

Exercise Choice

Luke Barden, July 2013

Last month we looked at the classes and cardio you could do in the gym, this month we will focus on weight training.

Weight training isn't only useful for those looking to gain muscle and size, it is advisable for the vast majority of gym-goers to do at least some weight training in their routine.

Different rep ranges and rest periods work for different people. After all none of us are the same. Weights in general have a high calorie burning benefit, as they will cause DOMS (delayed onset of muscle soreness). This is where the muscles need to repair and recover from the workout done, so will use calories you consume over the days following the workout (up to 3 days) to fully recover. With weights you can train on consecutive days easily with a well-organised program. This means you can increase the number of calories you burn while at work, from the workout you did last night!

Weights can be done in many ways, but some of the most popular methods are split body, full body, and circuits.

Split Body

Split body training is taking each part of the body (legs, back, chest etc.) and training them individually, so you will dedicate one workout to just one or two (an assisting muscle, chest and triceps for example) muscles. This method is very popular among those looking to get a lot stronger, or gain muscle size. Split body workouts tend to include a lot of isolation exercises, so exercises that only work one muscle over one joint.

Full Body

Full body training is when you put together exercises in a way that will work all parts of the body. For example: a leg exercise, then a back exercise, and then a chest exercise and so on.

When doing a full body workout, it is important to work the biggest muscles in the body first, down to the smallest muscles in the body last. This method can be used for gaining muscle size, but tends to be used more for losing fat while maintaining strength. It will not make you ache as much as split body, but burns a huge amount of calories, as the whole body needs to recover. Full body workouts tend to include a lot of compound exercises, which work a number of muscles over multiple joints.

Circuits

Weights circuits can be put together in a number of ways. You could aim for a number of reps on each exercise, or do each exercise for a set time period (e.g. 40 seconds). Most people find that when they do circuits, they sweat a lot more

than in their normal workouts, as they are very intense on the body. Because of this take it easy when you first try them and progress at a pace that you are comfortable with. Circuits tend to be designed to help burn fat, and normally work more than one muscle, making them similar to full body, but with less rest and normally much higher reps. They are mostly compound exercises to ensure that the maximum number of calories are burned.

Try to keep some weights in your routine, after all, keeping a good level of strength will make everyday tasks easier!