

Most things in life are just random. There are very few certainties. .. In fact, the certainties I'm certain of can be counted on one hand. I am certain that a chick would prefer a dude to own a Ferrari than a Kia. I am certain that ninjas are bad ass. And above all of these things, I am certain that in order to pack on real mass you must do compound movements. Seriously. You want to get big...you want to pack on thick muscle...you want to bust the seams out of your shirts while making the girls at the club, school, office, grocery store, gas station smile and stare...you must do compound movements.

Compound vs. Isolation

So, what is a compound movement? It's just what it sounds like. Compound movements, are the exercises that work several groups of muscle together with a single movement. For example, the squat is king of the compound movements. When doing a squat nearly every muscle in the body fires in order to push the weight through the range of motion. Not only are your hams and quads working, but so are your glutes and all of your core muscles. An example of an isolation exercise is a dumbbell curl. When using strict form, the curl focuses all of your energies into one direct muscle group: the bicep.

Besides squats, the other must-do compound movements (the one you see few people actually doing at the gym) are deadlifts. Talk about getting a full body workout. Not only do your hams, quads, glutes and back get thrashed from this exercise, but so do your traps and shoulders. If you're not deadlifting you're not serious about size.

Other must-do compound exercises include:

- LEGS: Squats, deadlifts, lunges, stiff leg deadlifts
- BACK: Pullups, deadlifts, rows
- CHEST: Bench press, dips, pushups
- SHOULDERS: Military press, Arnold presses
- ARMS: Close grip pushups and bench press, dips, chin ups (pullups with your hands facing you), barbell curls

Now, if you are serious about muscle development, you are going to have to use both compound and isolation exercises. But, if you want to really bulk it up you must focus your efforts on compound movements. Start your workouts with them.

These big movements use more muscle fibers. More calories will be burned and your metabolic rate will stay elevated longer. You'll be building strength. You'll be working hard. This extra effort pushes the body to produce more testosterone and growth hormone. The result...growth.

Another Component

I know no one wants to hear this, but to really see gains, these compound movements must be combined with a well-thought-out meal plan. You will not grow if you do not have a meal plan that allows you to take in more good calories, proteins, carbs and fats than are burned through the day. So, make sure to eat right. You'll need the nutrients to supply the body with the energy to really blast through a big, compound movement workout. And after, you've got to have enough nutrients to repair those fibers that were annihilated.

Sample workout - Start each workout with an easy cardio warm-up. 10 minutes is plenty. The goal is to get the blood pumping, not to tire you out.

LEGS

Warm up set on the leg extension machine - 1/2 your workout weight for 15-20 reps. Do not lock out your knees.

- Squats - 4 sets/8-10 reps
- Lunges - 4 sets/8-10 reps
- Leg extension - 3 sets/10-12 reps
- Stiff leg deadlifts - 4 sets/8-10 reps
- Leg curls - 3 sets/10-12 reps
- Calves - leg press toe press - 4 sets/15-20 reps

CHEST

Warm up with pushups. 4 sets (alternating wide and shoulder width)/15-20 reps

- Bench press - 4 sets/8-10 reps
- Dips - 4 sets/8-10 reps
- Incline dumbbell press - 3 sets/10-12 reps
- Incline flye - 3 sets/10-12 reps

BACK

- Pullups - get 20 total (if needed, use the assisted machine or use some bungees to help)
- Deadlift - 4 sets/8-10 reps
- Bent over row - 4 sets/8-10 reps
- One arm row - 3 sets/10-12 reps
- Lat pull downs - 3 sets/10-12 reps

SHOULDERS

Warm up with light dumbbell overhead presses. 15-20 reps. Good stretch on each one.

- Military press - 4 sets/8-10 reps
- Lateral raise - 3 sets/10-12 reps
- Front raise - 3 sets/10-12 reps
- Reverse pec dec - 3 sets/10-12 reps
- Shrugs - 4 sets/12-15 reps

ARMS

Warm up with pushups. 4 sets (alternating shoulder width and close)/ 15-20 reps

- Dips - 4 sets/8-10 reps
- Close grip bench press - 4 sets/8-10 reps
- Press downs - 3 sets/10-12 reps
- Chin ups (close grip hands facing you) get 20 total (if needed, use the assisted machine or use some bungees to help)
- Wide grip barbell curl - 4 sets/8-10 reps
- Alternating standing curl - 3 sets/10-12 reps