

# Got Mass?

*No?* Then Try Training Your Legs—  
*Hard!*

by Mike Mahler  
Photography by Michael Neveux

It sounds crazy, doesn't it? Of course you have to train your legs properly to gain weight and build a balanced physique. Still, you'd be amazed by the number of trainees around the world who do little or no leg work. Almost as amazing is the fact that many who *do* train legs make the mistake of focusing on leg curls, leg extensions, leg presses and the like. They avoid the exercises that pack on muscle weight rapidly—deadlifts and squats—probably because they're difficult. Squats and deadlifts can send you running to the bathroom to lose your lunch, but the truth is, you've got to do one or the other if you want to build your legs big time in a minimal amount of time. Plus, they give you overall growth. Here are two leg-specialization programs to get you started.



Model: Darrell Terrell



Model: Jay Cutler

## The 20-Rep-Squat Routine

This program was popular many years ago among serious trainees who wanted to gain size rapidly. In addition, coaches often had their athletes do high-rep squats to transform them from boys into men. The 20-rep-squat program was repopularized by Randall J. Strossen, Ph.D., a few years back in his outstanding book *Super Squats*.

Here's how it works. Shoulder a load with which you can squat 10 times with solid form, preferably in a power rack. At the top of each rep take three deep breaths and then descend into a deep squat. That's right, go deep. No partial squats or stopping at parallel—unless you have knee issues.

Using that breathing pattern will enable you to do more than 10 reps. If you have to stop at 14 or 15, no problem. Just stay at that weight until you can do 20 full reps. You should be stronger at almost every workout. Once you can do 20, in-



Think leg power for more mass.

crease the weight by 10 pounds and start over.

Make sure you have a good spotter and/or a sturdy power rack when you do the 20-rep squats. And be sure to train on an empty stomach, or you may unpleasantly revisit your last meal. A good rule of thumb is to make sure that you get your preworkout meal at least two hours before your workout.

Here's the 20-rep-squat workout that was featured in *Mass-Training Tactics* (IM subscribers can down-

load that book free at [www.ironmanmagazine.com](http://www.ironmanmagazine.com)):

### Monday & Thursday

Squats	1 x 20
immediately followed by	
Dumbbell pullovers	1 x 15-20
Rest five minutes	
Donkey calf raises	1 x 15-20
Stiff-legged deadlifts	1 x 15
Bench presses	1 x 8-10
Incline flies	1 x 8-10
Bent-over rows or	
cable rows	1 x 8-10
Chins or pulldowns	1 x 8-10
Behind-the-neck presses	1 x 8-10
Close-grip bench presses	1 x 8-10
Barbell curls	1 x 8-10
Crunches	1 x 15-20

Do this workout two days a week. Some trainees may make better gains doing it three times a week—Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Try the 20-rep-squat program for six weeks and be sure to up your calorie intake. If you have weak bodyparts, you may want to do two sets instead of one on the exercises that work (continued on page 110)

Classic mass builder: high-rep squats supersetted with pullovers.



Model: Lee Apperson \ Equipment: Powertec power rack, 1-800-447-0008



One all-out superset can work metabolic magic.

Model: Franco Santoriello

(continued from page 106) them. For example, if your calves are a problem, do two sets of donkey calf raises.

You say you hate squats or simply aren't built for them? Then you can concentrate on the regular deadlift. Here's another routine from *Mass-Training Tactics*:

### Monday & Thursday

Deadlifts	2 x 8-10
immediately followed by	
Dumbbell pullovers	2 x 15
One-leg calf raises or	
standing calf	
machine	1 x 15-20
Alternate lunges or	
leg presses	1 x 10-12
Incline barbell presses	1 x 8-10
Flat-bench flyes or	
pec deck flyes	1 x 8-10
Feet-elevated pushups or	
machine bench presses	1 x 8-10
Undergrip chins or	
undergrip pulldowns	1 x 8-10
Bent-arm bent-over	
lateral raises	1 x 8-10
Alternate dumbbell	
presses	1 x 8-10
Lying triceps extensions	1 x 8-10
Incline dumbbell curls	1 x 8-10
Crunches	1 x 15-20

## EDT (Escalating Density Training)

Recently, I read a great book by top strength coach Charles Staley, *The Ultimate Guide to Massive Arms: Escalating Density Training*. Yes, Sherlock, I know that the subject of the book is how to pack size on your arms; however, you can apply the EDT concept to any bodypart (well, just about any bodypart) for massive gains. Here's how it works: Take two antagonistic exercises such as squats and stiff-legged deadlifts. Squats focus on the quads and stiff-legged deadlifts focus on the hamstrings (at least when done properly). Do them back to back for as many reps as possible in a 15-minute period. [Editor's note:

This is similar to the way Arnold used to train his back and chest. See page 120.]

Now, don't start dry heaving just



**There's no denying the mega-mass-building benefits of deadlifts. So stack on the plates and pull!**

Model: Mike Morris

yet. Take a weight that you can do 10 times in solid form and do five reps, then rest for 30 seconds and do five reps on a weight you can get

**If you don't like eye-popping intensity training, try subfailure supersets of squats and stiff-legged deadlifts for 15 minutes.**



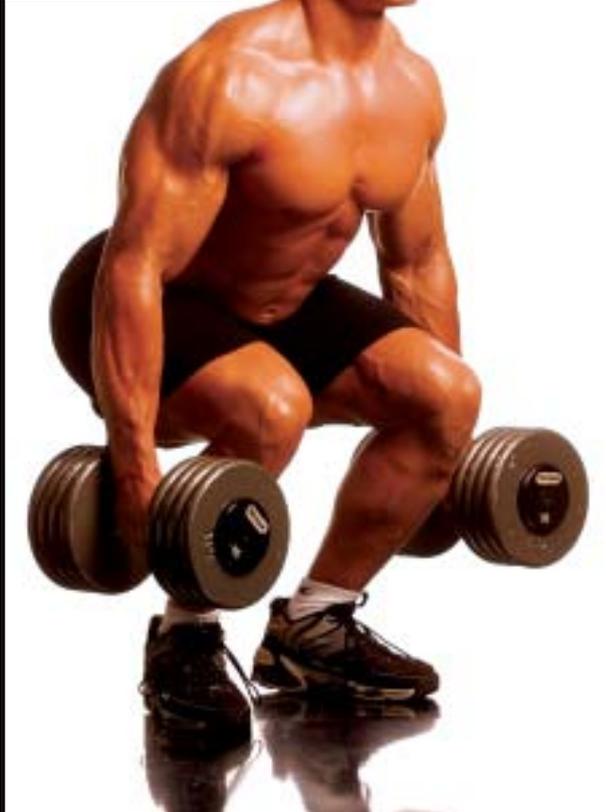
Model: Chris Cook

**Training antagonist muscles back to back can create a serious size surge.**



Model: Aaron Brumfield \ Equipment: Powertec power rack, 1-800-447-0008

Supersetting dumbbell squats with leg curls can jack up leg size and overall growth.



Model: Steve Kummer

10 with on an exercise for the opposing muscle group; for example, five reps on barbell squats, rest 30 seconds, then five reps on stiff-legged deadlifts. Rest another 30 seconds and do five reps on squats, alternating in that fashion for 15 minutes. As fatigue kicks in, take longer breaks and do fewer reps. After 15 minutes record how many total reps you did on each exercise. Write down the number in your training journal. (If you don't keep a journal, start at your very next workout!) Your

goal at the next leg session is to beat that number.

Avoid going to failure when doing EDT and take two days off between EDT workouts. Again, put your upper-body work on maintenance mode and channel all of your energy into bringing those toothpick legs of yours up to a respectable level. Here's an EDT program that you can follow for four weeks:

### Zone 1: 15 minutes

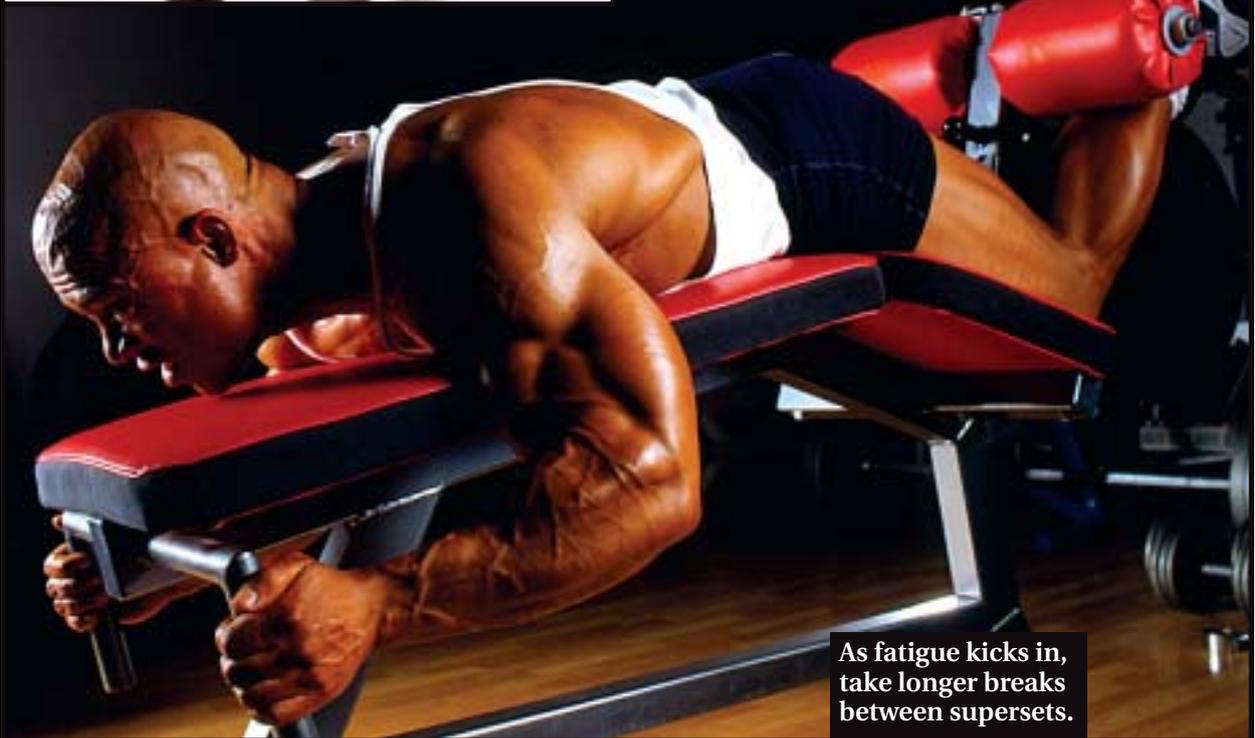
- A1: Barbell squats
- A2: Stiff-legged deadlifts

At the end of 15 minutes, take a break for five minutes and then proceed to Zone 2.

### Zone 2: 10 minutes

- A1: Dumbbell squats (hold a pair of dumbbells at your sides, and squat until they touch the floor)
- A2: Hyperextensions or leg curls

Okay, stop wasting time and get started on your new leg workout. Who knows, after a few months you may be able to finally wear shorts without looking like a flamingo, and your upper body should be larger than ever.



Model: Skip LaCour

As fatigue kicks in, take longer breaks between supersets.

**Avoid going to failure on Escalating Density Training.**



Model: Tamer Elshahhat

**Editor's note:** For more information on Charles Staley's EDT training system, go to [www.myodynamics.com](http://www.myodynamics.com). To order Randall J. Strossen's *Super Squats*, go to [www.homegym.com](http://www.homegym.com) or call (800) 447-0008.

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**Working for leg size can trigger overall growth.**

