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THE 3x3x3 MUSCLE BUILDING SYSTEM

*A Simple
Way To Pack
On Quality
Muscle, Fast.*



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DISCLAIMER:

You must get your physician's approval before beginning this exercise program. These recommendations are not medical guidelines but are for educational purposes only. You must consult your physician prior to starting this program or if you have any medical condition or injury that contraindicates physical activity. This program is designed for healthy individuals 18 years and older only.

See your physician before starting any exercise or nutrition program. If you are taking any medications, you must talk to your physician before starting any exercise program, including the *3x3x3 Muscle Building System*. If you experience any lightheadedness, dizziness, or shortness of breath while exercising, stop the movement and consult a physician.

It is strongly recommended that have a complete physical examination if you are sedentary, if you have high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or diabetes, if you are overweight, or if you are over 30 years old. Please discuss all nutritional changes with your physician or a registered dietician. If your physician recommends that you not use the *3x3x3 Muscle Building System*, please follow your Doctor's orders.

All forms of exercise pose some inherent risks. The editors and publishers advise readers to take full responsibility for their safety and know their limits. Before practicing the exercises in this workout, be sure that your equipment is well maintained, and do not take risks beyond your level of experience, aptitude, training and fitness. The exercises and dietary programs in this program are not intended as a substitute for any exercise routine or treatment or dietary regimen that may have been prescribed by your physician.

Don't lift heavy weights if you are alone, inexperienced, injured, or fatigued. Don't perform any exercise without proper instruction. Always perform a warm-up prior to all forms of training.

You want to build muscle and you want to build it *fast*.

Here's a simple but powerfully effective methodology to help you pack on pounds of muscle in short order.

It's called the 3x3x3 Muscle Building Program.

And it's so simple, you'll wonder why you haven't been doing it all along.

In a nutshell, here's the 3x3x3 Muscle Building Outline:

The First "3" = Frequency

The Second "3" = Exercises

The Third "3" = Programming

Let's take a closer look...

THE FIRST "3": FREQUENCY

The time-tested, battle-proven, optimum number of days to work out for mere mortals not using steroids or expensive magazine sponsored supplements is three days a week.

That's it.

Why?

Because if you lift heavy enough, frequently enough, you'll need the other 4 days a week to recover.

And Recovery = GROWTH.

If you can't recover, you won't grow. Pretty simple theory, but most people screw this up, falling for the "more is better" lie.

(The only place more is better is in your bank account.)

The best training days are two days during the week, and one day on the weekend.

Why?

Cause you probably have a job, and maybe even a wife, significant other, or family. And spending vast amounts of time away from them is a great way to lose them and end up alone. Sure, you might be HYYOOOGGGGE, but no one will be there to appreciate it.

And twice during the week allows you time to mentally focus on all the things you have to focus on. One training session on the weekend usually ensures that you'll get a least one or two really good nights of sleep per week.

Here's the schedule I recommend:

Monday, Wednesday, Saturday.

Simple.

THE SECOND “3”: EXERCISES

Choosing the right exercises for muscle growth is critical for, well, muscle growth.

Many people will waste time on the incidentals – biceps curls, calf raises, lateral raises, etc, at the expense of the “big bang for your buck exercises.”

And what are those?

Compound exercises.

These are exercises that use multiple joints and multiple muscle groups.

You probably already know that, though, right?

But do you know the Top 10 Mass Building Exercises?

They're listed below:

1. Squat



The Squat works every single muscle in your body. Research by Kraemer, et al, has shown that squatting heavy increases testosterone levels, which in turn triggers the anabolic (growth) response.

2. Deadlift



Also another powerful growth exercise, no muscle is left untouched after a set of heavy deadlifts. Builds muscle for the same reason Squats do – increase testosterone levels.

3. Bench Press



This is everybody's favorite upper body exercise and for good reason – it works all your pressing muscles – pecs, shoulder, triceps and packs muscle on the upper body.

4. Military Press



This is an old classic that's made a comeback in recent years. Press a bar from your chest to overhead without bending your knees or arching your back. Builds strong, wide, powerful shoulders.

5. Pull Ups / Chin Ups



This is another favorite of old-school bodybuilders like Arnold and Franco. Almost nothing builds a wide back – and that “V” taper like Pull Ups and Chins. Moving your body through space is neurologically demanding and your body rewards you with new strength and width in your back.

6. Rows



Any variety will do – barbell or dumbbell – just get them in your workouts to build back thickness. However, many coaches and lifters favor the dumbbell variety because they’re easier on the lower back.

7. Hang Snatch Pull



Most lifters miss this one. And unless you've been an Olympic lifter, you probably have too. This puppy will build a monster upper back to be proud of. Plus it'll thicken up your shoulders and arms also.

8. Front Squat



Complimentary to the Squat (or Back Squat), the Front Squat forces you to stay upright and shift more of the weight to your quads. Also a great exercise for building abdominal strength.

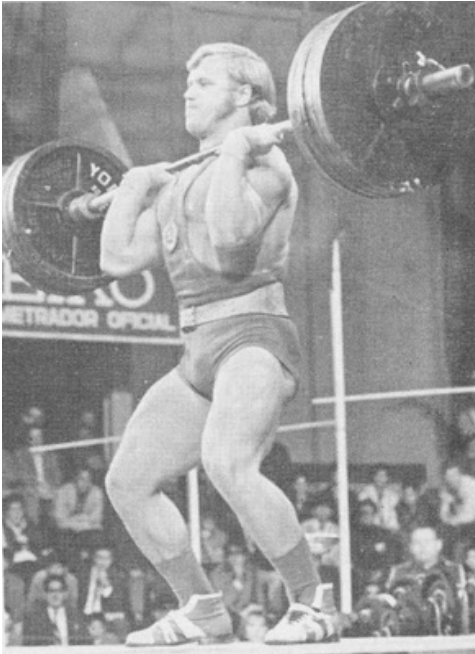
9. Power Clean / Hang Clean



(Image courtesy of the Diesel Crew – www.dieselcrew.com)

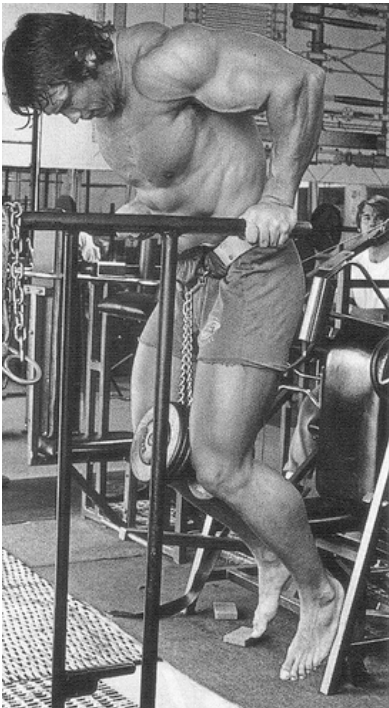
Also widely overlooked by must muscle-seekers, the Power Clean, when done for higher reps, was a favorite of Peary Rader, publisher of the old *Ironman Magazine*. Lower reps work just as well and the benefit is you don't have to worry about your technique going south.

10. Push Press



This starts in the same position as the Military Press – bar across chest, but the difference is that you use your legs to drive the bar overhead. So you can use more weight (way more in some cases). And that's the magic of the exercise. More weight = more stimulation = more growth.

11. Parallel Dips



Often called the “Squat for the Upper Body,” Parallel Dips were a favorite mass builder for old-school bodybuilders. They pack on mass all across the upper body with a special emphasis on the chest, shoulders, and triceps, especially when weighted.

Do them correctly and there's a special surprise awaiting your abs, too.

Yeah, I know there's 11 exercises here, but I couldn't help myself. I had to throw in a bonus. Notice what's not on there – all the “assistance” and “cutting” and “shaping” exercises.

I'm still amazed when I go to the gym and see guys talking about "shaping" exercises, and how this one cuts you up. (Diet cuts you up, not any particular exercise.)

THE THIRD "3": PROGRAMMING

This is where the rubber meets the road and most people screw up.

There are multiple ways to structure your workouts for mass building, but based on over 19 years of experience, I still think there are tried and true methods that you should use.

THE 3 P'S OF PROGRAMMING

1. PICK 3 EXERCISES

That's it. "Just" three.

Pick a leg dominant exercise, like the Deadlift.

Pick an upper body "push" exercise, like the Bench Press.

And pick an upper body "pull" exercise, like the Pull Up.

That's it.

And do this for each workout.

So Day 1 is:

- A. Deadlift
- B. Bench Press
- C. Pull Up

From there, you need to make sure you...

2. PRIORITIZE AND ROTATE YOUR EXERCISES

To make sure you fully develop your entire body without sacrificing one part over another, change the priority of your focus each workout.

What does that mean?

It means don't start with the same emphasis or focus each workout (unless you're trying to bring up a weakness). For example, you may start with lower body one day, an upper body pull the next, and an upper body push the third.

It's well established in both science and practice that the majority of your mental focus, your nervous system's energy, and your metabolic energy will be solely focused on the first exercise. You will not perform as well as you could on the second and third exercises because there is fatigue already in your system.

Therefore, by rotating your exercises, you ensure you pay equal attention to the major areas of your body.

Here's how you would set this up:

Day 1 is:

- A. Deadlift (**lower body**)
- B. Bench Press (**upper body push**)
- C. Pull Up (**upper body pull**)

So Day 2's workout may look like this:

- A. Parallel Dips (**upper body push**)
- B. Barbell Rows (**upper body pull**)
- C. Squat (**lower body**)

And do the same again for Day 3:

- A. Chin Ups (**upper body pull**)
- B. Hang Clean (**lower body**)
- C. Push Press (**upper body push**)

Pretty simple.

Which leads us to some more stuff, which should be simple, but often times is not...

3. PRACTICALITY: SETS N' REPS N' STUFF.

There's a lot of opinions on how many sets and how many reps you should do for maximum muscular growth. There's the 5x5 method. There's Westside. There's undulating and linear periodization. There's HIT. (Are people really doing that any more?) Dogg Crapp training. 5/3/1...

Man, there's a whole lot of different ways to cook up these sets and reps and stuff.

On Sets...

When I was a young strength coach, I used to spend Saturday's with my weightlifting coach. He was trained by the Soviets when he lived in Cuba.

One day I asked him what the absolute best method for strength and muscle gains was. (I can't believe I'm just giving this away – it works so well it's CRAZY. It's so simple, so ho-hum and run-of-the-mill, most people will overlook its simplicity in favor of something more complicated, so I guess I'm fine.)

He ripped off the bottom of the gym sign-in log and wrote down the following equation:

$$x/5, x+5/5, x+10/5$$

- x is the weight
- /5 is the number of reps (just a sample)
- +5 means add 5 pounds or kilos to your original weight
- +10 means add 10 pounds or kilos to your original weight

For the next workout, you'd do the following:

$$x+5/5, x+10/5, x+15/5$$

And you'd keep adding 5 pounds/kilos to the top set for each and every workout.

Simple. Elegant. And works.

And I've kept that burned in my memory for almost 15 years.

So that means, all **you NEED to do** is 3 work sets of each exercise.

Yup, just three. No need to do more.

(Sure, you can and should do warm up sets, but no need to get carried away. Two or three sets should be fine, especially on the upper body exercises. You may need to do more for things like Squats and Deadlifts that require your technique to be dialed in.)

Your first set is lighter, the second is medium, and your third set is the “top” set of the day, where you attempt to better your previous performance.

Why?

Two reasons:

1. Psychological: It's really hard to focus on more than one strong, heavy set. And doing so can lead to a diminished desire to train, which is the first onset sign of overtraining.
2. Physiological: To put on muscle, you've got to stimulate protein turnover. This is done by making the muscle contract against resistance – or lifting weights. Too many muscle contractions and you reach a point of diminishing returns – a point where you deplete your body of the necessary anabolic hormones – namely testosterone, and it has to work harder to repair itself. Training in this state can and will lead to injury and overtraining.

On Reps...

How many reps should you do?

Well, I've always grown like a weed off of heavy weights and low reps – 3 sets of 3 to 6 reps. But that's just me. Some guys get really strong but don't grow muscle with such low volume.

So what should you do?

Conveniently, you have three primary muscle types – fast twitch glycolytic (Type 2b), fast twitch oxidative glycolytic (Type 2a) and slow twitch (Type 1). Each of these corresponds with the different parts of your body's metabolism – or how it uses energy.

Here's the “science-y” breakdown:

Type 2b – Anaerobic alactic / ATP-PC / Phosphagen

- Lifting heavy stuff or throwing things
- Efforts that take predominantly between 0-10 seconds, but sometimes up to 30 seconds
- Fatigue quickly
- *Examples:* 5RM Squat, Olympic lifts, Shot put, Powerlifting

Type 2a – Anaerobic lactic / Pyruvate / Glycolysis

- Lifting or moving stuff for longer periods of time
- Efforts that take between 30s – 2 minutes
- By products is lactic acid, which when buffered properly, is turned into pyruvate, which can be used for more energy
- Mildly resistant to fatigue
- *Examples:* Wrestling and other martial arts, heavy sled dragging

Type 1 – Aerobic / Oxidative

- Lifting or moving low resistance for long periods of time
- Efforts that take 2 minutes and longer
- Uses oxygen for energy
- Resistant to fatigue
- *Examples:* Running, cycling

All that means is because you have different fiber types, and you want to maximize all of your muscle growth, you should train in different rep ranges to stimulate the growth mechanisms in each muscle fiber type.

Here's how that looks:

Type 2b: **1-6 reps (although for muscle building it's best to stay in the 4-6 rep range)**

Type 2a: **6-15 reps**

Type 1: **15-20+ reps**

Pretty simple.

Here's how you'd plug that into your workouts.

Take a look at Day 1:

A. Deadlift **x 3x6**

B. Bench Press **x 3x8-10**

C. Pull Up **x 3x15**

Rest...

How long do you rest between sets to achieve maximum muscle growth?

The real answer is as little as you have to while still being able to lift the load.

But according to our science, we can actually enforce some pretty strict rest periods to maximize our growth. Here's what's routinely worked for my athletes, my clients, and me:

Type 2b: **2 – 3 minutes (the heavier the load, the more rest)**

Type 2a: **90s – 2 minutes**

Type 1: **30s – 60s**

And here's how you might integrate that into your program:

A. Deadlift x 3x6, **3 minutes of rest**

B. Bench Press x 3x8-10, **90s rest**

C. Pull Ups x 3x12-15, **60s rest**

Now, you don't HAVE to do these reps and rest periods.

I personally prefer heavier weights and longer rests. That's where I've always made the majority of my growth.

However, sometimes I'll mix and match. **I've also found that lifting heavy, 3x6, with 2 minutes of rest, is a phenomenal way to pack on muscle.**

But that's because I'm what's called a "fast-twitch" dominant individual. I tend to grow off heavy weight and lower reps.

You may not be. I have known plenty of people who grow like weeds in the 6-12 range. I suggest you play around with several different cycles and see what works best for you.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Ok, so how do you put all this together?

Let's review:

Step 1: Pick your exercises

Step 2: Pick your rep ranges

Step 3: Pick your rest periods

Step 4: DO IT!

And it's just that simple.

The only thing to it is to do it, as they say.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Can I do exercises not listed in your Top Ten?

Sure. Do any variation of the exercises listed.

For example:

Bench Press => Incline Bench

Deadlift => RDL

Pull-Ups => Towel Chins

You get the picture.

You can also do some unilateral exercises like Lunges too.

2. Are you suggesting that I should do exercises like Hang Cleans and Hang Snatch Pulls for high reps?

No.

And yes.

Let me explain.

Using a bar this would be a really stupid idea for most people. Your form would disintegrate and you'd most likely get hurt. (Although Peary Rader, founder of

Ironman Magazine swore by them for mass building.) However, if you have a strong background in the Olympic lifts you could get away with it.

However, you can use other implements like kettlebells and sandbags for the higher reps and you will pack on a fair amount of muscle.

3. Can I just use the lower reps and longer rests like you did?

Sure can. Just make sure you're seeing the results you're truly looking for and not just being lazy.

4. What about dumbbells? You don't mention anything about dumbbells. Should I use them?

May pro-bodybuilders swear that dumbbells are the best for growth. But these same guys also use machines and "supplement" with things that you and I won't use. So they'll literally grow from anything. While it is true that dumbbells force your body to work "harder" because they move more freely in all three dimensions, as opposed to a barbell that works in just two, I still prefer the barbell.

And that's because you can just move more total weight – and do more mechanical work than you can with just about any other tool.

One of my only exceptions is Rows. I think that most guys will trash their lower backs doing barbell rows so using dumbbells for this exercise is a better choice.

5. How about nutrition? What should I eat?

Well that goes beyond the scope of this report. But the bottom line is this: If you want to grow a lot, you've got to eat a lot. Make sure you include the following: Meat, eggs, potatoes, rice – all good mass-gaining foods. Again, it's just that simple.

6. Do you recommend any supplements?

Yeah, sleep.

Seriously. Supplement your growth with an extra 20-30 minute nap a day. It's free and it works.

7. What should I do on my “off” days – any conditioning or stuff like that?

Nope. The only thing I would recommend is some stretching for relaxation and to get rid of the soreness. Sauna is good too.

But if your goal is to grow muscle, then certainly the last thing you want to do is conditioning in my opinion. If you must, throw in some sled or Prowler work at the end of your workouts for about 10 minutes.

ABOUT...



Geoff Neupert is currently a personal trainer with over 21,252 hours of one-on-one personal training under his belt and has been in the “biz” since 1993. He is also a Master Kettlebell Trainer with the Russian Kettlebell Challenge, a former Division 1 Strength and Conditioning Coach at Rutgers University, and a former National Qualifier and State Champion in Olympic Weightlifting at 105kg. He’s been a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist since 1997.

He currently trains a select group of clients both in person and online. He also runs a thriving online kettlebell workout business.

Geoff’s done and doing a lot of other stuff in the strength and fitness world that you probably don’t care about, like speaking gigs and seminars and publishing books ‘n stuff.

For more “interesting” and immediately useful out-of-the-box strength stuff, visit his blog at www.chasingstrength.com.