

Favorite Exercises

by

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As with all things, time brings about change. Perhaps dramatic and unmistakable and sometimes slight and hardly noticeable but change none the less. So are the progressions a person who has a life long devotion to bodybuilding experiences. With age, experience, and maturity comes change in ones physical, emotional, and mental state. For the majority of us, the older one becomes the more dramatic the changes. Normally they are not sudden changes but changes that gradually come about over the years.

Two examples are in the category of strength and size. I recognize there are always exceptions but most individuals will experience a significant reduction in strength and size of the muscle after a certain age. What age? This point will vary from individual to individual but all will experience some reduction. Most noticeable of all may be in the amount of weight used for movements such as squats – that is if at a certain age full squats are even being performed at all; and the other is the size of the upper arm.

Another area is in the body's ability to recuperate and the amount of resistance or work that results in stimulating the muscles to respond. I can't provide any scientific proof for my statements outside of my personal experiences but, over the years this has been the best proving ground for me.

I've discovered it takes much longer to recuperate from a strenuous workout today than it did years ago and it also takes far less today to stimulate my muscles than it did back "in the day". I have also found some movements I discarded earlier in my career as non productive can now be classified productive. On the other hand, some movements I used exclusively back "in the

day” are today not nearly as likely to provide results. The last point is that some movements I hated to perform years ago bring joy today and some I really liked doing years ago do not bring satisfaction or the same results they once did.

Take a close look at any champion bodybuilder who was once considered the cream of the crop when they were in their prime. If they are in their sixties and still dedicated to working out, compare their physiques. I know that’s pretty absurd – but take a close look. Some still have the delts, chest, back, abs, and some have even improved the legs but look closely; the arms show a dramatic change. Nothing to what they once were. They are smaller in size, less full in density, and less thick than before. Arms more than any other body part, seem to reflect the onslaught of time.

What are my favorite exercises for each body part is a question I am asked more now than before. I can’t recall the subject ever being brought up as often as it has of late. Over the years some of my favorites have changed from time to time. They may be my favorite this month; next month another exercise may take its place. Having said that, some movements have remained on my all time favorites list over the years. The criteria for being included in the list are two fold: Mentally I do not become bored and secondly it produces results.

Just because an exercise is on my favorite list does not mean I include it in every workout. I repeatedly talked about my instinctive training and how I change workouts almost each session. I love pizza too but I don’t eat it every meal or every day. Common sense... a little goes a long way.

Chest: Incline Dumbbell Press.

Back: Bent Over Barbell Row.

Delts: Standing Dumbbell Press.

Biceps: Seated Incline Dumbbell Curls.

Triceps: Dips.

Quads: Full Back Squats.

Calves: Standing Smith Machine Calf Raises.

Forearms: Reverse Curl.

Neck: Towel Resistance.

Abs: Kneeling Rope Crunches.

If I had to perform only one movement for each body part these are the ones I would perform. In fact, due to limited time, schedule conflicts, personal issues, and other such common occurrences that life often places in our paths, I've had to follow abbreviated workouts from time to time. There are many, many combinations that can be constructed with the above movements. Here is one example of how you can draft up a routine, it's one that I've used a lot.

Monday and Thursday:

Incline Dumbbell Press

Superset with

Bent Over Barbell Row

Seated Incline Dumbbell Curls

Superset with

Dips

Tuesday and Friday:

Standing Dumbbell Press (up and down the rack)

Full Back Squats

Calf Raises

Kneeling Rope Crunches

This routine is a basic two on, one off, two on, two off schedule. It takes minimum time to complete. It is brief enough to provide explosive intensity for progress and does not over tax the body as each body part is worked twice per week. All in all I find it ideal for times when time constraints are an obstacle.

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