muscles biomechanical action draws the torso toward the thighs, like a sit-up. The psoas muscles also stabilize the lower back in an arched position. So any time you are doing any sort of abdominal exercises and your lower back is arched you are mainly working the psoas muscles with little abdominal assistance.

Eliminating The Psoas Effect While Training Abs

Here is a sure-fire way to completely eliminate the psoas muscles from diminishing the efficiency of abdominal training. During all abdominal movements make sure you never arch your lower back. Always keep your lower back slightly rounded and emphasize the contraction of the abdominal region during the initial 30 degrees of movement. Simple as that, and now I will detail how to effectively accomplish this.

It does not take very long to fully overload the abdominals when you isolate them from any effect of the psoas muscles. Also, training your lower abs first helps to fully overload your entire abdominal region more efficiently.

Best Abdominal building exercises

Lying Leg Raises

This exercise is best done on the floor. The primary muscles used are the lower abdominal. Secondary muscles used are the upper abdominals, obliques, and hip flexors.

Execution

Lie on your back and place your hands palm down under your buttocks. From this position lift your head and shoulders slightly off the floor. This helps keep your lower back firmly planted on the floor to prevent any arching and any action of psoas muscle. With your knees slightly bent raise your legs until your feet are 12 to 16 inches off the floor. Lower your legs to about 6 inches off the floor and then repeat.

Ultimate Tip:

You can add resistance to leg raises to increase the overload by placing a weight on the tops of your feet and ankles.

Vertical Knee Raises

This is an excellent lower abdominal exercise that for some people allows them to easily eliminate the psoas muscle from the movement. The primary muscles used are the lower abdominals. Secondary muscles used are the upper abdominals, obliques, and hip flexors. Execution

Using a leg raise station that allows you to elevate your body in a vertical position and rest your weight on elbows, bring your knees toward your chest. As your knees come toward your chest your pelvis should rock slightly forward and your lower back should be slightly rounded. This eliminates the arching of the lower back and takes the psoas muscle completely out of the movement. Lower your knees slowly.

Ultimate Tip:

Do not let your legs straighten all the way out at the bottom of the movement. Keeping your knees slightly bent maintains constant tension on the lower abs through the entire movement. Also, a dumbbell can be held between your feet to increase the overload.

Cable Crunches

This is the all time most effective upper abdominal movement. In fact, if you could only do one abdominal exercise this would be it.

The primary muscles used are the upper abdominals. Secondary muscles used are the lower abdominals and obliques.

Execution

This abdominal exercise is performed using a cable pull down machine. Any cable machine that gives you access to an overhead cable and an unrestrictive spot directly below on the floor will work perfectly.

Using a rope attachment grab the cable/rope and with the machine set to the desired weight lower yourself down to the floor onto your knees. With your hands above your head crunch your abdominal muscle approximately 30 degrees from vertical. Raise yourself up slowly from the contracted 30 degrees to vertical and repeat.

Ultimate Tip:

Contract hard at the bottom of each rep and hold the contraction for 2 seconds. Allow your abdominals to remain tight as you ascend to to the upper portion of the movement. This creates extra intensity through continual tension on the abs.

Ab Crunches

Ab crunches are a tried and true abdominal movement. The primary muscles used are the upper abdominals. Secondary muscles used are the lower abdominals and obliques.

Execution

Lying on your back, elevate your knees until your thighs are perpendicular to the floor. With your knees bent and your fists touching your chin raise your shoulders up and toward your knees. Breath out as you contract your abdominal muscles. Hold this contraction for one second and slowly return to the starting position and repeat.

Ultimate Tip:

For increased overload hold a weight a few inches in front of your face. Also, do not lie completely back on the floor at the end of each rep. This keeps constant tension on your abs and increases overall intensity.

Summary

Follow these guidelines and implementing the Ultimate details will add increased intensity, isolation, efficiency, and overload to your abdominals while decreasing stress to your lower back.

Conclusion

Well, that covers the details of the most effective exercises employed in Ultimate training. The idea of Ultimate is to generate the greatest overload efficiently and effectively to stimulate maximum muscle growth response in minimum time. Great philosophy huh? Build maximum muscle in minimum time. That's Ultimate!

As the months go by and you start packing on the muscle you will still be bombarded with "gym-advice" and new training routines probably on a daily basis. You will however, already be armed with the undisputed knowledge of Ultimate. As you progress, your results will solidify the importance and effectiveness of Ultimate training and the principles that comprise this unique approach to building muscle.

I am convinced that the results you'll get with Ultimate will keep you loyal to the program and to yourself. If you are ever tempted to stray from Ultimate even for just one workout, remember the Ultimate Tip to evaluate a training routine, technique, or principle before you waste time doing it.

Ultimate Tip:

A very simple way to rank the effectiveness of a training program without wasting time using it is to evaluate whether or not it incorporates maximum overload. If it does not it's certainly not going to provide maximum growth stimulation. If it's not going to provide maximum growth stimulation, it's not worth your time. In fact, it's a complete waste of time and effort.

I'll see you next week as we delve deeper into the fine art of building muscle size and strength with Ultimate.

Ultimate Cardio: burning fat while building lean muscle – benefits

One of the most widely asked questions over the past few weeks has been how to correctly incorporate cardiovascular exercises with Ultimate. I'm going to lay out the correct way to integrate cardio work with Ultimate so that you get the maximum fat burning effect from the cardio and still retain all the muscle building impact generated by Ultimate.

I'm going to discuss cardio integration into Ultimate, but I will mainly detail the total requirements for burning fat. This involves more than just cardio. I will profile two approaches to achieving contest condition and show why the Ultimate approach is the most effective by far.

From reading many of your questions I get the feeling that many of you are putting too much emphasis on your cardio. Most people structure their cardio training in a way that negatively impacts their muscle's ability to grow. That's not good and is certainly something you want to correct.

Cardio has three main benefits

1. Expend energy by burning calories - hopefully in the form of stored body fat
2. Enhances cardiovascular health
3. Enhances endurance

The effect cardio exercises have on improving cardiovascular health is their most important function. However, most people that train view cardio work as a necessary evil to help burn body fat and achieve a lean appearance. In fact, most all lifters only do cardio for that purpose and that purpose only. Well, like it or not, you're doing your entire body good by incorporating a cardio routine with your training, but you need to understand the ramifications on muscle growth.

Secrets of Burning Fat

Most people are very confused when it comes to burning fat. They really don't know how it's done or how to do it. To get a basic understanding on how to decrease your body fat you need to know how you get fat. It's very simple and it works like this: If you consume more calories than you burn you are in a "positive energy balance". When you are in a positive energy balance you will store the extra energy (no matter what source the energy is from) as fat.

There are so many myths surrounding fat gain and fat loss and this market segment is a \$33,000,000,000 - yes, 33 billion dollar a year industry. 33 billion dollars are spent each year just in America by people trying to lose fat. And 90 percent of this money spent yields no results, either from product scams or, just as equally, from failure to comply with the fat loss protocol.

As I said earlier, total calories consumed versus total calories burned is what determines whether you gain or lose body fat. As simple as that sounds, that's as complicated as it gets.

With this basic understanding you now have a foundation of how to lose fat, but there is a problem, more correctly, an obstacle that must be dealt with and overcome. You want to lose fat without sacrificing any muscle. In fact, you want to lose fat while you build muscle. Let me tell you that most people do not know how to do this.

Ultimate and the principles that are involved are designed to allow your body to build muscle and lose fat concurrently

I want to paint a scenario for you and think to yourself if this has happened to you or if you have seen this happen to others. We will use "John" as our example.

John's Fat Loss Approach

John has been training for a few years and decides he's ready to compete in his first bodybuilding show. The show is about 12 weeks away. The first thing he does is increase his reps. By increasing his reps he is forced to reduce the amount of weight he trains with. "No big deal".

thinks John, "High reps burns fat".

The second thing John does is reduce his calorie intake. With this he cuts out all dairy products, sweets, and yes, he cuts out all his sodium intake - which he kept low year round anyway. Ever since he started training people told him that he should cut out all salt. He never thought to ask, but it sounded logical.

As if this isn't enough John then increases the volume of cardio he's been doing. He's now doing 45 minutes on the stair climber after each workout and on his off days. Burning that fat. It's tough, but he knows that's what he has to do.

As the weeks go John's clothes get looser and the weights feel heavier. So he goes lighter. ("Hey, I'm on a diet.". he thinks. "That's supposed to happen.") The scale is showing he's dropping weight. Plan's working.

Well as the weeks continue to go by he starts checking himself out in the mirror and sure enough, he's getting leaner. Smaller too, but hey, that's what happens. No big deal. Bodybuilding is certainly part illusion. "I'll look bigger when I'm shredded and have a tan", John rationalizes.

Weeks continue to click off and his body weight is dropping almost as fast as the weight he's lifting. Sure he's getting leaner and the tan sure has helped, but he's now looking kind of skinny, stringy, and he is probably going to be in a weight class lower than he had planned.

He can't understand it. Did he really have that much fat on him? Did he lose muscle along with the fat? If so, why? "I'm doing everything perfectly", John's thinking.

Now it's crunch time. 2 weeks before the show he "carb depletes" - you know, to burn that last little bit of fat. "All bodybuilders do this." he says. He goes to near zero carbs and increases his reps even further. He's going from exercise to exercise with little rest. And for more carb depletion he doubles his cardio. He's dragging ass, but that's what it takes.

To John's surprise he drops another 9 pounds during this carb depletion. He sure could have used those 9 pounds he thought, but he'll be ripped. However, when he looks in the mirror he's not seeing a big shredded bodybuilder. It's more like the smooth swimmer look. A little concerned, but "It's water," he thinks. "That's all. When I cut my water out the last few days everything will come together."

Well, contest day and he steps on the scale. Yikes! Not only is he in the next lower weight class than he thought he would be, but he just barely made that class. Another pound and he would be two weight classes lower.

On stage John looks small and smooth. What happened? What did he do wrong? Where did all the muscle go?

Does this sound familiar? How many people have you seen do this? Go to any local or regional bodybuilding

show and you'll see more people on stage that more than likely shouldn't be up there than should. Go to a natural show and the percentage of those that should not be up there is even higher.

Why does this happen to most people? Plain and simple, they are doing just about everything wrong. In fact, they are doing just about the opposite of what should be done to burn fat and build muscle.

Burning Fat As You Build Muscle

I have illustrated this example to get you to think about things. I want to see if you can relate to this approach to losing fat. Can you? If so, you need to forget everything you think you know about losing fat. You see, there is much more to losing fat than just doing cardio. Cardio is just one single piece to the fat loss puzzle. The idea is to lose fat and not lose muscle. Ideally you want to build muscle while you are losing fat. Ultimate is all about building muscle. Follow the Ultimate program and you can easily build muscle while you lose fat. But like all the misinformation about training and building muscle there is equally if not more misinformation about losing fat.

Now we are going to illustrate a perfect scenario for losing fat and getting ripped the Ultimate way. We will use "Ali" as our example.

Ali's Fat Loss Approach

Ali has been training for a few years and has packed on quite a bit of muscle. He has trained heavy and intensely - Ultimate style and is now ready to enter his first bodybuilding contest.

Right now Ali is not real lean but he's not holding a lot of fat either. He's carrying about about 12 percent body fat. His goal is to lose body fat and no muscle. It doesn't matter how low he gets his actual body fat percentage-wise, just so he visually is shredded and has lots of muscle.

Ali also saw what John did and learned from watching him that his approach was wrong. Why did John lose a bunch of weight and still not get shredded enough? Why did he lose so much muscle? It's pretty evident that doing exactly opposite of what John did, what just about everyone does, would be a much better way to go.

Ali decides that he not only doesn't want to lose any muscle, but also wants to continue to build muscle as he diets for the contest. How do you build muscle? Overload. Heavy weight, low reps. Ali continues to follow the Ultimate training protocol right up to contest time.

Ultimate Tip:

The dumbest thing you can do when preparing for a bodybuilding contest is to lighten up on the weights and increase your reps. For some reason people are under the assumption that this helps you get ripped. This could not be further from the truth.

One of the most important principles in Ultimate training is that any time you wrap your hands around a bar you are doing so to build muscle. You must realize that weight lifting is not an aerobic exercise. Increasing your reps and using lighter weight does not increase fat burning. But it will decrease muscle size and strength.

For muscle preservation, Ultimate principles are even more critical during a calorie restricted phase.

To build muscle and lose fat you have to train to build muscle and let your diet and cardio burn the fat. There is no way that lifting light weight has any significant fat burning impact.

As Ali continues to train heavy he continues to build muscle and add strength while he loses fat. Makes perfect sense to me.

Ali cleans up his diet but does not cut out the sodium. In fact, he increases his sodium intake to take advantage of the intracellular fluid retention for nutrient transport, increased strength, and injury prevention.

Ultimate Tip:

Sodium is not the evil monster it has been made out to be. As a bodybuilder, sodium is your friend. A real good friend. Sodium is a tool you should learn how to use to your benefit. Sodium is critical in many metabolic functions. By eliminating your sodium intake you decrease nutrient transport, decrease muscle cell volume, and decrease the joint fluid retention thereby increasing susceptibility to soft tissue injuries.

Ali knows that the only time he should restrict his sodium is just a few days before the show. In fact, increasing his sodium intake while he is dieting will not only help his training, it will allow the restriction of his sodium a few days before the show to have a more dramatic impact on his appearance the day of the show.

Ali now starts to implement regular cardio exercises into his program, but he does cardio the Ultimate way. This allows him to burn extra calories and in turn, decrease his body fat, while continuing to build muscle.

Ultimate Tip:

Building muscle while losing fat is possible if you structure your training correctly.

Ultimate Cardio

Cardiovascular exercise is very important for overall health. No question about it. But too much cardio can certainly impede muscle growth. Cardio impedes muscle growth by taxing the reserves in muscle that would normally be used for growth and repair. Cardio also burns calories that could be used to fuel the muscle growth process.

From a health standpoint, some cardio should always be done. What you want to do is strike a balance between your cardio and weight training so that you maximize the fat-burning benefits and reduce the negative impact the cardio will have on building muscle.

The most important thing here with regards to the cardio maximizing fat-loss while having minimal, if any, negative impact on muscle growth is the intensity of the cardio, the length of your cardio work, and **the time you do your cardio in relation to your weight training**. I recommend doing cardio exercises 3 to 5 times a week for 30 minutes each session. The key is timing your cardio for maximum efficiency.

Ultimate Tip:

You should approach your cardio exercises with the same mental focus and intensity you do your Ultimate training. Ultimate Cardio is not a walk in the park. It's intense, it's short, and it's scientifically structured to burn fat while preserving muscle.

Intensity

Intensity and cardio volume are the two energy expenditure barometers during aerobic exercise. Research shows that high intensity training for brief periods of time is more effective at burning fat than long duration low intensity aerobic activity. Also, there are some unique physiological factors that occur only in high-intensity short duration activity that favorably impact muscle recovery.

The higher the intensity of the cardio the greater the fat-loss and the greater the calorie expenditure during the length of exercise. And most importantly, the less of a negative impact it has on muscle breakdown.

Longer duration, lower intensity aerobic exercise tends to impact muscle growth negatively and has less of an effect on fat loss. Though you may burn calories, this type of aerobic exercise derives the majority of the calories burned from lean tissue and less from fat. This is exactly what you don't want.

To minimize cardio's negative effects on muscle growth you must schedule your aerobic sessions as distant in time from your weight training as possible. This means DO NOT do both cardio and weight training in the same workout. Don't do cardio immediately before you weight train and don't do cardio immediately after you weight train. This is how most people do it and it's completely wrong and detrimental to optimal muscle growth.

Timing of your Ultimate cardio approach

Ultimate Tip:

Your cardio exercises should be done approximately 8 to 12 hours before or after you weight train. Never do cardio immediately before or immediately after your Ultimate workout.

This means if you train in the morning you do your cardio at night. If you train at night then do your cardio in the morning. And to take it a step further, you should preferably do your cardio on your non weight training days.

And as I said earlier, the intensity of your cardio is a major factor in both the benefits from cardio (endurance, fat-loss, and vascular health) and the negatives of cardio (reduced muscle growth response). Timed correctly however, will allow you to maximize cardio's effects without any negative impact on the muscle building effects of Ultimate weight training

As the weeks go by Ali's strength does not diminish. In fact, he's getting stronger. One plus to this is that his motivation stays high and he stays focused. With his strength increasing he knows he's building muscle.

Ali has structured his diet in the percentages of protein, carbohydrates, and fats as outlined for Ultimate. He has determined his maintenance level of calories and reduced them by 150 calories. Each week he assesses himself and adjusts his total calorie intake accordingly. If he doesn't feel like he's losing fat fast enough, he lowers his calories by another 150.

Ultimate Tip:

It's more effective to lower your calories than to increase your aerobics. Increasing aerobic exercises to burn more fat will physically tax your muscles energy reserves. This negatively impacts muscle growth. Remember, to lose fat you must burn more calories than you consume. The simplest thing to do is to intelligently reduce you caloric intake. This method preserves maximum muscle mass while dieting. You lose more fat and keep more muscle.

Ali's Fat Loss Approach Continued...

As Ali's contest nears things are working great. He has lost no strength and the fat is melting off. He's getting lean and staying big and strong. He has lost about 1 to 1 1/2 pounds each week and it has been all fat. Even though he's 15 pounds lighter he looks much bigger.

Ali follows the same diet protocol right up until 6 days before his contest. He does not "carb deplete". He has dieted and trained correctly and carb depleting does not factor in. He does however, carb load the week leading up to the show. He also does not restrict his water intake and only cuts back slightly the night before the show.

This carefully structured approach to getting ripped for the contest has worked perfectly. Ali maintains virtually all of his muscle mass and loses enough body fat to come into the contest shredded.

I wanted to present these two different approaches to you so you could visualize the difference between them. Burning fat is not difficult. Erasing from your mind all the misinformation you have acquired is. Look, most people do not know how to properly diet to lose fat and build muscle. It's not necessarily their fault, it's just that they have been taught wrong. Now you have been taught right.

Fat loss Wrap-up

1. DO NOT train with more reps and less weight. This does not burn fat.
2. Train heavy - Ultimate. You always want to be building muscle. This is the only way this happens.
3. Determine your maintenance calorie level. Reduce your calories by 100 to 150 per day per week below the
determined maintenance.
4. Do your cardio work 3 to 5 times a week 8 to 12 hours before or after your weight training session.
DO NOT schedule your cardio immediately before or immediately after your weight training.
5. Cardio exercise should be very intense and about 30 minutes in length. High intensity short duration cardio exercise burns fat more effectively while reducing lean tissue breakdown.
6. Consume adequate amounts of sodium and drink plenty of pure water.
7. Progressively lower your calories each week as necessary.
8. Do NOT carb deplete unless you want to lose a lot of muscle in a short amount of time

Conclusion

I'll say it again, losing fat and building muscle is not difficult. It's not rocket science. So why do so many people have such a hard time with it? The answer, misinformation. The same sources that have taught you to train wrong are also teaching the wrong way to lose fat while you are building muscle.

It's very evident that only about 10 percent of the people that compete know what they are doing when it comes to shedding body fat without losing muscle. Go to any local bodybuilding show and you'll see only a handful of the competitors display a physique that was prepared properly. And this is why they win.

This week I have mapped out a very good general guideline of the dos and don'ts of eliminating fat while keeping and building muscle in the process. Read this section several times and let it sink in. Look at the logic. There's no Voodoo. There's no magic. There are no tricks. Just a sound, effective, and unbeatable scientific approach that will work for everyone.

Make sure you understand the guidelines for **Ultimate Cardio**. Most people do their cardio wrong and have done so for years.

The main factors to consider when structuring your cardio are:

1. Time you do your cardio
2. The level of intensity in which you do your cardio
3. Length of your cardio sessions

Each one of these variables plays a vital and important role in effectively burning body fat and not burning lean muscle tissue. Many of you are training hard and heavy for an hour and then jumping on a stair climber afterwards for another 45 minutes. That is a surefire way to slow muscle growth to a crawl if not stop it completely. It's like taking a step forward and 9/10 of a step backward.

A properly structured Ultimate training program gives you the best of everything. Ultimate forces your muscles to grow by applying the only stimulus that ignites muscle growth - overload. And now you have the tools and knowledge to integrate cardio in a manner that maximizes the fat burning process without negatively impacting muscle growth.

Following the Ultimate training program gives you a big, strong, and lean physique the intelligent way. With Ultimate nothing happens by accident. There is never any guess work. No crossing your fingers and hoping you get results. Ultimate lays it all out in a sophisticated, effective, and efficient program that will allow you to pack lean muscle mass and strength faster than any other training program.

Final Comments

Well, that's it. 120 pages of rock hard, solid information on the most advanced muscle building/fat loss techniques in the world.

The trick now is to continue training hard with full intensity with all the information you have learnt from this course.

I recommend that you read and re-read the whole program again and again until it becomes second nature to you.

The popularity of this program is spreading like wild fire for one simple reason - it produces muscle and strength increases faster than any other type of training there is. And it does this in less time and with more certainty. That's Ultimate Training.

I wish you all the luck in the world in achieving that elusive six pack – you've done the hard work by understanding and learning the techniques outlined in this document.