



## Specialization

For me, Winter is a season with maintenance as its theme. But the word maintenance is misleading. It generally means 'to keep things the same and in working order.' But nothing ever remains the same. The idea with maintenance as it applies to bodybuilding is to prevent regression while at the same time focusing one's available workout time on improving weak points. This is where specialization comes in, you do it in maintenance season, spending most of your workout time on these areas in need of improvement.

Maintenance season lasts three months during which time not much is done for areas already strong, just enough to keep them from going backward, once a week on strong areas is enough, just get a good pump on every set of everything you do.

How do you specialize? Here's an example from my history: 1972 saw large muscular thighs standing out from calves and upper body size, so what to do when I realize this? Stop squatting heavily. In subsequent years, my thighs got smaller, more muscular, and more in proportion with the rest of my body. As a result, my bodyweight dropped from a competitive 195 in 1972 down to 187 five years later when I won my first Olympia in 1977.

So, specialization for me was easy, all I had to do was stop squatting heavy and focus on quad definition by doing lots of leg extensions. During 1976 a more challenging specialization program was to bring my back definition and development up to a more muscular level. So, I began each of my three-way split routine workouts with 8 sets of bent over row working up in weight 10 pounds each set, eventually doing 200 pounds for 10 reps. I was in good shape training for competition so I could handle that many sets.

A good plan for this kind of specialization is hit the body part hard three days in a row and then rest three days. This is done for not more than 3 weeks. If you get too sore, then you are attempting too much so gauge your intensity accordingly. Since you are training three days in a row, the first three days you practice specialization don't do as many sets, 4 or 5 sets of the specialization exercise you choose. After three days' rest increase to six sets for three days in a row. Then after your next three days' rest increase to 7 or 8 sets of your specialization exercise. The specialization exercise is done before your regular workout making this a challenging workout so be sure to get enough rest. Good luck!