



## How Much Rest Between Sets?

How long you rest between sets depends on what you're after. Looking for muscular growth? Try working up in weight every set for three or four sets. When you increase weight every set, you'll need to rest longer in order to recover enough strength for a successful next set. This usually means you do fewer reps because the weight is heavier. In the bench press example across the page, I used the decreasing weight jump technique. The first weight jump (135 to 185) was 50 pounds, next (185 to 225) was 40 pounds, next (225 to 255) was 30 pounds, next was 20 pounds (255 to 275). And as the weight increased and reps decreased, I'd slow the negatives down on each set. This resulted in a deep pump that worked to accelerate growth.

You need to rest long enough but rest too long and the muscles/joints cool down and strength and pump diminish. You need to still be warm when you start your next set. Experiment and find out what rest time is best. Sri Chinmoy told me his inner pilot told him when to do the next set. This ideal rest time should be around 3 minutes plus or minus 30 seconds.

Want more definition? Rest less between sets, just long enough to stretch the body parts you're working for 15 seconds. Stretching keeps the muscles and joints warm and helps facilitate a better pump. We called this 'quality training' and would always do it the last 6 to 8 weeks before a competition. Training with one partner, the only rest I got was when my partner was doing his set. This amounted to about one minute rest between sets. The partner not doing his set would protect the other from outside interference from others so our focus would be maintained throughout the workout.

How long you rest between sets not only depends upon your strength but also on your endurance. I called it 'cultivating the breathless state' because I was still breathing hard when I started the set and sweating profusely (a condition I worked up to gradually). If I didn't wait long enough a light headedness came on. This is where cardio helped. Running a mile after workouts helped me regulate my breathing and push through these quality training workouts.

I remember a shoulder workout I got with Dave Draper training for the 1972 Mr. Universe early one morning at Gold's. We did 5 tri sets: seated dumbbell press (we worked up to 90 pounds), dumbbell side raise (working up to 50-pound DBs) and upright cable row (not real heavy, 120 or so). We did this without any rest between sets. It was a challenge to keep up with Draper's amazing strength.

The more you put into a set the longer you'll need to rest before you start your next set. In 1965 I used to squat 20 reps with 300 to 325 pounds. After each set, I'd

collapse to the floor, lying there wondering if I could do another set, when ten minutes later I'm up doing my second set with this weight only to collapse even more wholeheartedly after this set. Finally, a good 12 minutes later it was 20 more reps with 325 again. After the workout I drove home, stepped out of my 1966 Ford Mustang as my leg cramped up. Lying there I rested 10 minutes and then arose to walk . o my house. It was a bit extreme, and my thighs grew but I would never do it again.