Understanding the Difference Between Total-Body vs. Split Workouts

by Jimmie Flores

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When it comes to choosing a workout routine, many people are confused whether or not they should find one that works the entire body or one that splits the muscle groups up and trains them on separate days. I believe that either one is advantageous to certain goalsâ€”this article will tell you how to choose which is best for you.

Weâ€™ll start with total-body workoutsâ€”there are several advantages to training your entire body in a single work out a few times a week.

First of all, a recent study found that total body workouts result in a higher resting metabolism the day after training than a split workout does. The increase in metabolism is due to more muscle fibers being worked throughout the body, which requires more energy to repair than only working certain muscle groups on certain days. For this reason, I choose total-body workouts when Iâ€™m trying to lose weight and get as lean as possible. I generally start with a couple of explosive movements and finish with a series of supersets that turn my weightlifting workout into an effective cardio session. I do a routine like this a three times a week, with some other form of cardio on the days in between.

Secondly, total-body routines result in less time in the gym than split workouts do. Because you only need three workouts per week to work the entire body, total-body workouts are ideal for people with busy lifestyles.

Third and finally, total-body routines help to prevent muscle imbalances in your body. Because youâ€™re likely to have different circumstances every time you work out (training intensity, that dayâ€™s nutrition, amount of sleep, etcâ€¦), total-body routines allow for every muscle to be worked under similar conditions.

Be aware that Iâ€™m not denouncing split workoutsâ€”I use them when Iâ€™m trying to put on muscle ma Because they allow for a greater breakdown of muscle fibers than total-body workouts, this type of workout is great for putting on extra muscle. Also, they burn fewer calories than total-body workouts, so split workouts allow for more of your energy to go towards repairing the muscle that youâ€™ve broken down instead of turning your weightlifting routine into a cardio session like I do with total-body workouts.

So, the type of workout you choose should be based upon your goals. If you want to become lean and burn off as much fat as possible, I suggest doing a total-body routine comprised of mostly compound movements. However, if youâ€™re trying to pack on muscle, I believe split routines are more effective in that regard.

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