



VISUAL IMPACT
—MUSCLE BUILDING—

Muscle Building Special Report #12

The Ectomorph's Guide to a Big Bench Press

Want to learn how to increase your bench from a guy who SUCKS at bench?

Funny question I know, but there is a reason behind the question. Every few years I have tried many methods to increase my bench press power and I've failed over-and-over.

I honestly believe I'm the least naturally gifted person at the bench press on the planet.

I could squat 405 loooooong before I could bench press 225.



Kevin Durant supposedly couldn't bench press 185 when he was drafted into the NBA...so I guess I'm not alone when it comes to having a challenge with bench pressing.

Typically the guys who suck at bench have really long arms and a shallow rib cage. The guys who kill at at the bench press have short arms and a barrel chest rib cage.

When someone has great leverage in the bench, they don't even need as much muscle fiber recruitment to lift the same load as someone with less leverage.

Have you ever seen a small guy with barely any muscle density lift 225 pounds 6+ times with what looks like very little effort?

I see this every day.

I even see guys who look like they don't even lift, bench press 315 pounds.

Contrast that with Hugh Jackman.



He's a 6'3" long-armed ectomorph who puts up 315 (he's around 8% body fat and 195 pounds in this picture).

It takes a lot of muscle development and density for a long-armed ectomorph to bench press 315 pounds! You can clearly tell that it has taken years of effort for him to reach this level.

He's naturally terrible at the bench press and has reached close to his genetic potential for this exercise.

So why would you want to increase your bench pressing power in the first place?

Well...it will thicken up your chest, shoulders and arms.

You will also develop a density that isolation exercises will never provide.

A HUGE mistake that ectomorphs inevitably make.

They shy away from the bench press and gravitate towards flyes.

...I'm guilty of this myself. You can get really strong at dumbbell flyes and build large pecs. The problem is that your pecs grow large without equal development of your delts and triceps.

If your bench sucks, I'm going to suggest you avoid flyes.



Flyes are more suited to guys with shorter arms and strong leverage in the bench press....they need flyes for full pec development, because they don't get enough stretch at the bottom of a bench press.

If you have long arms, you get ample stretch with both the bench press and the incline press.

So let's talk about the ectomorph specialization routine.

...but first, let me share with you how well it has worked for me.

The past few times I've tried to increase my bench press, I would always get to where I could press 225 pounds 1-2 times...then I would plateau.

In less than 8 weeks, I've got to the point where I can bench press 225 pounds for 10 reps. I typically don't do reps of 10, but just tested myself last week.

Also...I actually benched 275 pounds last week!

This is a crazy HUGE accomplishment for me. When I was younger and much heavier I came close to this amount...but nowhere even close in the past 15 years.

I felt like a million bucks!



“Green is for the money and gold is for the honey's”

So let's get to the bench press routine.

First of all, you need to know that this is a specialization routine. The length of time is roughly 3-4 months. After this time, go back to a more well-

rounded routine.

This is a 2-Day split.

- Day 1: Back, Chest, Forearms
- Day 2: Legs, Biceps, Abs, Cardio

You will do ZERO direct shoulder and tricep work!

I'm convinced that the reason an ectomorph stalls in the bench is that both the delts and triceps get overworked with a typical routine.

Abs and legs will get worked, but with limited sets of both. I'll explain in another section why you will still work biceps.

Day 1: Back, Chest, Forearms

- Back -

Seated Cable Row: 5 Sets of 3 Reps

You are going to start with a set of 3 of really light weights, then increase the weight on each set. Your final set of 3 reps should be really heavy for you.

One Arm Dumbbell Rows: 5 sets of 3 reps

You are going to start with a set of 3 of really light weights, then increase the weight on each set. Your final set of 3 reps on each side should be really heavy for you. To give you an idea...I start with 60 pound dumbbells and work up to 125 pound dumbbells. You will rest a decent amount in between each set.

Note: These reps are to be done somewhat explosively. The whole goal here is to “wake up” your nervous system. You don't want to fatigue the muscle, so rest in between each set. The only tough set should be the final set.

So why are we only doing rows and not pull-downs or pull-ups?

For this specialization routine, I want you to get efficient in working the same

“groove” as the bench press. You are working opposing muscles, but your arms travel along a similar path (groove) as the bench press.

- Chest -

Bench Press: 5 sets of 3 reps + a set or two of 2 reps

You will start with a light weight and lift it for 3 reps. Add weight set-after-set and stop at 3 reps each time. Your 5th set should be (sort of) hard to get 3 reps. If you are feeling strong then add a little more weight and do a set of 2 reps. If that went well then add weight and do one more set of 2 reps.

Power Incline Presses: 5 sets of 3 reps

The reason I call this the power incline press, is that I want you to do these short of touching your chest. Only lower the bar about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way down before pressing back up. Also...don't aim for your collar bone. Aim lower down your chest a bit. This is safer for your shoulder joint and allows you to use more weight.

Note: These sets are to be done explosively. Take a second or two to lower, but then push the weight up hard.



Ever see sprinters jump up and down before a race? They are waking up their

nervous system for the race. Think of your lighter sets like this. You are simply waking up your nervous system with those sets. So jump that weight off your chest with those first 3-4 sets.

- Forearms -

Wrist Curls on Preacher Bench: 5 sets of 5 reps

Grab a barbell and hop on a preacher curl bench. Rest your upper arm along the pad of the preacher bench and simply perform a wrist curl. Start with light weight and make sure your last set is difficult. If you don't have a preacher bench available, use a flat bench. I like preacher bench because it seems easier on the wrists and gives you the ability to contract the forearms hard at the top of the movement.

Static Reverse Wrist Curl Holds: 3-4 Sets

I get a lot more out of simply holding the contracted portion of reverse wrist curls, than doing reps. The rep range seems so small and I only feel the contraction at the end of the movement...so I simply focus on the contracted part of the movement. Get in reverse wrist curl position, curl the barbell to the contracted portion, and hold for 30-60 seconds. Do for 3-4 sets total. No need to add weight for each set.



I simply like to hold the weight in this position. If you get stronger

contraction from doing 5 reps...then do standard 5 rep sets.

Note: No need to do “grip” exercises. Your grip will get challenged hard on One Arm Dumbbell Rows (don't use wrist wraps here).

Day 2: Legs, Biceps, Abs, Cardio

- Legs -

Squats: 5 Light Sets of 10

I simply recommend you do 5 light sets of 10 reps. Go deep while maintaining proper back arch (don't round the spine). Push your chest out while performing the squat. I find that squatting helps me maintain the proper form for the bench press...the chest gets pushed out with shoulders back, just like when performing a proper set of bench presses. I like to simply do 5 sets of 135 pounds. Go heavier if you feel the need.

Deadlifts: 3 Light Sets of 10(optional)

About every other workout I'll do 3 light sets of deadlifts. I will take the exact same grip I take on the bench press. Each rep will be done with an emphasis on pushing my chest out and pulling my shoulders back. Weight doesn't even matter...I will simply use 135 pounds and get a few sets in.

Note: You can fire these sets off pretty quickly. You aren't strength training here and the weights shouldn't be challenging. Rest about 30-60 seconds in between sets.

- Biceps -

Seated Power Alternate Dumbbell Curls: 5 sets of 3 reps

Sit on the end of a bench and do sets of 3 of alternate dumbbell curls. I call these “power” dumbbell curls since I want you to work up to heavy weights... and a little momentum is fine. Start really light and work your way to heavy reps. To give you an idea...for my first set I'll use 30 pound dumbbells and the last set I'm now at 65 pound dumbbells.

Incline Dumbbell Curls: 3 Sets Just to Stretch Out the Biceps

You will do this exercise just to make sure you get a few sets where you stretch out the biceps through a full range of motion. Lift both dumbbells at the same time, pause at the bottom of each rep. I typically use 20 pounds for 8 reps and do 2-3 sets.

Note: Perform your power alternate dumbbell curls in the fashion where you can generate the most power. What I mean by that is that it is fine to start off in hammer position and then supinate (palms forward) your hands at the very end. If you turn your palms forward too early, you won't be able to generate as much power.

So why are we working biceps in this routine?

I'm convinced that your pressing strength will stall if you don't increase forearm, grip, brachialis and bicep strength. Power alternate dumbbell curls will work these as a unit. You will be surprised at how power in these muscles will translate to increases in almost all upper body lifts.

- Abs -

Planks: 4-5 Sets

I don't suggest any ab exercise that has the potential to “pull you forward”. What I mean by that is avoid any type of leg raise or crunch during this specialization routine. To be honest, you could skip abs altogether during these 3-4 months. Planks are fine.

Note: Always finish any ab workout with hip bridges or back bridges. This is going to keep your spine healthy and improve your posture. Heck...even if you skip abs, I recommend hip bridges for this reason.

- Cardio -

Steady State Cardio: 15-30 minutes

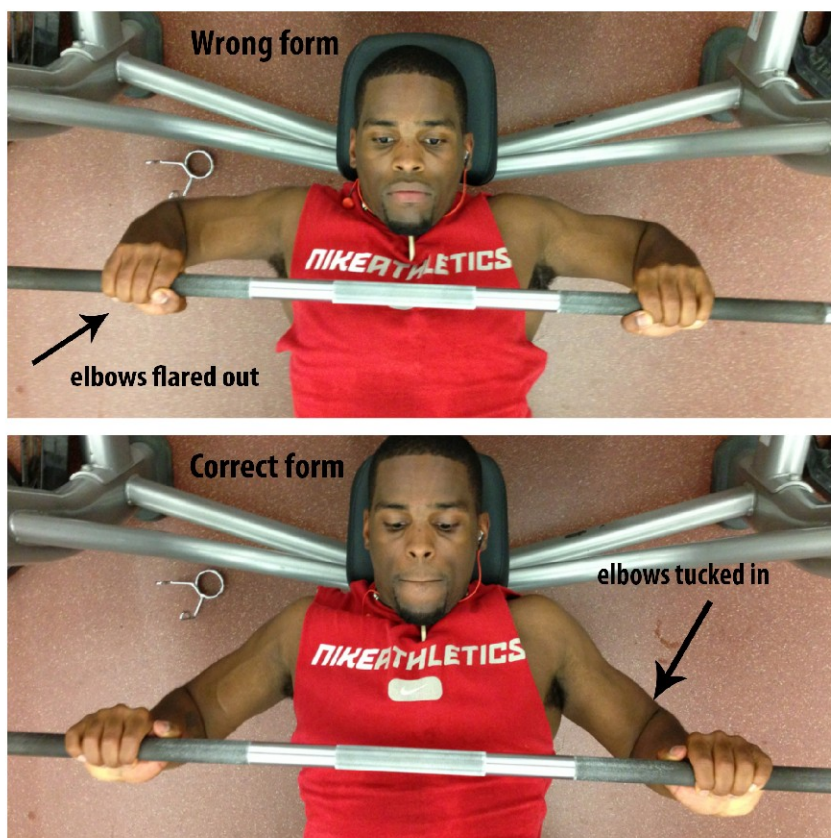
Since your leg workout has short rest periods, it should have created an HIIT type environment where fatty acids got released into the bloodstream. You might as well take advantage of this and burn a little bit of body fat by performing low intensity steady state cardio. Jump on the cardio machine of

your choice for 15-30 minutes at an easy to medium pace.

Let's go over proper bench press form...

Some keys to remember.

- Elbows need to be tucked in.
- The bar should hit low on your chest, below your pecs.
- Push your ribcage out with shoulders pulled back.



This second picture shows a thumb-less grip. I prefer to have my thumbs wrapped around the bar. Use whichever grip feels best to you.

I also have one single supplement recommendation during this 3-4 month specialization routine.

I highly recommend creatine (the following brand in particular).

The best creatine on the market right now is [Hyper Gain Black](#). I'm a huge fan of this stuff. It has a patented base of pH-buffered creatine along with a special ingredient (AlphaGPC) that increases explosive power.

This stuff is spendy, but you certainly won't need this year-round. A 3-4 month supply is perfect.

Hope you guys enjoyed this bonus report :)

-Rusty

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