

Forced Reps Are Great But These Incredible Techniques Will Open A Whole New World Of Results For You!

Intensity techniques are among the greatest weapons in your arsenal for building a truly astonishing physique. However they are not for everybody. Beginning trainers should definitely NOT use techniques such as these.

Intensity techniques allow you to push beyond conventional failure in order to work your muscles harder, providing an irresistible stimulus for the muscles to get larger and stronger. Try these techniques in your next workouts. You can even try using several of these techniques in one set if you really want to work yourself hard. Be careful not to overuse them, however, as they can be extremely demanding and difficult for your body to recover from.

1. Triple Drop & Rebound Sets

This is a variation of the Triple Drop Set. The Triple Drop Set is where you start with a heavy weight, do a set to failure, reduce the weight, do another set to failure, reduce the weight a third time and do a final set to failure.

Do the regular Triple Drop Set then quickly go back and do your starting (heaviest) weight again for a more few reps. Usually you will be able to get one or two reps with it. The reason for this is that the last of the drops uses a lighter weight, which recruits different muscle fibers than when you are using heavier weights.

2. Isolation/Compound Rebound Sets

Do a Triple Drop Set of an isolation exercise, e.g. flyes, then immediately go back and use your starting (heaviest) weights for a set of a compound exercise for that muscle group, e.g. dumbbell bench press.

This is a type of advanced Pre-Exhaust training. Pre-Exhaust training is when you do an isolation exercise (an exercise that involves motion at only one joint, such as a dumbbell fly) immediately followed by a compound exercise (an exercise that involves motion at two or more joints, such as a bench press).

The idea with the Pre-Exhaust training is to basically exhaust your target muscle group (in this case the chest), by first working directly with one exercise, then doing another exercise that utilizes other muscles to assist it. This increases the intensity of the work done by the chest as the assisting muscles will you allow you to push the chest further.

By utilizing a triple-drop set format for the isolation exercise, you dramatically increase the exhaustion of the target muscle, allowing you to push it extremely hard.

3. Jump Sets

This is a way of doing a large number of heavy sets for several muscle groups without losing as much strength from set to set. Jump sets are best used on antagonistic bodyparts such as back and chest, biceps and triceps, or hamstrings and quads.

For example, if you plan on doing 5 sets of chin-ups and 5 sets of bench, start with 3 sets of chin-ups, then 3 sets of bench, then go back and do your remaining 2 sets of chin-ups and 2 sets of bench. The extra rest will allow you to be stronger on your last 2 sets than you normally would.

Jumping between antagonistic muscle groups also seems to benefit strength. This can also be done going back and forth on every set instead of groups of sets. This is not a superset - take your normal rest period between each set. This technique enhances recuperation by providing more rest to the bodyparts but within the same workout time. This allows you to do more weight for each exercise.

4. 2 Up - 1 Down Negatives

This is a variation of negative training that is best done with machines. Use two arms or legs for the positive phase of the movement then lower it the weight using only one arm or leg. This type of negative training is useful if you do not have a partner to work with as it is done completely solo.

A good example of this technique is the machine bench press. Set the weight to about half of what you would normally use for the exercise. Press the weight up with both arms then remove one and lower the weight with one arm.

When using this technique, you can alternate arms/legs or do the complete set of reps with the one arm/leg, then the complete set of reps with the other arm/leg.

5. Combination Sets

With this technique, you will use two different exercises alternated with each rep, e.g. lying tricep extensions and close grip bench, dumbbell flyes and dumbbell press, rows and deadlifts. You should use exercises that are easily switched from to the other within a set.

To take the set even further, when you fail on one exercise, continue with the one you are stronger in until you fail on that one, too. For example, when combining rows and deadlifts, continue with deadlifts after failing on rows. Your legs will help push your back further. This whole technique is like an extended pre-exhaust superset.

6. Rep Targeting

Set a target of a certain amount of reps and get that target of reps no matter how many sets it takes you to get there. For example, if you pick a target of 50 reps on chin-ups, say you get 30 on the first set. Rest a little while, e.g. 10 to 30 seconds. Do another set. Say you get 10 reps this time. Rest 10 to 30 seconds again. Get 5 reps. Rest. Get 3 reps. Rest. Get 2 reps. Done.

A different version of this is what I call Time Subtraction. The amount of time you rest between sets is the amount of reps you have left to get to your target. For example, if your target is 50 and you get 30 reps, your rest period is 20 seconds. Say on the next set you get 10 more reps. This leaves you with 10 reps to go so rest 10 seconds then go again. If you get 4 more reps, and you have 6 left, rest 6 seconds.

7. Add Sets

These are the opposite of drop sets. Start with a light weight for high reps and add weight on progressive sets. This works the slow-twitch, higher rep fibers first, then the fast-twitch, powerful fibers. This technique works very well for calves as they recover very quickly. It also works very well with selectorized machines. You can combine this technique with drops sets, doing add and drop sets or drop and add sets like a pyramid.

8. Static Hold Weight Pyramiding

This technique only works on plate-loaded machines or on a barbell exercise with two spotters. Start with a moderate weight that you can do a static contraction with for a long period of time. Hold that weight in the contracted position of the exercise you are working, e.g. pec deck. Have a partner add plates to the machine while you continue to hold in that static position. Keep adding plates (small ones such as 2½'s, 5's, 7½'s or 10's work best, depending on the exercise and your strength levels) until the weight starts to drop. At that point, pull off one plate.

Hold until it starts to drop again. Pull off one plate and hold. You may come to a point where your partner is pulling off weights as fast as he can just to keep up with your lagging strength. Make sure you have effective communication such as a nod or a grunt when you want the next plate off or on. Continue this process until you end up at your original weight (you can continue to no weight if you want).

This is an incredibly intense static hold and will fatigue pretty much every muscle fiber in the target muscle group except for the explosive ones. To hit them as well, when you are the top of the pyramid using the heaviest weight, do as many partial, explosive reps as you can in the contracted position.