

HOW TO BUILD YOUR BODY

**BODY BUILDING WISDOM FROM SOMEONE
WHO'S BUILT MORE THAN JUST MUSCLES**



BY PAUL RICHARDS

CLUB **PHYSICAL**
you belong

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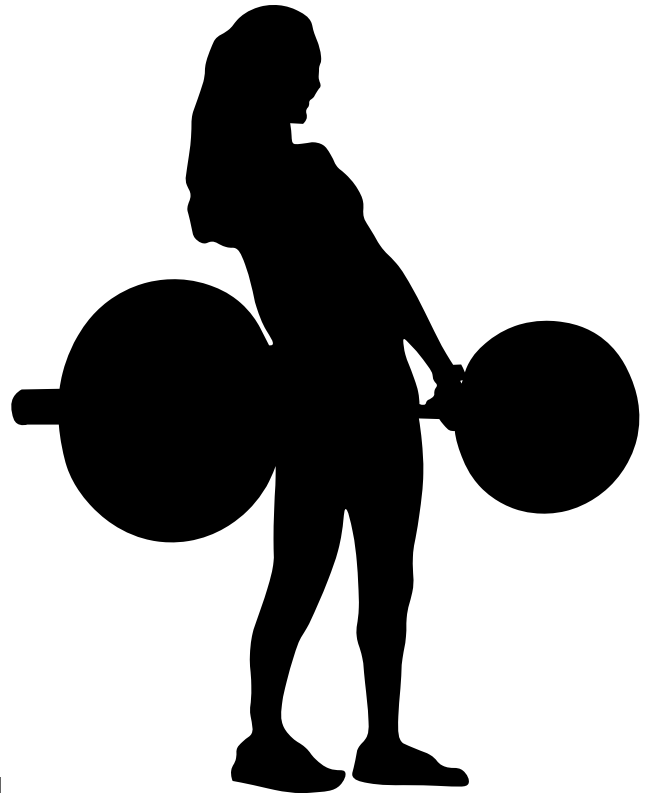
Every champion was once a beginner who decided to start. This is your beginning—your journey to strength, discipline, and transformation starts today.



From left, Joesph Ulberg became Mr New Zealand, Nickie, Fataai Venu – Mr South Pacific, Clara Thomsen, and Phillip Wulf

Introduction

Welcome to “How to Build Your Body: Bodybuilding for Beginners” Whether you’re looking to transform your physique, improve your health, or boost your confidence, this guide is designed to help you embark on your bodybuilding journey with the right knowledge and tools. Bodybuilding isn’t just about lifting heavy weights; it’s a comprehensive approach that involves proper nutrition, structured workouts, adequate rest, and mental resilience. This ebook will walk you through each of these aspects, providing you with a solid foundation to build the body you desire.



You don’t have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great. Starting can feel overwhelming, especially when others seem far ahead. But every rep, every workout, and every small choice adds up. The key to greatness is taking that first step—because once you begin, you’re already moving toward your goals.



What You’ll Learn

- The fundamentals of bodybuilding and how to get started
- How to set achievable fitness goals
- Nutritional strategies to support muscle growth and fat loss
- Designing effective workout routines tailored for beginners
- Essential exercises to target all major muscle groups
- The importance of rest and recovery in muscle development
- An overview of supplements and their role in bodybuilding
- Tips to stay motivated and consistent
- Common pitfalls to avoid on your bodybuilding journey
- Methods to track and assess your progress

Let’s dive in and start building a stronger, healthier you!



Chapter 1: A chest full of secrets



Arnold Alois Schwarzenegger himself

That was the headline under a photo of the incredible Arnold Schwarzenegger on Joe Weider's Muscle and Fitness Magazine in the 1970's. I collected and read each edition cover to cover as if it were The Bible itself. I followed the workout regimes and the lifestyles of all of the top American trainers at the time such as Robbie Robinson, Mike Mentzer, Frank Zane, Sergio Oliver, Serge Nubret (of France), Tony Emmot (England), Roger Walker (Australia) and many others. In fact I studied each article so well that by the time New Zealand's first Instructor Certificate Courses were created, served up by Auckland Technical Institute (AUT), I breezed through with my knowledge of training.



*From Left -
Clive Green,
Bill Pearl and
Earl Maynard
- Mr Universe
1961*

I had my first weights workout at the Auckland City YMCA. There were no instructors and you just had to figure things out on your own. Soon after that I joined Les Mills first gym, near Queen Street on Victoria Street. You could train Monday, Wednesday and Friday and I think Saturday morning. Clive Green himself was an instructor there as well as Ken Moran, otherwise known as Demetrius the Strongman. Many a time, when working as a cadet for HMNZ Customs Department, I'd be walking up Queen Street at lunchtime. A crowd would be gathered and sure enough, 'Demetrius the Strongman' would be gripping a leather/chain in his teeth, suspending 2-3 large concrete blocks which he would then carry over some poor voluntary pedestrian, lying prostrate on the pavement. That was one of his favourites, as was blowing up hot-water bottles, until they invariably burst!

There were men's and women's days. Later, when I was working at The Chief Postmasters Office downtown, a workmate (later to become rugby coach) Ian McIntosh began raving about a new gym just opened in Federal Street. A group of us went to see it at lunchtime. I was amazed. There were mirrors everywhere, the carpet was green and all of the machines were chrome. I immediately joined and booked this time with an 'instructor' to have my first workout designed. I'd never had an instructor show me what to do before.

Speedway rider and instructor – Tony Ducevich took my friends and I through our paces. I'll never forget learning what 'drop-down' sets are. Tony had us use the machine bench press for as many repetitions (reps) as I could. And when I went to get up, he told me to stay there. Tony reduced the weight-plates by one and said "keep going". Then he repeated the command as I became continuously fatigued. I dreamt about the exercise that night and awoke with the sorest chest muscles I've ever had. But I was fascinated with the impact and effect a little bit of coaching could have.



Tony Ducevich

The attraction of the gym, the feeling it gave me combined with the positive atmosphere of the place drew me in, and within days I was 'working out six-times a week. At the time I was accustomed to drinking, occasionally smoking marijuana and partying every Friday and Saturday with my West Auckland mates. We would roar around the City in our V8 cars and large British motorbikes with no thought given to drunk driving/riding. There was always a party somewhere, we would suddenly arrive on mass, invited or not.

But, I'll never forget the Saturday morning I arrived at Clive Greens to workout. As I struggled to lift the bench press I felt lethargic and could feel the excessive alcohol from the late night before, reeking through my skin. It was in that instant I realised that If I was to fully enjoy this new passion for weight-training, I'd need to change my lifestyle. That same Saturday night I went running up the nearby Waikamete Hill and heard the honking-horns of several familiar cars as my drinking/partying buddies raced past me in their group of 1930's V8 cars. Yes, I'd chosen a new path and it became obvious to them.



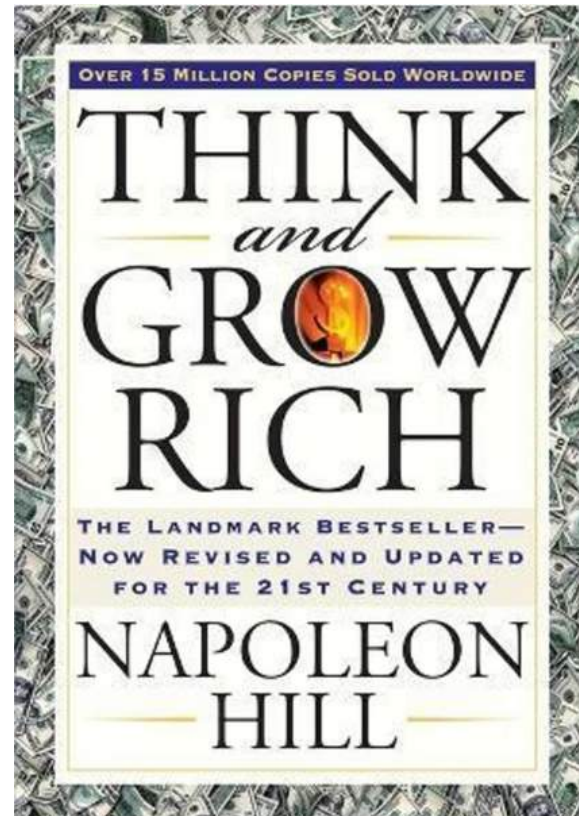
Think and grow Rich

I'd never actually read an entire book in my life. Just Donald Duck Comics! I was in my late 20's and had met a girl who believed in me and encouraged me to read. The infamous book – Think and Grow Rich by Napoleon Hill was my first book. I loved reading it and the numerous short-story accounts of people who had started businesses. I wondered what sort of business I could start. My friend – Mara, had the idea to begin an 'exercise to music' class. This was well before Les Mills began teaching Jazzercise and 'exercise to music' was unheard-of. She had the idea stewing in her brain while I realised I had the will and the gumption to make it happen, especially after reading that book. So, I rented the historic Parnell library Hall for her first class and promoted it in the community.

Mara designed the choreography and taped the music. But she was adamant that after each 3-minute track, the group would require a one-minute recovery break. I disagreed, but that is how the first 15 minutes went, with these massive no-action breaks, with a full class standing and waiting for an uncomfortable full-minute after each track. Mara quickly realised that people had better fitness than she expected and for the rest of the class, thankfully removed these breaks.



Stretch class 1983, Henderson. Leotards were in.



We went on to lease our own premises on Queen Street, in Queens Arcade where we ran classes at both lunchtime and after work. Believe it or not, we had no showers, just one huge bowl filled with warm water. Participants would sponge themselves down and return to work! I took a Swedish Massage course and began to provide massage to some of the women participants. Then the movie – Saturday Night Fever was released. At that time I had fortunately met a girl studying dance at Auckland University. Incredibly she was so skilled that she could watch a disco movie and teach the dances the following day. I renamed our studio HUSTLERS. We expanded our service to teach work groups how to do the dances of John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John. But I lacked the skills to grow it and I closed the business down a year later.

While later working for the Department of Social Welfare and simultaneously renovating an old Newton house, I re-read Think and Grow Rich. The habit of working-out six-days a week was by now very strongly ingrained in me. Napoleon Hill wrote that the secret to success in business was to find something that you love so much, that being 'paid' would be by far 'secondary'. All I could think of was that I should start a gym. Having been a Tech Drawing student at Avondale College and Kelston Boys I pictured my ideal gym, as the book advised. I drew a plan and carefully designed the layout. Then I thought about where this gym could be started. I looked at the map of Auckland. There were only three commercial gyms at the time; Les Mills – City, Clive Green's – City and Don Olivers – Glen Eden. The only gym in Henderson was a tiny run-down weight-room underneath the old Waitemata Athletic Club. But I didn't know this at the time and one Saturday headed out to Henderson to 'find' a building. In the centre of the township I turned right into Ratanui Street, and one -hundred meters down the road spotted a tall man standing outside an old building. I stopped and asked the man "What is this building and who owns it?".

*Top Shape
gym floor -
stage 2*



*Some of our
regular
members one
night in 1983*

The man turned out to be the local Police-chief, the late Ross Dallow and he told me he was also the Chairman of the Waitemata Athletic Club. The dilapidated building had been theirs. But they had sold it to a prominent local businessman - Brian Tracy, the day before. Consequently, I found out where Mr Tracy lived and mustered up the courage to go and visit him in his Te Atatu South mansion. I had zero business experience and just \$800, but I managed to convince Mr Tracy to lease the large 850 square meter building to me. He was to give me just eight-weeks rent FREE, so that I could renovate the building. After that, the rent would be \$500 a week.

With the \$800 I had to patch holes in walls, clean and paint the entire building, build reception, build saunas, extend showers and plumbing, fit carpets to the (to be) aerobic room, and source all of the gym equipment. My friend, Contest Promoter and supplement store owner – Peter Hardwick became my partner for a brief time. His friend Ellis managed to weld up a number of innovative (at the time) machines using and bending 'car exhaust-pipes' (pictured above). They worked fantastically for the time although metal fatigue did cause some interesting accidents. And the cast-iron weight-plates didn't respond well to being dropped and bashed.

How my friends and I managed to do this and take the unimaginable financial risk is a story that would take too long here. Suffice to say, we managed to get it going and to pay everyone who needed to be paid. It was highly stressful but very exciting. The gym quickly became popular.



It was 1983. No gym had a 'cardio section' those days. Our 'cardio' was one fan- bike. Eventually we got three.



Dr Gabielle Lyon



*My family – Noosa 2023.
Each has worked in the gyms. All train daily.*

Seven years later, when opening our next upmarket location on Lincoln Road Henderson we imported New Zealand's first line-up of six Life Cycles. Since then, my passion for health and fitness and for running health clubs has continued to grow, later spreading to my family. We ultimately built 25-large multipurpose health clubs and employed 350 people at its peak. In 2016, taking advantage of an opportunity at the time we sold many of the clubs to City Fitness and instead became their landlord. My family and I remain fully committed to the health and fitness lifestyle and love being involved operating Club Physical, currently in its Te Atatu location with a licensed branch also in Kaitaia.

Chapter 3: Build muscle for long term health

Here's something that ALL of your friends and ALL of your family should be made aware of. Weight-training will keep you healthy and make you live longer!

Dr Gabrielle Lyon emphasises the critical role of muscle health for longevity, describing it as essential not only for physical strength but also as a “metabolic currency” central to overall health. She advocates for what she terms “muscle-centric medicine” underscoring the importance of skeletal muscle as an organ that impacts metabolic, immune, and hormonal functions. According to Dr Lyon, maintaining muscle health through resistance training can help prevent age-related issues like sarcopenia, which is the gradual loss of muscle mass and strength that commonly occurs with aging. She highlights that muscle is more than just a means of movement; it acts as a nutrient-sensing organ that regulates energy and impacts blood sugar control. This regulation helps to prevent conditions like insulin resistance, thereby supporting metabolic health. Dr Lyon also points out that muscle influences our immune response by producing myokines, which are signalling molecules that help reduce inflammation and promote repair in other tissues.

In her approach to building muscle, Dr. Lyon stresses the importance of a high-protein diet combined with consistent resistance training. This combination not only aids in muscle maintenance but also helps people maintain functional strength as they age, which reduces the risk of debilitating injuries. She encourages individuals, particularly women, to move beyond lighter weights and embrace challenging resistance exercises, as these provide critical health benefits that go far beyond aesthetics. For Dr. Lyon, muscle health is foundational to aging well. By focusing on muscle health, individuals can better manage their overall health and potentially increase their lifespan by

You might find this an interesting educational with Andrew Huberman interviewing Dr Lyon.



Chapter 4: Men and women are 'different'

Like you, of course I know that men and women are different in many ways. But it wasn't until today – January 2025 – that when listening to an interview with American Dr Stacy Sims, that I heard how several key differences in our physiology, lead to huge differences in how girls and guys respond to training and nutrition. I heard how, when girls are around eight years old, they have no trouble competing and keeping up with boys in sport. Yet a little older, and girl's hips and even shoulders begin to widen leading to bodily changes. These changes often mean that, the way that a girl ran or played sport when younger, doesn't work the same. This often leads to the girl giving up athletics and other sports around the ages of 15-16. And yet there are training programmes and adaptations that could have retained their ability and motivation.

The same goes for a women's response to food intake. A mans and a women's body utilises fats and carbohydrates in different ways. The reason why these differences are not widely known is that, until now, the majority of research and studies have been male oriented, and with sport and 'muscle' studies, these have generally been using male students aged between 18 and 24.

If you are a women (or a man who would like to be more understanding towards your partner), I recommend you look up some of the books written by Dr Stacy Sims. These include: 'Next Level -your guide to Kicking- Ass, Feeling great, and Crushing Goals through menopause and Beyond'.



Catherine and Marilyn – both with terminal cancer, commenced weight-training and have now been training buddies for six-months

“

Men and women differ biologically, and this impacts bodybuilding. Men generally see faster muscle growth due to higher testosterone, while women build muscle more gradually but excel in endurance. Understanding these differences helps tailor training for each individual's strengths, unlocking their full potential in the gym.

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Picture below: Public Relations – with Club Physical covering the cost of these memberships and the coaching, we have relied on any voluntary PR (articles) printed in local media. And word-of-mouth by members and the Cancer Foundation





Chapter 5: Weights even for Cancer sufferers, really?



A twist of fate twenty years ago lead us to create a 10-Week FREE programme for people with or recovering from cancer. I won't go into what happened to make this a reality, but what followed was that over the course of 20-years several hundred people have benefitted by attending the clubs complimentary, in 10-Week blocks, over the years. Club Physical would supply a Personal Trainer at its own cost, each participant then receiving FULL membership for all on the programme as well as a support partner.

Research has proven that a weight-training programme taken up by people with cancer, will in 60% of cases, lead to recovery!

After initialising the Club Physical 10-week Cancer Wellfit programme I was fortunate to be at an IHRSA (International Health and Raquet Club Association) Convention in Los Angeles where three hospital leaders were lecturing on weight-training for cancer. That session convinced me that we were on the right path. Then later, I heard about and spoke with an Australian Professor – Rob Newton, who has, along with his colleagues, been involved with numerous studies on the effects of weight-training and exercise for those with cancer. Robert reassured me that we were on the right track.

Typically, a person with cancer can lose up to 14% of lean body mass (muscle). As you might imagine this causes the person to feel weak and depressed. After all, lean body-mass (muscle) can be seen as 'the engine for your body', strongly impacting the speed of your metabolism. We increase the strength of each client by doing the previously unthinkable. Giving cancer patients a weights -workout. Often the person is lacking energy. The lecturers at IHRSA told me personally to use 'available energy' for weights. Don't be too concerned to include 'cardio' also. The client will receive their best results from the weights, gaining strength and a feeling of empowerment, a sense of optimism and finally a sense of control.

Certainly, that has been our experience. At the time of writing (January 2025) we have two ladies with terminal cancer training weight-training twice weekly at the Te Atatu Club. Catherine and Marilyn have responded incredibly to the weights and the consistent strength gain often amazes me as their trainer. Both ladies have displayed an increased zest for life and have increased confidence in initiating other experiences including walking and travelling as a result. That's the value of weight- training. Club Physical is still offering this opportunity to cancer patients. Call our receptionist if you have a friend or family member who this could benefit.

Chapter 6: Weight Training and Mental Health

It wasn't 'The Pandemic' that led to a huge upswing in depression and poor mental health. It was the Government's decision to 'lock-down'. People need people contact. And the decision to bar this, led to pain greater than the reason for the lockdown, and society is still recovering. This not only happened in Auckland NZ, but in several other countries, so much so that there has been an amazing shift in the number one reason that people come to health clubs. Pre-lockdown the first reason given was 'to lose weight'. Post-lockdown the number one reason is 'mental health'. Weight-training is the very best 'pill' for stress relief and mental health. I first realised this when I went from 'truck-driving' to working in the office of Auckland City's Department of Social Welfare. Within minutes of my very first day on the job, untrained and with my associate called to attend a 'client', the phone rang on my desk. I answered it and was immediately confronted with the shouted reply "Where's my F...n pay!". Knowing that welfare payments were funded by tax paid by people like me, I took exception to the attitude of many of the 'clients'. Not humble in the least. Instead 'entitled'.

Although I enjoyed the pressurised and busy environment, I never really accepted the rude attitude of the people we dealt with. In the extreme this included a man knifing his wife to death in front of me. There had been 57 stab wounds later counted. Far from what you would expect in an office job. Another day, a man attacked our front desk with a baseball bat. No counselling was offered those days. After the knife incident, it was about 1pm, I took it upon myself to leave the office and to head down Queen Street to my Gym, Clive Greens. After 90-minutes of hoisting weights I was relatively relaxed although still emotionally shattered. Since then, over the years and having built 25 large gyms, I became accustomed to dealing with high and lows. The press and highs and lows of business come like the waves of the sea. Often the stress of not having the money to pay bills or the challenges that come with employing up to 350 people. We were hiring new team members every week of the year.



*We worked with Rutherford College students
and a promotion we called 'Natural High'*

Through the experiences at the Social Welfare and those of running a business I learned that without a doubt, a 'weights-workout' would ALWAYS leave me stress-FREE and relaxed after just one-hour. I never had to have any 'pills'.



Then more recently a Professor spoke at the Australian Industry Convention, FILEX. He told us how he and his team were involved in studies of 'depression'. Incredibly, they discovered that by giving patients a placebo, this worked the same as an actual drug. The placebo would 'work' best if it was a large 'blue' pill. The professor went on to assert that the very best antidote for depression in most cases, was weight training.

Why weight training? There is no doubt that there are some very good scientific explanations of what happens in your body between your muscles and your mind. But quite simply, from years of experience, I believe that the de-stressing has to do with the fact that when you lift weights you need to;

- Focus on the movement. It's hard and you need that focus to maintain your form. Hence it forces you to 'overcome' negative thoughts and to live in 'the moment'.
- You need to 'breathe', deliberately and slowly, in and out as you move. This is known to be de-stressing.
- The exercise flushes your body and brain with blood, great for mental clarity and acuity
- It also creates natural 'feel-good' chemicals like Oxytocin
- You invariably have the opportunity to develop friendships that often then become support networks
- And finally, the 'firm' feeling surrounding your body known as 'the pump' leaves you feeling well and satisfied!

As I write this in January 2025, today I was speaking with a member and businessman, Shane, and he has the same philosophy. Shane's life has been filled with numerous stressful situations. Many of these in the extreme. But his method in coping with this and regaining his composure is 'weight-training'. If you train with weights, you will know this works!



Weight training isn't just for building muscles; it's a powerful tool for building resilience. Each rep helps release stress, boost endorphins, and create a sense of accomplishment. It's not just about lifting weights —it's about lifting your mood, clearing your mind, and strengthening your mental well-being.

Chapter 7: Gym Etiquette

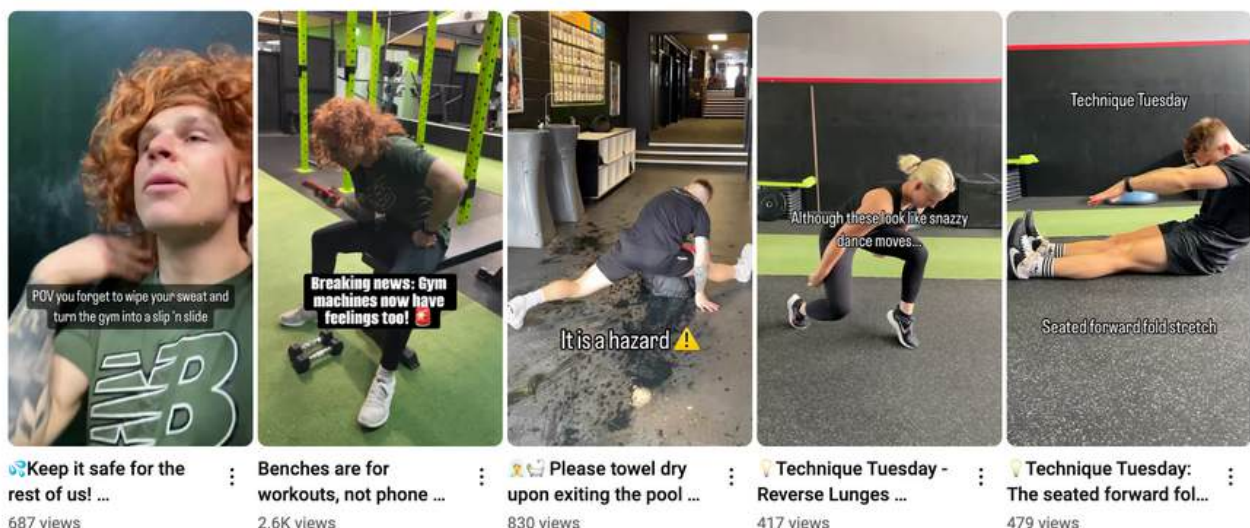
It's a privilege to be able to become a member of your local gym. Yes, you do pay membership fees, but it doesn't take a graduate in accounting to calculate the value you receive in comparison to the relatively small fees. In fact, the more you use the club, the greater value you get. Most gyms are privately operated with a massive amount of time, effort and passion required to run them. A reasonably sized commercial health club is expensive to fund. Staffing costs, power costs, water, equipment upkeep and rents are the weekly responsibility of the owners. At the time of writing the running costs for a club such Club Physical Te Atatu averages well over \$20,000 a week!

Yes, you could' train at home. But what you will quickly find is doing so offers little to no gym-vibe and inspiration. When you visit a health club you will always be surrounded by a troop of like-minded individuals, all there to maintain and to improve their health and fitness. It is impossible not to be positively influenced by the members around you. You have expert trainers nearby and hundreds of thousands dollars-worth of equipment at your disposal. You might be lucky enough to join a club that also offers Swedish Saunas, Spa pool, swimming pool, Recovery Room, Group Exercise classes and more that help make your membership like a home away from home. Add to this the opportunity you would have to make friends with many others.

Have you ever visited a friend's house to witness a pile of old gym equipment, discarded in the corner of the garage and covered with cobwebs? I've seen this on numerous occasions. Trying to workout alone at home just doesn't generally stimulate! Much better to be surrounded by others all doing their best.

My family and I created Technique Tuesday during the tough 'Lockdowns' of 2021/2 to make light and to add humour to many of the facets of exercise and gym etiquette. These clips are found on YOU-TUBE, Club Physical Official.

Take a look at some of these 'shorts'.



Now, with respect to the fact that you have joined a club to workout among others, there are a few disciplines that will make your experience better.

1. Always bring a workout towel. Place this between you and the upholstery. Not only will this save benches from regularly needing re-upholstery, it will ensure that both yourself and others have a clean bench to lie on.
2. Share your equipment. When you have completed a set of a particular exercise, get up and if someone else is waiting, offer them a turn.
3. Similarly, if you are wanting to use a machine that someone else is using, wait until they have completed their set. Then ask, “Hi, do you mind if I work-in?” Most trainers rest a minute between sets.
4. Avoid ‘banging’ your weights. Often, an unreasonably hard banging of weights is connected to ‘ego’. This is unnecessary and can damage equipment.
5. Avoid excessive ‘grunting’. Many of the strongest trainers in the world workout with a confident, mature attitude, not needing to draw attention to themselves by grunting. One gym chain has installed what they call a ‘lunk alarm’ so that other members can press in the above circumstance.
6. Do always wear clean gym shoes, shorts or track-pants and a singlet or sweatshirt. No commercial health club allows bare chests.

Finally, respect the club facilities. Most clubs have a high daily use and keeping the place clean and well-maintained is not only the operators responsibility, but, as a member, its YOUR responsibility too.



Chapter 8: Understanding Bodybuilding

What is Bodybuilding?

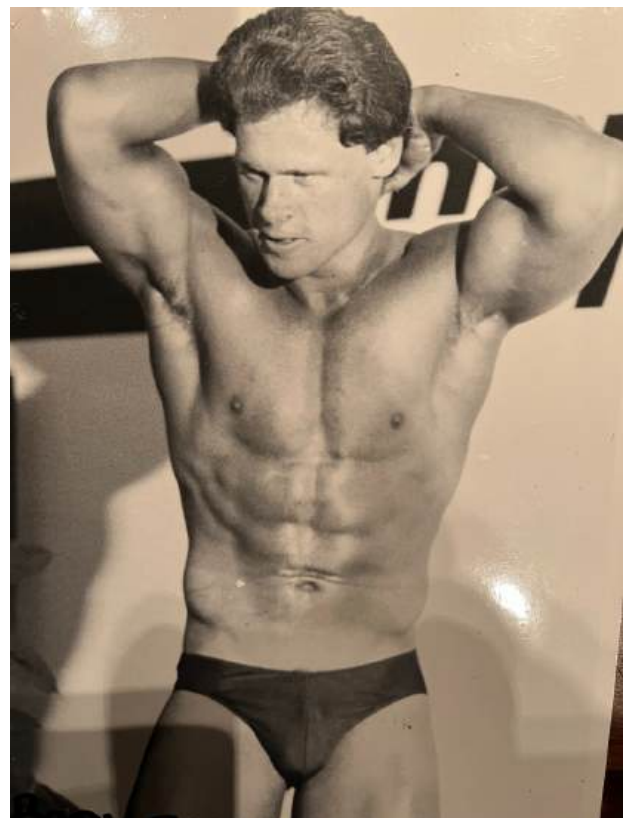
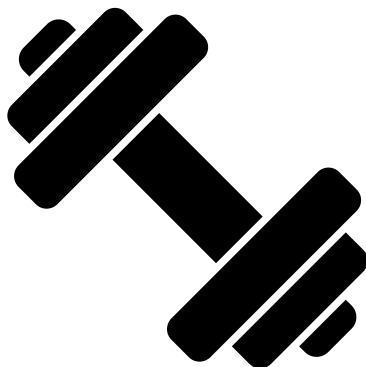
Bodybuilding is the practice of developing and strengthening the muscles of the body through resistance training and proper nutrition. While often associated with competitive physiques, bodybuilding also offers numerous health benefits, including increased muscle mass, improved metabolism, enhanced bone density, and better overall physical appearance.

Benefits of Bodybuilding

1. **Muscle Growth:** Increases muscle size and strength.
2. **Fat Loss:** Enhances fat metabolism, leading to a leaner physique.
3. **Improved Health:** Reduces the risk of chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease.
4. **Mental Health:** Boosts confidence, reduces stress, and improves mood.
5. **Functional Strength:** Enhances daily functional movements and athletic performance.

Key Principles of Bodybuilding

1. **Progressive Overload:** Gradually increasing the weight, frequency, or number of repetitions in your strength training routine to challenge your muscles.
2. **Specificity:** Targeting specific muscle groups to ensure balanced development.
3. **Recovery:** Allowing adequate time for muscles to repair and grow stronger after workouts.
4. **Nutrition:** Consuming the right balance of macronutrients (proteins, carbohydrates, fats) to fuel workouts and support muscle growth.
5. **Consistency:** Maintaining a regular workout and nutrition regimen to achieve and sustain results.



Pictured: One of my favourite young guys who joined to build-up. He was slim and had never trained before. This is Nigel Stirling 12-months later.

The Science Behind Muscle Growth

Muscle growth, scientifically known as hypertrophy, occurs when the muscle fibers endure microscopic tears as a result of resistance training or lifting weights. These small tears act as signals to the body, prompting it to repair and rebuild the damaged fibers. This repair process involves fusing the fibers back together, which not only increases their size but also enhances their overall strength.

However, the process of muscle growth doesn't end with just training—it relies heavily on two additional factors: nutrition and rest. Proper nutrition provides the body with the essential building blocks it needs, such as protein to rebuild muscle tissue and carbohydrates to fuel recovery. Rest and sleep, on the other hand, allow the body to focus its energy on repair and growth, as this is when most of the recovery process happens. Without sufficient rest or the right nutrients, the body cannot optimize muscle repair, potentially slowing progress. Understanding the science behind muscle growth is crucial for tailoring effective training programs and adopting a balanced lifestyle that supports strength and development.



Mike Ayek a consistent trainer and competitor at the club

Bodybuilding is built on three key principles: consistency, discipline, and patience. It's not about quick fixes or shortcuts—it's about showing up, staying focused, and trusting the process. The strongest bodies are built one rep, one meal, and one day at a time.

Chapter 9: Setting Realistic Goals

Importance of Goal Setting

Setting clear and achievable goals provides direction, motivation, and a sense of purpose. It helps you stay focused and track your progress, making it easier to stay committed to your bodybuilding journey.

SMART Goals

Ensure your goals are:

- **Specific:** Clearly define what you want to achieve.
- **Measurable:** Establish criteria to track progress.
- **Achievable:** Set realistic targets based on your current fitness level.
- **Relevant:** Align goals with your personal motivations and lifestyle.
- **Time-bound:** Set deadlines to create a sense of urgency.

Examples of Bodybuilding Goals

- **Short-Term Goal:** Increase bench press weight by 10 kilos in three months.
- **Long-Term Goal:** Gain 8 kilos of lean muscle mass over a year.
- **Health Goal:** Lower body fat percentage by 5% within six months.
- **Skill Goal:** Master the proper form for deadlifts within two months.

Muscle Hack: I severely ruptured my spine once doing heavy deadlifts while being simultaneously distracted by others in the gym. I couldn't walk for six- weeks. With this movement especially, it is vital that YOU get your posture and technique checked by a Personal Trainer before you start going heavy. If you have a history of lower back injury, there are alternative exercises.



Pic. They trained hard for several months for this. Members compete at one of Club Physical's many previous Body-Building contests

Creating Your Personalised Plan

1. **Assess Your Starting Point:** Evaluate your current fitness level, body composition, and strength.
2. **Define Your Objectives:** Decide whether you want to build muscle, lose fat, improve strength, or a combination.
3. **Set Milestones:** Break down long-term goals into smaller, manageable milestones.
4. **Develop a Timeline:** Assign realistic deadlines to each milestone.
5. **Monitor and Adjust:** Regularly review your progress and adjust your goals as needed.

Goal setting alone won't change anything

WARNING: The following information can change your life!

According to research by The University of Scranton USA, only 8% of people actually follow through and achieve their New Year's Resolutions. While resolutions and goal setting are certainly powerful and admirable aims to aspire to, with most people, something is going seriously wrong. And the exciting thing I've discovered is this.....

While listening to a talk by former US Navy Chief and World renowned behavioural expert – Chase Hughes, what he said immediately made everything clear! Having a Goal alone won't change anything. What will propell you forward on a tradectory to success is forming a new habits!

The answer was so obvious, that its amazing that most of us didn't get it. The secret to achievement is to;

1. First, have a Goal or a Vision
2. Create a plan that will get you there. Then do what most people neglect to do. Decide on the 'habits' to you need to start, that by doing these consistently, will result in your vision being achieved?
3. Use 'self-discipline' to get you started. But after that initial effort, simply stick to the habit that you have agreed (with yourself) to follow.

Examples:

- VISION; I would like to see myself having read six non-fiction books by July.
- ACTION: That's one every 4.2 weeks. Decide on how many pages you would need to read a day to get you there. Then create a new habit to read X-pages each day.
- VISION: I would like to see myself as having reduced my waistline by 6cm by next Christmas.
- ACTION: Create the habit of working out, either weights or cardio, five days a week. Then if you have been in the habit of consuming ice-cream and wine for supper, begin a new substitute habit of say, eating a handful of almonds along with a cup of Green Tea instead. To ensure that you are on track, you can check your monthly progress with a tape measure or even better, an EVOLT Scan.

You can see that having a Goal alone, wont do anything. Far more important in the long term is that you agree on setting up a new HABIT. Yes use your self-discipline to get you started, then the habit will take over. It's the 'habit' that is all important. Get ready to celebrate the changes!



Avoid making weight-training ALL you do

There was a common saying a few years back. 'All work and no play make Jack a dull boy!'. At one stage, around the age of 23, bodybuilding was ALL I talked about. I talked about training. I talked about my precious workout schedule. How I had to get sleep for my next early workout (5.30am). And I talked allot about vitamins and getting enough protein to grow. I didn't realise how 'boring' this can be to others. There's a BIG world out there and I urge you to place the same effort you put into your training, as you do with other sports and greater education.

I took up Tae Kwon Do to encourage my daughter Chloé, and over seven years we both went through to Black Belt. This was while training daily in the gym and also building our business, employing staff and opening more gyms. Then I did the same with Renee and Brahm, starting Shotokan Karate with them. Nine years later we all had black belts. Brahm also became NZ Champ in Judo and Wrestling, while Renee now represents NZ in Hip Hop Dance. These training sessions were after work at night. On alternate nights I also began Toastmasters to tackle my shyness and reluctance to speak in public. My wife Tina and I have since founded two Toastmaster clubs ([WAKE-UP.COMMUNICATE](https://www.wake-up.communicate.co.nz/) and [RIVERHEAD TM](https://www.riverheadtm.co.nz/)).

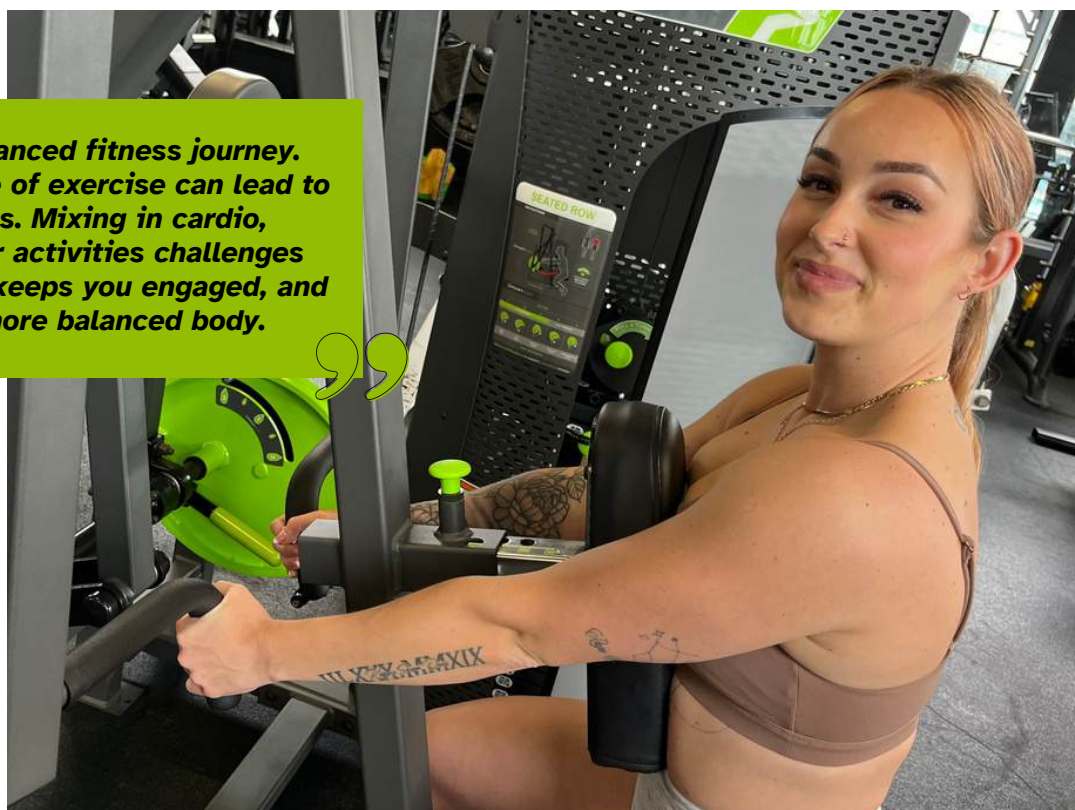


There are six Martial-Art Black-Belts in our immediate family and two browns

The point is, to not only grow your strength but to grow and expand yourself.



Variety is key to a balanced fitness journey. Sticking to just one type of exercise can lead to burnout and plateaus. Mixing in cardio, flexibility, and outdoor activities challenges your body in new ways, keeps you engaged, and builds a stronger, more balanced body.



2024 – Ashley has developed a strong support network of friends who love to train

Body Type Review: Ectomorph, Mesomorph, and Endomorph

Is it possible to totally 'transform' your body? First, I'd have to tell you that my team and I have witnessed numerous incredible and amazing transformations as a result of consistent training and wise nutrition choices over a period of time. That said, you do have a set bone structure and inherited body-type. The changes you make will be within this make-up. It would therefore be prudent to make you aware of this.

The concept of body types, or somatotypes, was introduced by psychologist William Sheldon in the 1940s. While modern science suggests body composition can be influenced by lifestyle, genetics, and environment, these classifications remain a helpful guide for understanding general physical tendencies.

*Bianca won this at a Club Physical Contest around 2016.
Bianca is the daughter of Body Building
Champions, Jo and Mark Stewart.*



1. Ectomorph

- Appearance: Lean and slender, with long limbs and minimal body fat.
- Metabolism: Fast metabolism, making it difficult to gain weight or muscle.
- Training Focus: Emphasis on resistance training with moderate intensity to build muscle, and a caloric surplus with protein-rich foods to support growth.

2. Mesomorph

- Appearance: Naturally athletic, with a muscular and well-proportioned frame.
- Metabolism: Balanced metabolism, allowing for easier muscle gain and fat loss.
- Training Focus: Responds well to varied training styles, from strength training to endurance exercises, with a balanced diet to maintain their physique.

3. Endomorph

- Appearance: Rounder body shape, with a higher tendency to store fat.
- Metabolism: Slower metabolism, making fat loss more challenging.
- Training Focus: A mix of cardio and strength training to boost metabolism, paired with a nutrient-dense, controlled-calorie diet.

Conclusion

Understanding body types helps tailor fitness and nutrition plans. While no one fits neatly into a single category, identifying predominant traits can optimize results.

Remember, progress is influenced by consistent effort, not just genetics.



Chapter 10: Nutrition Essentials

The Role of Nutrition in Bodybuilding

Proper nutrition is the cornerstone of bodybuilding. It provides the necessary fuel for workouts, supports muscle repair and growth, and aids in recovery.

Macronutrients Explained

1. **Proteins:** Essential for muscle repair and growth. Aim for 1.2 to 2.2 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight. Sources: Lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, legumes, and protein supplements.
2. **Carbohydrates:** Primary energy source for workouts. They replenish glycogen stores in muscles. Sources: Whole grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes, and starchy vegetables.
3. **Fats:** Important for hormone production and overall health. Sources: Avocados, nuts, seeds, olive oil, and fatty fish.



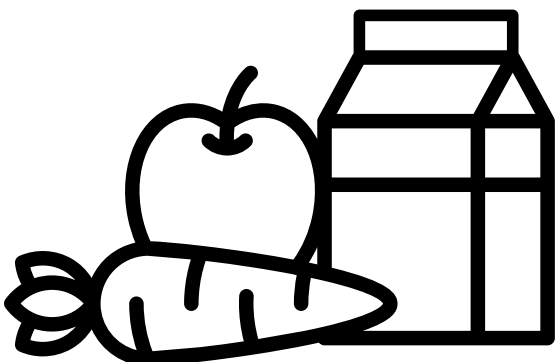
Brahm Richards, multiple NZ Judo and Wrestling Champion, Oceania Gold Medallist, and twice represented NZ in the Commonwealth Games. He believes in supplements.

Micronutrients and Hydration

- **Vitamins and Minerals:** Support various bodily functions, including metabolism and muscle contraction.
- **Hydration:** Essential for performance and recovery. Aim for at least 3 litres of water per day, adjusting based on activity level and climate.

Meal Planning Tips

1. **Balanced Meals:** Incorporate a mix of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats in each meal.
2. **Frequent Eating:** Consider eating 4-6 smaller meals throughout the day to maintain energy levels and support muscle growth.
3. **Pre- and Post-Workout Nutrition:** Pre-Workout: Consume a meal rich in carbohydrates and moderate in protein 1-2 hours before training. Post-Workout: Have a protein-rich meal or shake within 30 minutes after exercising to aid muscle recovery.
4. **Caloric Intake:** Determine your caloric needs based on your goals—caloric surplus for muscle gain, deficit for fat loss, or maintenance for recomposition.





Sample Meal Plan for Beginners

Breakfast:

- Scrambled eggs with spinach and tomatoes
- Whole-grain toast
- A glass of orange juice

Snack:

- Greek yogurt with mixed berries and honey

Lunch:

- Grilled chicken breast
- Quinoa
- Steamed broccoli

Snack:

- Protein shake
- A handful of almonds / fruit and nut mix
- Perhaps a Vogel's and peanut butter sandwich

Dinner:

- Baked salmon
- Sweet potatoes
- Asparagus

Evening Snack:

- Cottage cheese with pineapple chunks



On our 12-week Transformation programme, Stephen and Alison learned the power of improving their nutrition. Look at the change!



Nutrition is the foundation of progress in exercise and bodybuilding. What you fuel your body with determines how well it performs, recovers, and grows. Every rep in the gym is backed by the nutrients you consume—food isn't just fuel, it's the power that transforms effort into results.



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Chapter 11: Creating Your Workout Plan

Principles of Effective Workout Planning

1. Frequency: How often you train each muscle group. Beginners typically train each major muscle group 2-3 times per week.
2. Intensity: The level of effort you put into each exercise, often measured by the weight lifted.
3. Volume: The total number of sets and repetitions performed for each muscle group.
4. Exercise Selection: Choosing a variety of exercises to target all major muscle groups.
5. Progression: Gradually increasing the difficulty of your workouts to continue making gains.

Types of Workout Splits

1. Full-Body Split: Training all major muscle groups in a single session, typically 3 times per week.
2. Upper/Lower Split: Alternating between upper body and lower body workouts, usually 4 times per week.
3. Push/Pull/Legs Split: Dividing workouts based on movement patterns—push (chest, shoulders, triceps), pull (back, biceps), and legs, typically spread over 3-6 days.

Designing a Beginner's Workout Plan

Example: 3-Day Full-Body Workout

Firstly, I'd like to share my thoughts on the following 8-12 rep system. Use a weight that you can lift for at least 8 repetitions. If you can make it to 12 (using good form), then that is the trigger to increasing your weights. By utilising this simple philosophy, your strength gains as a beginner to intermediate trainer will be consistent and satisfying.

Day 1:

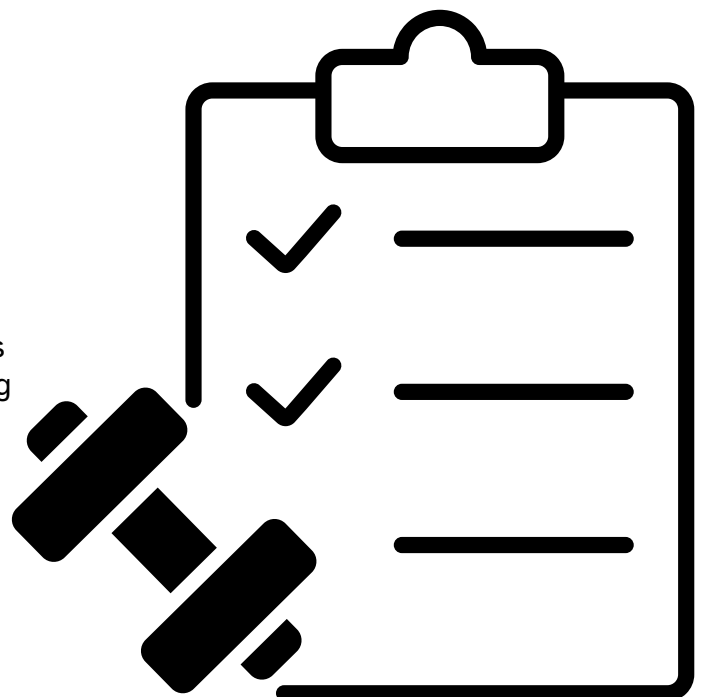
- Squats: 3 sets of 8-12 reps
- Bench Press: 3 sets of 8-12 reps
- Bent-Over Rows: 3 sets of 8-12 reps
- Overhead Press: 2 sets of 10-15 reps
- Plank: 3 sets of 30 seconds

Day 2:

- Deadlifts: 3 sets of 6-10 reps
- Pull-Ups or Lat Pulldowns: 3 sets of 8-12 reps
- Dumbbell Lunges: 3 sets of 10-12 reps per leg
- Dumbbell Bicep Curls: 2 sets of 12-15 reps
- Bicycle Crunches: 3 sets of 20 reps

Day 3:

- Leg Press: 3 sets of 10-15 reps
- Incline Dumbbell Press: 3 sets of 8-12 reps
- Seated Cable Rows: 3 sets of 8-12 reps
- Tricep Dips: 2 sets of 10-15 reps
- Russian Twists: 3 sets of 20 reps



Tips for Beginners

- **Start Light:** Master proper form before increasing weights.
- **Warm-Up & Cool Down:** Prevent injuries with a 5-10 minute warm-up and post-workout stretching.
- **Rest Between Sets:** Take 60-90 seconds to recover.
- **Listen to Your Body:** Avoid pushing through pain to prevent injuries.
- **Stay Consistent:** Stick to a routine for steady progress.
- **Fuel & Hydrate:** Eat a balanced diet and drink plenty of water.
- **Prioritise Rest:** Sleep and recovery days are key for muscle growth.
- **Track Progress:** Keep a log to measure improvements.
- **Mix It Up:** Vary exercises to target different muscles and avoid plateaus.
- **Be Patient:** Results take time—celebrate small wins!

Paul's muscle hack: When its time to increase your weights, do so with only the smallest increment at a time. What I personally experienced is that your muscles grow in strength faster than your ligaments and joints can adapt to the heavier weight. Increasing slowly over time gives your body time to grow and adapt.

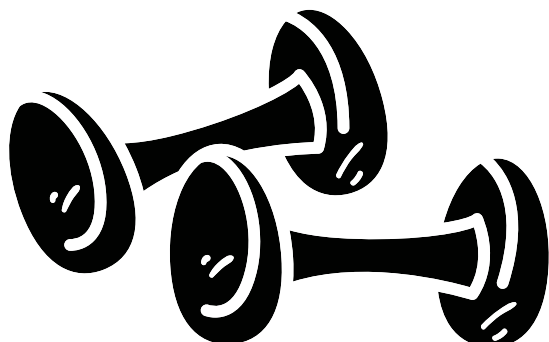


2024 - Popular Personal Trainer, Kevin Henderson with his friend and Tongan Rugby star, Taniela. Both are renowned for their discipline and hard training.



A group of our regular women trainers in 1986

Success in fitness isn't about fleeting motivation—it's about unwavering consistency. A structured routine provides the foundation for progress, turning small daily efforts into lasting results. When you commit to a plan and stick to it, discipline takes over where motivation fades, and that's when real transformation happens



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Chapter 12: Essential Exercises for Beginners

Compound vs. Isolation Exercises

- Compound Exercises: Involve multiple joints and muscle groups (e.g., squats, deadlifts). They are efficient for building overall strength and mass.
- Isolation Exercises: Target a single muscle group (e.g., bicep curls). They are useful for addressing specific muscle weaknesses or imbalances.

Top 10 Essential Exercises

1. Squats

- Muscles Worked: Quads, hamstrings, glutes, lower back
- Tips: Keep your chest up, back straight, and knees tracking over your toes.

2. Deadlifts

- Muscles Worked: Hamstrings, glutes, lower back, traps
- Tips: Maintain a neutral spine and engage your core throughout the lift.

3. Bench Press

- Muscles Worked: Chest, shoulders, triceps
- Tips: Keep your feet flat on the ground and avoid arching your back excessively.

4. Overhead Press

- Muscles Worked: Shoulders, triceps, upper chest
- Tips: Press the weight straight overhead without leaning back.

5. Pull-Ups/Lat Pulldowns

- Muscles Worked: Back, biceps, forearms
- Tips: Use a full range of motion, pulling your chin above the bar.

6. Bent-Over Rows

- Muscles Worked: Upper and middle back, biceps
- Tips: Keep your back parallel to the floor and squeeze your shoulder blades together.

7. Lunges

- Muscles Worked: Quads, hamstrings, glutes
- Tips: Take a step forward and lower your body until both knees are at 90-degree angles.

8. Dumbbell Bicep Curls

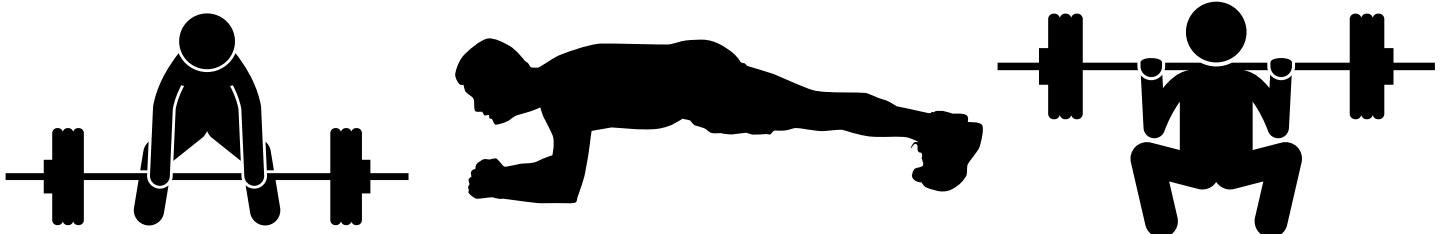
- Muscles Worked: Biceps
- Tips: Keep your elbows stationary and focus on squeezing the bicep at the top.

9. Tricep Dips

- Muscles Worked: Triceps, shoulders, chest
- Tips: Lower your body until your elbows are at 90 degrees, then push back up.

10. Planks

- Muscles Worked: Core, shoulders, back
- Tips: Maintain a straight line from head to heels and engage your core.



Paul's Muscle Hack: Sometimes, when you feel like pushing your repetitions to the limit, it is better to engage a 'spotter'. That is either your training partner, or another trainer nearby in the gym. Simply ask "Excuse me mate, do you mind giving me a spot?". If the exercise is the bench press, you should expect to complete most repetitions on your own. Then as you slow near your peak effort, your spotter would help just enough to keep the bar in motion – then ensure the bar is securely returned.

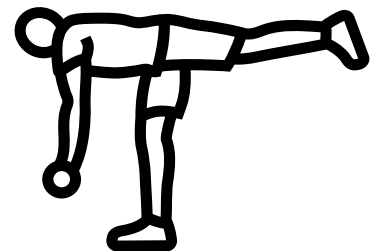
Incorporating Exercises into Your Routine

- **Balance:** Ensure you're working all major muscle groups evenly to prevent imbalances.
- **Variation:** Change exercises periodically to target muscles from different angles and prevent plateaus.
- **Progression:** Gradually increase the weight or number of repetitions as you become stronger.



Members who helped instal the new PRIME gear 2024

Starting a new exercise routine can feel like standing at the base of a mountain, with the peak far out of reach. But remember, every step you take brings you closer to your goal. Progress isn't always linear, and some days may feel slower than others, but consistency is key. Stick with it, and know that strength isn't just physical –it's mental too. Embrace the process, celebrate every small victory, and trust that your efforts will pay off. Stay in the game and hang in there; you're exactly where you need to be.



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Chapter 13: Rest and Recovery

Importance of Recovery

Muscle growth occurs during rest periods, not just during workouts. Adequate recovery allows your muscles to repair, grow, and adapt to the stresses of training.

Key Components of Recovery

1. **Sleep:** Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night to support muscle repair and overall health.
2. **Rest Days:** Incorporate at least one or two rest days per week to allow muscles to recover.
3. **Active Recovery:** Engage in low-intensity activities like walking, yoga, or stretching on rest days to promote blood flow and reduce stiffness.

Paul's Muscle Hack: At our own gym – Club Physical, we have fitted out a specific Recovery Room that incorporates Luxury Massage Chairs as well as the fit-out for Contrast Therapy, hot and cold. The 'Ice-bath' is typically around- 8 degrees. You do this first (after showering) for anything from 30 seconds to 2 minutes. Towel off and advance to the Infrared Sauna. This heats you from the inside out, as opposed to the standard sauna that heats the surrounding air. Apart from the unique health benefits, the experience offers you valuable time-out, perhaps while listening to your favourite music.



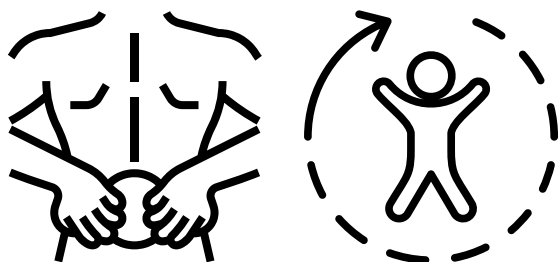
Note: Club Physical has a Recovery Room incorporating Ice -bath, Infrared Sauna and luxury Massage Chairs

4. **Nutrition:** Consume sufficient protein and other nutrients to facilitate muscle repair.
5. **Hydration:** Stay well-hydrated to support metabolic processes and nutrient transport.

Paul's Muscle hack: Drink water as often as possible. Purchase a stainless-steel drink container. There is a significant controversy about our high use of plastics. You can ingest microplastics without realising it. These tiny particles can make it into your bloodstream and all the way to your brain.

Signs of Overtraining

- Persistent muscle soreness
- Decreased performance
- Increased susceptibility to injuries
- Fatigue and lack of energy
- Insomnia or disrupted sleep patterns
- Irritability and mood swings
- Decreased motivation



Huge Group Exercise Class 1993 – Henderson Falls, where the Korean Church now is

Paul's Muscle Hack: It's a common plan to stick with a workout programme for eight weeks, notwithstanding your incremental weight increases, before you change to a completely new programme. Some experts advise a week's break after this. However I did meet a former Mr Universe (Albert Beckles) who told me that he pretty much used the same programme all year.

Tips for Effective Recovery

- **Listen to Your Body:** If you're feeling excessively tired or sore, consider taking an extra rest day.
- **Stretching and Mobility Work:** Incorporate stretching routines to improve flexibility and reduce muscle tension.
- **Massage and Foam Rolling:** Use foam rollers or get massages to alleviate muscle tightness and improve circulation.
- **Proper Nutrition:** Ensure you're getting enough calories and nutrients to support your activity level and recovery needs.



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Chapter 14: Supplements: What You Need to Know

Especially in the decade of the 2020's, many of us live fast and furious lives, with limited time between career, societal changes and adaptations, prioritising time for exercise, sport and family. Much of our foods lack adequate nutrition and I personally believe that 'some' supplements are essential to health achieve our health and longevity aims. That is, provided they are of good quality. I'll never forget the morning I sat in the sauna at Les Mills (on men's day) at the age of 18 and in walked my favourite television Big-Time Wrestler – stage-named 'Giant Zulu' (real name Ron Pope of USA). The massive 6 foot 8 inch athlete, huge chest, small waist, had a plastic bag full of 'vitamins'. As he sat in the sauna his giant hand reached into the bag for a hand-full which he swallowed without water. Asking what they were, he graciously shared the list which included about 30- 'descicated liver' tablets. I quickly learned that supplements and massive muscular athletes went together.

Understanding Supplements

Supplements can help fill nutritional gaps and support your bodybuilding goals. However, they should compliment a balanced diet, not replace it.

Common Supplements for Beginners

1. Protein Powder

- Purpose: Helps meet daily protein requirements for muscle repair and growth.
- Types: Whey, casein, plant-based (pea, soy, hemp).

Paul's Muscle Hack: Having lived an extremely busy and demanding lifestyle for 40 plus years I particularly like the concept of the Protein Shake. You can make these in a matter of minutes and have them as delicious as you like. The idea is to get in at least 30 grams of protein plus to pack in some extra supportive nutrition. My current favourite is soy-milk or milk or water, with either plant or whey protein, a couple of spoons of natural yoghurt and a dozen frozen blueberries. Then a low cost NUTRA-BULLET will quickly render this into a great shake. Very time-efficient for busy people.

2. Creatine Monohydrate

- Purpose: Enhances strength, power, and muscle mass by increasing ATP production.
- Usage: 5 grams daily, preferably post-workout.

3. Branched-Chain Amino Acids (BCAAs)

- Purpose: Supports muscle recovery and reduces soreness.
- Usage: 5-10 grams before or after workouts.

4. Multivitamins

- Purpose: Ensures adequate intake of essential vitamins and minerals.
- Usage: As directed on the label, typically once daily.



5. Fish Oil (Omega-3 Fatty Acids)

- Purpose: Supports heart health, reduces inflammation, and aids in recovery.
- Usage: 1-3 grams daily.

6. Pre-Workout Supplements

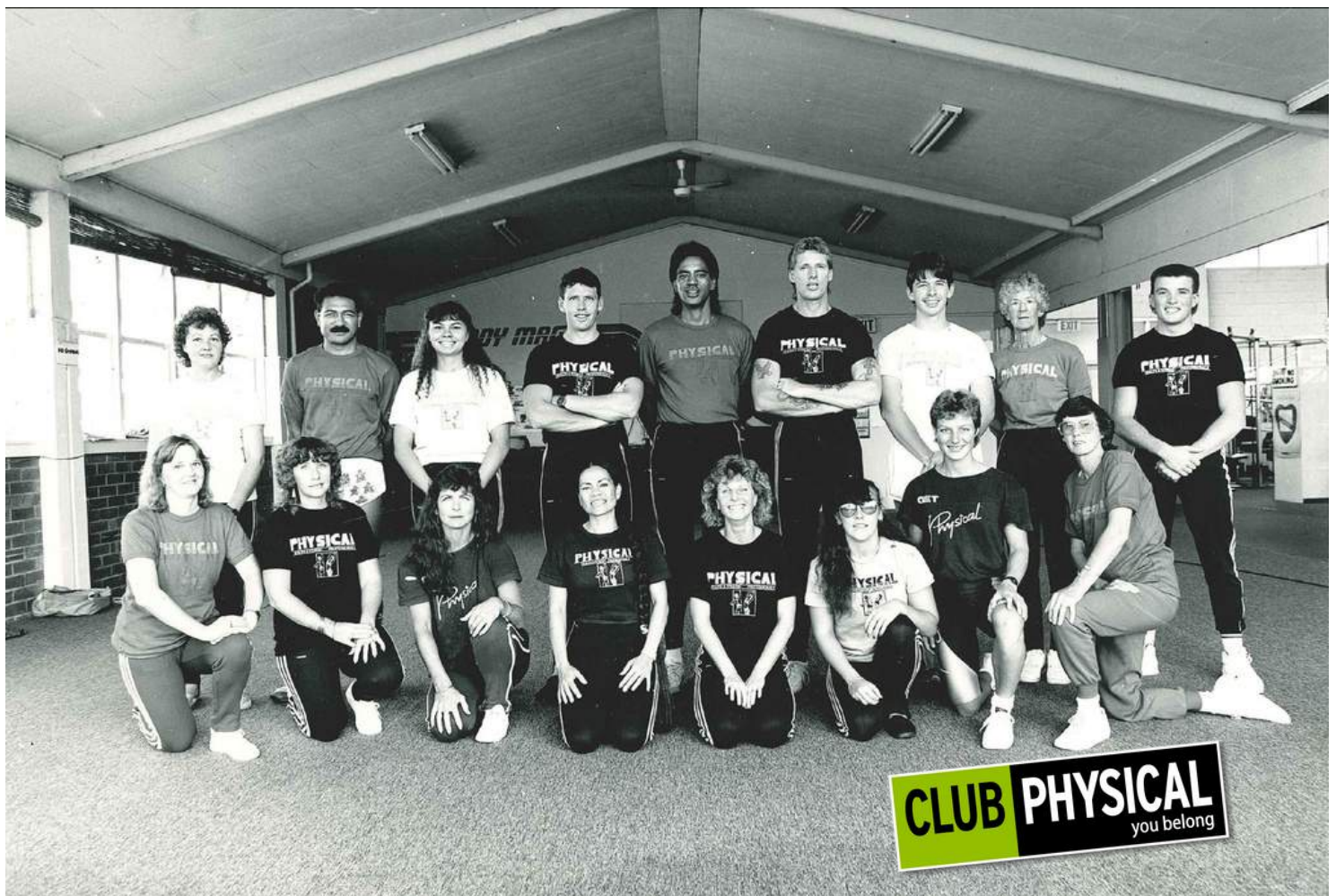
- Purpose: Boosts energy, focus, and endurance during workouts.
- Ingredients: Often contain caffeine, beta-alanine, and other performance-enhancing compounds.
- Usage: As directed, typically 20-30 minutes before training.

Safety and Considerations

- Quality: Choose reputable brands that undergo third-party testing.
- Dosage: Follow recommended dosages to avoid adverse effects.
- Consult a Professional: Speak with a healthcare provider before starting any new supplement, especially if you have underlying health conditions.

Avoiding Supplements Pitfalls

- Avoid Overreliance: Supplements should not replace whole foods.
- Watch for Additives: Be cautious of products with excessive fillers, artificial colours, or sweeteners.
- Stay Informed: Research the benefits and potential side effects of each supplement.



Our Team in 1989 - Henderson



Chapter 15: Staying Motivated

The Importance of Motivation

Maintaining motivation is crucial for consistency and long-term success in bodybuilding. It helps you push through challenges and stay committed to your goals.

Strategies to Stay Motivated

1. **Set Clear Goals:** Having specific, achievable goals provides direction and purpose.

Paul's Muscle Hack: Remember, as discussed earlier, once you have a clear vision/goal, use self-discipline to kick-start your training, then focus completely on creating and sticking to the 'HABIT' of trainingbe this 3-4-5-6 times a week.

2. **Track Progress:** Keep a workout journal or use apps to monitor your improvements.

3. **Find a Workout Buddy:** Training with someone can provide support, accountability, and make workouts more enjoyable.

4. **Book a regular session with a Personal Trainer:** Even one 30-minute session a week can keep you accountable and motivated through to the following week.

5. **Join a strength-training group:** At Club Physical we provide X45 classes

6. **Celebrate Milestones:** Acknowledge and reward yourself for reaching your fitness milestones.

7. **Mix It Up:** Incorporate variety in your workouts to prevent boredom and keep things interesting.

8. **Visualise Success:** Imagine achieving your goals to reinforce your commitment.

9. **Stay Educated:** Continuously learn about bodybuilding to stay inspired and informed.

10. **Maintain a Positive Mindset:** Focus on your progress rather than setbacks and stay optimistic about your journey.

Paul's Muscle Hack: As discussed earlier, I personally used 'visualisation' when imagining my first gym. I did this to the point of drafting the design on an A3 sheet. The day I went searching to activate this dream/goal, I 'magically' discovered the building within 2-minutes of entering the Henderson township and fully believe this to be the power of visualisation. With consideration to your bone-structure, can you find a photo of the type of results that you would like. This can help with your own visualisation.



Overcoming Common Motivation Slumps

- **Identify the Cause:** Determine what's causing the dip in motivation—be it fatigue, boredom, or external stressors.
- **Adjust Your Routine:** Change your workout plan or try new exercises to reignite interest.
- **Set Smaller Goals:** Break down larger goals into smaller, more manageable tasks to regain a sense of achievement.
- **Seek Support:** Talk to friends, family, or a fitness community for encouragement.
- **Rest and Recharge:** Sometimes, taking a short break can help you return with renewed energy.

Club Physical has in the past held over thirty inhouse Body Building Contests over the years to inspire and to serve as a goal for members to strive for.

“*Sticking with your exercise routine isn't always about motivation—it's about commitment. On those tough days when motivation is low, remind yourself that progress comes with consistency, not perfection. Every workout, no matter how small, brings you one step closer to your goals. Keep pushing, even when it's hard—you've got this!*”



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My good friend – former Mr New Zealand Barry Davies (left) competed at the Auckland Champs on the spur of the moment



Chapter 16: Common Mistakes to Avoid

Beginner Bodybuilding Pitfalls

1. Neglecting Proper Form

- Solution: Focus on mastering technique with lighter weights before increasing the load. Consider working with a trainer initially.

2. Skipping Warm-Ups and Cool Downs

- Solution: Always incorporate a 5-10 minute warm-up and a cool-down with stretching to prevent injuries and aid recovery.

3. Overtraining

- Solution: Allow adequate rest between workouts and listen to your body's signals to avoid burnout and injuries.

4. Poor Nutrition

- Solution: Follow a balanced diet tailored to your bodybuilding goals, ensuring sufficient protein, carbohydrates, fats, and micronutrients.

5. Inconsistent Training

- Solution: Establish a regular workout schedule and stick to it. Consistency is key to making progress.

6. Ignoring Rest Days

- Solution: Schedule rest days into your routine to allow muscles to repair and grow.

7. Focusing Only on Certain Muscle Groups

- Solution: Train all major muscle groups to achieve a balanced and proportionate physique.

8. Not Tracking Progress

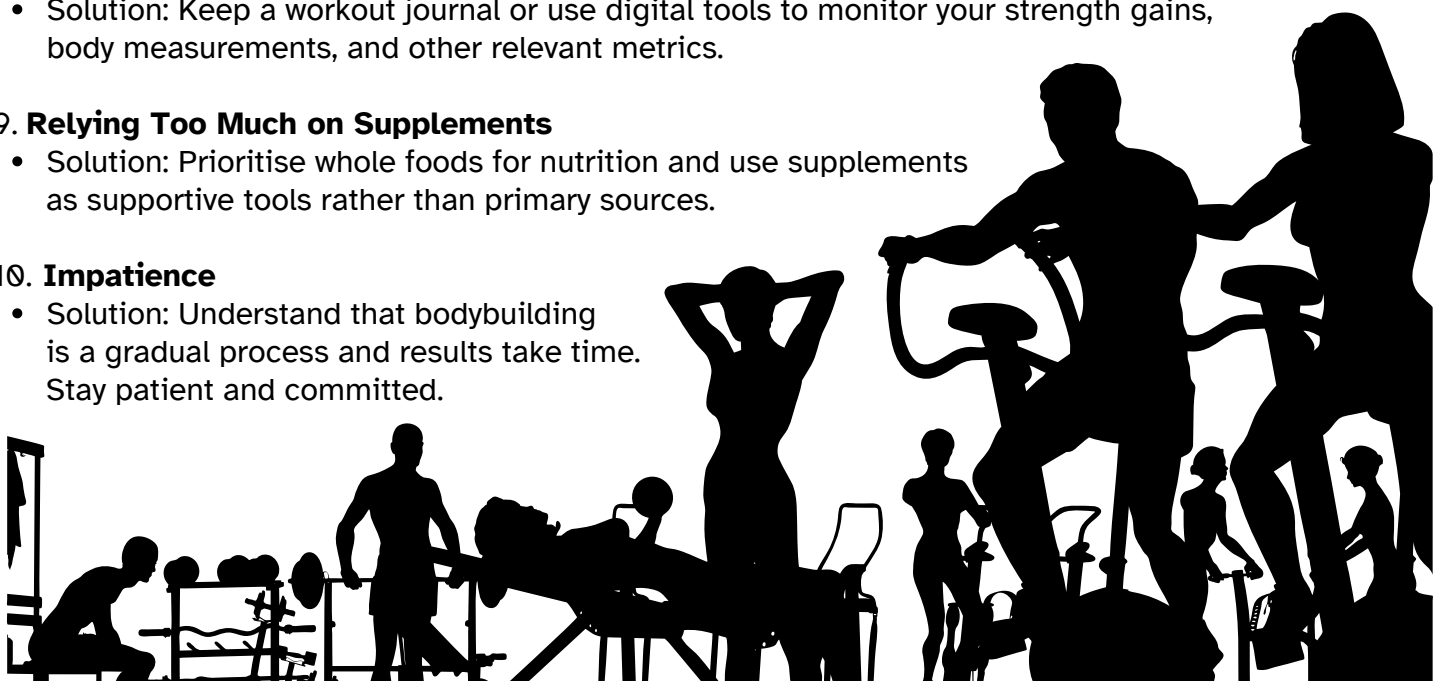
- Solution: Keep a workout journal or use digital tools to monitor your strength gains, body measurements, and other relevant metrics.

9. Relying Too Much on Supplements

- Solution: Prioritise whole foods for nutrition and use supplements as supportive tools rather than primary sources.

10. Impatience

- Solution: Understand that bodybuilding is a gradual process and results take time. Stay patient and committed.



Chapter 17: Tracking Your Progress

Why Tracking Matters

Multiple time Mr New Zealand Joseph Ulberg joined my first gym at the age of 14. He had been boxing and his mum brought him in. She had been concerned about the ear damage that Joseph was receiving in boxing. We became great friends and Joseph quickly became popular with everyone in the club. He would always agree to join me when we held 'shows' in the town centre – Henderson Square. Joseph was a master 'poser' and amused the audience as he glided through his routine to the sound of Elvis.

Joseph loved to monitor his muscle growth, and believe it, he did this multiple times each week by asking me to measure his biceps. Admittedly it was hard for me to always remain 'interested' and excited about doing this coming up with a variety of compliments each time.

Monitoring your progress helps you stay motivated, adjust your training and nutrition plans as needed, and insurers that you're moving towards your goals effectively.

Methods to Track Progress

1. Workout Logs

- Details to Record: Exercises performed, sets, repetitions, weight used, and notes on performance.
- Benefits: Helps identify strength gains and areas needing improvement.

2. Body Measurements

- Areas to Measure: Chest, arms, waist, hips, thighs, and calves.
- Frequency: Monthly measurements to track changes over time.

3. Photographs

- Approach: Take front, side, and back photos in consistent lighting and poses.
- Frequency: Every 4 weeks to visually assess physique changes.

4. Body Weight

- Method: Weigh yourself weekly at the same time of day.
- Considerations: Remember that weight fluctuates due to factors like hydration and food intake.

5. Body Fat Percentage

- Tools: Use calipers, bioelectrical impedance scales, or professional assessments.
- Purpose: Provides a clearer picture of body composition changes beyond just weight.

6. Strength Levels

- Tracking: Monitor increases in the weights you lift or the number of repetitions you perform.
- Benefits: Indicates muscle growth and improved strength.



Analysing Your Progress

- **Set Regular Check-Ins:** Schedule specific times (e.g., monthly) to review your tracked data.
- **Compare Data Points:** Look for trends and patterns that indicate progress or highlight areas needing adjustment.
- **Adjust Plans Accordingly:** If progress stalls, consider modifying your workout routine, nutrition, or recovery strategies.
- **Stay Flexible:** Be prepared to tweak your goals and methods based on your progress and any new challenges that arise.

“

Tracking your progress is like having a personal roadmap on your fitness journey. It helps you stay focused, gives you a clear picture of how far you've come, and serves as a constant reminder that every step—no matter how small—is progress. By seeing your growth, you'll stay motivated to keep going, even when the going gets tough. Remember, it's not just about the destination; it's about celebrating every milestone along the way.

”



Paul Nelson was one of the many outstanding 'Transformers' on our 12-Week Transformation Programme





Chapter 18: Stretch for Success

Operating gyms' I get to see non-stop daily examples of how people of all body-types, fitness and careers exercise. Did you know, stretching appears to be a rarity.

And yet it is so valuable to your health and wellbeing. Here's what I've learned from the scores of conventions, workshops and books that I've read.

We once had a Personal Trainer called Henry. Henry had been active in the NZ Army SAS Division and had seen allot of action. He had a reputation within the SAS as being very tough and an expert at hand-to-hand combat. Henry was also an expert and a strong believer in stretching. He told me that he had practiced this for hours and for days while being under-cover, partially submerged in various 'trenches' while observing the enemy. Henry later held 'stretch classes' at the club which quickly became very popular. Invariably, Henry gained his patience and stretching expertise as a matter of surviving long periods, almost motionless. Heck, he shared that they even had to quietly bury their pooh in case the smell got them detected.

In later years a senior Black Belt visited our Karate club from Japan. Despite his age, the Sensei could point his leg straight up in a vertical stretch. Then after observing the rest of us black belts, he commented "You guys are already old men. You should be able to do this!". I found it fascinating and insightful that he equated body age with the ability to stretch.

Then in 2023, I purchased a newly released book 'Can't hurt me' by David Goggins. The book and the follow-up book to it were both riveting. I read about the exploits of this iconic US Navy Seal, cover to cover. David described, how during a near-death experience in a hospital bed, he had discovered the 'rejuvenating' power of stretching'. Then adopting a daily stretch workout, David made himself well again. That was the final prompt that I personally needed to make 'stretching' the not-negotiable inclusion at the end of every workout I now do.



After you've completed your 'cardio' warm-up, stretch before lifting weights. But make this 'dynamic stretching' – a warming and limbering of all major joints, shoulders, elbows, knees, lower back, with movement. Not 'static stretching' – stretching where you are holding a pose and extending the muscle reach.

After you have completed your weight workout, and your abdominal exercises, then that is the time for static stretching in a quiet area of the club where others are also stretching. There, with the heat from your workout, muscles warm and limber, now is the perfect time to appreciate and to enjoy the movements, to hold and to extend – typically for 15-30 seconds. While you do this you can reflect on your workout or simply enjoy the moment and enjoy the chatter in the background and the pulse of the club. That's what does it for me.

*US Navy Seal and Ultramarathon competitor,
David Goggins*

Conclusion

Embarking on your bodybuilding journey as a beginner can be both exciting and overwhelming. **“How to Build Your Body: Bodybuilding for Beginners”** has provided you with the foundational knowledge to get started, covering everything from understanding the basics of bodybuilding to setting goals, planning workouts, optimising nutrition, and maintaining motivation.

Final Tips for Success

- Stay Committed: Consistency is the key to achieving and maintaining your bodybuilding goals.
- Train with a similarly committed partner. This can work well with one resting (and spotting and encouraging) while the other is lifting.
- If you feel your motivation is at risk, book a Personal Trainer
- Be Patient: Understand that significant changes take time and persistent effort.
- Seek Support: Surround yourself with a supportive community, whether through friends, family, or fitness groups.
- Keep Learning: Continuously educate yourself about new training techniques, nutritional strategies, and recovery methods.
- Listen to Your Body: Prioritise your health by paying attention to your body's signals and avoiding overexertion.

Remember, bodybuilding is a personal journey. Celebrate your progress, stay dedicated, and enjoy the transformation both physically and mentally. Here's to building a stronger, healthier, and more confident you!

Thank you for choosing this guide to kickstart your bodybuilding journey. Wishing you all the best in building the body you've always desired!



Your journey to strength begins the moment you decide to start. Every rep, every set, every challenge is an opportunity to build not just your body, but your resilience and determination. The road may be long, but with each step, you'll grow stronger, both inside and out. So, take that first step—your future self will thank you for it.

