

# Why the emphasis on limit strength?

May 14, 2019 | 19 upvotes | by [AccidentallyShackled](#)

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For those familiar with the nature of bodily overcompensation, your body adapts in ways specific to how you train (“Specific Adaptation to Imposed Demands” Or SAID principle).

I notice RP generally advises to train limit strength primarily through lifting heavy, but doesn’t focus much on other forms of strength such as explosive strength or endurance strength.

For those unfamiliar there are different forms of strength. For example a shot putter has starting strength and explosive strength up the wazoo but might have a 1 rm of 220. No one strength is “stronger.”

Historically, who could throw a heavy object the farthest has been the measure of “strongest,” but now it seems limit strength is the RP norm for measuring strength.

Why is that?

Is there anything “not RP” about wanting to have endurance strength primarily? Is German High Volume training or Gironda 8x8 somehow inferior? Am I reading a preference for limit strength into MRP that doesn’t actually exist? If so, why the 1 rm focus?

Thanks

Edit: my karma sucks so I can’t respond, but I want to thank all of you guys who put in time to answer this question. You guys all have some really in depth answers and I appreciate it.

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## Comments

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JCX\_Pulse • 15 points • 14 May, 2019 08:01 PM

I think you're diving into the weeds far too much here. While the basis of RP is to lift and thus lift heavy, it doesn't mandate it.

However, if your pudgy and have no prior lifting experience you're going to need a foundation built by a simple program such as SL 5x5 instead of jumping into CrossFit, so assume the lifting heavy mantra as a starting pre-req but if you pay attention to how people lift in here, experienced lifters or fitness folks have a wide variety of programs they adhere to.

There are advantages to lifting heavy, though, especially for beginners with difficulty expressing emotions. Plus, lifting heavy is the most effective way for sustaining increased metabolism, lowering body fat and increased muscle mass.

If you're an experienced lifter, you do you.

Edit: typo

RPWolf • 14 points • 14 May, 2019 08:04 PM

I don't think anyone gives a shit how you get jacked. Most people who come in here don't know dick about lifting or physical fitness at all. Most of them are craft beer drinking, Cheeto dust finger having slobs. So making it easy by saying 1RM or getting them to do SL 5x5 is the easy push to get a guy down that road. Try explaining Gironda 8x8 or nSuns to someone who has no clue what their actual 1 RM is is futile at best. So most guys starting in here need to actually figure out their 1 RM before they can move to intermediate or advanced programs.

I think the bigger take away is lifting gives you a place to get internal validation and gets you away from your wife. Bottom line is get below 15% BF however you want.

AccidentallyShackled[S] • 1 point • 14 May, 2019 08:13 PM

Thanks for this, this all makes a lot of sense to me.

red-sfpplus • 10 points • 14 May, 2019 10:13 PM

Beuase fat chicks give the best head, and you need to still be able to carry their fat asses to the bedroom.

Taipanshimshon • 3 points • 14 May, 2019 10:34 PM

I see you.

Advise getting her to follow you on hands and knees.

Adapt.

hack3ge • 2 points • 15 May, 2019 12:23 PM

A leash and a collar is always a good investment

RStonePT • 5 points • 14 May, 2019 11:55 PM\*

deleted

keisagu • 4 points • 15 May, 2019 08:41 AM\*

One of the ideas behind RP is to up your testosterone level, because beta-behavior diminishes testosterone. One way to help your body to make more testosterone, is to grow bigger muscles. And big is equal to max strength, not endurance.

tap0988534 • 2 points • 15 May, 2019 07:01 PM

I don't know if it's broscience, but the internet told me that lifting the heaviest weights you can with the biggest muscles in your body helps maximize testosterone provided your diet has enough cholesterol and saturated fat.

Also lower body fat = increased testosterone.

keisagu • 1 point • 15 May, 2019 08:45 PM

And oatmeal, white cabbage, eggs, oysters and zinc provide ingredients for testosterone

hystericalbonding • 6 points • 14 May, 2019 08:06 PM\*

Many (most?) of the 1RM's you see in the OYS threads are calculated from the last 5RM. In fact, many OYS posts only talk about their working weights. Strength gives some indication that they have put the time and effort into the gym, but if it were all about 1RM, we'd probably all do Sheiko or other powerlifting programs.

Size matters to women. You can work hard without getting bigger, but you can't get really strong without getting bigger.

From 3 years ago. Notice they're mostly beginner programs.

Most guys are fat, poorly conditioned, and will just fuck around in the gym. They primarily need to develop the discipline to go to the gym and some introduction to the sensation of effort - how it feels to strain and work hard. They also need to learn some basic compound movements. Beginner programs are good for that. Some guys make fantastic gains on that alone.

There are some solid critiques of GVT out there. It's less applicable than beginner routines to this demographic. Some guys can't even handle 5x5, and need to start with 3x5.

After a few months and a plateau on a beginner program, assuming diet and sleep are in order, they can move on to whatever program they like. Following the data regarding attractiveness, they'd probably do better with a bodybuilding program than either GVT or 5x5, but some guys will move on from female validation being the #1 goal in life by that point.

We've got crossfitters, endurance athletes, powerlifters... But there's plenty of high volume bodybuilding and gear in MRP and TRP, you just need to lurk more.

AccidentallyShackled[S] • 1 point • 14 May, 2019 08:14 PM

Will do. Thanks.

brooklynbooked 1 points 14 May, 2019 08:08 PM\* **[recovered]**

The casual gym-goer has no need to train for explosive-strength, speed-strength, or strength-endurance. Also, training max-strength (typically done lifting at your 1-5 rep max) will also train explosive-strength. Think about benching your 3 RM. The bar is moving slowly, but you are actually exploding against the bar. This carryover from max-strength to explosive-strength is actually quite significant. For example, you can significantly increase your vertical jump (of which explosive-strength is a big determinant) by training your max-strength in the back squat.

Lifting heavy is the typical advice because you need to build a strength base. Strength work should precede hypertrophy work, mainly because you will be able to lift a higher weight in the "hypertrophy rep ranges" if you have a good strength base first. Programs like GVT should not be done, at least in my opinion, until an adequate strength base is acquired. This is to 1) make the most out of a program like GVT, 2) strengthen the tendons and ligaments for a high-volume program like GVT, 3) acquire the necessary work capacity to attempt a program like GVT

Last but not least, it feels good to throw around some heavy fucking weight.

AccidentallyShackled[S] • 1 point • 14 May, 2019 08:16 PM

It does doesn't it. Haha. Thanks though, I want to switch to endurance-strength and explosive strength (similar to boxing) but interference principle will fuck with my limit strength. I'm OK with that, but wanted to understand as much as I can before deciding. Thanks.

IRunYourRiver • 3 points • 14 May, 2019 09:39 PM

One element missing from high volume / low weight exercises is a simple element of fear and, by extension, putting that fear aside to better yourself. I'm a Crossfitter and I love it. But I will make time once every few months to work up to a 1 rep max on something. The feeling of walking up to a barbell and not really knowing if you can lift it is different somehow - especially with complex OLY movements (not that you need these). You feel dumb for having fear, but there it is. RP asks you to push yourself in ways that make you uncomfortable or even fearful at first. I think making yourself face that fear in (let's be honest) a highly controlled environment like a gym is good practice for your life to come.

BobbyPeru • 5 points • 14 May, 2019 09:58 PM\*

Here's something that recently surprised me. I had a couple women tell me about how in shape and strong a particular man was. One day I happened to see him in the gym, and he wasn't lifting in the same ballpark as me. So, as one other commenter mentioned it's more about the BF%. He looked like about 8%. He was doing Dumbell bench with 55's or maybe 60's. I'm 50 yrs old and I'm in the 1000 club. I *enjoy* lifting heavy, but I will always do a minimum 5 reps.

But hell, if you can have low BF and big lifts, even better. But, always **form over weight**

Lifting heavy has other benefits like challenging yourself. It's the guys fucking around in the gym that are always giving a patented speech about how they "don't want to get big."

RPWolf • 2 points • 15 May, 2019 12:25 PM

Girls only give a fuck about arms, chest and abs. You could tell a woman your lifts and she could give 2 shifts but rock the lower ab cum gutters and its panty dropping time.

redwall92 • 2 points • 14 May, 2019 08:12 PM

Personally, I looked at benching my body weight and squatting 1.5x my body weight as my base goal for strength. Once I hit that with stronglifts and the nSuns 5/3/1 app I started changing things up to lift for looks while keeping my baseline strength in tact.

There is something primal that lifting heavy gave me as a guy who had never lifted before the age of 35; I went from benching and squatting the bar to benching 195 and squatting 315. There is another level on top of that when I see the different strands of my quads or I feel my pecks that I never knew existed before lifting.

I think the natural baselines for what you term "limit strength" are tied to your body weight. Other goals (1k

club, XX" biceps, competition shot-put, etc) are personal goals you set up and knock over according to your choosing.

SBIII • 3 points • 14 May, 2019 11:09 PM

If you want to lift, then lift.

If you don't want to lift, then don't lift.

No need to write a fucking essay about it.

Taipanshimshon • 1 point • 14 May, 2019 10:34 PM

Because it's the first thing most guys need to start looking good.

Also it's a chosen comparison tool here both internally and externally.

We could compare hip/waist ratio but that doesn't translate after a while.

Oio- • 1 point • 14 May, 2019 11:00 PM

Olympic weightlifting works, and actually if you did competitive swimming or gymnastics you would probably get plenty jacked for RP purposes.

If you're coming from overweight and unfit, the skill level required to do gymnastics or oly lifting is a lot higher than the skill level required to do the basic barbell exercises, and the investment required to master them is much greater. But if you have the strength and flexibility and background required, like you used to do college gymnastics or something, there's no reason you couldn't make that work. I think it's not recommended because it's not accessible for most people. In addition to lifting weights, having a sport is a great idea.

The point is most guys idea of "going to the gym" is to bounce around on a treadmill for an hour, and that's just not going to cut it.

Anything that gets you big, and ripped, with low body fat, should fit the bill.

screechhater • 1 point • 15 May, 2019 12:34 AM

Most of the Schleps that land here Jane slumped shoulders and beer bellies.

Lifting hard and heavy will correct this quickly, but if the subject reads, well, the mind will go with the body.

Lifting with form in a disciplined manner makes all the difference in the world and the absolute discipline to do so, takes the mind into what's good/best for the Red Pillar.

It's not just about the heavy weight

[deleted] • 1 point • 15 May, 2019 03:43 PM

I started with something very basic for 6 months and slowly over the last few months I have started adapting, watching videos on other types of lifts to mix up my work out.

I have been using 531 from the fitness reddit as my baseline workout and it has been wonderful. I think the important things you can do involve talking to a typical lifting bro in your social circle, if you don't have that go to a gym and get a few lessons from a personal trainer.

I assume, because I have a dozen friends that lift, that a few lessons at a gym would give one the basic understanding of how to do the most essential movements for a workout with or without a gym membership.

I have also purchased 2 sets of weights off craigslist for about half the cost of what retail would charge me. These items are also a fantastic investment because they won't lose value over time. Weight is weight and basic equipment will always hold value as long as you take care of it.

Anyhow that's my novice 2 cents. Taking a preworkout is also explosive compared to just lifting with a clean diet. I cannot take caffeine so for half a year I also didn't take any preworkout. I have since found many items with no caffeine that work extremely well.

If you take B-Alanine, creatine and L-Carnitine daily you should feel alright lifting every other day, probably 20% more than you would without them, and everything will develop faster.

These are my assumptions, given to me by others. I believe they are working, I feel better taking preworkout daily. Progress is just that and I have a hard time comprehending if it is going 'way faster' by itself, or if the specific boost to my enthusiasm from the preworkout is creating the results [as opposed to just taking supplements that are supposed to boost muscle growth without the energy boost from.... rhodiola and whatever combos are in the preworkout]... Good luck.

Ah also I don't 1RM ever. Watched a podcast talking about never working yourself 100% so you always have gas to lift the next day. I don't lift every day at this point but it would be awesome to do so in the future.

Sepean • 2 points • 14 May, 2019 08:47 PM

Who gives a fuck about strength, we lift for aesthetics and lifting heavy is king for that.

[deleted] • 9 points • 14 May, 2019 09:44 PM

Not even close. Hypertrophy is king of aesthetics. Fitness models fight off women. Powerlifters high five each other.

Sepean • 3 points • 14 May, 2019 09:53 PM

First, google what hypertrophy means. Second, do you really think fitness models don't lift heavy? Third, do powerlifters lift and more importantly diet for aesthetics or strength?

[deleted] • 6 points • 14 May, 2019 10:16 PM\*

1) I'm ISSA certified so I'm pretty sure I not only know what it means better than you and how to achieve it, I also know the physiologic process that underlies it.

2) no. Many of them don't. I know a lot personally. I work with two, and my best friend is one. So no. No they don't.

3) absolutely for strength. And further, they do work to minimize DOMS to manage their size so they can make weight. Do you know how this works? Maybe you only think you're a powerlifter but aren't.

Let me know if you have any more questions. I don't know what you do to put bread on your table, but you are firmly in my lane right now.

Sepean • 0 points • 15 May, 2019 06:29 AM

I'm ISSA certified so I'm pretty sure I not only know what it means better than you and how to achieve it, I also know the physiologic process that underlies it.

So the issue is you're communications challenged? Because saying "instead of heavy lifting you should hypertrophy" makes no sense.

no. Many of them don't. I know a lot personally. I work with two, and my best friend is one. So no. No they don't.

Ok, it sounds like you're trying to win the discussion instead of thinking. Do you *really* want to say that fitness models don't lift heavy this categorically? I'm completely open to some fitness models not doing it - I've seen crossfitters that look great, but that doesn't mean that crossfit is the best way to get that look. You can just work harder at it, or be on gear. You don't have to use the most efficient method.

Maybe you only think you're a powerlifter but aren't.

Try remembering a post back, what I said was that I didn't lift for strength.

I don't know what you do to put bread on your table, but you are firmly in my lane right now.

This isn't your lane. As a fitness instructor, you make money from repeat customers. A simple system that people can easily learn on their own and works efficiently, that's bad for your business but exactly what I want.

What's fucking next, a marriage counsellor coming on here and telling us that fixing marriages puts bread on her table so she knows better than us?

Cam\_Winston21 • 1 point • 15 May, 2019 04:00 PM

I think you guys are saying the same thing (aesthetics = hypertrophy) yet talking past each other cuz words.

Sepean • 0 points • 15 May, 2019 04:10 PM

Maybe, but these guys are also saying you shouldn't lift heavy. Which is wrong.

Cam\_Winston21 • 2 points • 15 May, 2019 04:45 PM

I could be wrong but I think they're (mistakenly) interpreting that you were saying lifting heavy but so heavy that it's only for a **few** reps, like power lifters, which you did not do.

You said lift heavy for aesthetics, he said hypertrophy. Same thing.

[deleted] • 0 points • 15 May, 2019 04:52 PM\*

Lifting heavy means low reps, high % of 1 rm. I'm not mistaken, I understand what he's saying.

You can't massage the two together. They are not the same thing. He's just wrong.

I don't know this guy, but he's the type to get beginner knowledge, declare himself an expert, then attack anyone who knows more. I would take his "advice" with a grain of salt from here on out if I were you.

Sepean • 2 points • 15 May, 2019 06:47 PM

No, you don't know me. I think you just read a LOT into "lifting heavy" like



you think I was trying to pass on an entire training program with those 2 words - I was not, I was answering OP. And in trying to debunk your strawman, you came across as someone opposed to the general idea of lifting heavy, and calling me a power lifter when I said the exact opposite.

I'm not a beginner, I don't just try to max 1 rpm or anything even close to that or whatever it is you think I mean by lifting heavy, I've even at times been at 10-12 reps to break a plateau. The core of this shit is still 4-8 reps and that's called lifting heavy in my book.

If guys on gear do it differently, maybe, I know very little about it. If so, fitness models spend most of their time not lifting heavy, maybe, I don't know much about how guys who work on their body full time do it and you certainly can't lift heavy 2 hours per day every day - though I feel confident that the quickest way to get close to their lean mass is still heavy lifting, and there's certainly guys with godlike physique who don't do anything except lift heavy.

Cam\_Winston21 • 1 point • 15 May, 2019 05:10 PM\*

First, I'm not trying to argue. With anyone.

Lifting heavy means low reps, high % of 1 rm.

Yes, but it depends on what **your** definition of "high % of 1 RM" would be. I consider heavy (for me) to be 4-8 reps or around 85%-90% of my 1RM, which certainly will lead to hypertrophy. You may consider 1-3 reps (~95%) as heavy.

Again, I could be wrong, but I think you guys are arguing over minutia & word interpretation because it got a bit personal. Neither of you are saying to lift like a power lifter.

Edit: I say 4-8 reps is "heavy" for me b/c I lift for hypertrophy not strength, so going less than 4 reps isn't on my radar & only happens by mistake. So, routines that are 10-12 reps are "moderate" for me, 4-8 are on my "heavy" days. Not that my routines or definitions mean squat, just saying 'heavy' sets for me are most certainly not those that power lifters do.

officerkondo • 0 points • 15 May, 2019 10:11 AM

Know when you got told.

Sepean • 1 point • 15 May, 2019 02:19 PM

So a guy claims to be a fitness instructor, and now you believe you shouldn't lift heavy? Good luck with that.

officerkondo • 2 points • 15 May, 2019 02:25 PM

I don't care if he's a fitness instructor. He's correct. I lift for aesthetics so of course I don't lift like a powerlifter. Do you think bodybuilders and powerlifters follow identical lifting programs?

A powerlifter is a fat guy who no one knows is strong.



Sepean • 1 point • 15 May, 2019 02:40 PM

Wait, you're saying you're not lifting heavy?

officerkondo • 0 points • 15 May, 2019 02:49 PM

You're a passive-aggressively indecisive one. Whose wife are you?

Sepean • 0 points • 15 May, 2019 02:31 PM

This powerlifting BS is something he made up, don't look at me.

officerkondo • 1 point • 15 May, 2019 02:36 PM

I'm sure you are well experienced in being disregarded.