

# Myth Buster

## Different training programmes for different body types

*Text: Ignatius Loubser, Head Strength and Conditioning Coach, hpc*

Since the dawn of time (or should I say the dawn of gym instructors) people have wanted to know what the best way is to get a smaller butt, tighter abs, or bigger guns (Gymneste for biceps).

Most gym instructors will lead you to believe that body type plays a crucial role in selecting a sound workout programme. First, they'll do a body assessment, then determine your body type, and finally conjure up a magical programme tailored for your specific needs. Naturally, you will fall into one of the three archetypal body types (as outlined by Tamilee Webb and Lori Seeger from [www.dummies.com](http://www.dummies.com)) and your workout programme will centre around this vital bit of information.

According to these authorities you will either be:

A mesomorph (or meso, for short) can be defined in one word: muscular. If you're a meso, your body type is usually the envy of all gym rats because you can increase your muscle size quickly and easily. The well developed, rectangular shapes of mesomorphs are representative of their thick bones and muscles. (Before you get too excited about this perfect form, keep in mind that being a meso may also mean you have poor flexibility.) If you are a characteristic mesomorph, you have a well-defined chest and shoulders that are both larger and broader than your waistline. Your abdomen is taut and your hips are generally the same width as your shoulders. Your buttocks, thighs, and calves are all toned and defined.

*When you think "mesomorph," think of Sylvester Stallone and Demi Moore.*

A one-word description for the ectomorph body type (or ecto, for short) is slim. If you're an ecto, mesomorphs and endomorphs usually don't want to stand next to you. It's not that ectomorphs aren't personable, it's just that you're probably a tall, slender individual who has trouble gaining weight (oh darn!). As you may have guessed, the perfect example of an ecto is a fashion model. An ectomorph is relatively linear in shape with a delicate build, narrow hips and pelvis, and long arms and legs. As an ecto, your muscle and bone outlines are usually visible (especially if you are an extremely thin ecto), and you normally have less fat and muscle mass than people with other bodytypes.

*When you think "ectomorph," think of Tom Hanks and Courtney Cox.*

A one-word description of the endomorph body type (or endo, for short) is curvy. The soft, flowing curve of an endo are similar to that of an hourglass in more ways than one. And wouldn't you know it; the sands of an hourglass tend to settle in its bottom half just like the fat in the body.

Comparatively, if you're an endomorph, your body fat may have a tendency to settle into the lower regions of your body, predominantly the lower abdomen, hips and thighs, rather than being distributed evenly throughout your body. Keep in mind, though, that most endomorphs don't have all the features of characteristic endomorph, but a blend of features from other body types as well.

*When you think "endomorph," think of Robin Williams and Oprah Winfrey*

While it's true that these are the dominant body types, it's important to keep in mind that you can be a combination of all three. Customising your workout to suit your build will have no greater or lesser effect on the results. There are thousands of theories about how to approach training, but in the end the only real determinant is putting in the hard yards.

So if you are serious about getting into better shape, ask yourself a few important questions:

1. What is my goal?
2. How badly do I want this?
3. What do I stand to gain from this?
4. What do I stand to lose from this?
5. How will I know that I have achieved this? What will I see, hear, feel, think?
6. What steps do I need to take to get this?

Make sure your training fits in with the goal you want to achieve. If you want to lose fat, train to lose fat! Remember that the human body adapts to any stimulus that it is given and that the adaptation process equals the results. This also means that after a period of time, when the body has finally got used to these rigours, the results will become less visible. So keep in mind that when it comes to training principles anything works, but nothing works for very long.

Reference

<http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/determining-the-best-workout-for-your-body-type.html#ixzzUuo0Ecj2F>

