

## WEIGHT TRAINING

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(1) Like a lot of other men, I get a great deal of pleasure out of sucking down a few cold cans of Bud, feasting on a large pepperoni-mushroom-and double-cheese pizza, and watching a good ball game on the television. Unfortunately, this sacred tradition, which has been practiced by generations of Bechtolds before me, is fast becoming outdated. Today's male is part of a fitness-crazed nation. Whether the cause is fiercer athletic competition or choosier women, a man must keep his body in excellent form to maintain an advantage.

(2) A person in excellent form has a low percentage of body fat, ten percent or less, and is strong enough to work with his own body weight. The best way to get a body into excellent form is to lift weights, and weight training means pain. There is no easy way around it; weight training is hard and tedious, but a necessary process.

(3) The first step to excellent form is to pick out the right weight-training program. This choice depends solely on what goal you wish to reach. Do you want to be able to bench press a pickup truck, swim 40 laps or just rearrange some of that "happy fat"? Three main weight training programs develop muscular strength, muscular endurance, or muscular tone.

(4) A football player might choose to develop muscular strength. The way to strengthen a muscle is to lift a heavy weight a very few times, say ten. The weight is then increased and the repetitions decreased until the desired weight can be lifted with a single effort. Lifting for strength will increase the diameter of the targeted muscle, but such power muscles fatigue very quickly. A person who wants his muscles to fatigue slowly, like a swimmer, would lift for muscular endurance. An endurance lifter executes several repetitions, at least twenty-five, of a light weight, repeating this process four or five times without adding more weight. A muscle worked for endurance will fatigue more slowly, but it will not increase in size or have the potential for explosive power. The third kind of weight training, to develop muscle tone, appeals to someone who just wants to look good in a bathing suit. Muscle tone is achieved by training with isokinetic machines, such as the Nautilus equipment seen in almost every health spa. A toned muscle will not increase in size or endurance but will eliminate the blubber around the midsection, back of legs, and upper torso.

(5) After the correct weight training program has been chosen, the next problem is to get started. This is not as easy as it sounds. How many times have you gazed at yourself in the mirror after a shower and said, "I gotta start working out!" The day never really seems to come, and the plans for a better body are never set in motion. The sooner you start, the sooner you will get results. Don't be ashamed or intimidated to train beside a person who has arms the size of tree trunks; he's probably paying attention to his own efforts and won't laugh at you at all. Start now!

(6) Finally, and most importantly, once you begin your training program, do not quit! Many people become discouraged when they don't see dramatic improvement right away. I don't care what Charles Atlas says, you can't get immediate results from any weight training program. Guys like Arnold Schwarzenegger have been body-building for twelve years or more. It takes time to get your body into excellent shape, but it will happen. You can usually see some results after about two months.

(7) Although it is not pleasant and there are a million other things more fun to do (like drink beer, eat pizza, and watch T.V.), weight training has its rewards. The disciplined person who sticks with his weight training program is going to be the one getting scholarships to play college sports--and second looks from the ladies on the beach.