

**Q: Dear Coach: I am ready to start a weight training program and I'd like to gain definition in my shoulders, arms, back, thighs and calves. What do you advise? - "22 -n- Ready to Burn"**

**A:** Dear Ready to Burn: Resistance training for sculpting, or body building, is different than training for muscular endurance, strength, power, or functional activities. Many people enjoy the effects of body sculpting because they enjoy a significant and noticeable difference in your appearance – and that's when the compliments flow!

When you gain lean muscle mass from sculpting, this requires changing your body composition. Body composition is the percentage or ratio of fat, muscle, soft tissue, and bone in the body. Most people wish to gain muscle bulk rather than fat when they want to build shape and definition.

A hypertrophy program – or muscle bulking program – helps increase muscle fiber size. To do this, your goal for repetitions with each set of resistance training ranges 6 – 12, and your rest period is shorter than strength or power work-outs; you would rest 30 – 90 seconds between sets. You need to be working at a challenging level so to complete your number of repetitions you should be working at a level equivalent to 67 to 85% of effort to move weight in a safe manner with one maximal attempt. For example, if you perform one bench press with safe technique to the point of fatigue with 100kg, then your goal for hypertrophy may be to achieve approximately 8-10 repetitions with 70 kg per set.

A qualified strength and conditioning coach or experienced personal trainer can guide you through a specific program for your target body areas if you are unfamiliar with weight lifting technique. They can help motivate you while varying your program to keep things interesting and challenging, too!

Yours in health and fitness  
The Coach

*Sara Pazell is a strength and conditioning coach, occupational therapist, yoga instructor, personal trainer and group fitness instructor. She is a trainer with Paradise Training.*