

Isolation or Integration

Without a doubt there is quite an art to formulating the right training programme, the right training cocktail can take many attempts to perfect and combined without the correct guidance the line between success and failure is thin indeed. There are many scientific programmes to be followed that guarantee results, but how can we be sure that these are right for us all?

From what I read and in accordance with my training beliefs, Functional training could very well be what a lot of us are looking for. If you think about it this form of training has always been present and before machines were invented Functional training was the only option. The Fitness industry has a lot of sceptics some who believe and some who don't, me, I am a believer. Movement based resistance-training can only be a good thing, assisting with sports specific performance, rehab and plain old programme design. Are you a believer? Only you can decide.

Isolation

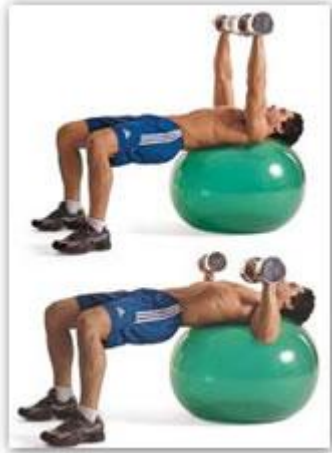


To set apart from others, to select from among others: to separate from another substance so as to obtain pure or in a free state. (Courtesy of Merriam-Webster dictionary)

Isolation machines hit the market around 1970, by 1980 bodybuilders alike united around isolation based programme design. This way of training allows effective singular muscle targeting leading to impressive hypertrophy gains. Afraid of being left behind, most gyms around the world got rid of all the lovely stuff that made us work and bought machines, guaranteeing results for almost any part time non-educated gym user. What's wrong with that you say?

Well, what was hugely overlooked was the fact that the now machine crazed training population were no longer really moving correctly, they were jammed into these machines targeting singular muscles and working in one plane of movement, teaching our muscles to work as one and not as a team thus isolating not integrating. Everyday human movement patterns require multi-joint, multi-muscular recruitment and in stimulating single muscles our body's ability to react and move effectively is greatly compromised.

Integration



To form, coordinate, or blend into a functioning or unified whole, to unite with something else. “To incorporate into a larger unit”. (Courtesy of Merriam-Webster dictionary)

The ability to replicate everyday movement patterns into a resistance workout, thus conditioning our bodies to be strong in all planes of movement cannot be a bad thing. The idea behind Functional training or Rogue training is that they can be integrated and compliment any programme regardless of who you are or what you are training for, from firemen to rugby players to athletes to nurses anyone you can think of, movement is something that is taken for granted and rarely exploited in a fitness programme.

It is possible to achieve an impressive, healthy, functional physique without isolation training. What we need is a programme design that allows for replication and integration of resistance training methods to help condition and prepare ourselves for the years of everyday movements ahead.

Before embarking on any new training programme it is important to have your goals firmly in place, Keep in mind at all times how you move, where you move and why. Are you training for a marathon? Are you conditioning for everyday strength? Are you training for your job? Is it sports specific? The list is endless, stay focused on your goals and don't be swept up in what other people are doing, chances are it's either wrong or not right for you. Stick to exercises that revolve around multi-joint and multi-muscle function, pushes, pulls, presses etc. If you focus on these points you will not go far wrong.

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Remember

Train smart. Move well

By Dan Welch