

Count To 60 seconds And Grow Man Grow!!!!

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Introduction

The title sounds crazy doesn't it? Let me guarantee you this, its no where near as crazy as the gains you will receive by implementing the following workout principle!!! I will break down in the paragraphs to come, the very core of mass building! Its raw essence, if you will.

What Do You Mean By Raw Essence?

I am sure that many of you are asking this very question right now. So I will gladly answer it. The raw essence of gaining mass, as far as training goes is the exact time that your muscles are forced to work " **under intense loads.** " In other words, optimal mass gains are directly proportionate to exactly how long your sets last!

Optimal Amount of Time To Expose Your muscles To Tension And Why!

With that being said I'm sure your next question is what is the optimal time to force your muscles to work during a set for mass gains. Through countless studies and journals, great trainers and bodybuilders have found that for size gains, a set should last between 30-70 seconds. The simple reason for this is that our larger muscle fibers, which have the highest potential for growth are fast twitch type IIa and type IIb white fibers. It has been noted that if you vary your time range between 30-70 seconds throughout your workout, you will end up stimulating an optimal amount of hypertrophy (muscle growth) in both of these fibers.

note: *We have type I, slow twitch muscle fibers as well. These are red and have less potential for growth as compared to fast twitch muscle fibers. Type I fibers are targeted in activities, such as long distance running. They have high endurance properties and exert much less force than the fast twitch white fibers. But again, they last much longer. You can also stimulate hypertrophy in these but that is another article in itself.*

For example tests have compared fiber recruitment in athletes when they lifted in the 5-15 second range, to the 30-70 second range and found that the latter incorporated much more muscle fibers than the former. The reason why this is true is because at a lower second range your muscles would fail due to a rapid atp(our bodies main energy source) shortage, and this rapid shortage of energy, just doesn't allow enough time for your muscles to be stimulated enough to grow. Essentially, the total time that the muscle fibers are required to produce force is shorter in low-rep sets than in higher-rep sets. Simply put, a hard set that lasts 30-70 seconds delivers more growth stimulus to the muscle cells than a hard set that lasts below this because in a shorter set, failure may occur due to reasons other than muscle fiber

fatigue and before a significant growth stimulus has been achieved. This should give you a clearer understanding of why bodybuilders tend to lift in a higher rep range than power lifters.

note: *When I say 30 seconds, I of course mean a weight that causes you to fail in that time range. For example, say that you can barbell curl 135 pounds for a total of 6 repetitions. If this takes you 30 seconds, then this is the rep range you would use to fail within this time frame. If this is the case, then 12 reps would most likely cause you to fail in the 60 second range.*

Vary The Time Range To Incorporate A Maximum Amount Of Muscle Fibers!

As stated above you have both type IIB and type IIA muscle fibers. The type IIB fibers have less endurance, and are stronger than the IIA fibers. These also take longer to recover, i.e. 3-5 minutes. So when you are working on the lower end, say around 30 seconds you will be incorporating more IIB fibers, than IIA. Type IIA fibers will be incorporated to a greater degree in the 35-70 second range. In addition type IIA fibers recover faster than type IIB. So you can rest shorter, i.e. 30-60 seconds. Therefore, vary time range, because you need to stimulate growth in both of these. You might start out by going heavier, and resting longer, follow this up with higher rep/second sets and rest less. An example of this would be:

Exercise # 1

Heavy Barbell Curls: 3 sets of a total of 30 seconds each. Rest 3 minutes between sets. Due to the strain the heavy weight places on your neural system you will need longer to recover.

Exercise # 2

Incline Dumbbell Curls: 3 sets. 60 seconds the first set, 50 seconds the second set and 40 the next set. Rest 60-90 seconds. Again fast twitch IIA recover quickly compared to IIB fibers.

Now this is just a basic program, but you can see how I hit the biceps throughout in a variety of ranges, thereby stimulating a maximum amount of hypertrophy in both IIA and B fibers.

How To Apply This To Your Current Routine

Out of all the concepts presented, I see none more exciting than literally having an actual key to the mass zone!

You see, by staying within this range, you literally ensure optimal growth! This concept has become so popular with trainers, that many lift to the clock, rather than by repetitions. However, if you look at repetitions, you will find that the 6-12 rep range usually falls within the optimal length of time a set should be carried out. Which is why you will see me vary the range of reps during my programs. You also should notice that I discuss tempo frequently. This is to ensure that you fall within the optimal mass zone. And in fact, by using a correct tempo I can almost ensure that I fall within this range. For example, my tempo on squats is usually 4 seconds

for the eccentric portion of the rep, and 2 seconds for the concentric. If I perform a six repetition set, then it will take me approximately 36-40 seconds. So you can see how we can pre-plan the time of our set. If you do a higher repetition set, you will need to speed the tempo up in order to still fall within the 30-70 second time frame.

A different Approach

With tempo being one way to measure progress in a set, I have also utilized another. This approach is a bit unorthodox, but I have found that it produces tremendous gains! What you literally do is count seconds rather repetitions. You will find that you end out pushing yourself way beyond what you normally would have done!

For example, one of the most asked questions in bodybuilding is:

" how do I make my calves grow "

This method of training can do wonders for any muscle. Take a normal calf set. I have observed a pattern in people I have trained on countless occasions when working this muscle. Lets say that the bodybuilder performing the set does the following workout routine:

standing calf raises: 12, 10, 8

donkey calf raises: 12, 10, 8

Now if you examine the typical rep used on a calf machine, it takes about 1.5 seconds for each rep to be completed and 2 at the max. If you analyze this you will find that the typical set of 12 reps lasts a grand total of 24 seconds. Anything less than that, is even shorter. I believe that 90 percent of the people who have lagging calves do not force their muscles to be exposed to tension for a long enough period. Furthermore, I believe that most people reach " mental failure " while training calves before reaching true failure. This area is so difficult to concentrate on and with the build up of lactic acid, its easy to presume failure before it's actually reached. This of course holds true to body parts across the board!

My Solution

In this case, I would solve the problem by eliminating the counting of repetitions. I would set up the amount of weight that the athlete normally fails at 12 reps with. Then I would set my stop watch for 60 seconds and have him no matter what, continue to perform repetitions until the 60 seconds have ended. Every time I do this, without fail, I find that the athlete gets way more repetitions than he normally would have because his focus is on doing optimal damage to the area, rather than just reaching failure. This method usually causes a person to fail, as far as being able to get a full repetition at around 40-45 seconds. At this point I would recommend continuing the set with partial repetitions until the time is up. With this training method, you will literally double the amount of muscle fibers stimulated than you would have, had you simply went to failure. I have tested this theory on several occasions. Here are the results from the last test I took.

1. Athlete Uses failure and repetitions to Gauge The Effectiveness of his set:

Standing Calf Raises: 12, 10, 8 reps

set one: 27 seconds

set two: 24 seconds

set three: 21 seconds.

2. Athlete Uses Seconds To Gauge The Effectiveness of his set:

Standing Calf Raises: 60 s., 45 s. , 30 s.

set one: 60 seconds

set two: 45 seconds

set three: 30 seconds

When the athlete used seconds to measure his set, he was able to expose his muscle fibers to more than double the stress they had been accustomed to! He was able to break through mental and physical barriers, which equals big time growth!

Note On Lagging Body Parts, etc. Biceps

I want you to take whatever body part that is lagging and use this training method to boost yourself into new growth! The most asked question is, " how can I get my biceps to grow? " This is without a doubt one of the most painful areas to work in our entire bodies. It houses an unbelievable amount of nerves. In fact in martial arts, you are taught to strike the biceps on numerous occasions for this particular reason. I constantly notice, no matter how advanced the athlete is, a state of mental failure reached, before actual failure when training this muscle group. To ensure that you get the most out of your set, simply go by the clock for several workouts and I guarantee you will get unbelievable results! The reason for this, is because you will have optimally stressed your biceps, each and every set! What better way to produce results than this?

Overview Of Gains Received From This Method

- 1.** You know that you are in the optimal range for gaining mass. Or the range that stimulates growth in the highest percentage of fast twitch IIA and IIB muscle fibers
- 2.** It forces you to concentrate on working the muscle completely, rather than just go to failure or a certain amount of reps. I have noted, that most people end out working their muscles in a fuller range of motion when using this method, rather than seeing how many reps they can get pump out. This tends to more completely develop the target area.
- 3.** You will end out pushing yourself further than you are used to, as displayed in the calf example above. In this way you will stimulate more muscle fibers, which equals more growth.

Overview of Use

1. Use this Method on any lagging body part to ensure that it is being worked in the optimal mass zone. Remember, the area that is lacking, may be stagnant for this very reason!
2. One way to measure time can be tempo. On a barbell curl, 2 seconds on the eccentric portion, one to raise the weight and a one second peak contraction at the top range of motion equals 4 seconds a rep. Multiply this by the number of repetitions and you will know what your duration is.
3. When not counting reps concentrate fully on the muscle group! Forget about reps. Get a complete peak contraction and a full stretch at the bottom of the movement. If you reach failure before the time is up, simply complete the set with beyond failure training techniques. I.E. partial reps, forced reps, negative reps, etc. etc.
4. Vary your time under tension to incorporate both IIA and IIB fibers.

Conclusion

Every time I train, I see a gym moron performing the worst cheat curls possible! They grab a barbell that is way to heavy for them and do cheat quarter reps. Usually a set of 10 reps lasts a grand total of 5 seconds and they wonder why they are not getting gains! They are simply not exposing their biceps to tension, long enough to stimulate growth in their muscle fibers. Take care that you are not doing this and your gains will stay consistent for the rest of your lifting career! Enjoy the growth, and go kick your lagging body parts in the ass!

Sincerely

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