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**Real Muscle Real Fast!**

**By Jesse Cannone**

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Adding muscle seems to be a mystery to most, yet if you pick up a copy of any fitness or bodybuilding magazine and you'll almost always see a headline like this: "Gain 15 Pounds of Muscle in 6 Weeks."

If it were so easy you'd have millions of muscle-heads running around. Even though building muscle tissue can be a challenge, I'm going to outline some very specific principles that can pack on the muscle faster than you can throw away that copy of "Muscle and Fiction"!

Before we get started though I want to clarify a few points. The ridiculous claims made by most fitness and bodybuilding magazines are only there to get you to buy that issue - nothing more! If you are serious about strength training you need to be reading books and NOT cheesy fitness magazines

Ok... here we go.

In order to add muscle tissue you must force the body to add it. Your body won't just add a pound of muscle just because you followed a 3-set workout that you read about in Muscle + Fitness. You need to give the body a reason to make improvements - in this case add muscle tissue.

You have to provide what I call a "stimulus". This can be done in many ways and I'll address a few in just a moment. Basically, you need to force the body to add muscle by subjecting it to levels of stress it is not used to. Some methods are more obvious than others but all can work. Here are a few examples of how this can be done effectively.

First, the basic and common methods: Increase weight or resistance Perform more repetitions  
Perform more sets Move the resistance slower Rest less between sets and exercises

Now for the more advanced methods: Pre-exhaust (perform an isolation exercise first and immediately continue with no rest on a compound movement. ex. chest flye and then chest press)

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Static holds (hold the resistance in the hardest position of the range of motion. ex. the top position during a leg extension) Partial reps in weak range (perform a portion of the rep where you are weakest. ex. the top half of a rep of leg extensions) Strip-set (after a warm-up set, perform 3 sets back to back with no rest while starting with the heaviest weight possible and each time strip off some weight to allow you to continue) 1 ½ reps (perform one full rep and then on the second rep only perform half the normal range of motion and then return to starting position to begin the next rep. ex. one full rep of lat pulldowns, pull second rep all the way down, resist weight back up but only half way and then pull back down)

These are just a few examples of methods of increasing intensity to ensure progress. The key point to remember is that whatever you do it must be progressive in order for it to elicit a physical change. This is even more critical for those looking to add muscle size.

Although this article is geared towards individuals who are interested in gaining muscle size, the

principles can also be used for individuals who want to build strength, increase metabolism, or tighten and tone muscles.

Here are some general recommendations for different goals...

If your goal is to tighten and tone muscles: Focus on increasing reps, decreasing rest, and changing exercises frequently Train each muscle group twice per week Perform fewer sets of many different exercises (1–2 sets per exercise)

If your goal is to increase strength and power: Focus on increasing weight Train each muscle group once every 7–10 days Perform multiple sets of each exercise (2–5 sets per exercise)

If your goal is to increase muscle size: Focus on shocking muscles by changing variables frequently (exercises, set and rep schemes, rest time, etc) Train each muscle group on a variable schedule (experiment by training a muscle group 3 times a week and then once every ten days) Perform multiple sets for a while and then perform single sets for a week or two

Some final reminders:

The recommendations above are general and of course would need to be adapted and adjusted for your personal goals and experience. For those of you who are advanced and may be thinking there's no way you can build strength by training once every 10 days I challenge you to try it for at least 4 weeks, or those of you who think that you need to stick to the same basic movements like bench to build size I challenge you to try shocking the muscles by changing the exercises you perform each week for 4 weeks, and those of you with little experience I hope that you'll throw away the fitness magazines and learn what really works.

There are some great books on these subjects and for those of you who are serious about strength training I personally recommend you check out the books "APEX" and "No Turning Back" by Brian Johnston. You can find them online at [www.iart.com](http://www.iart.com)

If you have any questions about the techniques described in this article please feel free to contact me. You can email me at [jesse@achieve-fitness.com](mailto:jesse@achieve-fitness.com)

I wish you the best!

Jesse Cannone is a certified personal trainer, nutritionist, and best-selling fitness author. Sign up to receive his free email course, Muscle Building Tips which is full of powerful tips and techniques for maximizing strength and size.

## **The Muscle Car Craze**

**By Jason Tarasi**

Somebody once asked me why I was so fascinated with muscle cars. You know, it's hard for an outsider looking in to understand why we muscle car lovers are so fanatical about our cars. Until they've been behind the wheel of a newly restored '66 Pontiac GTO, they just haven't a clue.

Why is it that we can browse through muscle car advertisements for hours on end? Why do we have to go to every muscle car show that comes near our town? Why do we drive out of our way to see some of the hottest muscle cars around? Why do we seemingly pour all of our extra money into our muscle cars?

Some people think a passion for muscle cars comes from peer pressure - a need to impress other people per se. As a muscle car enthusiast I can honestly say that's not it, at least not for me. My interest in muscle cars dates way back to before I was ever concerned about what anybody thought. I have always found muscle cars to be fascinating and exciting.

First, muscle cars are original. Those who collect or restore muscle cars put their heart and soul into their hobby which makes every muscle car truly unique. Second, muscle cars are powerful. There's nothing that gets the adrenaline pumping quite like sitting behind the wheel of a classic, high-performance muscle car. Third, when you take a classic car, restore it and muscle it up, you really have something to be proud of. It's a lot like an artistic ability for me - like taking a blank canvas and creating an incredible piece of art out of it.

One thing is for certain, regardless of the reason a muscle car devotee is interested in muscle cars, we all seem to talk the same talk and walk the same walk. Dealing with muscle cars is an incredible social outlet. Whether we collect, restore, show, or race our muscle cars, it doesn't matter. We're all on the same wavelength and we truly enjoy looking at and chatting about muscle cars.

Some enthusiasts have specific lines of muscle cars that they are interested in, while others are just crazy about muscle cars in general. Some like imports, others like exports, and most all muscle car enthusiasts have a strong interest in classics. We can look at them, talk about them, drive them, or just work on them. Muscle cars give us something to look forward to, something fun to invest our time and money into, and the muscle car hobby keeps us out of trouble - for the most part.

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Jason Tarasi is a muscle car enthusiast who runs the Muscle Car Monster Website, where members can buy and sell muscle cars for free through the site's online classifieds.

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