

https://www.voxmagazine.com/news/beginners-guide-to-bodybuilding/article_a1c799de-c18c-11ec-902b-9f5a53b854bf.html

Get ready to make gains with this beginner's guide to bodybuilding

We've done the heavy lifting for you and asked local bodybuilding experts to weigh in with some tips on how to get stronger

SYDNEY SCALIA
APR 29, 2022



Bodybuilding is all about balance, says Marcus Seidel, a bodybuilding contest prep coach. This balance is needed in nutrition, training and mindset.

JOHN ARANO/UNSPLASH

Are you looking to become the next Mr. Olympia? Or do you just want to put on muscle to look and feel stronger? Either way, bodybuilding, the sport that specifically targets muscle growth through strenuous physical exercise, could be for you. But if you have no idea how to start, breaking into the

sport can be intimidating. We did the work for you — here's a beginner's guide to bodybuilding in Columbia.

The training

When first starting out with bodybuilding, finding a coach and a gym are two of the most important aspects. Marcus Seidel, a bodybuilding contest prep coach out of St. Louis, warns about the tricky task of finding a reputable coach, especially in the age of social media. “I encourage people to really do their homework,” Seidel says. “The most important thing to avoid is hiring a coach based on their social media presence.” Seidel recommends word-of-mouth advertising and paying close attention to how people describe their experience with a coach.

When it comes to training, Peydon Rifkin, the owner of Iron House Fitness and Conditioning in Columbia and a current bodybuilder, advises those who start bodybuilding to stick to gyms where they know they'll be comfortable training or where it's more acceptable to drop heavy weights. Iron House Fitness, Body Refinery Gym and even Crunch Fitness are all options in Columbia with a wide selection of weights and machines available. Gyms such as these have trainers specifically associated with bodybuilding training, as well as top-of-the-line equipment targeted toward intermediate and advanced weightlifters.

Weightlifting programs vary depending on a person's goals and existing body composition. “Your goal when you're training, even if you are trying to lose fat, is to train as if you're trying to build muscle,” Seidel says.

There are nine competition divisions in bodybuilding: three for men and six for women. Men can compete in the classic physique division, the men's physique division and the bodybuilding division. Women can choose among the women's physique division, the figure division, the



In 2017, Marcus Seidel won Super Heavyweight in the National Physique Committee Junior USA Championship. Seidel currently uses his experience with competitions by working as a bodybuilding contest prep coach and a personal trainer.

MARCUS SEIDEL

bikini division, the wellness division, the fitness division and the women's bodybuilding division.

Training programs change based on the shape and muscle mass competitors are trying to achieve for their competition division. Basic training programs include both compound lifting exercises, such as barbell squats and bench presses, and isolation exercises, such as seated leg extensions or single-arm tricep extensions. Most bodybuilders ensure optimal results by using “progressive overload,” the gradual increase of weight or repetitions of an exercise, in their workout regimens.

The nutrition

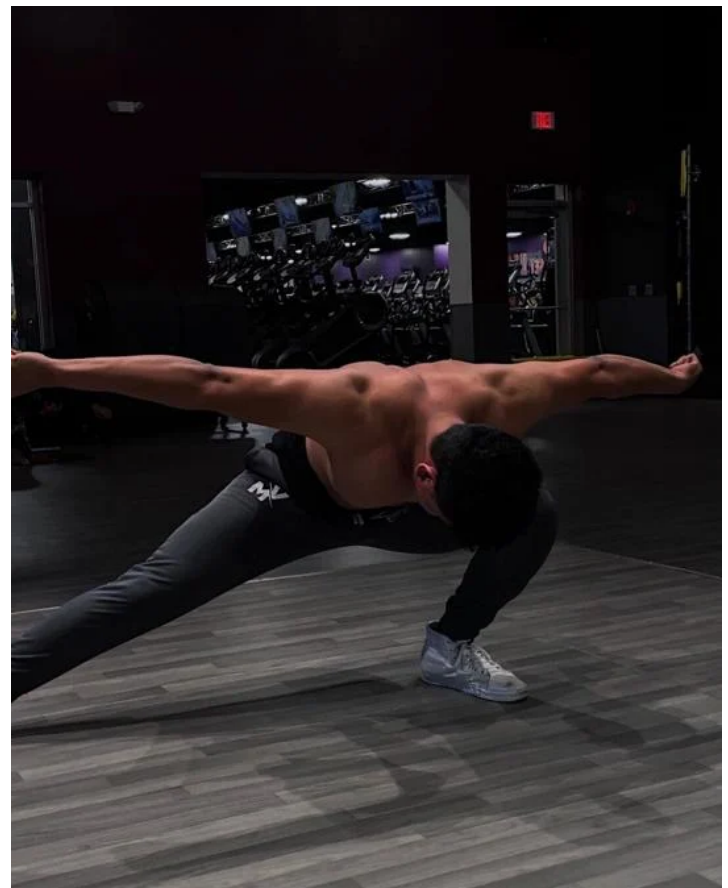
Besides the training, perhaps the biggest part of bodybuilding is nutrition. Maintaining a clean diet that focuses largely on healthy macronutrients is extremely important. “Your macros are your protein, carbohydrates and fats,” says Chris Monroe, a certified nutritionist at Supplement Superstore. “You have to hit those on a day-to-day basis and track your progress.”

Bryan Diaz, who started bodybuilding in January, says you have to make sacrifices in the kitchen in order to see progress. “You have to stop eating some of the stuff that you love, and that’s the hardest thing you’re going to do,” Diaz says. “But at the end of the day, it’s going to be so rewarding.”

Bodybuilding competitors often prepare for competitions by eating in a caloric deficit, or burning more calories each day than they consume. This way, athletes can cut down their body fat and keep their muscle mass while improving the appearance of their muscles. However, Siedel says that during a competitor’s off-season, they need to consume more calories than they burn in order to build muscle. “Your nutrition really determines what result you’re going to get from your training,” Seidel says.

Diaz says he eats five meals per day and is focusing on consuming as much protein as possible. Lean proteins such as egg whites, chicken and turkey with a serving of veggies and rice are common staples in bodybuilding nutrition, while processed foods and excess sugar are left out.

The recovery



Bryan Diaz started bodybuilding this year and works with a coach to perfect his physique. He believes it takes a certain mindset to break into bodybuilding and be successful.

BRYAN DIAZ

Like any other sport, bodybuilders need rest to help their muscles recover and maximize growth. “The common misconception when you’re a bodybuilder is that you train all the time,” Seidel says.

Bodybuilders are often seen as people who practically live at the gym. In reality, they often take days off to help with muscle recovery. Per the experts' recommendations, take a day or two off in between training sessions. “Recovery is crucial,” Monroe says. “The actual tearing of the muscle fibers happens in the weight room, but the actual growth happens outside of it.”

Diaz says that bodybuilding, while physically challenging, also helps to improve mental strength. “It pushes you past your limits and makes you do things that you'd never do,” he says.

Even on rest days, Seidel says a bodybuilder's mindset doesn't change. “The most important mindset that these bodybuilders have who are successful is that they are always happy but never satisfied,” Seidel says. “The mindset is constant progress.”

RELATED STORIES



Soaring, flying: Bungee fitness takes to the ceiling
Janae McKenzie



A guide to martial arts in Columbia
Sydney Scalia



Inside a local Irish dance class
Jacey Johnson

Sydney Scalia