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Big Man On Campus: Week 1, Day 3

By [Contributing Writer](#)

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Rest is essential for maximum muscle growth. Get the most from your rest days with these essential tips.

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Muscle growth requires adequate rest. To become the biggest man on campus, you need to treat your rest days as seriously as your training days. Lifting actually damages muscle tissue; only with proper rest and recovery does muscle grow.

Quality rest isn't watching movies, swilling soda and cramming potato chips. Check these seven essential tips to get the best from your rest days.

1

EAT

Don't turn your rest days into cheat days. You need to ingest quality fuel to build quality muscle. Give your body every opportunity to grow by sticking to clean, nutrient-dense food sources.

[Junk food may be convenient, but it won't boost your gains. It may even derail them. One cheat meal](#) per week may

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help you stick to the nutrition plan, but I'd save it for a training day.



Don't turn your rest days into cheat days. You need to ingest quality fuel to build quality muscle. Have your cheat meal after a workout, when your muscles are hungry for nutrients.

2

SLEEP

Sleep is essential for muscle growth. It's the time when your body's growth hormone release peaks. It's also a key time for muscle repair and growth.

Take your rest days seriously: Use the extra time to schedule extra sleep! You've been working your butt off in the gym, so make sure you allow your muscles to recover. No recovery means no growth!

3

GO PLAY!

A low-intensity cardio session can help you recover from a lifting session. Take a walk around campus, play some Frisbee golf, or go play a light game of pick-up ball.

Low-intensity cardio will loosen your muscles, move nutrients to damaged tissue, speed your recovery and help you maintain a solid level of cardiovascular fitness. Rest-day cardio should be fun, not taxing.

4

STRETCHING

In the process of recovering from cumulative training damage, your muscles tend to shorten. You can easily tell which bodybuilders don't work on their flexibility—their muscles are tight and stiff, which hampers athleticism.

Take your body through the following light stretching routine, holding each stretch for at least 30 seconds.




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Take your body through the following light stretching routine, holding each stretch for at least 30 seconds.

Stretching 

1

Kneeling Hip Flexor

30 seconds



2

Intermediate Groin Stretch

30 seconds



3

Ankle On The Knee

30 seconds



4

Chest And Front Of Shoulder Stretch

30 seconds



5

Front Leg Raises

30 seconds



6

World's Greatest Stretch

30 Seconds



5

YOGA

Don't want to stretch alone? Turn over a new leaf and try [yoga](#). Current research suggests that yoga may reduce back pain, reduce stress and anxiety, lower [heart rate](#) and blood pressure, and help relieve insomnia.

Yoga is also great for increasing strength and flexibility. Of course, this is a rest day, so don't burn yourself out in a hot yoga class.



6

FOAM ROLLING

A **foam roll** (or other device/massage) applies force to a tightened muscle, activating certain receptors that will cause it to relax. Adhesions that are gluing together your muscle fibers are broken, accelerating muscle recovery.

After you stretch or hit a yoga class, perform the following soft-tissue routine. Make sure to hit each exercise for at least 30 seconds.

Foam Rolling 

1

Adductor

30 seconds



2

Quadriceps-SMR

30 seconds



3

Iliotibial Tract-SMR

30 seconds



4

Rhomboids-SMR

30 seconds



7

STUDY GROUP

Big Man on Campus is about balance and time management. If you want to be a successful student, you need to put in the work. Spend some time on rest days paying special attention to your schoolwork. Join a study group for extra homework help, motivation and socialization.



Big Man on Campus is about balance and time management.



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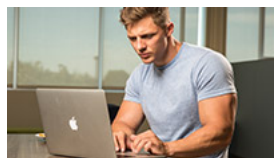
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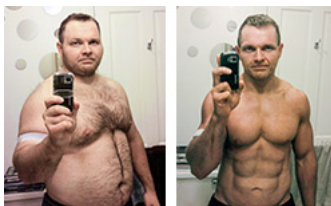
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