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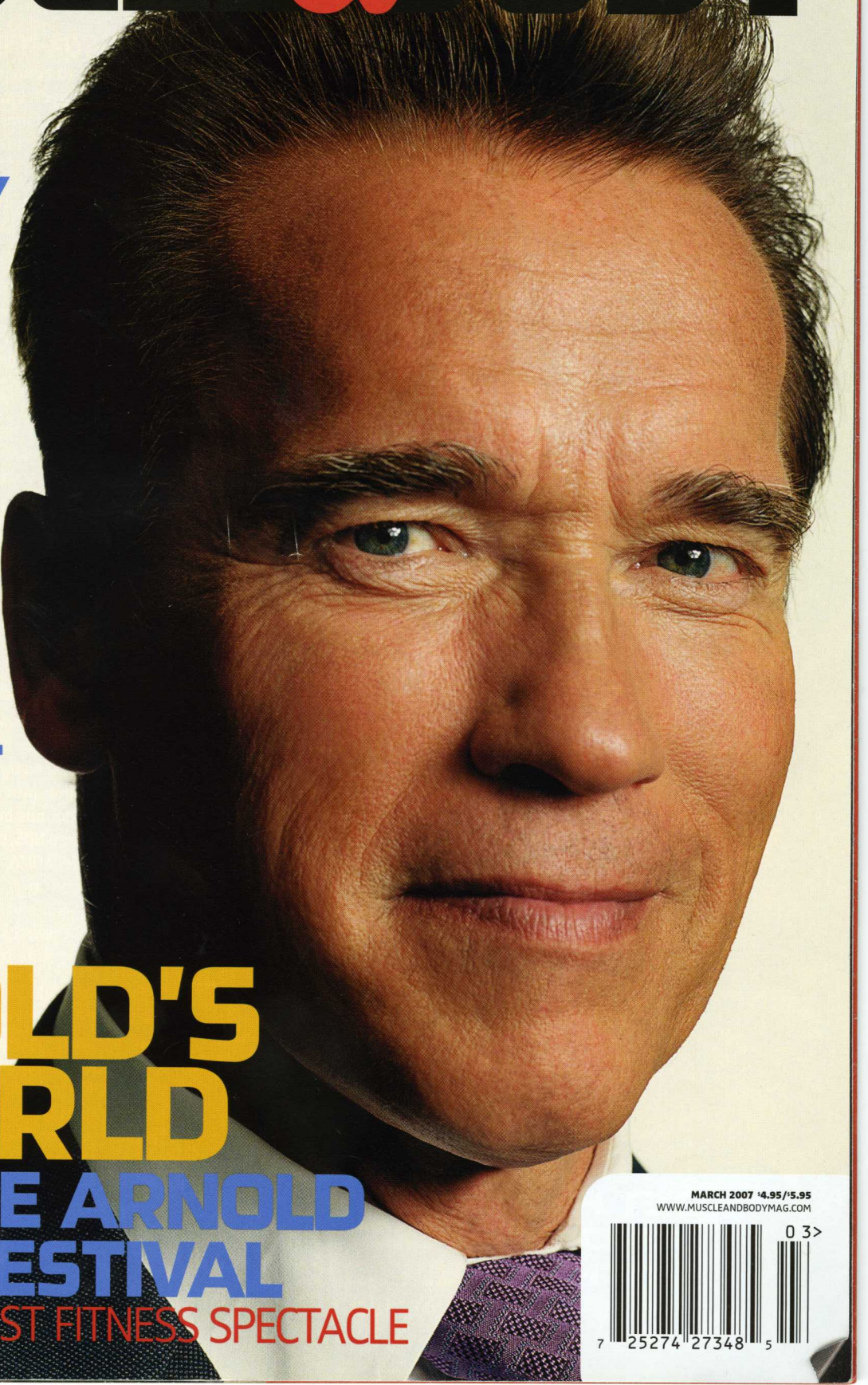

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FAST-TRACK TRAINING

So, you're too busy to fit a serious workout into your schedule. Not enough time to build lean muscle and power, so you choose to plod on the treadmill for a few minutes. Or, worse yet, you choose not to do anything at all in the gym, but sit at home and watch Jack Bauer torture terrorists on "24."

But, really, how much time does it take to do a serious iron-pumping, strength-building workout of any significance? Probably a lot less time than you think. In fact, it's closer to 24 than you would ever guess.

Knowing how valuable your time is, and also how valuable strength training is, *M&B* has developed a workout plan that will have you blitzed, pumped and on your way to great power gains in about 25 minutes per workout. That's right, 25 measly minutes. And it won't feel like Jack Bauer's torturing you.

HURT FOR TIME? HERE'S HOW TO GET AN AWESOME MUSCLE-BUILDING WORKOUT IN ONLY 25 MINUTES.

BY GREG WERNER, MS, CSCS, NSCA-CP, ACSM-HFI

GETTY IMAGES

LOCK AND OVERLOAD

In your quest to build a stronger, more muscular body, it's important to understand some basic facts of resistance training. Fact number one is that overload is necessary to stimulate muscle growth. Overload is the key to forcing your body to make positive change, and it can come in the form of resistance/load (intensity), tempo (execution speed) or the amount of work done per unit of time (density). The key to making continual progress in your workouts is to manipulate your training variables on a regular basis to avoid plateaus and boredom, and to keep overload progressive/constant.

Fact number two is that your physiological inroads to muscle activation are neuromuscular connections called motor units. A motor unit is a motor neuron (nerve) and all the muscle fibers it connects to.

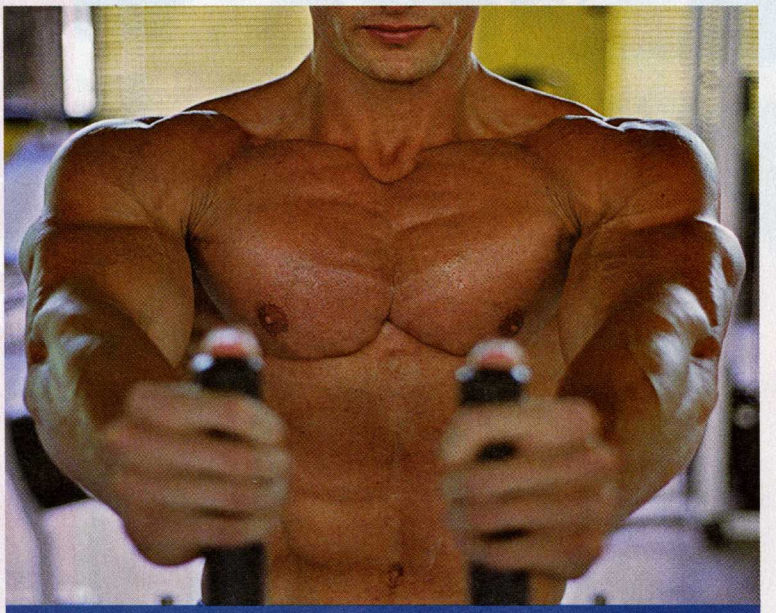
There are two types of motor units: fast and slow. Fast units activate the larger, more strength-and-power-oriented fast-twitch muscle fibers. To build thicker, stronger muscles, you must activate and overload the high-threshold fast-twitch fibers. Vladimir Zatsiorsky, PhD, a professor of kinesiology at Penn State University, has found that there are three methods to activate the fast motor units: maximum effort, dynamic effort and repetitive effort.

The max-effort method is heavy training and it is the most widely abused, as it entails lifting heavy weights (85% and greater of your 1-rep max). The caution we give you for max-effort training is that unless you are lifting the weight yourself (without a spotter touching the bar), you are not actually forcing all your fast motor units to control the lift. Use a weight that you can barely lift, without any help from a spotter. Strain without failing.

The dynamic-effort method is probably the least used and therefore the most underdeveloped. It entails lifting sub-maximum loads at maximum velocity/speed (i.e., explosive lifting). Any lift can be a dynamic-explosive exercise. An increase in acceleration will increase muscle tension and enhance the training effect of any resistance exercise. Higher bar speed equals higher power output.

The last training method, the repetitive-effort method, is widely used by bodybuilders and fitness enthusiasts. It entails lifting sub-maximum weights for 6–20 reps to failure (pushing every last rep possible to complete a set). The goal of this method is to push your muscles until they are burning — and then some.

The key to this program, and to optimal fast-twitch-fiber development, is to progressively utilize all three methods of overload.



THRIVE ON 5

The problem with most workouts is that they involve way too many exercises. In your quest to get as much done in as short a time as possible, we have boiled the exercise selection down to the five most critical movements. When done properly, these five exercises and their three variations will activate and overload every major muscle group in your body.

The Deadlift	The Squat	The Press	The Pull	The Crunch
Conventional	Back	Bench Press	Pull-up	Flat
Sumo	Front	Incline Press	Chin-up	Decline
Romanian Stiff Leg	Lunge	Military Press	Bent-over Row	Exercise-ball

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Now that you know the critical five movements, it's time to put them into a workout so you can get started. This program is made up of three four-week cycles in which you will cycle through the A, B and Cs of all five movements utilizing the three methods of fast-twitch activation. Since these workouts are so brief in time (25 minutes each workout), we recommend you train four times per week: three main-course workouts and one dessert.

To make the best use of your training time, follow these guidelines:

/// Superset (SS) all presses and pulls (i.e., do a set of a press and then follow with a set of a pull, back and forth until all sets are completed).

/// Only perform one max-effort exercise per workout.

/// Do Days 1–3 with at least one day of rest between workouts, and then do Day 4 (dessert) the very next day (i.e., Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday).

/// Alternate between a deadlift movement and a squat every workout; don't do both.

/// Your "dessert" workout is for your guns, abs and calves. Most people feel deprived if they don't get some dessert.

ISTOCKPHOTO

THE WORKOUTS

	Cycle I (weeks 1–4)	Cycle II (weeks 5–8)	Cycle III (weeks 9–12)	
Method	*Reps x % of 1-Rep Max*	*Reps x % of 1-Rep Max*	*Reps x % of 1-Rep Max*	*Rest*
a › Maximum effort	8 x 70%, 6 x 80%, 2 x 5 x 85%	6 x 70%, 5 x 80%, 2 x 4 x 90%	5 x 75%, 4 x 85%, 3 x 3 x 95%	1–2 min
b › Dynamic effort	5 x 55%, 5 x 60%, 2 x 5 x 65%	5 x 60%, 5 x 65%, 2 x 5 x 70%	5 x 60%, 5 x 65%, 2 x 5 x 75%	1 min
c › Repetitive effort	15 x 65%, 12 x 70%, 10 x 75%	12 x 70%, 10 x 75%, 8 x 75%	20 x 50%, 15 x 65%, 10 x 75%	≤ 1 min

FOUR-DAYS-PER-WEEK ROUTINE
(I.E., MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY)

Day 1 Main Course

Exercise	*Method*	*Reps x % of 1-Rep Max*
1 › Conventional Deadlift	**1a** › Maximum Effort	10 x 70%, 6 x 80%, 2 x 5 x 85%
2 › (SS) Military Press	**1b** › Dynamic Effort	5 x 55%, 5 x 60%, 2 x 5 x 65%
3 › (SS) Pull-up (overhand)	**1c** › Repetitive Effort	15 x 65%, 12 x 70%, 10 x 75%
4 › Flat Crunch	**1c** › Repetitive Effort	3 x 15 holding a weight on your chest

Day 2 Main Course

Exercise	*Method*	*Reps x % of 1-Rep Max*
1 › Back Squat	**1c** › Repetitive Effort	15 x 65%, 12 x 70%, 10 x 75%
2 › (SS) Incline Press	**1c** › Repetitive Effort	15 x 65%, 12 x 70%, 10 x 65%
3 › (SS) Chin-up (underhand)	**1a** › Maximum Effort	10 x 70%, 6 x 80%, 2 x 5 x 85% weighted
4 › Decline Crunch	**1c** › Repetitive Effort	3 x 15 holding a weight on your chest

Day 3 Main Course

Exercise	*Method*	*Reps x % of 1-Rep Max*
1 › Sumo Deadlift	**1c** › Repetitive Effort	15 x 65%, 12 x 70%, 10 x 75%
2 › (SS) Bench Press	**1a** › Maximum Effort	10 x 70%, 6 x 80%, 2 x 5 x 85%
3 › (SS) Bent-over Row	**1b** › Dynamic Effort	5 x 55%, 5 x 60%, 2 x 5 x 65%
4 › Exercise-ball Crunch	**1c** › Repetitive Effort	3 x 15 using elastic tubing for resistance

Day 4 Dessert

Exercise	*Method*	*Reps x % of 1-Rep Max*
1 › Triceps Push-down	**1c** › Repetitive Effort	15 x 65%, 12 x 70%, 10 x 75%
2 › (SS) Barbell Biceps Curl	**1c** › Repetitive Effort	15 x 65%, 12 x 70%, 10 x 75%
3 › (SS) Standing Calf Raise	**1c** › Repetitive Effort	15 x 65%, 12 x 70%, 10 x 75%
4 › (SS) Hanging Knee Raise	**1c** › Repetitive Effort	15 x 65%, 12 x 70%, 10 x 75%
5 › Wrist Curl	**1c** › Repetitive Effort	15 x 65%, 12 x 70%, 10 x 75%

TOO MANY PEOPLE WANDER INTO THE GYM AND WORK OUT WITHOUT A PLAN OF ACTION.

STOP GUESSING, START WORKING

Too many people wander into the gym and work out without a plan of action; two hours later, they walk out not knowing what they've done. It's been said that if you fail to plan, then you plan to fail.

We've given you a plan, one that takes about only 25 minutes per workout to follow. Now it's up to you to use it and make it yours. Keep a training journal and record all your weights lifted so that you can track your progress. As you become more efficient at doing these workouts, add an exercise here and there as time permits. Train hard and train smart. Visit *http://orgs.jmu.edu/strength* for exercise technique videos and descriptions. M&B