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Anatomy of Strength and Conditioning: A Trainer's Guide to Building Strength and Stamina

By Hollis Liebman



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Reviews for *Anatomy of Exercise* (in the same series):

Fascinating ... useful for anyone interested in enhancing their fitness routine as well as fitness instructors who want to visually show their customers the benefits of each exercise. --American Reference Book Annual

One of the best books written as a reference manual for understanding exercise... Great how-to instructions. --Men's Exercise

The winning format of the Anatomy of... series was established quickly with the first title, *The Anatomy of Exercise*. The success of the series lies not only in the innovative presentation but in the variety of titles offered, which gives readers the opportunity to pick and choose according to their needs and goals.

Anatomy of Strength and Conditioning is a great how-to reference for those who wish to "up their game" and train for activities requiring high performance -- strength, speed, aerobic capacity and accuracy -- all essential to success in such sports as soccer, hockey, skiing, climbing and rowing as well as marathons and other endurance activities. The book is also an ideal way to achieve overall fitness.

Like each of the other titles in the series this book:

- Opens with two (front/back) full-body annotated anatomical drawings
- Shows specific exercises with instructions and annotated anatomical drawings and corresponding photographs
- Labels all muscles used with bold text to indicate target muscles
- Provides helpful notes throughout to amplify the how-to instructions: Best For (the muscles getting the maximum effect), Targets (muscles worked), Benefits (effect of the exercise).

Anatomy of Strength and Conditioning offers 29 Strength Exercises and 28 Conditioning Exercises, plus a full set of Warm-Up Exercises. There are six specialized Workouts to choose from: Beginner's, Sports, Mixed-Modalities, Range, Melting-Pot and Kamikaze. Lifelike anatomical illustrations demonstrate each exercise and reveal in colorful detail exactly which muscles are engaged -- a

great way to focus exercises to a specific problem area.

No other book provides such rich detail tailored to the general reader. Athletes of all experience levels, fitness trainers, coaches, physiotherapists and many others will find *Anatomy of Strength and Conditioning* instructive and extremely practical.

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Editorial Review

Review

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About the Author

Hollis Liebman has been a fitness magazine editor and national bodybuilding champion. He lives in Los Angeles and works with Hollywood's elite, including Hugh Jackman ("Wolverine"), Jane Lynch (Glee) and Chris Jericho (WWE Superstar). Hollis is the author of *Anatomy of Exercise for 50+* and *Anatomy of Core Stability*. Visit Liebman's web site at www.holliswashere.com.

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Excerpt from the Introduction

The aim of strength and conditioning training is to enable you not only to handle a heavier load but also to carry that load in a better way. This is achieved by improving your aerobic capacity through the grouping together of various types of exercise. In plain speak, we are talking about enabling greater performance through increased strength, speed, capacity and accuracy. It is only through the continual application and eventual mastery of these four skill sets that an athlete can achieve his or her best.

Strength training and conditioning, though different in definition and result, are reliant on one another and complement each other perfectly. A strong athlete may be able to lift an enormous load, but this is of limited use if he or she doesn't also have the conditioning and requisite lung capacity to go the distance in a chosen discipline. It also follows that an athlete with great stamina but lacking explosive power will not reach his or her full potential. Generally speaking, a bigger muscle tends to be a stronger muscle; however, one need not be overly developed to showcase unparalleled strength. This is because the best, most rounded sporting performance depends on the application of four major elements: strength, speed, capacity and accuracy. Combining strength training with conditioning work allows an athlete to master these skill sets; he or she will not only be able to handle a heavier load but will also develop greater aerobic capacity.

What is Strength Training?

In its simplest terms, strength training can be defined as the act of moving a weight from point A via point B to point C. Although straightforward, this pathway requires progressively more effort, forcing the muscle to work increasingly hard. Performance in strength training can be compared to that of a coiled spring -- first, there is a slow winding or cranking of the muscle; and then a quick, explosive release. A very obvious example of this is the Barbell Power Clean and Jerk (see page 38), in which the barbell is lifted first off the floor and to the chest (the movement from A to B), then from the chest to an overhead position (the movement from B to C). A few repetitions of this type of muscular contraction will result in increased anaerobic output and muscular power. Strength training usually calls for the assistance of a group of muscles

to complete a multi-jointed movement. The squat, for example -- perhaps the ultimate exercise for lower-body strength -- is widely considered a thigh exercise; however, it also uses the glutes, hamstrings and core muscles to stabilize the body properly during motion and to "fire" during execution. This synergistic combination of opposing body parts working together to complete a given movement is an important difference between strength training and conventional bodybuilding. In the latter, the tendency is to isolate and focus on one muscle, minimizing help from neighboring ancillary tissue in order to keep tension primarily on the target. A bodybuilder wishing to work the biceps, for example, would perform seated dumbbell curls, because the seated position ensures that assistance from the lower back is kept to a minimum. Strength training also differs from bodybuilding because its focus is not on increasing muscle tissue and bulk, refining proportions or creating symmetry; it is not about how big your chest or arms are or the compactness of your waist. The real goal of strength training is quite simply increased strength and muscular power. Any type of strength-focused exercise results in the muscles being broken down through microscopic tears that occur during muscular overload. Bodybuilders often train to the point of absolute muscular failure (that is, the inability to complete a movement due to inadequate strength), because the effort of the muscle to repair itself contributes and leads to increased muscle mass. However, since the goal in strength training is increased power rather than bulk, it is not necessary to lift the maximum weight you can manage for the highest number of repetitions you can achieve. As a result, recuperation time is shortened, which means that you can train more often and see results more quickly. Nevertheless, you should avoid over-training or training to the point of excessive body fatigue and lethargy. Aim to incorporate strength training into your regime no more than three or four days per week, focusing on correct form and execution rather than on marathon sessions. Throughout this book, the number of repetitions performed in strength exercises is high enough for you to test and improve upon your current strength levels, but low enough not to exert too much stress on your body.

What is Conditioning?

Conditioning, a type of training based on constant motion performed for ever-increasing amounts of time, is less about strength and more about fitness. This aerobic activity is usually executed at high speed. Since the goal of conditioning is improved performance and an increased aerobic output and efficacy when completing a given movement, muscle tissue is not broken down. This eliminates the need for the rest and repair that is required after anaerobic training. This type of training often necessitates a high number of repetitions or is carried out in time increments. Its success is dependent on continual body movement, often of the full body, incorporating speed, balance, stability and accuracy. A person who is well conditioned is able to use his or her body at physically strenuous levels for prolonged periods of time. Combining conditioning with the explosive power gleaned from strength training makes for a very well-rounded individual, athletically speaking. Whereas strength training is limited to a given and predictable routine, the possibilities in conditioning exercises are almost infinite. Elements such as speed, direction, impact and breathing pattern can all be altered during this type of workout to "confuse" the body, forcing it to adapt in terms of performance.

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