

The Bodybuilding Tips Checklist

Use the bodybuilding tips checklist below to examine your mass gain training program. Are you doing all you can do to accomplish your goals or are there simple things that you could be doing that will greatly enhance your results?

Incredible results from bodybuilding training do not go to the guy who does one thing well, but rather they go to those who do a multitude of things well. It is not enough to work out with great intensity and then get a couple of hours sleep before heading into work. Big muscles won't come if you have a great weight gain diet but spend much of your workout time on a Stairmaster. You can work out hard, you can eat well, get your sleep and still get poor results because the form you lift with is just downright ugly.

The secret to big and consistent bodybuilding training gains is to do it all well, from A to Z, from your breakfast to your workouts to the long sleep you get before starting all over again. This synergy of action, all factors working together towards the muscle and weight gain goal, will produce amazing results.

On this page you will find a list of twenty-one bodybuilding tips. Some deal with your actual workouts and routines but others deal with things outside the gym. Bodybuilding training does not only occur in the gym. Away from the iron, you will find many secrets to success. A great many weight lifters ignore this fact and find their muscles ignoring them.

If you are stuck in a rut it may be that new bodybuilding routine that will break you out BUT, even more likely it is another factor that is impeding your progress. Too many inexperienced weight trainers always look at the routine and de-emphasize the other factors (and I have a great deal of sympathy for these frustrated trainers because I was one for longer than I care to remember).

Putting all the 21 bodybuilding tips below into your "bodybuilding training package" will propel you to great gains, a perfect 21 is an unbeatable hand (like in black-jack, get it?). Forget a few and you might start overtraining on the head scratching exercise.

In no particular order, pay attention to these often under-appreciated, typically ignored, overlooked essentials secrets to success...

The Bodybuilding Tips List

Diet - You wouldn't try and build a log cabin without logs, would you? Imagine yourself in the woods with the fixtures and nails and insulation and trying to figure out why you can't get that cabin built. Pretty stupid, eh?

And yet there are countless weight lifters out there trying to figure out why they can't make muscle gains while eating without any concern for what the body needs to build

muscle. Bodybuilding training without providing the body the nutrients it needs to grow is as stupid as the log cabin story. Your diet will be the number one factor in your success. More on the Weight Gain Diet.

Change - It would be nice if we could just find a routine that works and repeat it over and over until our goals were met. Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way. The body becomes accustomed to the rigors we put it through and builds itself accordingly. If it knows you're coming at it with three sets of ten at X weight, it will realize from past experience (the previous 6 months of you doing this every Tuesday and Thursday) that it has what it takes to conquer this and your following workouts. It won't react. It has adapted.

You must constantly be changing things up to continue your gains. Always keep the body guessing. Check out a chart of suggested time-to-time changes to make with your weight training routines.

Sleep - "The body builds itself at rest, not in the gym." You hear that a lot in weight training circles and you should pay attention. It is easy to think of sleep time as lost time but, if you are out to improve your physique, this couldn't be less true - sleep time will be your most productive bodybuilding training time. Stop getting up with an alarm clock, get up when your rested and you'll start getting up bigger and bigger every day. This means eight plus hours for most people.

You're wasting those hours at the gym if you're not using this bodybuilding tip to allow the body a chance to show what it can do.

Progressive Overload - If you train for the next 52 weeks by doing 100 lb. bench presses, will you be bigger and stronger at the end of your weight training program?

No, you won't. You'll have muscles conditioned to handle that weight but not bigger and stronger because of it. You have to keep pushing the envelope. Keep increasing the weight you lift or the reps you do in order to create a continual need for more muscle. Read more on Progressive Overload and making muscles grow here.

Less Can be More - Common logic is that if you aren't getting the results you want, do more until you do. This is dangerous logic with regards to weight training. Your logic should often be the opposite, do less curls if your biceps won't grow. The resulting measurements that show amazing growth may go against all you thought you knew, but at least you'll have big arms to hold your bewildered head with.

Compound Exercises - To build muscle you must stimulate as much muscle fiber as possible. Compound exercises are those which stimulate more than one major muscle

group at a time. They effect your entire skeletal system and trigger growth throughout the body. Isolated exercises like leg extensions may make for a happy and fun little workout but they won't come close to being as effective for muscle growth as squats. Definitely check out this Anthony Ellis article on the Mass Building With Deadlifts and Squats.

The focus of bodybuilding training for muscle growth should be compound exercises. You simply won't have much success gaining muscle weight without utilizing the power in this bodybuilding tip. Check out this list of Eight Get Big Exercises.

Mental Intensity - If you are thinking about anything other than weight lifting and muscle growth for that hour workout, if you aren't using visualization to perfect your form and provide a guide to what you want your body to become, if you don't believe you can accomplish your weight gain goals, you are failing to take advantage of one of a very strong workout partner: Your mind.

The mind can do truly amazing things when we put it to work. It seems more than a little likely that it will have a major effect on your weight training results. Make sure that effect is a positive one. More on Mental Bodybuilding Techniques.

Lifting with intensity can be the difference between success and failure. A lot of people come to bodybuilding with the false-assumption that the rewards go to the person with the greatest quantity of training. This is wrong. They go to the person with the greatest quality of training - the person that works with the most intensity. Check out Sean Nalewanyj's article on Increasing your Training Intensity.

Form - Unfortunately, if a frozen Neanderthal was thawed and set loose in a gym he wouldn't look all that much more stupid or accomplish all that much less than a lot of weight trainers at the local fitness club. At least, he would have an excuse (he didn't have these bodybuilding tips to review). Learn good weight lifting form and consciously practice it. Good form will prevent injury and increase the effectiveness of your bodybuilding training.

Put wall charts up where you can't help but pay attention to them, hire a knowledgeable trainer to help you and/or study a book which outlines proper form. Whatever way you get it, get and keep this knowledge. Review it often, bad form will get you if you don't stay on top of it.

One Hour Workouts - Yes, you can probably sustain more than an hour of intense weight lifting without dropping dead. And you may really enjoy your weight training and not be able to get enough of it in just an hour. But would you still do it if you knew it was doing you no good to go beyond that hour threshold? That you could be doing yourself harm, depleting your muscles of protein?

If you answered "yes," than good luck to you - you're going to need it. Intense workouts should be kept under an hour unless you're juiced or genetically superior to most of us. Intense exercise is progressively less effective beyond that time.

Stretching - Stretching should be done before, during and after your bodybuilding training. Good stretching can accomplish many things. It can warm-up the muscles and joints, stretch surrounding tissues and speed up recovery. Stretching should not be the forgotten bodybuilding tip - it should be a point of emphasis.

Plan - "What are you doing and why are you doing it?" If someone came up to you in the middle of a workout and asked you that question, what would you say? First, I hope you'd give them a nasty look and tell them that it is not okay to disturb you in the midst of a workout. But then, after your bodybuilding workout, you should have an answer to this question.

You should have a goal and a plan to accomplish that goal. It isn't enough to throw weights around. Know what you are doing and why you are doing it. If what you are currently doing doesn't work, at least you will be able to cross it off the list as the wrong approach. If you don't know the what's and why's, how do you expect to ever get anything back? Have a plan and stick to it long enough to know whether or not it is the right plan. More on Planning the Weight Gain Program.

Lift Heavy - Lifting heavy is a mandatory part of weight training programs designed to build muscle. For muscle growth, you must create a need. Lifting light at high reps doesn't create a need for more muscle, it creates a need for better conditioned muscles. If you want to build muscle, your weight training program must have heavy training (weights you can lift for a maximum of 3-12 reps) in its arsenal.

This doesn't mean it needs to be the focus of every single routine (it shouldn't be) but it should be central to the overall program. All other routines should exist to create the proper mood for heavy lifting to come in and do its wonders.

Overtraining - Note that a good many of these bodybuilding tips are trying to force into your consciousness that doing too much weight lifting can be a bad thing. It can be a bad thing and the most frustrating of all ways to fail in your quest to gain weight fast. Afterall, it comes about because you have an abundance of the motivation to get to the gym and do the hard work, a factor that is missing in many prospective physique-changers.

Pay attention to what your body tells you. If it is refusing to grow, ask yourself if you are overtraining it. If the answer is yes or even maybe - **BACK OFF.**

Learn more about insuring you are getting enough rest and sufficiently warding off overtraining here - [Adequate Rest to Avoid Overtraining and Increase Muscle Growth](#)

Water - Water is a miracle supplement. The benefits are truly limitless. Do not depend on your body to tell you when it is thirsty. As an athlete, you need to dictate to your body what it needs - one 8 oz. glass for every 10-12.5 pounds of bodyweight per day will improve your bodybuilding training results as well as your overall health. It will help the kidneys deal with the extra protein and it will circulate the nutrients throughout the body.

If the great nutrition you intake to help your muscles grow never reaches your muscles, what is the point? Water is the transportation system to the muscles. Drink it. More on [Water and the Importance of this Tip](#).

Warming Up - Before stretching (which you must do as well) you need to do a warm-up. I'm not talking about your warm-up sets (which you must do as well), I'm talking about raising your body temperature a little. Following this bodybuilding tip and doing a little light aerobic exercise as the first thing you do in the gym will go a long way to helping you have the most productive workout possible.

Free Weights - Machines are easy to use but they aren't the most effective way to build muscle and gain weight. The reason lies in the fact that machines contribute to the stabilization of the weight and therefore leave the stabilizer muscles unstressed. These stabilizer muscles are necessary to support muscle growth.

Free weights allow you to stimulate more muscles and stimulating more muscles means more muscle growth. Weight lifting for the purposes of building muscle should have a heavy concentration on free weights. More on the [Machines Vs. Free Weights](#) argument.

Supplements - Supplements will not be the reason for the success or failure of your weight training programs. They are not a necessity by any means - not if you can get all you need from your weight gain diet. However, this is an extremely tough if not impossible thing to do. Therefore, with the goal to gain weight fast, you should not ignore the ability of supplements to take your results to a new level.

This doesn't mean that you should buy every ridiculous supplement on the market (there are many ridiculous ones). Be smart with your supplementation and spend your money on those with a track record and proven results. Check the [Bodybuilding Supplement Guide](#) for a proven effective plan.

Concentration on the Eccentric - It is the lowering of the weights that is most effective in tearing down the muscles. A trip to the gym will prove that too many weight lifters either

don't know this bodybuilding tip or choose to ignore it. For them, it seems, their bodybuilding training purpose is to impress others with how much they can lift rather than to build muscle.

If your bodybuilding training purpose is to build muscle, than concentrate on the eccentric. Break down more muscle and give the body more to rebuild. Your lifts won't be as impressive but your results will be big.

Balanced Intensity - An over-reliance on intensity builder routine methods or always going to failure can create muscles which become hard to impress. Results come when the muscles are forced to stand up and take notice, when they aren't expecting that monster routine you're about to put them through. Therefore, use your intensity increasing tactics sparingly. Sometimes the basics will get you the best results. More on Workout Routine Methods.

Breaks - Once you get into bodybuilding training, it can be addicting. Not doing your workouts can make you feel incomplete. Even still, backing off can be very beneficial to your training. Take a couple of weeks every once in a while and totally abandon your training. This bodybuilding tip means taking a break from everything. Eat what you want whenever you want. Put your supplements away. Don't pick up a weight. Don't think about your body. Then start in again...and you may be surprised to find your training reinvigorated, your body stronger and more responsive.

Tracking - Cave explorers trail a string behind them. They then follow this string out of the cave. Why? Because they don't want to get lost and die in the cave. You should always trail a string in your bodybuilding training so that you don't get lost and have your results die. You always want to know where you are and know how you got to where you are.

Whether the place your training has delivered you to is good or bad, tracking will tell you how to avoid or return to that place in the future. Not having good tracking habits will mean that you will spend much of your valuable time running in circles. Like caves, weight training is very easy to get lost in. Learn to implement a good bodybuilding tracking program.

There you have it, a list of 21 bodybuilding tips. They are not all-encompassing, there are more things you can do both right and wrong in your bodybuilding training. But they are all important and having them present in your weight training programs will surely help you get results.