

# Weightlifting



Your Body Transformation Program is designed to minimize body fat and maximize muscle mass over a 3 to 9 month period (depending on your starting fitness level) resulting in a **Lean, Well-Built and Healthy** physique. In order to accomplish this, resistance training with weights beginning with Stage 2 is required. This document lists all of your Instructions and guidelines for Weight Training.

## Warm-up, Cool-downs and Stretching

### Warm-up and Cool-downs

All of your weight training sessions start and finish with 3 to 5 minutes of low-impact cardio. Pick any form of cardio you like, and perform it with low, casual intensity. This will help loosen your muscles and improve your blood circulation prior to exercising.

### Stretching

Every workout session contains a link to [Bodybuilding.com](http://Bodybuilding.com) with examples of which body parts you need to stretch before you lift. I won't limit you to *which* stretching techniques to choose as that list is different for everyone, but you can use the examples provided in this program as a reference. In time, you will learn which stretches work best for you. Stretching prior to lifting helps avoid injury

## How Much Weight to Lift and How Many Reps to Do

Experimenting with different exercises, learning your body, and finding out what works and what doesn't is part of the FUN in transforming your physique. Not getting everything right in the beginning is OKAY and one area people tend to be unsure of is whether they are lifting enough weight, or performing enough reps.

**How much weight to lift** requires a bit of experimentation in the beginning because everyone's strength threshold is different. A 10 rep exercise of a certain weight at your fitness level may require less or more weight for someone else and even a different rep range. To take some of the guesswork out for you, **the target rep range has already been provided for you in each exercise**. Here is the general rule on how much weight to lift:

1. If you feel on your first set you can do *much less* than the **minimum** prescribed number of reps, it's too heavy
2. Likewise, if you feel on your first set you can do *much more* than the **maximum** prescribed number of reps on your first set, it's too light.

3. **Find a balance:** choose a **starting weight** heavy enough that the *maximum* number of reps gets slightly difficult (and burns) by the end of your 1st set or the beginning to middle of your 2nd set.
4. These rules apply regardless of whether you are adding weight on each set or keeping the weight the same. Use the example below as a point of reference.

EXAMPLE: BENCH PRESS									
How Much Weight You Can Lift									
+145lbs	145lbs	155lbs	165lbs	175lbs	185lbs	195lbs	205lbs	215lbs	225lbs
How Many Reps You Can Do									
+15	14-15	13	11-12	9	7-8	5-6	4	2	1
Endurance	Muscle Building				Strength Training				

### Summary

**Strength Training:** Single Digit Reps with Heavy Weight

**Muscle Building:** Double Digit Reps with Moderate Weight

**Muscle Endurance:** Double Digit (over 15) Reps with Low Weight

**DON'T WORRY ABOUT GETTING IT DOWN TO AN EXACT SCIENCE.**

**IN THE BEGINNING, JUST HIT THE WEIGHTS, DO THE PRESCRIBED NUMBER OF REPS AND LEARN/MODIFY USING THE ABOVE 4 POINTS.**

## Proper Form

Every workout in your program contains a link to a video on [Bodybuilding.com](http://Bodybuilding.com) of how to perform the exercise, taking the guesswork out of technique.

You've probably seen people at the gym bouncing the bar off their chest when they bench to get some extra momentum to lift easier. Maybe you've seen someone use their back to swing their arm into a barbell bicep curl. Those *DO NOT* count as good form; that's called cheating - using joints that should not be involved in the exercise. Generally speaking, **you have to perform the exercises with controlled, stable movements**, and **ONLY designated joints are supposed to be performing the move**.

Be sure to familiarize yourself with the videos in your training program so that you can improve your form over the course your fitness journey; **it's a HUGE factor in making sure your muscles are being activated during your workouts, as well as avoiding injury.**

## Supersets and Pyramids

There are several intermediate to advanced styles of weight training that are not covered by this program as the world is filled with an infinite number of avenues to reach the same goal. For the sake of what I consider MOST efficient for MOST people, as well as MOST convenient, styles like "Negative sets" and "Drop sets," while popular and effective, will be absent here.

What I have opted for at the intermediate to advanced level instead are two styles that have helped me tremendously over the past decade: Supersets and Pyramids. Neither style requires a workout partner, they both save time, and they both give your muscles a wicked beating. Here is how to perform them wherever they are highlighted in your Program:

## Supersets

A superset occurs when two exercises are performed in a row without stopping. Here is an example of a Superset from Level 3:

Exercise	Supersets	Reps	Rest Time Between Supersets
<b>Superset:</b> <a href="#">Barbell Bench Press</a> + <a href="#">Dumbbell Flyes</a>	4	Barbell Bench Press: 10 Dumbbell Flyes: 10	75 seconds

The above illustrates that 10 reps on the bench IMMEDIATELY followed by 10 reps of dumbbell flyes would = 1 Superset. For this particular workout, you would do 4 Supersets, 75 seconds apart. Supersets save incredible amounts of time by allowing you to do two (or more) workouts when you would normally only do one.

## Pyramids

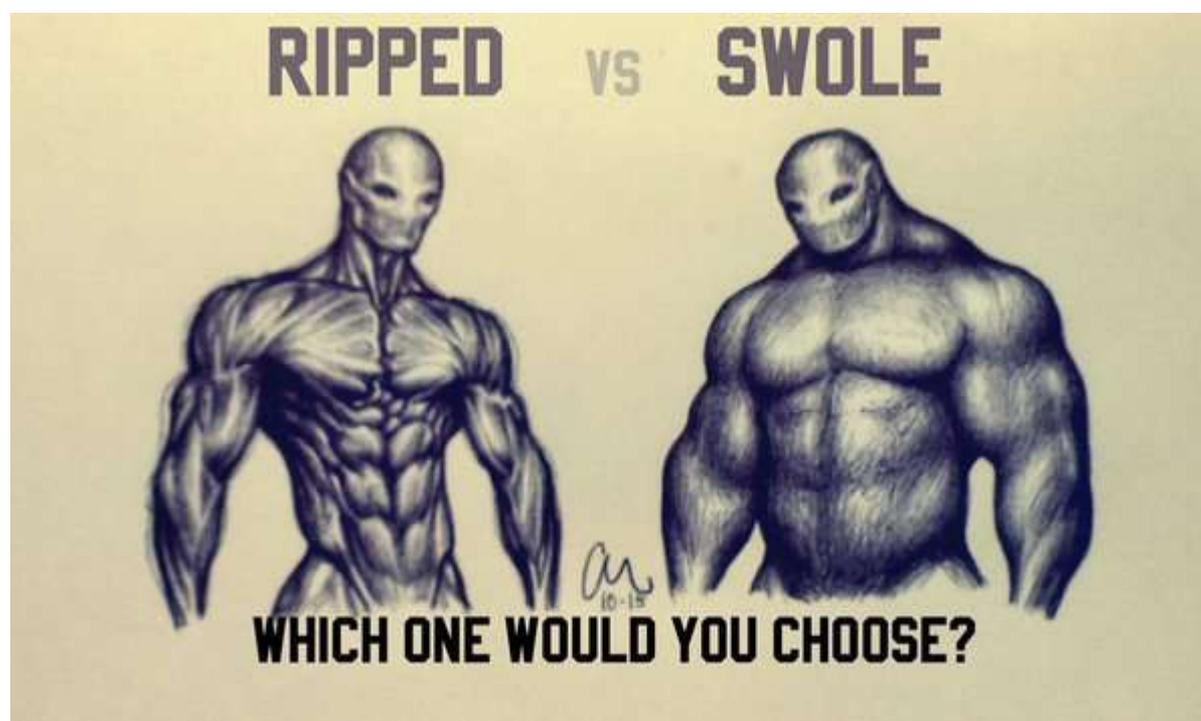
Sometimes called “Ladders,” a Pyramid occurs when you increase the weight each set, then do an equal number of sets but reduce the weight each set. Here is an example of a Pyramid from Level 3:

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest Time Between Sets	Weight
<b>Pyramid:</b> <a href="#">Barbell Squats</a>	8	10	60 seconds	Add weight each on each set from 1 through 4. Decrease the weight by the same amount on each set from 5 through 8. Your last set should be the same weight you started with.

In other words, if the weight you use for your first 4 sets are 5lbs, 10lbs, 15lbs, and 20lbs (up the Pyramid) your last 4 sets should be 20lbs, 15lbs, 10lbs and 5lbs (down the Pyramid) for a total of 8 sets.

This is a strenuous, advanced style of lifting with changing difficulty depending on how you mix up your rep range. Pyramids are great when you are short on time or in a crowded gym and can't bounce around to all of the designated areas in your workout schedule. Rather, you can stick to one particular area in the gym and kill the targeted muscle with just one exercise, hitting strength, muscle building and endurance all in one. Pyramids are most effective with compound movements.

## Bulking and Cutting



These are two terms that are commonly used in the world of competitive Bodybuilding and describe a very important part of your muscle building, fat burning journey, especially by Stage 3. This program isn't designed to help you reach a competitive level of fitness so you won't be taking these concepts to the extreme. Nonetheless, you will still have a comparable level of aesthetics after completion.

### Bulking

This is the term used when your nutrition and workout regimen is aimed at increasing weight and muscle mass. This is achieved through eating at a 300 to 600 surplus above your maintenance calories combined with low-rep, heavy lifting. Stage 3 Month 1 is an example of a bulk cycle.

### Cutting

Cutting is the term used when your nutrition and workout regimen is aimed at shedding as much fat as possible (after months of muscle building) to create a well-defined, "cut" physique. This is achieved through short cycles of eating at a 300 to 500 calorie deficit below your maintenance calories combined with increased cardiovascular exercise. Stage 3 Month 3 is an example of cutting.

## Nutrition and Hydration



The complete overview of rules and guidelines on Nutrition and Hydration are covered in the Nutrition and Meal Planning section of your Dashboard, but for the sake of performance in the gym only, here are the requirements:

## Nutrition

For most people, it isn't comfortable to go to the gym right after eating a big meal. Food sits in the stomach without having been fully digested, causing uneasiness and cramps. Conversely, it isn't comfortable for a lot of people to work out on a completely empty stomach either as hunger might settle in during the workout. This can also negatively impact performance as dizziness from hunger can cause weakness and distraction.

It takes about 1 to 2 hours for food to digest so it's probably best to listen to your body and decide how much you need in your stomach within a few hours before your workout. The amount should generally be *small* enough to satisfy you for an hour or two without weighing you down.

**Just make sure that whatever fuel you decide, the majority of it comes from Carbohydrates.** If you decide to eat further from your workout, choose more whole grains/starches, sweet potatoes, beans and healthy fats. If you decide to eat closer to or during your work out, choose fruits, granola, rice cakes or small amounts of candy.

## Hydration

Enough can't be said about the importance of water. All human beings are mostly comprised of it, so take that by itself as the most important reason why you want to be hydrated, especially under strenuous athletic conditions. Most of what we eat and drink contains water, but they are not substitutes for water. All the guidelines on Hydration will be covered in your Caloric Overview, but here are the guidelines for the sake of performance in the gym only:

1. Make sure you hydrate throughout the day before your workout mostly or entirely with water
2. Make sure you hydrate during your workout with any of the following:
  - a) Water: Your best option for optimal performance under any and all circumstances.
  - b) Electrolyte Sports Drinks, i.e. Gatorade: an option if you feel a bit dehydrated before your workout.
  - c) Coconut Water (Nature's Gatorade): an all-natural option if you feel a bit dehydrated before your workout.
  - d) Light Juice/Juice Mix: possibly diluted with water with added natural sugar, this can be great for quick access to fast burning carbs in case you feel sluggish before or in the middle of your workout.
3. Another serving of a Sports Drink or Coconut Water after your workout can also aid in post-workout hydration by recovering salts that were lost during exercise.
4. After the gym, continue to primarily drink water throughout the day.