

# Turk's Training Principals

BY TURK FICKLING



Socrates and Schwarzenegger had one thing in common: philosophy. The Greek pondered heavy thoughts, the Austrian lifted heavy things. However, the 7-time Mr. Olympia incorporated his own training philosophy into a regimen that developed a physique worthy of comparison to an ancient Greek sculpture.

I've never been to Greece, and I've never been the governor of California. However, I am both passionate and philosophical

about my training methods! I'd like to introduce you to three letters that define my training philosophy. I call it TTP, or Turk's Training Principal.

I developed TTP to combat the inevitable muscular development plateaus one would get from doing conventional, volume training methods. My training philosophy and methodology virtually eliminates the ultra-high repetition loads required by other training systems that, to me, seem unsustainable over the long haul.

Let's examine volume training, then I'll explain why I am not a fan. For those of you who don't know, volume training is doing multiple sets of an exercise. For example, 3 sets of 10 reps is the most common routine on the planet. However, the main variation of volume training utilizes the ascending set principal. Simply stated, you either increase the reps in each set, or you increase the weight. Of course, when you increase the weight you decrease the sets. Either way,

the goal is to train to failure (complete muscle exhaustion) by the last set of the exercise. I have trained using this system for many years, and I've grown plenty of muscle in the process. The problem is, at some point, your muscular development will hit a plateau doing volume training. This is due to neuromuscular adaptation.

If your muscles could talk, they'd describe neuromuscular adaptation with a sneer, "Been there, done that, I know the routine, so now I'm done growing!" Precisely. Do you remember when someone showed you a new exercise, and after doing it you felt this incredible reaction, usually a super-pump during the exercise? Remember the mega-soreness the next day? Ultimately, the more you do this exercise, the pump is not as big and the soreness is not as intense. This is because your muscles have adapted to this new stimulus, and the tissue has compensated by growing lean mass to support the activity. This, in effect, is how we grow muscle. The problem is that neuromuscular adaptation will make that muscle growth eventually plateau. The key to continued growth is keeping your body in a state of continual, new compensation. My training

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philosophy and approach will make your muscles think twice about sneering again.

In Turk's Training Principal, I have developed a system that directly addresses this issue by using one, crucial principal that will trigger and enhance the success of constant compensation. It's called muscle confusion. I wrote about this important concept in last month's edition of NWFitness. By doing an exercise differently every time, my muscles will not adapt! In this context, confusion is a good thing. Your muscles will try to slip into adaptation mode, but you won't give them the chance because you're constantly changing the dynamics of their workload. In addition, I must stress that the other crucial component of my exercise system is, in every set, **YOU MUST GO TO FAILURE!**

Here is the outline of my TTP system. For smaller body parts such as biceps, triceps, calves, chest and shoulders, I do 2-4 sets total. For bigger

body parts, such as legs and back, I do 3-5 sets total. In last month's article, I spoke about training principals. These are tools to help increase intensity in a given set. For example, increasing weight after each set, or increasing reps after each set, is but one principal. There are around 23 known principals, and typically I incorporate at least 9 of them while training myself or my clients:

**“TTP ain't easy! But trust me, the rewards will be worth the effort.”**



# 9 Training Principals

- 1** Giant sets- 3 or more exercises training the same muscle group
- 2** Compound set- 2 exercises training the same muscle group
- 3** Super set- Training opposing muscle groups at the same time ( i.e. biceps & triceps )
- 4** Slow reps- Just like it sounds, usually doing this at 4,6,8 count
- 5** Forced reps- Doing more reps past failure, usually 2-4 reps is enough
- 6** Force negatives- Adding more resistance to the eccentric part of the repetition (great for growth, but you cannot do this all the time)
- 7** Pauses- Pausing at the end or the beginning of the rep
- 8** Partials Reps- This is probably the most misunderstood principal. Perform full range of motion reps until failure, then continue with partial reps until entire range has been exhausted
- 9** Ballistic reps- Fast, hard explosive reps - great for power

You can use as many combinations of principals as your imagination can come up with. For example, back training. Do a giant set, the first movement will have force negatives followed by slow reps, the last movement will include pauses. Add 'em up: we did a giant set (1), force negs(6), slow reps(4), and pauses(7). You can see that this set would be highly intense since it incorporates 4 different training principals.

I highly recommend Turk's Training Principal to anyone who is experiencing a muscle performance plateau, or anyone who's serious about growing lean muscle. Want to see my training in action? Great! I've teamed up with [ShapeFit.com](http://ShapeFit.com) to help me launch TTP videos that you can find on YouTube. Type my name, Turk Fickling, into the search box and you'll find videos on back, chest, and leg workouts.

TTP ain't easy! But trust me, the rewards will be worth the effort. Try it out and let me know what you think. Until next time, train hard.

Questions? Comments? You can find me on Face Book or email me at [turkfickling@gmail.com](mailto:turkfickling@gmail.com).