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An Introduction to Bodybuilding

Bodybuilding as a sport came to the public in the late nineteenth century in Europe and coincided with the advent of photography. Promoters would often send pictures of bodybuilders along with promotional materials to encourage people to buy products.

From the first name in bodybuilding Eugen Sandow to the incomparable Arnold Schwarzenegger, bodybuilding has grown in the public eye as a sport and as a discipline, and remains an intense discipline followed and practiced by a dedicated audience to this day.

Female bodybuilding

Not to be left behind, female bodybuilding began in the 1960s, but the first contest in which female contestants were judged solely on muscular development was the U.S. Women's National Physique Championship in 1978. This is considered the beginning of true female bodybuilding.

Since that time, female bodybuilding has grown into its own, introducing its own standard of perfection more geared towards the female form. It has its own following, makes its own stars, and has enough history to merit its own Hall of Fame, which was established in 1999.

Weight training

Weight training is the basis of bodybuilding. As with martial arts, many of the best bodybuilders attribute the discipline of weight training as a way to develop inner as well as outer strength. Bodybuilders tend to hold a special camaraderie in the weight room.

There are many types of weight training geared towards developing different types of muscles. The main two types of muscle that are important to bodybuilders are bulk and lean muscle. Building bulk gives size, and building lean muscle gives definition, both important to competition.

Nutrition

As important as weight training is, a bodybuilder will not grow without proper nutrition. A bodybuilder must simply eat more than the average human; almost a superhuman amount. They also consume more proteins and carbohydrates, 3-5 times the regular amount, than a normal person. Bodybuilders also have lower fat than many other athletes (3-4%) making them lean machines.

Proteins are essential to building and maintaining muscle. As the building blocks of muscle, proteins provide the main fuel for a bodybuilder. Carbohydrates provide the energy for the body to complete workouts so that muscles may be broken down and re built by the body into bigger versions of themselves.

Meals

The meals of a bodybuilder must remain balanced for overall health, but include more proteins and carbohydrates than the average diet. A bodybuilder must also drink more water than the average person to encourage growth. Certain types of fats, or slow burning energy, are also essential to the diet of a successful bodybuilder.

Dietary supplements

Because it can become rather difficult to intake the amount of nutrition that a successful bodybuilder needs to be successful, the supplementation industry came about to make getting the proper nutrition for a bodybuilder easier. While most of the dietary supplements in the market are focused on the building blocks of bodybuilding, e.g. proteins and carbohydrates, there are many other types of supplements that a bodybuilder must consider to achieve maximum performance, such as multivitamins.

Protein, as the second most populous substance in the body (after water), is especially important to maintain as a bodybuilder, as protein forms the building blocks of muscle in the body. Protein supplements are the backbone of a bodybuilder's routine, because to build muscle the body must have a surplus of protein past the amount used in a daily routine. Whey, casein, and egg proteins are some of the different types of protein supplements available on the market today, and each type is absorbed differently within the body. Some of the more popular brands include Optimum Nutrition, The Protein Factory, and Myoplex.

Performance enhancing substances

Bodybuilders are constantly looking for ways to increase their performance in the gym. Increased performance in the gym means greater gains, plain and simple. Performance enhancing substances such as human growth hormone are a part of the industry now, for better or for worse. Because of the potential

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adverse effects to overall health that some performance enhancers produce, many have been outlawed, but are still used, because they tend to be the most powerful and bring the biggest, fastest results.

Over-training

One of the first mistakes that newbies to bodybuilding are guilty of is over training, or not allowing the body to properly rest and re build the muscle that has been broken down by high impact workouts. Not allowing for proper rest does not allow this muscle to re build, and the bodybuilder who over trains will not grow to his or her maximum potential. Also, [over training](#) tends to introduce the risk of injury into the workout. Follow a program and trust in the results. Increase intensity only under the supervision of a more advanced bodybuilder, and never work out when injured in any way.


Even in an increasingly sedentary age of more technology and less athleticism, bodybuilding remains a widely followed sport and pursued discipline. The benefits of training as a bodybuilder continue to draw people to it, and it shows no signs of slowing down.

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2 Responses to *An Introduction to Bodybuilding*



Mike Murphy says:
June 1, 2011 at 10:33 pm

Very helpful article, thank you. I do have a big concern relating to bodybuilding though. I get very fatigued every afternoon, during the past couple weeks. A couple months ago I began to eat healthy with intentions of weight loss. I have had success and went from 270 to 235 in less than two months. I mainly started by doing cardio but have really started getting serious about weightlifting over the past few weeks. The problem I am encountering however, is that I get very exhausted every afternoon now, almost to the point of leaving work to nap. I have never really experienced this until a week or two after I began seriously lifting weights. I figure that the issue is that my 'healthy' eating habits don't really provide me with enough calories, with my new and intense workout routine. I want to eat a bit more, but I don't want to eat so much that I hinder my weightloss goals, because I still am about 40 pounds overweight. DO you have any tips? I know seeing a doctor is a good idea, and perhaps a nutritionist as well. Thank you in advance for any feedback!



John Finn says:
May 23, 2014 at 7:16 pm

You should always prefer protein from natural sources (meat, fish) and avoid whey. Food will always be superior to powder, most people just

go for the easy way and buy whey. Don't do it, just eat chicken breasts like there was no tomorrow.

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