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Weight Lifting 101

By Kevin Valluzzi

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by: **Kevin Valluzzi**

WHY WEIGHT LIFTING?

What's the one thing that you can do to lose weight, re-shape your body, improve muscle tone, become stronger, fight off osteoporosis, lower blood pressure, etc.?

Weight Lifting! Or as it's also called, Strength Training!

For the rest of this book I will refer to the art of weight lifting as strength training. One of the reasons a lot of people don't lift weights is because they are intimidated by the word weight lifting.

It amazes me to see how many people avoid lifting weights for one reason or another.

Let me make sure you are clear of one very important fact.

LIFTING WEIGHTS IS ONE OF THE BEST, IF NOT THE BEST THING YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR OVERALL HEALTH!!!

Let's jump right in and start off by covering exactly "what" strength training is.

It's actually very simple. Strength training or weight lifting is the lifting of heavy weights and/or resistance in a prescribed manner as an exercise or in athletic competition.

Notice I said weights and/or resistance. It doesn't have to necessarily be a weight plate or a dumbbell. We'll get into that more later.

As simple as that definition of strength training sounds, why are you and so many other people not doing it?

The answer to that is probably one of these two: You're not sure what to do, or you're confused about what to do. You have never realized that strength-training can and will build muscle, which in turn will help you look and feel great.

You very well could be on a strength-training program right now.

Even if you are, I want you to really pay attention to what we're going to talk about for the rest of the book. I'm sure it is going to have you thinking differently about why you should be lifting weights from now on.

We're going to talk about why developing a strength training program will ultimately help you lose weight, add some muscle tone, look better and feel better about yourself.

We will go over some "myths" about strength training and the real facts behind them.

So, whether you're new to strength training or you've been doing it for years, pay close attention.

MYTHS

Let's first clear up some of the misconceptions about strength training and the truth behind these myths.

This first myth is the "biggie" and it has prevented many of you from weight lifting (especially women).

It sounds a little something like this; "I don't want to lift weights because I don't want to get big and bulky."

It's a shame that a lot of people think like this because it is so far from the truth. Let's explore that myth a little.

When you think of weight lifters, you probably think of body builders, right?

You think of the men and women on ESPN parading around in little swimsuits with big bulky muscles popping out all over the place.

There are three reasons for this: These people are an extremely minute percentage of the population.

That is their livelihood and they spend 4 to 5 hours a day in the gym. Some of them are using performance-enhancing drugs (steroids, etc.) to look like that

So if you can get that image of the "bodybuilder" out of your head and think in terms of the average everyday person, you will see why the myth about getting bulky is just that, a myth!

What we're going to talk about next I will try to explain to you in an easy to understand way, without

using any medical or professional terminology.

When you lift weights your body builds muscle. The more muscle you have, the more calories you burn (even at rest). The more calories you burn the less you weigh.

It's as simple as that!!!

Let me give you an example of this that might make it a little easier to understand. We'll talk about 2 women in this example.

Let's say you and your best friend are sitting on the couch watching some T.V. You personally strength-train 3 times a week, but your friend does not.

After an hour of watching T.V goes by, who will have burned more calories?

The common answer to that would be that you both burned the same (almost nothing), since you weren't doing anything.

But the actual answer would be that you burned more calories, and I'll tell you why for one simple

reason. **THE MORE MUSCLE YOU HAVE THE MORE CALORIES YOU BURN!!**

Now you might say to yourself, "But if I lift weights, my muscles will get bigger and I will appear big and bulky."

This does have a tendency to happen to men sometimes, and that is because of the male hormone testosterone. But what also happens to men, just like the women, is that they will get rid of the fat and replace it with lean muscle.

So the lean added muscle will now be there instead of the soft jelly-like fat.

With that said, keep this in mind. Even though men have more testosterone, it would still be very difficult for a man to get big and bulky. You would have to train like a real bodybuilder in order for this to occur. Being genetically blessed doesn't hurt either.

And if you did see yourself starting to "bulk" up a little, and that's not what you want, just decrease the amount of weight you are lifting. Very simple.

Women on the other hand, do not have enough testosterone to even come close to "bulking up".

Which brings us to another myth.

That myth being one of the most popular in the world of exercise, which is, "Muscle weighs more than fat."

How ridiculous is that saying?

That's like the old joke, "Which weighs more—10 lbs. of steel or 10 lbs. of feathers?"

Hopefully by now you know that the answer to that question is that they both really weigh the same. 10 lbs. is 10 lbs. no matter what it is made of.

Let's go over this in a little more detail.

Muscle is much more compact and dense than fat. It actually takes up less space than fat does because of that. That makes sense, right?

Fat, on the other hand, is very soft and jelly-like and is a lot bigger than muscle. By that I mean it takes up more space than muscle does.

Let me give you another example to clarify this a little more.

If you were to take 10 lbs. of fat and 10 lbs. of muscle and roll each of them into a ball, the 10 lbs. of fat might be the size of a bowling ball. In comparison, the 10 lbs. of muscle would be about the size of a baseball.

Let's take this a step further and use you and your friend in an example. You and your friend, for argument sake, are both 5' 5" tall and both weigh the exact same weight of 130 lbs.

Your friend, as we mentioned, does not lift weights or do any kind of strength training. Her dress size is a size 12.

You, on the other hand, lift weights and follow a strength-training program 3 times a week. Your dress size is a size 8.

If you and your friend were standing side by side people would definitely think that you weighed less than your friend. But in reality you both weigh exactly the same.

How can that be?

It all relates back to what I said earlier. Muscle does not weigh more than fat, it weighs the same. It is more compact than fat and it takes up less space. So you, the strength trainer, have more muscle than your friend does which means you will take up less space.

That's why it's also not a good idea to let the scale be your judge of your progress. You can very well have lost weight, but it won't show up on the scale sometimes. A good indication of progress is how your clothes fit. If you are getting smaller, or should we say more compact/dense, you will notice that your clothes are getting a little looser.

Well all right you say, "I'll lift weights, but I'm only lifting light weights and doing lots of repetitions."

This is another mistake a lot of you are making. Now I'm not saying that this is the wrong way to lift, but it is not the optimal way to go about strength training if you are looking to lose weight and change your body.

So, is it all right for you to lift heavy weights and fewer repetitions? ABSOLUTELY!!

There's another statement you need to clear your head of---"I shouldn't lift heavy weights because that is for bodybuilders."

You absolutely can and should be lifting heavy weights if you want to change your body!

Let's take a moment now to recap some of the main ideas we have just covered; Lifting weights will not make you bulky (it will make you leaner and more toned) Muscle doesn't weigh more than fat; it's simply more compact and denser than fat. (Remember, muscle actually takes up less space than fat) The more muscle you have, the more calories you burn (even at rest!).

Now you are well informed of why strength training will help you look and feel great. Hopefully this cleared up any confusion you might have had and now you are ready to "hit the weights."

"WHAT DO I DO NOW"?

So you now know what strength training is and you know why it will help you change your body.

"But how do I actually go ahead and get started?"

As I said before, this is one of the main reasons if not THE main reason that most people don't lift weights.

But what if I was to tell you that it's not nearly as complicated as you might think.

What we're going to discuss now is the "nuts and bolts" of designing a strength-training program.

Let me first start out by saying that if you are out of shape, haven't exercised in awhile, suffer from any kind of medical condition (heart problems, high blood pressure, etc.) or are over 40 years old, you should make an appointment with your doctor to get a physical to make sure you are ready to start lifting weights.

With that said, here we go!

One of the very popular questions is what equipment do I need to strength train? Or better yet, what equipment is the best?

Luckily, there are plenty of options; machines, free weights (dumbbells), elastic bands, using your own body weight, which is called isometrics (push-ups, sit-ups, lunges, etc.).

I guess the best way to decide what equipment you are going to use is to first decide exactly where you'll be working out.

Will you be at home, or will you be at some kind of gym or fitness center?

Let's first explore the many options you have at a gym or fitness center.

Depending on your particular gym, you will probably have the choice of using free weights (dumbbells, weight bars, weight plates, etc.) or machines.

If you are a beginner to lifting weights, I highly recommend you use the machines for a few reasons. Almost no chance of injury Much easier to use proper form Easily change weights via a pin

Also when using machines, especially the newer ones, there is usually a picture on the machine that demonstrates someone doing the actual exercise.

There is also a great product out now that is a ring of 50 pocket-sized exercise cards. They not only show a full color photo of each exercise, but each card also contains easy-to-read instructions as well as helpful trainer's tips and common training mistakes, which are found on the back of the cards.

These cards are excellent and I highly recommend them.

Log on to my web-site at www.thefitnessleader.com and go to the "Products" page. There you will see a link for the cards. Click on that link and order your set of cards today. There is a lot more that comes with your set of 50 cards, and they are definitely worth having.

Another option is to purchase some really great books.

There are hundreds of great picture books out there to help you get started.

If you go to my web-site (www.thefitnessleader.com) and go to "products", there you will find a link to Amazon.

Once you click on the link, you will find some great books that I recommend that are very helpful for the beginner exerciser.

There is of course the third option, which is to hire one of the personal trainers that works at your gym or an in-home personal trainer, like myself, who comes to your house and sets you up on a program.

One word of advice if you decide to get a trainer. Make sure this person has the right credentials (personal trainer certification and/or fitness related degree). Don't just assume that since they work in a gym or because they call themselves a personal trainer, that they are qualified.

It's always best to watch the trainers for a couple of weeks if you are at a gym, or get a free session from an in-home trainer. See how they operate, how they get along with their other clients, what kind

of personality they have, etc. Make sure you think that they will be a good fit for you.

I would personally love to tell you about all of the wonderful exercises you can do, but I would need about 200 pages just to list the pictures and explain proper form and technique.

Your best move would be to buy the cards (they are great) get your hands on a good "beginner's exercise" book and/or hire a certified personal trainer.

Are you now saying, "But what if I don't want to go to the gym, it takes too much time driving, it's always packed, and I just don't like the whole gym scene."

"Can I still lose weight and get in shape at home?"

ABSOLUTELY!!

A lot of people feel the same way that you do. Either they don't have time to go back and forth to the gym, or they're just more comfortable working out in the privacy of their own home.

Depending on the space you have, you can make your own little "private" gym just for you and your family.

For this section of the book on working out at home, let's assume that you don't have a huge space.

The only things you actually need, believe it or not, are a bench and some free weights (dumbbells).

It would also be a good idea to get some exercise bands that you can use to do lots of different exercises, in addition to bench exercises, that will help diversify your program.

Again, I would highly recommend that you get either the Solotrainer cards or a beginner's exercise/weight training book to help you get started with your workouts.

Okay, let's get back to the equipment that you'll need. First off is a bench.

BENCH

The bench you purchase should be multi-functional. In other words, it should be able to incline as well as being flat. Some benches can even decline in addition to flat and incline. It is not necessary to

have a flat/decline/incline bench or even a flat/incline bench, but I definitely recommend it.

It allows you to do a lot more exercises as you get into your program a little more.

FREE WEIGHTS

There are numerous types of free weights to choose from. There are traditional dumbbells that range

anywhere between 1 lb. to 200 lbs.

Depending on how much space you have and how much weight you think you'll be lifting, this will determine what kind of dumbbells you will be looking for.

One item that comes to mind is the PROBELL 30 Classic Adjustable Dumbbell System. It sounds intimidating, but it's not at all. It's actually quite a space saver. It is a pair of dumbbells that can go from 2 1/2 lbs. to 30 lbs. each, in 2 1/2 pound increments, with the turn of a dial. So in other words, you get 12 pairs of dumbbells all in 1 pair.

This is a great product and I definitely recommend it, especially if you want to save some space.

You can get this item too by going to my web-site and finding it in the "Products" page under the BIG FITNESS link. It is called the ProBell Classic.

Another option, or rather an accompaniment, to the bench and free weights, is exercise bands.

For those of you who aren't familiar with these, they are elastic rubber bands with handles at the ends and some companies also have ankle straps for leg exercises.

I personally use these myself and with all my clients. I love them!!!

BODYLASTICS is a great company that makes an excellent little package. It includes 4 bands (each one a little harder), 2 handles, 2 ankle straps, 1 door anchor, and a video and booklet. At the time of this printing the price for the package is \$50. It's a great value.

You can also find these on my web-site under the "Products" page.

Okay, now you know what equipment you'll need, but what about questions like: How many days a week? How many sets and repetitions? When do I change my routine?

These are all very good questions. Let's take a look at the first question now.

HOW MANY DAYS A WEEK?

There is not a straight forward simple answer to this question. It really all comes down to two things: How many days can you realistically devote to lifting weights? How much improvement are you really looking to get from your program?

Before we address these two questions let me first say that lifting weights once a week is probably not enough and four or five times a week might be a little too much (especially for a beginner).

That leaves us with 2 or 3 times a week.

As you can probably imagine, 2 times a week is good but 3 times a week is better.

This is of course assuming that you are training every body part during each workout. Some people prefer to train 1 or 2 body parts a day. There are good and bad points to this.

The good thing is that since you are only training 1 or 2 body parts (an example would be training your chest and triceps) you can really do a lot of exercises for each body part. The bad thing is that if you train 2 body parts per work out, and since there are 6 major body parts (chest, back, triceps, biceps, shoulders, and legs), even if you work out 3 times a week you will only be able to train each body part once.

That's why I recommend training every body part, every work out. This way you'll be training every body part at least twice or maybe even three times a week. The most bang for your buck.

So, getting back to the issue of how many days a week. If you have the time and you are really looking to see some changes in your body, I definitely say go for 3 times a week.

With that said, if you really aren't sure about the time issue and if you are a beginner, start out at 2 times a week.

This will give you a chance to ease into it. Once you're comfortable, in a routine, and you find that you have time to add an extra day, then consider bumping it up to 3 times a week.

HOW MANY SETS AND REPETITIONS?

Let's first start out by explaining what sets and repetitions are.

When you do any particular exercise, let's say the arm curl, each time you curl the weight up and bring it back down would be considered a repetition.

Now let's say you did 12 repetitions, took a break for 1 minute, then did another 12 repetitions. You would have done 2 sets of 12 repetitions.

Simple, right?

What sometimes seems confusing for some people is that they think they should do a certain number of sets and reps (reps is short for repetitions).

The fact is that there is no certain number of sets and reps that you should be doing. It will probably vary from time to time, based on your goals.

The one **BIG** mistake a lot of people make is doing too many repetitions.

Often times at the gym I'll see someone doing 20 or 30 reps.

Now like I said, there is a place for that depending on your goals. Certain sports require extensive muscular endurance, in which case you should do a lot of reps.

But your goal is to lose weight, get stronger, and change your body. So the best way to achieve that is to lift a weight that is heavy enough to fatigue your muscles between 8 and 12 reps.

Remember, **YOU WILL NOT GET BULKY!**

Okay, so what if you can lift a weight for 13, 14, or 15 reps and beyond?

Very simple. Just increase the weight slightly and that will get you into the 8 to 12 rep range.

HOW MANY SETS SHOULD I DO?

Same thing applies here as it does to the number of reps; nothing is set in stone.

I can give you a recommendation though. 1 set is definitely not enough and depending on how much time you have to exercise, 4 or 5 sets might be too time consuming.

If you are first starting out, I would say do 2 sets for each exercise. Just like with the number of days you are lifting, it's a good way to ease into it. Also, starting out right away with 3 sets will probably leave you feeling very sore for the first week or so.

And just like with the days of the week, a good goal to shoot for is to work your way up to 3 sets. This will make sure you are working your muscles to fatigue, and that's when you will really start to notice some changes.

And again, you'll see as you get into it more and more, you might want to challenge yourself and add in a 4th or 5th set on some exercises.

This ties in nicely to our 3rd question.

WHEN DO I CHANGE MY ROUTINE?

Never!

Just kidding. That's actually another big mistake that a lot of people make. They do the same thing over and over again, day in and day out.

That will work for a beginner just starting out, and you will see some improvement, but after about 6 to 8 weeks you will start to plateau.

Your muscles need to be challenged or "shocked" in order to stimulate them.

On the other hand, you also want your muscles to adapt and improve to the increasing weight.

By that I mean you want to give your muscles a chance to get stronger and you want to be able to increase the weights on the same exercise and see what the most weight is that you can actually lift on that same exercise.

For that reason you don't want to change your routine every time either.

"So what's the bottom line then? How often should I change my routine?"

A good rule of thumb to follow is to keep your routine relatively the same for about 6 to 8 weeks, then make some changes.

"What exactly do you mean by change the routine?"

The best way to change your routine is to do totally different exercises. Let's say for example that for your leg muscles you've been doing leg presses, lunges and leg extensions. For a complete change you can now do squats, leg curls, and abduction (for the outer thigh).

Other changes include; changing from using a free weight to a machine for a particular exercise. doing 4 or 5 sets instead of 3. switching the order of your exercises. Instead of training your chest, back, biceps, shoulders, legs and triceps, you can do just the reverse. Triceps, legs, shoulders, etc.

The possibilities are endless. The nice thing is that there is no "wrong" way.

Which brings up a good point. There is no wrong routine, but your form and/or technique can be wrong.

Always remember to use a slow, controlled motion. Don't use momentum or "jerk" the weights around.

It should take you approximately 2 to 3 seconds to lift or push the weight (which is called the positive) and 3 to 4 seconds to lower or let down the weight (which is called the negative).

That's right, it should take you a little longer to lower the weight than it takes to raise it.

Most people do the opposite and that's why you see a lot of people using momentum and jerking the weights around. You're not using your muscles when you do it like this.

And that's really it! As you can see, it's not all that difficult. What it does take is a COMMITMENT. If you can make a COMMITMENT and be consistent with your strength training program, I GUARANTEE you that you will be successful and notice considerable changes in they way you look and feel.

With that said, just take a moment now and look over the main areas of a successful strength-training program: The optimal strength training routine should be performed 2 to 3 days/wk. you should do 2 to 3 sets for each exercise. use a weight that will fatigue or challenge you to do between 8 and 12 reps. change your routine approximately every 6 to 8 weeks to prevent plateaus. always use proper form; slow, controlled movements. No jerking the weight or using momentum. and most important, make sure to visit your doctor and get a physical so you know you have no medical conditions that would prevent you from participating in a strength training routine.

There you have it, a nice little introduction to the world of strength training. Something that I hope will

help you get started.

So give strength training a try, you have nothing to lose (except for maybe a few pounds of fat!!!).

If you're a woman and you'd like to learn how to lose weight by exercising and eating healthy, please

go to:

This is a great book that will have you looking and feeling better than you ever have.

Kevin is the owner/operator of A & B Fitness, which is an in-home personal training company located in Northern New Jersey. He has a degree in Exercise Physiology and is certified by the American College of Sports Medicine as a Health/Fitness Instructor. Kevin is also an Advanced Level Personal trainer by IDEA.

Weight Lifting Supplement

By Rolf Rasmusson

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Weight Lifting Supplement - what is it?

The term "weight lifting supplement" is familiar to almost everyone nowadays. Weight lifting supplement is a supplement that is designed to help people who use it to achieve better results in their body building or weight lifting training programs. Currently there is a wide range of weight lifting supplement products available in the US market.

Weight Lifting Supplement - safety.

You need to be very careful when you are looking for weight lifting supplement products for your training. There are many fake products available on the market. There are also many very dangerous supplements that may harm your health. Always consult with your doctor and other health professionals before using any of the weight lifting supplement products. Don't just trust the labels' claims. There is not much scientific proof for many of them.

Weight Lifting Supplement - dangers.

Weight lifting supplement products could be very dangerous. For example, according to several health organizations' sources, a study of androstenedione, the steroid-like food supplement used legally by professional athletes, has found it may not build muscles and could create adverse health effects. The report said muscle strength did not differ in the men given the supplement, compared to others in the study who were given a placebo.

Weight Lifting Supplement – severe withdrawal syndrome.

Weight lifting supplement products could also be very addictive. For example, according to several health organizations' sources, a study provides the detailed report of a severe withdrawal syndrome related to gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), a supplement used by body builders. Researchers documented in a six-month period in 1999, five cases in which previously healthy young adults arrived at the emergency department with paranoid delusions, hallucinations, and deranged vital signs after discontinuing use of body-building products containing GBL.

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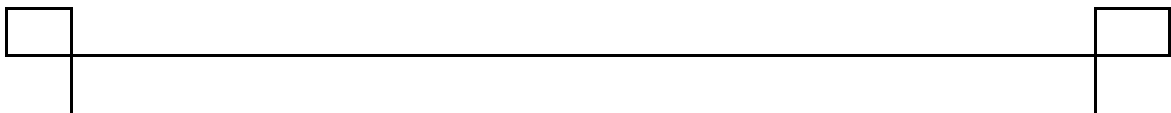
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