

BIG MUSCLE IN 28 DAYS

USE THIS MASS-BUILDING PLAN TO BULK UP YOUR BODY

BY DAN JOHN

HOW YOUR MUSCLES GROW

It would be easy to assume that you build muscle when you lift weights, but the truth is that weightlifting is only part of a much bigger process. In fact, your body only starts the biological work needed to pack on muscle once you put down the dumbbells. Here's a breakdown of what happens after you hit the showers.

- 1** Each muscle fibre is made up of thousands of myofibrils containing tiny actin and myosin proteins. When you lift weights, the mechanical force on your muscles damages these proteins and causes small microtears in the muscle membranes.
- 2** The damaged areas are then invaded by chemicals called "reactive oxygen species". These act like mini car-bombs inside your fibres, causing further destruction to the muscle tissue.
- 3** All this disruption leads to an immune and inflammatory response. White blood cells and inflammatory agents are sent to the damaged sites.
- 4** These cells and chemicals remove the damaged parts of the fibres and replace them with new tissue.
- 5** Your body ramps up its production of actin and myosin to replace any proteins that were damaged. If you regularly lift weights, your body will adapt by building more of these contractile units. This increases muscle size.



THE MAXIMUM MASS WORKOUT

YOUR BLUEPRINT FOR SERIOUS GAINS IN STRENGTH AND MUSCLE

You build muscle with hard work and sweat. And that's exactly what this workout requires. The cool part: while you'll do the same exercises every workout, you'll vary the sets and reps so it won't become boring. More importantly, this allows you to work one area of your body a little harder while still hitting every muscle during every workout. Don't worry if you're not sure which muscles a certain workout focuses on; your question will be answered the next day.

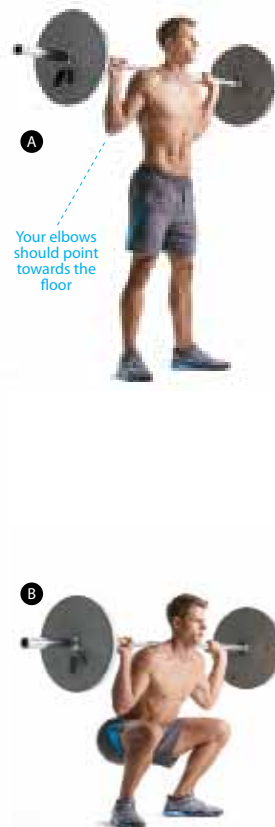
DIRECTIONS

Do this workout three days a week, with at least a day of rest between each session. Note that each workout – designated as Workout A, Workout B and Workout C – recommends a different number for sets and reps of each exercise (see the chart below each move). So you may do Workout A on Monday, Workout B on Wednesday and Workout C on Friday. Do the exercises in the order shown. Warm up for five to 10 minutes before you begin.

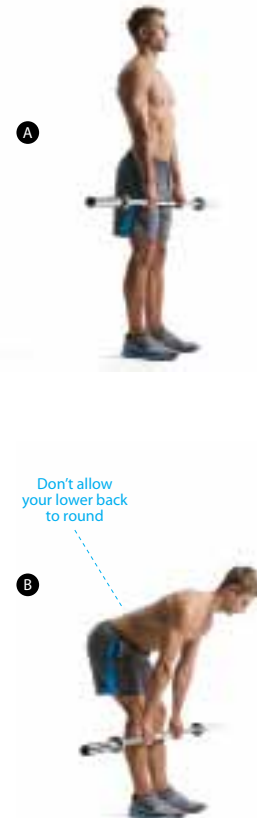
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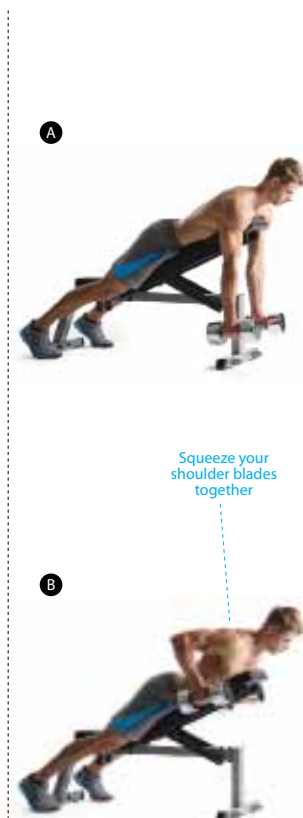
1 **Dumbbell clean and press**
Hold a pair of dumbbells at arm's length, palms facing each other. Bend your hips and knees so that the dumbbells hang at knee level [A]. In one move, explosively pull the dumbbells upwards as you thrust your hips forwards, then "catch" the dumbbells at shoulder height [B]. Stand tall [C] and press the weights above your head [D]. Return to the starting position. Make sure to use a manageable weight: 15 to 20kg dumbbells are about right for most guys.



2 **Barbell squat**
Hold a bar across your upper back [A]. Extend your hips backwards and squat until your thighs are at least parallel to the floor [B]. Strive to use a weight equal to your body weight on the last set of Workout A. Try to go a little heavier than that on your last set of Workout C.



3 **Straight-leg deadlift**
Do this exercise with just an empty 20kg barbell. Grab the bar with an overhand grip that's just greater than shoulder width and hold it at arm's length in front of your thighs [A]. Bend at your hips and lower your torso until it's nearly parallel to the floor [B].



4 **Chest-supported row**
Set an adjustable bench to a low incline. Then grab a pair of dumbbells and lie with your chest on the bench. Let the dumbbells hang straight down from your shoulders [A]. Pull the dumbbells to the sides of your chest [B].



5 **Pull-up**
Hang at arm's length from a pull-up bar using an overhand grip that's just greater than shoulder width [A]. Pull your chest up to the bar as you squeeze your shoulder blades together [B]. Pause and slowly lower your body back to the starting position.



6 **Barbell bench press**
Grab a barbell and lie on a bench. Using an overhand grip that's just greater than shoulder width, hold the bar above your sternum, keeping your arms straight [A]. Lower the bar to your chest [B], then push it back to the starting position.



7 **Barbell curl**
Using an underhand, shoulder-width grip, hold the bar at arm's length in front of your hips [A]. Keeping your elbows close to your body, curl the bar up to shoulder level [B]. Pause, lower the bar and repeat.



8 **Farmer's walk**
Grab a pair of heavy dumbbells and let them hang naturally at arm's length. Walk for about 100m in Workout A (if you're in a gym, you'll obviously need to walk back and forth). In Workouts B and C, walk as far as you can without dropping the weights.

WORKOUT

A	Do 3 sets of 5 repetitions with 90 seconds of rest	Do 3 sets of 10 reps, with 3 minutes of rest	Do 1 set of 20 reps, and move immediately to the next exercise	Do 5 sets of 5 reps, with 90 seconds of rest	Do as many sets as it takes to get to 25 reps total. Rest as needed	Do 3 sets of 5 reps, with 3 minutes of rest	Do 3 sets of 5 reps, with 90 seconds of rest	Do 1 set
B	Do 5 sets of 5 repetitions with 90 seconds of rest	Do 2 sets of 10 reps, with 3 minutes of rest	Do 1 set of 20 reps, and move immediately to the next exercise	Do 3 sets of 5 reps, with 90 seconds of rest	Do as many sets as it takes to get to 15 reps total. Rest as needed	Do 5 sets of 5 reps, with 3 minutes of rest	Do 3 sets of 10 reps, with 90 seconds of rest	Do 2 sets, with 90 seconds of rest
C	Do 3 sets of 5 repetitions with 90 seconds of rest	Do 5 sets of 10 reps, with 3 minutes of rest	Do 1 set of 20 reps, and move immediately to the next exercise	Do 2 sets of 5 reps, with 90 seconds of rest	Do 1 set of 12 reps. (or do 12 reps in as few sets as possible)	Do 2 sets of 5 reps, with 3 minutes of rest	Do 2 sets of 5 reps, with 90 seconds of rest	Do 1 set