



# **Summary: Best strategy for building muscle mass**

In summary, a resistance training program that includes using varied exercises, multiple sets of each exercise, lifting moderate to heavy loads for 8-12 reps, and training each muscle group 2-3 times per week, with adequate rest and recovery, can help optimize muscle growth. Advanced lifters may benefit from performing more sets (i.e., 15-20 sets) per muscle group per week, while beginners may see results with fewer sets (i.e., 10-12 sets) per muscle group per week.

# Summary: Best strategy for building muscle mass

PERFORMANCE 101

PHYSICAL  
CARRIAGE  
MUSCLE  
MOVEMENT

The best strategy for building muscle mass from resistance training depends on several factors, including the individual's fitness level, goals, and preferences. However, here are some evidence-based guidelines for sets, reps, loads, intensity, frequency of training, and rest days that can help optimize muscle growth:

- **Sets and reps:** To build muscle mass, research suggests performing multiple sets of each exercise, with a moderate to high number of reps per set. A range of 8-12 reps per set is commonly recommended, but lifting lighter weights for higher reps (15-20) can also be effective for hypertrophy. Advanced lifters may benefit from performing more sets (i.e., 4-6 sets) per exercise, while beginners may see results with fewer sets (i.e., 2-3 sets) per exercise. Advanced lifters may benefit from performing more sets (i.e., 15-20 sets) per muscle group per week, while beginners may see results with fewer sets (i.e., 10-12 sets) per muscle group per week.
- **Load:** To promote muscle growth, it is recommended to lift weights that are heavy enough to fatigue the muscles within the target rep range. Research suggests that lifting loads that correspond to 60-85% of one-rep maximum (1RM) is optimal for hypertrophy.
- **Coming close to MMF (Momentary Muscular Failure):** Lifting to muscle failure (MMF), which means performing reps until it is impossible to complete another rep with proper form or be within a couple reps of it, can help stimulate muscle growth.
- **Frequency of days training:** Resistance training at least twice a week (a muscle group) is recommended to promote muscle growth, but the optimal frequency may vary depending on the individual's fitness level, goals, and recovery capacity. Advanced lifters may benefit from training each muscle group 3-4 times per week, while beginners may see results with 2-3 weekly workouts.
- **Exercise order:** Compound exercises, which involve multiple muscle groups, should be performed early in the workout when the muscles are fresh and can generate maximum force. Examples of compound exercises include squats, deadlifts, bench presses, and rows (primary motions). Isolation exercises, which target a specific muscle group, can be performed later in the workout to further fatigue the muscle. Examples of isolation exercises include bicep curls, tricep extensions, and leg extensions.
- **Types of exercises:** To promote muscle growth, it is recommended to include a variety of exercises that target all major muscle groups, including the chest, back, legs, shoulders, arms, and core. Compound exercises, as mentioned earlier, are highly effective for building muscle mass, but isolation exercises can also be included to target specific muscles that may be lagging or to achieve a more balanced physique. Do not forget to include primary motion exercises.
- **Rest days:** Adequate rest and recovery are essential for muscle growth. It is recommended to take at least 1-2 rest days per week to allow the muscles to recover and grow. Getting enough sleep, eating a balanced diet, and managing stress are also critical for optimal muscle growth.