

8870 Eighty Eight Seventy

By
Alan Palmieri

Don't you hate it when a book or article has a strange title, such as 8870, and you have to hunt and read, hunt and read to find the meaning of what it is? I do, so in this very first paragraph I'm going to tell you what 8870 stands for and describe it in detail later on. 8870 is a workout routine. It stands for 8 sets of 8 reps using 70% of your 1 rep maximum.

We've all read and heard the bodybuilder should train with approximately 85% of their 1 rep max for sets in the range of 6 to 8 reps in order to build additional muscle mass. I have no doubt some natural bodybuilders can actually accomplish this feat. I do believe however, this is true for only a very few. 85% of a person's 1 rep max for four or five sets of eight reps is a lot of weight, especially if perfect form is to be adhered to. I can't do it and I personally have never seen anyone who could, not without taking a ten minute rest between sets that is.

To gain additional muscle mass the muscles must be placed under progressively more resistance and worked harder. This can be accomplished in many different ways. Adding more weight, or sets, more reps. Reducing the rest time between sets, performing supersets, changing your workout program, or adding additional exercises just to mention a few. Some work better for one person better than another but all have their place in the world of bodybuilding.

A beginner really has no need for a special program because in the beginning almost any routine will produce results. The problem comes later, when the muscles actually become adjusted and familiar to the workload placed on them. Sticking points, all intermediate and advanced bodybuilders incur the frustration these present to continuing progress. The more advanced a bodybuilder is the more frequent adjustments need to be made in training in order to progress to the next level. The 8870 program is designed to promote new growth and development. It can be followed by anyone who has at least one solid year of training under their belt.

The most difficult part of the program, in addition to actually doing the workout, is determining your 70% of 1 rep max weight. I have included a chart to assist you but you will have to experiment in determining what your max 1 rep is for each exercise. Once you have this amount you can easily locate on the chart how much weight you will need for each movement. A couple of methods are used in determining a one rep max. I personally like to take a very thorough warm up and work up to my 1 rep max. Usually it takes a couple of workouts to get an actual weight. There are good days and there are bad days so don't rely on just one workout to provide you with your 1 rep max.

The 8870 program requires you to select two exercises for each body part. One exercise per body part will be the heavy movement and the other exercise will be your 70% of 1 rep max. In other words, take the chest for example; you may select for your heavy movement the bench press. Your other movement may be dumbbell flies. Select one heavy movement and one movement that will be 70% of your 1 rep max for each body part.

You are to work each body part only one day per week and you are to employ two movements and no more. Do not break away from this rule. Adding more will not produce better results. If this program is followed correctly you will find enough intensity for even the most advanced bodybuilder. You will need to provide plenty of recuperation time for the muscles in order to acquire additional growth. Taxing your muscles completely once per week following this program will certainly do that. Always remember, exercise breaks down the muscle tissue and pumps blood into the area worked, it is the rest and nutrition that follows that adds growth and strength.

Let me illustrate by describing how the 8870 program should be followed for your chest. Begin by warming up completely. Take your time here as you will be starting with the heaviest weights first. Be sure to add some stretching movements in your warm up sessions. Let's assume you are going to use the two movements I mentioned earlier, the bench press and dumbbell flies. The bench press is the exercise selected as the heavy movement. Take a weight in the bench press that you can only perform, using strict form, a maximum of 5 reps with. Do 2 sets of 5 reps in the bench press, resting no more than 60 to 90 seconds between sets. After you complete your second set, rest for approximately three minutes and begin your dumbbell flies using 70% of your 1 rep max for 8 sets of 8

reps. Gradually and systematically reduce the time of rest you take between sets. Your goal should be to take no longer than 60 seconds between each set. The first couple of sets are not bad but the closer you get to set 8 the harder it becomes.

The next scheduled workout for your chest, reverse the entire process. Start with dumbbell flies. Perform 2 x 5 as your heavy movement and perform 8 x 8 with 70% of your 1 rep max in the bench press. Continue alternating the movements each week. Never start with your 70% movements first. They are to be followed by your 2 x 5 heavy movements.

The length of time you should stay on this program varies from person to person. Some may find six weeks adequate, while others may continue for several months. Continue as long as you find progress and results. In any case I would suggest following the 8870 program for no less than six weeks. A suggested body part schedule should look something like this.

| | |
|------------|---------|
| Monday: | Chest |
| Tuesday: | Back |
| Wednesday: | Delts |
| Thursday: | Thigh |
| Friday: | Biceps |
| Saturday: | Triceps |
| Sunday: | Rest |

You notice only one muscle group per session is listed and no time is outlined for abs, calves, hams and forearms. For those who possess a high level of energy or, for those that wish to work these muscles, include some work on the rest days or at the end of your normal training session. Unless you have a specific reason to do so, I would suggest bringing them back into your workouts after you cycle out of the 8870 program. This however, is totally up to you.

Because the triceps are heavily worked when performing pressing movements for the chest and, because biceps are heavily worked when performing pulling movements for the back, never schedule triceps workouts the day after chest or visa versa and never

schedule biceps workouts the day after back or visa versa. Notice the schedule I have outlined allows for plenty of rest between these workouts. If you change the schedule from above keep this important point in mind.

Do not add weight, pyramiding up, during the 8 x 8 portion of this program. By the same token do not reduce the weight either. Keep the same weight throughout for all eight sets. Once you are able to perform 8 x 8 comfortably with your 70% poundage, increase the weight slightly. Do not attempt to add too much too fast.

The important points for you to remember while following the 8870 are these.

1. Warm up fully and completely before starting your workout. Be sure to include stretching movements.
2. Take time to determine your actual 1 rep max weight in the movements you have selected for this program. Do not consider one attempt to be accurate.
3. Always start with the 2 x 5 heavy movements first which are to be followed by the 8 x 8 70% movements.
4. Use the same weight for all 8 x 8 70% movements.
5. Work each muscle group only once per week.
6. Schedule workouts so that you do not work secondary muscle groups, chest or triceps, back or biceps, the next day after working a primary muscle group.
7. Follow the 8870 program as long as you feel you are receiving benefits from it. Remember, the more advanced you are the more you need to cycle different routines into your training.
8. Keep your diet high in good sources of protein and complex carbs.

9. Take advantage of the shorter time you will be training to push yourself harder during each rep and set of the 8870 program. Do not hold back on the weight you use or the intensity you employ.

10. Make certain to rotate the heavy movements with the 8 x 8 70% movements every other workout.

Give this program your all out effort and you will feel and see a noticeable difference almost immediately. Do not let the fact you are only performing two movements per body part, one day per week throw you into thinking it is not enough. Performed correctly 8870 is much more intense than it appears to be. Of course that really depends on how much effort you put into it.

| Weight | 70% | 80% | 85% | 90% |
|---------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 30 | 21 | 24 | 26 | 27 |
| 35 | 25 | 28 | 30 | 32 |
| 40 | 28 | 32 | 34 | 36 |
| 45 | 32 | 36 | 38 | 41 |
| 50 | 35 | 40 | 43 | 45 |
| 55 | 39 | 44 | 47 | 50 |
| 60 | 42 | 48 | 51 | 54 |
| 65 | 46 | 52 | 55 | 59 |
| 70 | 49 | 56 | 60 | 63 |
| 75 | 53 | 60 | 64 | 68 |
| 80 | 56 | 64 | 68 | 72 |
| 85 | 60 | 68 | 72 | 77 |
| 90 | 63 | 72 | 77 | 81 |
| 95 | 67 | 76 | 81 | 86 |
| 100 | 70 | 80 | 85 | 90 |
| 105 | 74 | 84 | 90 | 95 |
| 110 | 77 | 88 | 94 | 99 |
| 115 | 81 | 92 | 98 | 104 |
| 120 | 84 | 96 | 102 | 108 |
| 125 | 88 | 100 | 106 | 113 |
| 130 | 91 | 104 | 111 | 117 |
| 135 | 95 | 108 | 115 | 122 |
| 140 | 98 | 112 | 119 | 126 |
| 145 | 102 | 116 | 123 | 131 |
| 150 | 105 | 120 | 128 | 135 |
| 155 | 109 | 124 | 132 | 140 |
| 160 | 112 | 128 | 136 | 144 |
| 165 | 116 | 132 | 140 | 149 |
| 170 | 119 | 136 | 145 | 153 |
| 175 | 123 | 140 | 149 | 158 |
| 180 | 126 | 144 | 153 | 162 |
| 185 | 130 | 148 | 157 | 167 |
| 190 | 133 | 152 | 162 | 171 |
| 195 | 137 | 156 | 166 | 176 |
| 200 | 140 | 160 | 170 | 180 |
| 205 | 144 | 164 | 174 | 185 |
| 210 | 147 | 168 | 179 | 189 |
| 215 | 151 | 172 | 183 | 194 |
| 220 | 154 | 176 | 187 | 198 |
| 225 | 158 | 180 | 191 | 203 |
| 230 | 161 | 184 | 196 | 207 |
| 235 | 165 | 188 | 200 | 212 |
| 240 | 168 | 192 | 204 | 216 |
| 245 | 172 | 196 | 208 | 221 |
| 250 | 175 | 200 | 213 | 225 |
| 255 | 179 | 204 | 217 | 230 |
| 260 | 182 | 208 | 221 | 234 |
| 265 | 186 | 212 | 252 | 239 |

| Weight | 70% | 80% | 85% | 90% |
|---------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 270 | 189 | 216 | 230 | 243 |
| 275 | 193 | 220 | 234 | 248 |
| 280 | 196 | 224 | 238 | 252 |
| 285 | 200 | 228 | 242 | 257 |
| 290 | 203 | 232 | 247 | 261 |
| 295 | 207 | 236 | 251 | 266 |
| 300 | 210 | 240 | 255 | 270 |
| 305 | 214 | 244 | 259 | 275 |
| 310 | 217 | 248 | 264 | 279 |
| 315 | 221 | 252 | 268 | 284 |
| 320 | 224 | 256 | 272 | 288 |
| 325 | 228 | 260 | 276 | 293 |
| 330 | 231 | 264 | 281 | 297 |
| 335 | 235 | 268 | 285 | 302 |
| 340 | 238 | 272 | 289 | 306 |
| 345 | 242 | 276 | 293 | 311 |
| 350 | 245 | 280 | 298 | 315 |
| 355 | 249 | 284 | 302 | 320 |
| 360 | 252 | 288 | 306 | 324 |
| 365 | 256 | 292 | 310 | 329 |
| 370 | 259 | 296 | 315 | 333 |
| 375 | 263 | 300 | 319 | 338 |
| 380 | 266 | 304 | 323 | 342 |
| 385 | 270 | 308 | 327 | 347 |
| 390 | 273 | 312 | 332 | 351 |
| 395 | 277 | 316 | 336 | 356 |
| 400 | 280 | 320 | 340 | 360 |
| 405 | 284 | 324 | 344 | 365 |
| 410 | 287 | 328 | 349 | 369 |
| 415 | 291 | 332 | 353 | 374 |
| 420 | 294 | 336 | 357 | 378 |
| 425 | 298 | 340 | 361 | 383 |
| 430 | 301 | 344 | 366 | 387 |
| 435 | 305 | 348 | 370 | 392 |
| 440 | 308 | 352 | 374 | 396 |
| 445 | 312 | 356 | 378 | 401 |
| 450 | 315 | 360 | 383 | 405 |
| 455 | 319 | 364 | 387 | 410 |
| 460 | 322 | 368 | 391 | 414 |
| 465 | 326 | 372 | 395 | 419 |
| 470 | 329 | 376 | 400 | 423 |
| 475 | 333 | 380 | 404 | 428 |
| 480 | 336 | 384 | 408 | 432 |
| 485 | 340 | 388 | 412 | 437 |
| 490 | 343 | 392 | 417 | 441 |
| 495 | 347 | 396 | 421 | 446 |
| 500 | 350 | 400 | 425 | 450 |