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# Rules of Muscle Building: How Do Pro Athletes Do It?

Posted by [Mathews McGarry](#) / 20 Jul, 2016

Building muscle is no easy task. It requires discipline, patience, dedication, knowledge, and endurance (both physical and mental). Most people spend a lot of time in the gym, lifting weights and performing endless sets, without seeing much result. It is good for your overall health and physique, of course, but some people want more. Can one really add size without cheating, using various substances, or drugs? It is what this article is all about. To all those misled and frustrated average-built guys: there are certain rules and lessons you should take into consideration in order to build muscle and see better results when you look at yourself in the mirror.

## 1. Lift Heavier Weights

When it comes to your ability to grow, training heavily plays an important role. You increase your strength when focusing on heavier weight and you will be able to use more weight for more reps as you increase your physical strength. Finally, you will be able to add more mass as your total work capacity increases. On the other hand, with heavier weight comes a greater likelihood of injury, so you better have a smart approach – [never skip warm-up](#) and a few work-up sets. It will make your ligaments, tendons, and muscles prepared for adding more weight and staying free of injury.

## 2. Do Compound Exercises in the Gym

There is no need for you to perform endless exercise changes and complicate your training. The key to gaining size is lifting more weight and becoming better at a few exercises. Focus on those exercises that work the largest number of muscles, such as the overhead press, rows, bench press, deadlifts and squats. Also, train your vanity muscles by adding in some good isolation exercises, and there you have the perfect workout plan. This will surely lead to noticeable size gains.

## 3. Eating More Than You Burn

If you want to add body mass, than you need to eat more. Not eating enough is an old topic among those who struggle to gain weight. There is no rule on how much you should eat. Most people eat for their current body mass, which your metabolism finds easy to maintain: however, you should ask yourself this: how much food would it take to fuel the body I desire to have? Find ways to take in more calories and push the limits. Eat smaller amounts of food more often, or eat significantly larger meals fewer times per day. It might feel uncomfortable, but stick to your plan. If there are

no changes, start eating more.

## 4. Sleep Enough

If you haven't prioritized your rest time by now, you should do so, because providing your body with enough sleep helps build muscle. Lack of sleep, according to [this 2011 study](#), can cause hormonal imbalances, increase in cortisol levels and the activity of protein degradation pathways. Thus, sleep is crucial for the organic, cellular and systemic functions of an organism. When we get enough sleep, our levels of growth hormone (which plays an important role in muscle growth) increase. You will ensure that all your hard work in the gym won't go to waste by prioritizing your rest as much as your workouts and meals.

## 5. Workout Clothing

If you work out regularly, then you shouldn't do it without proper clothing, because it may hinder your progress and leave you unprotected from external conditions. For example, by wearing loose clothes, you allow air to evaporate sweat and cool your body. Wearing several layers of clothing is great in colder weather. Layers near your body are there to absorb sweat, while outer layers help your body to regulate body temperature. If lifting weights in the gym, then your [weightlifting clothes](#) should be loose, so you could perform your lifts comfortably and correctly with the right amount of movement. Otherwise, you won't be able to give the best you've got and reach your performance peak.

Take these pointers as seriously as you can. By following these guidelines and being consistent, you will avoid the most common mistakes that make gaining size seem like an impossible goal to reach.