

## Do you always train your muscles to the point of complete failure?

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Training to failure puts a huge amount of stress on your nervous system - exposing you to the real risk of overtraining.

The result?

Your gains slow down, you get weaker, and your motivation to go to the gym dries up completely. Sure, training to failure does have a place in any good training programme. However, you'll get far better results if you vary your training intensity. It's simple - during some workouts, push each set to the point of muscular failure, whereas on other training days, stop a rep or two short of total failure. The trick is knowing when you should train to failure and when to stop a few reps short. An easy way to cycle your intensity level is to train in three-week phases.

Week 1

For example, during week 1, start off using 3-4 sets per exercise, 6-8 reps per set, with each set stopping a rep or two short of muscular failure.

Week 2

In week 2, reduce the total number of sets per exercise to 2-3, while increasing the number of reps to 8-12. Here, the final set of each exercise would be taken to the point of failure.

Week 3

In the third week, you would really attack the weights, and go "all-out" during each set. This would complete your 3-week cycle.

Week 4

On week 4, add in and delete some exercises, and repeat the intensity cycle again.

It's a great way to make continued gains in strength and size and, most importantly, avoid overtraining. Plus, because you're changing your routine every three weeks, there's less chance you'll get bored. If you look at many of the worlds top powerlifters training routines, you'll notice

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they all do similar varied intensity phases, allowing them to make consistent gains, without overtraining, burning out and getting injured.