

Bodybuilders and powerlifters each have something to teach you. This plan combines the best of both worlds so you can build your best body ever.

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If you're under the impression that all powerlifters are fat and all bodybuilders are weak, you'd be wrong. Despite the prevalence of these stereotypes, the majority of bodybuilders are big, lean, and strong.

What's more, just about any good powerlifter who's not a super heavyweight is going to be pretty ripped—especially the guys who compete at 220 pounds and less. Just like you can't get lean without a proper diet, there's no way you'll build muscle without also getting stronger.

Ultimately, the most efficient way to reach your bodybuilding goals will be a combination of heavy lifting and "detail" work to address weak points and areas the big lifts don't really hit.

If you're not sure how to do it, here's a primer on how to combine powerlifting and bodybuilding in your program to make maximum gains in the shortest amount of time!

The Powerlifts

The back squat, the flat bench press, and the deadlift are the three competition powerlifts. In my opinion, these exact lifts should be the cornerstones of your mass-building program. Some guys think front squats are better than back squats for quads, the bench press won't adequately stimulate your chest, and deadlifts will leave you with a big but an incomplete back. In some cases, this could be true, but it doesn't matter!

In this program, you'll fill in these "gaps" with other exercises to make sure every muscle gets worked. But when your goal is to put on as much size as

possible, you need to choose exercises that allow you to lift as much as possible. That's why the powerlifts are included.

The deadlift and back squat will allow you to hoist the heaviest poundage you're capable of lifting and the bench press is bound to be your strongest upper-body movement. You might stimulate various muscle groups a little better with lighter variations, but you'd miss out on overall size gains.

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Oh, and don't worry about becoming "blocky" from heavy squats and deads. Some gurus claim deadlifts will thicken your waist and heavy back squats will overdevelop your glutes. Nonsense, I say! Ninety-nine percent of people will never need to worry about this. If you really think your waist is too wide, or that your ass is too big, you're probably just fat!

A few bodybuilders have genetically blocky structures, but there's no reason to worry about creating "too much" hypertrophy in any given area. Once you're lean enough, you'll see that all the heavy lifting you've been doing creates a thickly muscled, V-tapered physique.

Refinement Exercises

As useful as the powerlifts are, you will probably need to add in some additional work to hit specific muscle groups. Although your needs will vary from the next person, most people will need to address:

Biceps

A few skinny "experts" claim that you don't need direct arm work. While your arms get trained doing most upper-body movements, you'll never fully develop your biceps without training them directly. You don't need a day dedicated to arms—at least not until you're advanced—but you will need to curl regularly.

Upper Pecs

Even if the bench press stimulates your pecs in crazy fashion, your lower chest will be doing most of the work. If you want that wide, shelf-like look stemming from your clavicle, you'll need to add in some incline work and flyes.

Lats

The deadlift will create incredible mass gains in your lower back, mid back, and traps, but you'll probably need additional work to widen and thicken your lats. Some pull-ups and rows will do the trick!

Delts

Some guys can grow their shoulders with nothing but the bench press, but they're freaks. To fully develop both strength and size, you'll need to add some kind of overhead press as well as rear-delt and lateral raises.

Calves

This is the one body part that actually looks straight-up skinny on some big powerlifters! The lower-leg size you start with is largely genetic, but you won't build any new mass down there without busting your ass on some calf raises.

Quads

While you may develop all the quad size in the world from squats alone, quite a few lifters need to add more movements for full development. The quadriceps are a big, four-headed muscle group, and some areas may lag without extra attention.

Abs

You'll need to do some ab work, but not for the reasons you think! You've already got a six-pack, and it's up to you to reveal it by getting lean. Skip the high-rep crunches, and strengthen your core with some heavy sit-ups. Your squat, deadlift, and lower back will be better for it.

Powerlifting And Hypertrophy Split

Here's how you tie all these exercises together! You'll lift four days per week, but focus on movements, not body parts. Hit the main exercises hard, and then finish up with hypertrophy work for the lagging areas. And of course, add weight, reps, or both every week! No program will work unless you consistently progress.

If you're a beginner or intermediate lifter and you can't see any progress from one session to the next, double-check your eating and sleeping regimen. Make sure you get enough of both!

Day 1: Squat

Print

1

[Barbell Squat](#)

5 sets, 5 reps

2

[Leg Press](#)

3 sets, 15 reps

3

[Stiff-Legged Dumbbell Deadlift](#)

3 sets, 20 reps

4

[Decline Crunch](#)

3 sets, 10 reps (weighted)

5

[Seated Calf Raise](#)

3 sets, 15 reps

Day 2: Bench Press

Print

1

[Barbell Bench Press - Medium Grip](#)

5 sets, 5 reps

2

[Incline Dumbbell Flyes](#)

to Incline Dumbbell Press.

4 sets, 15 reps

3

[Pull-up](#)

4 sets, 10 reps

4

Superset

[Alternating incline dumbbell biceps curl](#)

5 sets, 15 reps

[Decline EZ-bar skullcrusher](#)

5 sets, 15 reps

Day 3: Deadlift

Print

1

[Barbell Deadlift](#)

1 set, to failure (decrease weight again by 40-50 lbs and do 1 more set of AMRAP)

2

[Barbell front squat](#)

4 sets, 6 reps

3

[Bent Over Barbell Row](#)

4 sets, 10 reps

4

[Ab Roller](#)

3 sets, 15-20 reps

5

[Standing Calf Raises](#)

3 sets, 20 reps

Day 4: Military Press

Print

1

[Military press](#)

5 sets, 5 reps

2

[Leverage Incline Chest Press](#)

4 sets, 15 reps

3

[Pullups](#)

4 sets, 12 reps

4

[Side Lateral Raise](#)

5 sets, 20 reps

5

[Reverse Machine Flyes](#)

5 sets, 25 reps