



Easy Guide to Strength Training

Whether you are looking for muscle definition, weight loss or sports conditioning, strength training is an essential part of fitness.

What are Reps and Sets???

Repetitions (Reps) are the number of times you perform an exercise or repeated movement (if you curl a dumbbell 10 times, you just performed 10 reps!). **Sets** are the number of fixed repetitions you perform (curl a dumbbell 10 times...wait...curl a dumbbell 10 times, you just performed 2 sets!) Your fitness goals will determine your guidelines for strength training:

GOAL:	Resistance % of Max	# of Repetitions	# of Sets	Rest Between Sets	# Workouts per week
Health/Fitness	60-80%	8-12	1-3	30 sec.- 2 min.	2-3
Muscular Endurance	50-70%	12-20	2-5	30 sec.- 2 min.	3-5
Muscle Strength	85-100%	1-6	3-8	2-4 min.	2-3

In general... Aim for three workouts a week, 45-90 minutes per session, with a rest or cardio day in between. Perform 3-5 sets of 10 repetitions.

How much weight???

Use as much weight as is comfortable for your number of repetitions. The last repetition should be difficult to perform, but you should be able to do one or two more reps. Use your first session to see how much weight feels comfortable and record it in your exercise log.

Low reps & high weights = strength
High reps & low weight = endurance

Consider alternating days: one day training for strength the other training for endurance.

- ✓ Quality is more important than quantity. Maintain good form and control. Do NOT bounce, throw or drop the weights.
- ✓ If you ca not perform your number of reps, decrease the weight.
- ✓ Lift speed should be a 1-2 seconds lift, and a 2-4 seconds lower.
- ✓ Keep a training log to track weight loads and progress.



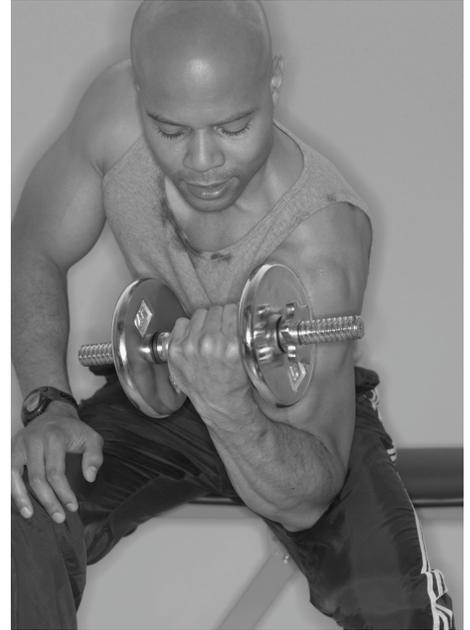
Should I be using free weights or machines???

In order to get the most from both strength gains and joint stability, an ideal training program will actually incorporate both free weights and machines. However, free weights are not for everyone! The following chart can help you decide which is best for you.

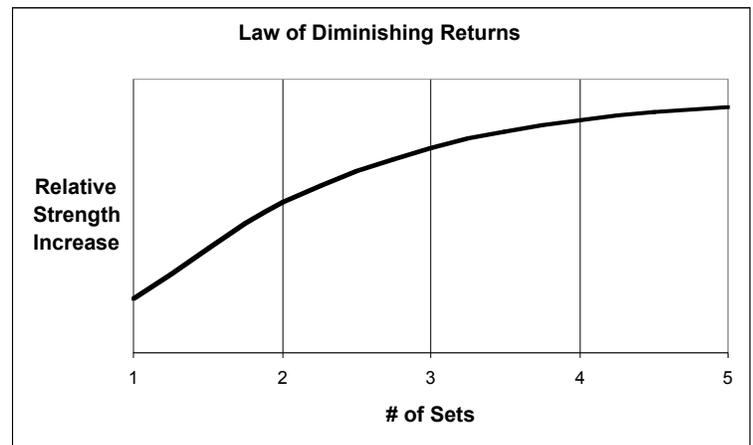
	Reasons to Choose
Machines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Controlled motion = Safety for beginners ✓ Great for injury rehabilitation ✓ Ability to Isolate certain muscle groups ✓ Do not require a spotter
Free Weights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Challenge balance and coordination ✓ Work stabilizer muscles ✓ Better strength gains than machines

10 Tips For Getting Started

- 1. Match Your Abilities and Interests:** You have to ENJOY your training program or you probably won't stick with it long enough to see results! Rather than simply doing what your friends do or picking a generic program, consider seeing a trainer to develop a workout to fit your lifestyle and goals.
- 2. Avoid Overtraining:** You don't get stronger by constantly training hard. Your muscles actually develop during the rest days that follow. Listen to your body: if your heart rate remains elevated at night, if your legs feel heavy, your motivation fades...you may need more rest!
- 3. Variation:** Vary your exercises, pace, and intensity to enjoy a well-rounded fitness routine that is less likely to result in burn-out, boredom or plateaus. Ideally, workouts should be modified every month.
- 4. Be Flexible:** If you have to miss a training day, don't worry, just continue on your training plan. It's the consistency of your training, rather than one particular workout that is important.



- 5. Set Realistic Goals:** You may want to win every race you enter, but it's probably not realistic! Be honest about your current fitness level and your potential. It's important to find a balance between what you want and what you're able to do. If your new to a sport or fitness routine, be conservative in your estimates until you know what you can accomplish, otherwise you are more prone to injury and mental setbacks.
- 6. Be Patient:** It takes time and consistency to build up fitness and performance, so avoid falling into the more is better mindset. You'll only end up injured, or frustrated.
- 7. Be Consistent:** Even if you're starting with very short workouts, it's important to do them on a regular basis, several days a week. Injuries are much more common for those who are inconsistent with training.



- 8. Nutrition is Critical:** Eating well goes a long way to improving your energy and results. Your food is not only the fuel your body uses during exercise but also the building blocks it needs during rest days.
- 9. Drink Water:** Muscle is actually up to 75% water! The condition of your body, your physical performance and resistance to injury are ALL dependent on staying well hydrated!
- 10. Warm-up/Cool-Down:** Don't forget a 5-10 minute warm-up and cool-down. This reduces the risk of injury and post-exercise soreness. Don't forget to stretch!

