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A bodybuilding and powerlifting guide :.

Training journals provide a path for progression

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Serious strength athletes must consider a training journal as a standard piece of equipment in their carry-on luggage. It doesn't matter what they call their gear – journal, record, diary, log – so long as it's included in the gym bag during intense training periods. Reporting to the gym without one is similar to an airline pilot taking off without a navigator. Lost in the wind, no pilot can remember a destination by merely thinking about previous travels. In the same respect, great battles were never won without a plan – small victories are possible but massive offensives must be accompanied by a detailed plan of attack. Training journals provide a written log of fitness thresholds experienced during resistance-training sessions. They identify how much more effort is needed to evolve into a stronger, more muscular individual.

Unfortunately, taking a knee to record intersession accomplishments is often overlooked in fitness facilities. The real upset is when someone readily spends several hundred dollars on sports nutrition products or personal training, yet fails to notice the potential found in a simple two-dollar ledger. Ironically, this little inexpensive alternative can lead to much greater progress than most of today's expensive dietary supplements. It also serves as a helpful training partner by showing off each day's improvements and failures. It shouldn't take $200 and a fancy advertisement to figure that out – only objective reasoning based on basic documentation. If you don't know where you've been, you can't know where you're going.

"I'm a bodybuilder, not a powerlifter," is possibly bodybuilding's most abused cliché. It's often used when fighting the idea of plotting strength efforts when the ultimate goal is muscle size and definition. There are a lot of differences in bodybuilding, versus powerlifting, but the general training concept is the same: develop a stronger physique. All powerlifters understand the value of strength training through progressive overloads, while many bodybuilders quickly dismiss the principle, opting to blindly train for a pump before calling it a day. The problem is, similar to inhuman strength performance, sleeve-splitting muscle growth only occurs by repeatedly overloading muscular systems with intense resistance training. If a bodybuilder can push 135 pounds 10 times today, he will be much more massive when pushing 315 pounds 10 times tomorrow. With that said, differences do exist. Bodybuilders generally don't use bench shirts to support their joints or train for any specific lifts. Powerlifters generally don't care to drop down to single-digit body-fat percentages. But despite their differences, both goal-focused groups of trainees depend on an

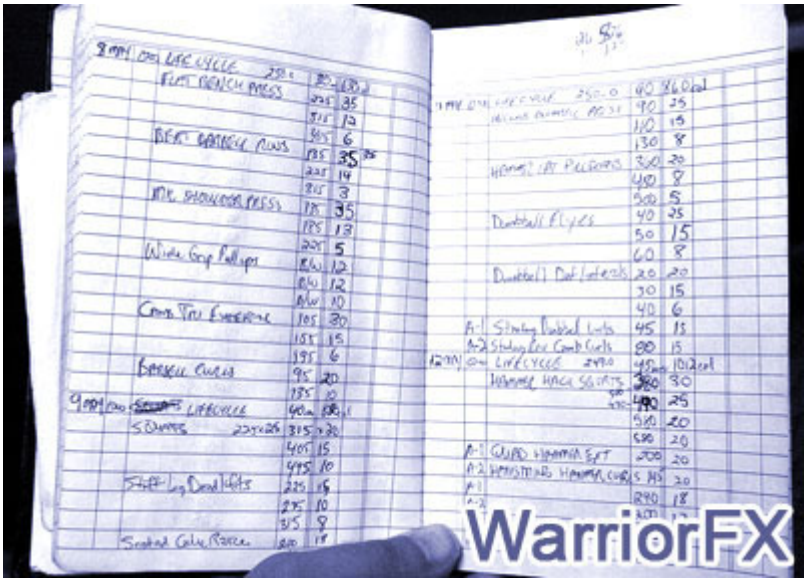
ability to overloading muscular systems. In powerlifting and bodybuilding: if you aren't training hard, you're not training at all.

Hard training improves attentiveness in an environment stimulated by adrenal output and surges of endorphins but detailed information about a session is quickly forgotten after a cool down and shower. Writing training results down on some sort of record makes recollecting numbers much more reasonable. At times, small load increases are only needed for continued progression, such as a pound or two, or less. Regardless of the amount of effort required during the next session, surpassing existing fitness threshold is never easy. The human body, more interested in survival than performance, instinctively resists extreme metabolic stress. Journals help keep strength athletes focused and on the right track. Nobody consciously tries to consistently report to a gym with little or no progress, but the body's deeply embedded survival mechanisms make it easy to get stuck in a monotonous rut for months – or years. Training journals assist in identifying stagnant phases in a resistance training program early on, so timely modifications in training can be introduced.

To get started, get a good ledger or grid out a blank sheet of paper with a straight-edge and pen. Keep in mind: the media you choose must be durable, since it's likely to get smashed between plates and dumbbells, as well as exposed to frequent drizzles of sweat from exhaustive high-energy training. Align the amount of columns with the intentions of the current training cycle. A maintenance strength routine may only need basic numbers, such as loads, sets, reps and dates. The written numbers will help to provide a preservation guide for each subsequent training day. Record everything in a chronological order for easy recollection later.

Advanced training documentation can include much more specific elements, such as the time of day, time to completion, time under tension, changes in body weight, mental disposition, as well as comprehensive program variables found in advanced training protocols. Post-workout calculations can attempt to measure the amount of work being performed in each session, or the perceived effort after finishing.

In the end, some information is better than none. Plotting a few details explaining training-day labors is more important than constantly slaving over heaps of information. If a trainee has it in his or her mind to reach a radical change in performance, merely jotting down a few reminders about a workout is a step in the right direction.



A basic log can easily fit within the columns established within a universally sold, hard cover money ledger.

An advance log may document more specific training variables to assure proper assessment of training success, or digress.

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