

Basic Anabolic Hypertrophy Training (BAHT)

By Josh Hewett

Throughout history both men and woman have pursued their aesthetic ideal, with men typically trying to gain muscular weight while women focus on losing body fat. Both sexes usually have some sort of ideal physique in mind, often derived from the beautiful bodies dominating our media.

But there tends to be a big difference between the way men and women perceive themselves as they chase these goals: women never think they're lean enough, while men suddenly visualize themselves as Arnold after they pick up a dumbbell for the first time!



But listen guys, if you're goal is to gain some **serious muscle mass**, it takes time. You need to follow a serious training and nutrition plan. **That's exactly what BAHT is.**

So who the hell am I?

I'm a certified personal trainer, public speaker, author, former strength athlete, founder of Team Barbarian, and the owner of Top Form Fitness.

My qualifications include a degree in Kinesiology, multiple personal training certifications, and experience training a wide variety of clients both privately and with various organizations. I have been working in the fitness industry for over 20 years, and have helped hundreds of people reach their physique and performance goals.

You can find out more about my background by stalking me on my site at:

<http://top-form-fitness.com/trainers.html>



In my 20's and 30's my only training goal was to get bigger and stronger. I competed in strength athletics and just focused on eating big and lifting big. This was effective to a point, but my training plan was oriented more towards strength rather than hypertrophy, so although I did get bigger, it wasn't all quality mass.

*Btw, if you're goal is to get as strong as possible, check out my strength training program: [BARBARIAN STRENGTH TRAINING](http://www.GETSTRONGprogram.com) at www.GETSTRONGprogram.com



Once I hit my 40's I realize I had accumulated a little extra body fat without really realizing it ... I was a chubby guy looking in the mirror and seeing myself as jacked and huge!

But as a fitness professional helping other people lose fat and gain muscle, I decided I better look the part. So I ventured on a quest for six pack abs and dedicated myself to getting lean, which lead to the creation of my book [“Get Lean: Permanent Physique Transformation”](http://www.GetLeanBook.com). If your goal is to lose fat, I recommend you check it out at www.GetLeanBook.com:



After focusing on losing body fat for over a year, and successfully achieving a single digit body fat % as well as the coveted "six pack", I decided that I now looked a little too "skinny" for my liking. Which is why I designed this program you are now reading: to gain a few pounds of muscle while minimizing fat gain.



Yes I lost the fat, but now I feel the need for MASS!

In preparation for this goal I've added to my knowledge of hypertrophy by doing a serious amount of research, as well as speaking with other athletes and fitness experts who are well versed in the science of growing muscle. I used what I've learned to develop a solid program for putting on size: **Basic Anabolic Hypertrophy Training**.

Training to be as strong as possible will help you put on muscle, but there are some differences between training purely for strength as opposed to training specifically for hypertrophy and aesthetics. So keep in mind that although you will get stronger by following this program, it is not designed to increase your 1 rep max... it is designed to pack on muscle mass!



It's also worth mentioning that this is not necessarily a beginner program (although a beginner could still benefit). I won't be getting into any detail on exercise technique so I'm assuming you already have some training experience under your belt (but I will post [demo videos on my blog HERE](#)). It may take some time to get used to the higher frequency training in this program as well.

Let's take a look at the fundamentals that form the foundation of this program.

First of all it's helpful to consider that hypertrophy is multi-factorial... here's a link to an expert guest post on my blog that discusses this. It's called **How to Induce Hypertrophy**: <http://top-form-fitness.com/fitness-...y-gain-muscle/>

But rather than outline *every single factor* let's review the main aspects:

1. **Mechanical Tension** - this addresses progressive overload, resistance used, exercise selection, etc. Emphasized in mid rep ranges.
2. **Muscular Damage** - inroad / fatigue, eccentric emphasis, intensity threshold. Emphasized in low rep ranges.
3. **Metabolic Distress** - reduced rest intervals, supersets, dropsets, hormonal affect, etc. Emphasized in higher rep ranges.

So the goal is to accommodate as many of the primary factors for hypertrophy as possible, without compromising what I consider to be the MAIN factor: *progressive tension overload!*

BAHT Program Fundamentals:

-Mental Aspect: Visualize muscle growth and use affirmations daily. Maintain intense focus on creating maximum tension, contracting and growing the target muscle every rep. Work hard!

-Full Range of Motion: Perform each repetition with a full range of motion (as long as you can control that range). I.e: when fully extended with bicep curl, try to *contract triceps* at end range! This also relates to using exercises that challenge the muscle at both extremes of its strength curve.

-Exercise Selection: choose primarily compound (multi-joint) movements. As you will notice, this program leaves plenty of room for you to choose exercise variations, as long as these primary factors are considered.

-High Frequency: hit each muscle group twice weekly. Research has shown that the more frequently you smash each muscle, the faster your gains are (to a point). *Don't believe me? I can share more info on this if you want.

-High Intensity: take each set to performance failure, then on final set do as many reps as possible followed by a drop set (reduce load 30-40% and continue to fatigue).

-Tempo: fast controlled concentric; slower controlled eccentric (approx 2 seconds). Maintain *constant continuous Time Under Tension* during every set. Continuous tension means you DO NOT rest or pause between reps during a set.

-Antagonist Super-Sets: pair up opposite exercises into push-pull "antagonist" supersets, with minimal rest in the superset. I.e: chest press superset with row.

-Rest Intervals: 1 to 2 minutes between supersets. Aim for around 90 seconds, even while increasing load.

-Recovery: Aim for 7 to 9 hours of quality sleep each night. Follow the Nutrition Guidelines.

-Duration: Aim to keep your workout less than 1 hour. This will be challenging by the last couple of weeks of the program.

-Set/Rep Range: 5 to 15 reps per exercise. You will be hitting around **25 to 30 total reps** per exercise every workout, with an inverse set / rep relationship. So total volume will remain similar, but intensity will increase.

-Warming Up: Remember to perform 1 or 2 lighter warm up sets before starting the working sets. Your warm ups don't count towards your total reps/sets. I also recommend performing a [dynamic warm up](#) and some [core activation](#).

-Periodization: This is a 6 week loading ramp with descending reps and ascending weight (MUST increase load every single workout)... yep, that's key.

Set – Rep Parameters:
Week One - 2 sets of 15 reps
Week Two - 2 sets of 12 reps
Week Three - 3 sets of 10 reps
Week Four - 3 sets of 8 reps
Week Five - 4 sets of 6 reps
Week Six - 5 sets of 5 reps

Once you've completed the entire program, you can go back to the beginning of the set/rep ramp and start on Week One with a slightly heavier weight than you did the previous time. I also recommend **switching up your main exercises every few cycles**; (ie: switch between dumbbells and barbells; change the angle of the exercise; alternate between free weights and machines; etc).

Don't go crazy with trying to "shock" your muscles by changing everything all the time, but sometimes a little variation can stimulate new adaptation.



OK, so here's the actual program:

BASIC ANABOLIC HYPERTROPHY TRAINING (BAHT)

Day One – Lower Body:

Squat variation



SuperSet with:

Hamstring curls (OR GHR)



Deadlift variation *(ya, you're doing deadlifts & squats in the SAME workout... get over it!)*



SuperSet with:

Leg extension *(OR Single Leg Push ie: lunges, if you don't have a leg extension machine)*



Core and / or Calves



*(I focus on core myself, as a member of **Team No Calves** I'm not permitted to train calves, LOL)*

****Remember, the exercise variations I've shown here are simply examples... you can choose whatever variation fits within that exercise description.***

BASIC ANABOLIC HYPERTROPHY TRAINING (BAHT)

Day Two- Upper Body:

Vertical Pull (*ie: pulldowns / pullups variation*)



SuperSet with:

Vertical Push (*ie: overhead press variation*)



Horizontal Pull (*ie: row variation*)



SuperSet with:

Horizontal Push (*ie: chest press variation*)



Isolation Work:

Biceps



SuperSet with:

Triceps



BASIC ANABOLIC HYPERTROPHY TRAINING (BAHT)

Day Three- Lower:

Deadlift variation

SuperSet with:



Leg extension *(OR Single Leg Push ie: lunges, if you don't have a leg extension machine)*



Squat variation

SuperSet with:



Hamstring curls (OR GHR)



Core/Calves



BASIC ANABOLIC HYPERTROPHY TRAINING (BAHT)

Day Four - Upper:

Horizontal Pull *(ie: row variation)*



SuperSet with:

Horizontal Push *(ie: chest press variation)*



Vertical Pull *(ie: pulldowns / pullups variation)*



SuperSet with:

Vertical Push *(ie: overhead press variation)*



Isolation Work:

Rear Flyes



SuperSet with:

Lateral Raises



*(NOTE- During my **Arm Specialization Program**, included below, you will substitute more bicep/tricep exercises here instead of shoulder isolation for a few weeks)*

Other Considerations & Resources:

- As you can see, you are performing the same exercises twice per week, but you switch the order of supersets so that each pair of exercises gets a chance to be trained first in the workout when you are strongest.
- Although your main goal is to increase weight every week, focus primarily on **increasing the resistance used on the FIRST superset pair in each workout**, while *maintaining* the weight in the secondary exercises if you are unable to increase them. Everybody gets their turn at the top each week!
- **How do you know how much weight to use?** Here are a couple of “Rep Max” calculators you can use to estimate your 5, 10, and 15 rep max weights:
 - <http://www.miniwebtool.com/1-rep-max-calculator/>
 - <http://www.ivannikolov.com/calculators/rep-max-calculator/>

I'm not sure why there is such a variance between them, but every damn calculator I've used gives me different numbers! So just use it as a guideline to get started, and you'll get used to what weights are appropriate.

Just be sure to maintain the prescribed form and tempo for each rep range! In general I've found it best to **add about 10 lbs to lower body exercises and 5 lbs to upper body exercises each week**.

- I'll be posting training tutorial videos for each workout in the BAHT program on my blog for you to check out at:
>> [BAHT Training Videos](#) <<
- **Why use such high reps on the first week?:** although the recognized rep range for hypertrophy is typically 6 to 12, there are benefits to including higher rep work on occasion. It is beneficial for glycogen depletion, which can help draw in more glycogen post workout. It is also great for sarcoplasmic hypertrophy (*the pump*), increasing capillary density, nutrient delivery, circulation, and waste removal.

At the beginning of the program, high reps can improve neural muscular activation (NMA)... basically you are “greasing the groove” to become more efficient with your technique. At the end of the program, the use of lighter weights for one week can assist in recovery, by giving your nervous system a break from the heavy lifting.

- I know this program may be different from what you are used to, but stick with it for a full cycle or two... the main reason it might not work is because of your own “*better idea!*”

Here's a link to one of my other blog posts you might find of interest, where I review a **Hypertrophy Seminar I attended with Big Ben Pakulski:**

<http://top-form-fitness.com/fitness-blog/top-5-muscle-building-tips/>



Nutritional Guidelines:

The training program is the foundation for stimulating muscular growth in your body, but if you don't follow a solid nutrition plan you aren't likely to grow... or you might get bigger but you'd look like shit because of all the excess fat you'd gain.

The old-school approach of "dirty bulking" to pack on as much mass as possible, followed by an extreme cutting phase to drop all the extra body fat, may work to some extent, but it's certainly not the most efficient way to reach your goal. Of course, if you are using anabolic steroids and thermogenic drugs, you might have more success with this than natural athletes do.

But if you follow certain nutrition guidelines, you can start packing on some serious muscle while minimizing fat gain. I'm not including a specific meal plan in this ebook, but here are some tips that will help guide you:

- **Body-composition:** Try to **get as lean as possible before starting this program.** If you are over 15% body fat I suggest you first follow a slight caloric deficit and include a couple of weekly HIIT sessions to try to get down close to 10%.

I also recommend **reducing carbohydrates or carb cycling while you cut**. This will PRIME you for growth by creating a favorable anabolic state which encourages glycogen storage and nutrient-partitioning, once you start increasing your calories and carbs back up during this program. Basically deplete first, and then reload.

- Once you commit to growing, **follow a modest caloric surplus** and monitor your gains so you can adjust your calories as needed. I typically estimate *15 calories per pound of body weight* to be your daily maintenance calories (dependant on activity). Then **add an extra 300 to 500 calories per day** to gain weight, track your progress each week, and adjust your caloric intake accordingly.
- Aim for **1 to 1.5 grams of protein / lb of body weight daily**. The remainder of your daily calorie allowance will come from carbs (higher on training days) and fats (higher on rest days). Consume plenty of fibrous green vegetables. Stay well hydrated, drinking about 1 liter of water for every 50 lbs of your bodyweight daily.
- **Supplements:** Creatine, Whey Protein, Fish Oil, Vitamin D. Those are my basics... you can include BCAA's or whatever else you want.
- To **calculate your daily caloric needs**, you can use any number of free online calculators. I like to use www.MyFitnessPal.com to track my daily food intake on a program like this.



Here are some forms you can **print out** to take with you to the gym, including a **Program Outline** card, and **Workout Tracking Forms** to record your weights used.

Remember, I'm just providing you with a template to work from ... you still need to choose your exercise variations, write your selections on the Tracking Forms, and GO HARD!

Basic Anabolic Hypertrophy Training (BAHT)

	Day 1: Lower	Day 2: Upper	Day 3: Lower	Day 4: Upper
2-5 sets X 5-15 reps Ramp	Deadlift Variation <i>Superset with:</i> Leg Extension / Lunge Variation	Pull Up / Pulldown <i>Superset with:</i> Overhead Press Variation	Squat Variation <i>Superset with:</i> Hamstrings Variation	Row Variation <i>SuperSet with:</i> Dips OR Chest Press Variation
2-5 sets X 5-15 reps Ramp	Hamstring Curl <i>SuperSet with:</i> Squat Variation	Row Variation <i>SuperSet with:</i> Chest Press Variation OR Dips	Leg Ext OR Lunge <i>SuperSet with:</i> Deadlift Variation	Pull Up / Pulldown <i>Superset with:</i> Overhead Press Variation
2-5 sets X 5-15 reps	Core OR Calf Exercise	Triceps <i>SuperSet with:</i> Biceps	Core OR Calf Exercise	Face pulls / Rear Flyes <i>SuperSet with:</i> Lateral Raises

6 week loading ramp (must increase load/tension every workout):

2 sets X 15 reps	2 sets X 12 reps	3 sets X 10 reps	3 sets X 8 reps	4 sets X 6 reps	5 sets X 5 reps
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www.Youtube.com/topformfitness

www.Facebook.com/topformfitness

www.Instagram.com/topformfitness

www.Top-Form-Fitness.com/fitness-blog

BAHT Protocol Tracking Form

Day One: Lower	2 sets x 15 reps	2 sets x 12 reps	2 sets x 10 reps	3 sets x 8 reps	4 sets x 6 reps	5 sets x 5 reps
Squat variation:						
Hamstrings:						
Deadlift:						
Leg Ext/Lunge:						
Core / Calves:						

Day Two: Upper	2 sets x 15 reps	2 sets x 12 reps	2 sets x 10 reps	3 sets x 8 reps	4 sets x 6 reps	5 sets x 5 reps
Vertical Pull:						
Vertical Push:						
Horizontal Pull:						
Horizontal Push:						
Biceps:						
Triceps:						

BAHT Protocol Tracking Form

Day Three: Lower	2 sets x 15 reps	2 sets x 12 reps	2 sets x 10 reps	3 sets x 8 reps	4 sets x 6 reps	5 sets x 5 reps
Deadlift:						
Leg Ext/Lunge:						
Squat:						
Hamstrings:						
Core / Calves:						

Day Four: Upper	2 sets x 15 reps	2 sets x 12 reps	2 sets x 10 reps	3 sets x 8 reps	4 sets x 6 reps	5 sets x 5 reps
Horizontal Pull:						
Horizontal Push:						
Vertical Pull:						
Vertical Push:						
*Rear Delts:						
*Lateral Raise:						

**You can substitute more bicep and tricep exercises here instead of shoulder work, if arm specialization is the goal.*

Now you have a solid plan for putting on a few pounds of muscle. This program works, as long as you do. Put your ego aside, used strict form, full range of motion, controlled tempo, increase weight each week, and remember to use drop-sets on the last set to full failure. Let's do this... it's time to "lump up"!

So let's say you've got a year or more of decent mass "gainz" but you still have a lagging muscle group that you want to target. For the sake of argument, let's say that lagging body part is "arms". What to do?

Well, you're in luck... because I've included a BONUS with this ebook, that I'm calling:



Every red-blooded man with hair on his balls wants bigger, more muscular arms. It's in our DNA. Women are also attracted to large manly arms, whether they admit it or not. Their subconscious mind recognizes huge guns as a sign that you're an Alpha Male and a good protector / provider. That's a solid bro-scientific fact.

With that in mind, how can you make those bitches grow? Well, the first step is to focus on gaining some quality muscle mass over your entire frame, by following the BAHT program and nutrition plan for several months. I don't recommend focusing on smaller muscle group too much until you have a decent base to build from.

Once you've gained a few pounds, there are several ways to emphasize arms and trigger greater growth. Here are a few considerations:

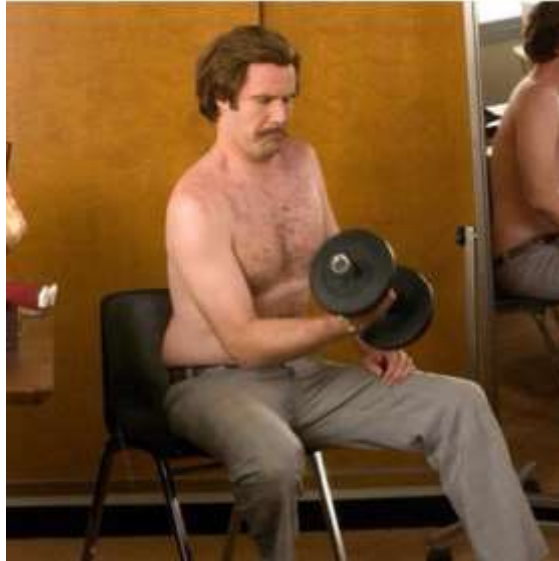
1. **Focus on big compound movements** for your upper body workout, such as chin ups and dips, but if you want to specialize in arm development you need to include more **isolation exercises for biceps and triceps** as well.

- 2. Train arms with higher frequency.** Hitting arms two or three times per week will lead to faster gains. Don't stress about that overtraining bullshit... you're only doing this for a few weeks.
- 3. When possible, train arms alone;** separate from the rest of your upper body workout. For example, rather than always training arms at the end of your upper body workout, hit them a few hours later that same day (if 2-a-day workouts are possible) or the following day. This will allow you to use more weight and attack your arms while they are fresh.
- 4. Train arms with less volume (but high intensity)!** Small muscles require less volume, and recover faster (which allows for more frequent sessions). Smaller muscles have less overall muscle fibre. Therefore it takes LESS overall training to fatigue these muscles and exhaust glycogen stores. I suggest just choosing ONE bicep and triceps exercise per workout and hitting a few hard super-sets. You don't need 10 different arm exercises in one workout!
- 5. Train biceps and triceps in their weakest positions,** at each extreme range of motion (*ie: when the muscle is fully shortened or lengthened*). Arms get a lot of work in the mid-range where they are strongest. To stimulate new growth, introduce a new stimulus by targeting different positions in the strength curve. You'll see what I mean when you check out the exercise selections below.
- 6. Thick bar training** can increase muscle activation and blow up your forearms. Try adding Fat Gripz to your arm workouts and see what happens. Go to www.fatgripz.com to check these things out... they kick ass.



- 7. Do some research on Occlusion Training.** It's not for everyone, but it may support hypertrophy without the need to use heavy weights. It works particularly well for arms.
- 8. Supra-maximal eccentric training** is a great high intensity training technique for hypertrophy, but I don't suggest using it too often; it's very taxing on your muscles and nervous system. However, used once every few weeks, eccentric only training will cause more muscular micro-damage leading to greater growth.

Basically, you want to use a heavier weight than you can lift with concentric effort, and just focus on lowering under control eccentrically. For example, you could do a heavy 1 arm dumbbell curl and lift it up with both hands, lowering for a 3 to 4 second negative rep with one arm (like “spotting” yourself). A couple of sets of 5 reps like that will do the trick!



If this is you, it might be time to get Tickets to the Gunshow!

In addition to the above training tips, you will still be following the same BAHT program template and training principles as described in the first part of this ebook. But instead of doing the shoulder isolation work at the end of Day 4, you’d replace it another bicep / tricep superset.

Start out hitting arms twice per week like that, at the end of each upper body workout (or later that same day). After a few weeks, once you get used to the higher frequency training, progress to adding a 3rd “Arms Only” workout.

Now let’s look at the specific exercises involved in each of those arm training sessions.

Workout 1 - Fully Lengthened Positions:

As mentioned in Tip #5 above, we want to train our biceps and triceps at both extreme ranges of motion. One workout will focus on training biceps and triceps in a fully lengthened (stretch) position, using exercises such as **incline dumbbell curls** and **seated overhead tricep extensions**.



Workout 2 – Fully Shortened Positions:

Then at your next arm workout (performed after the Day 4 workout) you will train biceps and triceps in a fully flexed position.

I like to use a longer rope or cable for the **triceps pushdowns** so that I can extend further behind me with each rep to contract the triceps in the fully shortened position. (Keeping in mind the triceps also extend at the shoulder as well as at the elbow).



For the **bicep exercise** I recommend **cable curls reaching back behind your head** and really squeezing the biceps (with your elbows pointing up) to hit that full contraction in the shortened position. (Remember the bicep also contracts at the shoulder joint). Here's an example using a lat pulldown machine:



Workout 3 – Mid Range Positions:

This is an Extra Arms Only Day that you will add in after a few weeks of hitting arms twice per week. You'll need to find time to do this workout on its own, in addition to the regular 4 Day BAHT Split.

Training the extreme opposite ranges with the above exercises can be quite challenging, so you may need to start off using lighter weight in order to reach those fully stretched and fully shortened positions.

That's where this 3rd "arm only day" comes into play. Now you get to use the good old fashioned, heavy-ass mid-range exercises like standing bar curls and lying headcavers (or close grip press).

This workout is where I'd also experiment with using Fat Gripz, occlusion training, and the occasional supra-max eccentric workout.



Now you have all the tools you need to grow ... **go get it!**

*Yours in strength,
Josh Hewett*