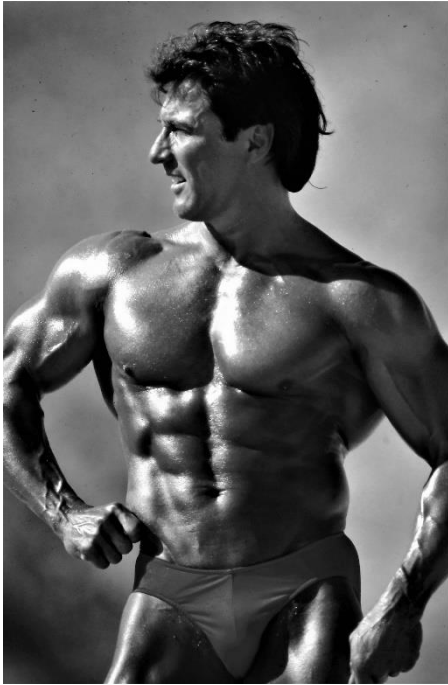


How to Exercise Successfully



BREATHING

At first you may have to spend a bit of time learning to breathe correctly, but in general, you inhale as you begin each repetition at the beginning of the movement, and you exhale as you finish each repetition at the end of the movement. Do not hold your breath after you inhale but begin exhaling slowly as you complete each repetition. The results will give you more stamina and strength during the movements. Breathing correctly will also help your timing on each repetition and your pace will be better.

MOVEMENTS

The actual movement of an exercise is very important. Do the movements slowly, using light weights at first. As your strength increases and you begin to use heavier weights, you can increase the speed of each repetition. The movement should always be correct, with little or no cheating. Cheating is not using correct form in an exercise. In weight training, cheating enables a bodybuilder to handle more weight, but he or she does so at the expense of working other muscles than those intended. Poor muscle shape often results from cheating even though the muscles may grow larger.

THE BODY THRIVES ON ROUTINE

Be sure to set aside the same time period to practice your exercises each day. With Frank this time is 10 A.M. to noon. Christine usually trains from 1 P.M. to 2 P.M. Choose the hours that are most compatible with your job and your lifestyle. Early-morning training has its advantages:

the mind is usually more relaxed early in the morning and you get a good feeling from completing your training early. But it also has its disadvantages: sleepiness from getting up early, occasional weakness from not being awake long enough and not eating enough meals to keep the blood sugar up. We find that we are strongest between 10 A.M. and 4 P.M. each day. Any earlier or later and we are not up to par physically.

Choose the routine most practical for you. The body thrives on routine. Exercises done haphazardly without a plan or program result in little physical gain. Follow each program as directed the same time each day you train.

It is a good idea to begin at the beginners' level for at least one week whenever you start a new routine. After this you can gradually increase sets, reps, and weights as you get in better shape and progress to intermediate and advanced levels. The day after exercising you may feel a slight soreness in those areas you exercised. This is normal and shows these areas are responding to the exercise. However, if the soreness is severe, you are doing too much and must cut back on sets.

and/or weights in your program. A good way to help alleviate muscular soreness is to exercise those sore areas with light weights and high repetitions several days in succession to bring a fresh blood supply into the area. In this way you can work the muscular soreness out in less time than it would normally take the soreness to disappear if you did nothing for it.

Arrange your routine in a definite pattern. Establish a rhythm in your training and follow it throughout your workout. You will need rest periods between each set. Do not rest longer than it takes your breathing to return to normal. During this rest period prepare your mind and body for the next exercise or movement. Don't lose your concentration through idle conversation or trying to do unrelated tasks during the rest period. Once you have begun your routine, keep your mind and body directed toward your training.

Each time you exercise, begin the session with a mental-preparation exercise. This is important in establishing the right atmosphere and attitude for your workout. Next come your warm-up movements, which prepare the body by increasing circulation, allowing greater flexibility, and preventing injury to the muscles. These warm-ups should begin working specific muscle groups, depending on the warm-up being done. Then, your workout. Your weak areas should be exercised first because your energy level is always highest at the beginning of your workout, and so you will put more into improving this area. When you do the exercises for each body part one after the other you keep more blood in this area and work the muscle more directly. Notice that the waist is never worked first but usually close to or at the end of the routine when the stomach is emptiest. At the end of each routine there is a relaxation exercise. After a period of intense exercise, you will need this to help you relax tense muscles and prepare yourself for the rest of the day.

YOU CREATE YOUR BODY

There is no simple way to get physically fit. You must put out some energy to get results. A machine can't do it for you, nor can wraps, massages, or gadgets. You are the only one who can get yourself into better shape and improve the appearance of your body. If your body is out of proportion a diet alone will not remedy this problem. Dieting alone may cause you to lose where you already are slim, and you'll only appear as a smaller version of your former self. Yet combine exercise and diet and you will see yourself creating an entirely new body. Regular exercising will enable you to have more control over where you lose and where you gain. But exercise alone won't work: you must follow a sensible, well-balanced diet as well.

Whether you realize it or not, you create your own body. There are two categories of body creation, and most people fall into the unconscious creation category. They are unaware of their bodies and what they are doing to them. They eat junk foods and get very little or no regular exercise. As they grow older their bodies gradually deteriorate and look worse and worse. Their metabolism slows down and they gain weight by accumulating more body fat. Physiologists tell us that after the late twenties most people's bodies start going downhill. In bodybuilding, we've seen men and women in their forties in the best shape of their lives. So, it's really not too late to get into good shape right now, no matter how old you are. Improvement is possible at any age. But first you must realize that you created your body as it is now, and you are responsible for your appearance and health. You have been causing changes in your body all along—negative changes that have worked against your appearance and health. Once you realize that you, and nobody else, caused your body to be the way it is right now, then conscious creation of the body becomes possible.

The body is never static; it is always changing. When you live in a way that nourishes your body, you can make your body look as you wish. You don't have to get out of shape as you grow older—you should be in better shape because you have accumulated more years of conscious body creation. The secret is after you get into reasonably good shape, don't allow yourself to get out of shape. If you must stop training, it is better to allow your body weight to drop by eating less than you did when you were exercising.

If you were exercising regularly years ago, have taken a few years' layoff, and again begin to work out, you will find that the development that you once achieved will gradually return until your body is again in good condition. It seems that the muscle cells have a memory, and once you achieve a certain physical development you can usually regain or even improve on it, providing you work hard enough and haven't let yourself go too far in the wrong direction.

MENTAL PREPARATION

Each time before you begin your exercises, prepare yourself mentally. This mental-preparation exercise will help you to relax as well as to visualize more clearly exactly what you want to do with your body. When you visualize your routine and how the movements are done before they are actually performed, they seem to be done with more success and ease when you train.

Find a place where you can concentrate and relax. It is preferable to do this mental exercise in the area where you are going to train. However, this may not be possible if you train away from home. So, plan to do your mental preparation just prior to leaving for the gym, if that is where you train.

It may be easier and more relaxing if you record these instructions on a cassette and play them softly before each workout session. This way you don't have to bother with reading or memorizing.

Sit down or lie on your back with arms at sides and legs straight. Close your eyes. Begin to breathe deeply through your nostrils. Inhale very deeply, expanding the lungs to their fullest, and exhale completely. As you exhale, each time allow your body to relax a little bit more. Relax your entire body as you feel yourself breathing, staying aware of your body completely. Beginning with your toes, totally relax your toes, feet, and ankles. Remove all tension from the calves and knees, continuing to breathe fully and completely. Move your awareness up to your thighs and hips. Completely relax this area. Let your abdomen and buttocks relax. Breathing very deeply, allow your chest and back to relax. Notice all of the tension now disappearing from your neck. Breathe

deeply and relax all your facial muscles. Let go of the tightness in your lips, eyes, and forehead. Take a very deep breath and notice that your entire body is now relaxed. If any area is holding tension, return to this area and dissolve the tension. Feel it being lifted out of your body. Now bring an image of yourself into your mind. See yourself doing your routine step by step. You see yourself doing the movements easily and gracefully. Each movement is in perfect form. Follow through to the end of the routine. Now bring an image of yourself into mind. See yourself in fantastic shape, looking as you wish to look when your goal is met. You feel extremely radiant, happy, and energetic. Stretch your body. Open your eyes slowly. You are now ready to begin exercising.

RELAXATION

After each exercise session it is very important to relax your body completely. By doing so you will be allowing the muscles to unstress (tension stored in the muscles is released in this manner; unstressing comes in the form of seemingly involuntary muscle twitches). After your relaxation period your mind will be much clearer and your body more relaxed.

As we suggested with the mental preparation, it may prove easier for you if you record these instructions on a tape which can be played after you finish your exercise routine. To begin, lie flat on your back, palms facing upward, and your feet approximately 18 inches apart. Take deep breaths. Concentrate on your lungs as they expand and contract. Close your eyes and continue breathing deeper and deeper. Inhale until your lungs are completely filled and exhale until you have expelled all the air from your lungs. Focus your attention on your feet. Flex them, curl your toes, and roll your ankles in all directions. Now allow your feet to rest and relax completely. Begin tensing and then relaxing your legs and knees. Flex and relax your legs three times. Each time you flex and relax your legs they become more and more relaxed. Begin tensing your buttocks and abdomen; tense and relax. Continue to breathe very deeply, relaxing more and more with each breath. Now tense and then relax your hip area. Begin tensing and relaxing your back and chest. Breathe deeply and relax this area completely. Next, tense and relax your arms. Stretch your fingers and totally relax your hands. Now tighten your neck and facial muscles. Take a deep breath and completely relax these muscles. Slowly direct your attention throughout your entire body. Are there any areas still holding tension? If so, take a deep breath, pulling the tension out of the muscles and exhale it out of your body completely. Mentally move through your body again. Notice how completely relaxed you are. Let your body become very heavy, as if you were dissolving and melting into the floor. You are now totally relaxed and completely free of tension.

Let your breathing continue to be deep and relaxed. Bring a vision of yourself into your mind. Become familiar with exactly how your body looks. Now gradually begin changing your image of yourself until you see yourself as you would like to look. Get to know this ideal image. Study it carefully and become familiar with it. If there are any changes you'd like to make in your image do so mentally until you are completely satisfied. Go into extreme detail with your visual description. Keep this image in your mind and feel your body becoming lighter. See yourself floating in midair, completely free from tension. Create a peaceful space around your floating body. Maybe you are floating over a sunny meadow of spring flowers. The sky is clear blue and filled with fluffy white clouds. Create the environment which is most peaceful and pleasing to you. Allow it to change whenever and however you wish. R—E—E—E—L—A—A—A—A—A—X. Slowly come out of this deep relaxation by inhaling deeply as you raise and stretch

your arms overhead, at the same time stretching your legs and feet. Now exhale as you bring your arms back to rest near your sides. You will feel very happy, energetic, and looking better than ever as you slowly open your eyes. Get up when you feel ready and begin your normal daily activities.