

Arm Mass

By

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A product of Bodybuilding's Golden Era, the 60's, I can reflect back on mistakes made in nutrition as well as training. In those days we trained each body part three times per week and it was not uncommon for our workouts to last three hours or so. Somewhere along the line I broke away from what was then considered the "norm" and started to listen to my body and train more instinctively. I am not genetically gifted and I recognized early on that although I loved bodybuilding, I would never stand on a dais and accept a trophy for winning a major title. For me that was okay, it was the training I loved anyway. My goal was self improvement, not a major title. The sound of the iron banging together, the sweat, the pump, the feel of performing a rep in perfect form, those were the important things to me.

Then, before the 60's, today and into the future, bodybuilders will focus on arm development first and foremost, it's only natural. The more advanced one becomes the more they recognize and understand total body development and proportions and advance beyond the arms only thought pattern. As with anything in life it's the natural progression of maturity. Still arms remain the envy of all who train. For centuries there has been a non-existent veil that surrounds ones quest for massive arms. There has to be a secret! There has to be some trick! There has to be something that is not spoken outside the inner circle of champion bodybuilders that sport 21" arms! There just has to be! Why? Well, because you have followed every routine in every magazine exactly as outlined. You never miss a workout and you train with complete and total dedication yet you still have not been able to achieve those massive arms you so desperately seek, right? You bet I'm right! Look, I've been at this for more years than the age of most readers. During this time I have learned many great and valuable lessons as well as making more than my fair share of mistakes.

Today, the world is global. We operate in a hi-tech world and that includes bodybuilding. Nothing wrong with that, in fact, it's great. As with all new and exciting breakthroughs, you can check back into history and find that there is nothing really new at all. Ideas, methods, training, all evolve from what was. They simply take on a new face and name but are not really new and unique. Concepts talked about by some in the 60's were disregarded as useless. Today some of these very same concepts have become mainstream and are considered new, unique, and recent scientific breakthroughs! A few, very few are but most are not. Admittedly I am a dinosaur from the past living in a strange world. I personally find this comforting as I can say my piece with complete confidence because I have been there and done that. For almost forty years I have experimented, tested, changed, incorporated and developed training methods using the almost forgotten method of trial by error. This experience has provided a rich resource upon which to draw for helping others make the right moves with their training.

If it's massive arms you seek you must begin with the truth. Listen to it, learn it, and most important of all accept it. The truth can often hurt but without it you live in an unrealistic world. Massive arms require living in a real world and seeking the truth. Well, here's the truth.

1. Genetics play perhaps the most important part of not only how large your arms can be but also their shape. Now if you are not a genetically gifted bodybuilder do not take this statement as a cause for you to have a yard sale and sell your weights. True, you may not be able to develop a 21" arm but this will not prevent you from sporting an 18" or even 19" well shaped and defined arm and what's wrong with that? A well shaped defined 18" arm is much more impressive than a flat chunk of flesh that measures 21" anyway. It takes a lot of time and experience before one can say for certain any lack of arm development is due to genetics. Don't be quick in jumping to this assessment; it's the lazy way out.

2. Most bodybuilders, advanced included, over train their arms. Advanced bodybuilders however have experience on their side and it won't take them long before

they realize they are in an over training state and take corrective action. The arms are some of the smaller muscle groups of the body and are easy to over train, especially since they are involved and worked when training almost all other body parts. The key is in taxing them to their limit and then stop. Do not continue as it results in a loss of muscle tissue not more size.

3. Following a routine used by someone with those 21” arms will most likely do you very little if any good at all. Remember genetics? Well, if someone sports 21” arms you can bet they have some good genetics and chances are that you don’t, so following their routine will only hinder your progress.

4. You must allow for plenty of rest between arm workouts to allow your muscles to recover. Exercise does basically two things; pumps blood into the region being worked and tears down muscle tissue. It is the protein and nutrients your muscles receive during the recuperative stages that are responsible for adding mass. Recuperation takes place during resting stages. Don’t make the mistake of taking this for granted.

5. Non-gifted bodybuilders most often obtain the best results in training their arms only one day a week. Biceps and triceps should be trained together on days when no other body part is being worked. Leave one day between back and chest work before training arms. Always work biceps before triceps for a host of reasons not the least being it will help increase blood flow into the elbow region which will come under heavy fire during any movements for triceps.

6. There are no secrets to arm development. It takes a lot of hard work and dedication. It takes a lot of time and effort. If you are impatient and attempt to rush the process you are sure to fail. Arms tend to be the last muscle group to show improvement and regardless of the improvement made, it never seems enough to satisfy the trainee.

There, you have six truths about gaining more arm mass for the natural bodybuilder that is not genetically gifted. Simple but important, it’s not rocket science.

It is dedication, concentration, determination, patience, combined with a solid diet, supplements, and a routine designed for your specific body type.

No longer would I train arms three days per week or any other body part for that matter, the exception being abs and calves and I don't advocate training calves more than twice per week. A change from the 60's as far as frequency goes but the exercises are still solid and useful. In fact some of the best arm movements from that era are no longer being used. Ones such as the lying dumbbell curls, back to the wall curls, seated barbell curls, reverse grip triceps press, and decline dumbbell extensions just to name a few. Oh well, that's another story for another time.

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