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Be not afraid of growing slowly,

Be afraid only of standing still.

Chinese proverb

A personal return on experience

By Pierre Wurth (facebook alias Peter Pancake)

Eat to get BIG

Disclaimer:

When you want to start a rigorous training and nutrition program – consult your physician beforehand.



First off, what is the purpose of this book?

In fact I was getting tired of repeatedly giving people the same explanations and advices about workouts and nutrition. I could barely go to my gym and have a good workout without being asked by some friends or even strangers, what bizarre workouts I was doing and why I wasn't doing the same "normal" stuff, like anybody else. They saw me doing deadlifts or dips with 40kg of additional weight and I could see on their faces that it was like the most unconventional thing that they ever saw in a gym. Everybody was doing a crappy split routine with exercises like dumbbell flies, triceps kickbacks, infinite variations of bicep curls, in the old fashioned 3x10-12 repetition scheme, and actually they all looked the way they were training. They looked like shit.

Well, sometimes it wasn't their body composition which sucked, sometimes it was even pretty decent, but then I saw them struggling with moving 75kg on the bench press or the guys didn't even squat. And that's when you realize that their muscles are a little bit like mascara on a girl's face. Good looking, but

actually useless. When I say useless, I mean that the muscle may be shaped and give them a strong look, but in reality it's just an illusion. They are buffed and well-shaped, but there's no power behind them.

You see that these guys simply don't understand the principle behind muscle building or strength gains. When they saw me at the gym, working out intensively but briefly and leaving after just 45 minutes, getting bigger and stronger as the weeks went on, they started asking me some dumbass questions about the supplements I take or whose (well-known Bodybuilder) routine I was following. At the beginning I felt honoured about the attention paid to me, because I used to be the skinny guy who nobody paid attention to, but very fast it turned out to be the most annoying thing that could happen. Because, in my endless kindness, I took the time to explain them every part of my fitness lifestyle. Giving them tips, advices and guess what? They still kept going with their bullshit workout routines, and bullshit diets.

So every time I went to the gym, I secretly hoped that one of them would break his ankle while doing his stupid Bosu-Ball Squats, hoping for them to finally admit that they had no fucking clue about what they were doing.

But deep inside myself I always had this feeling that I had to help others in their goals, simply because I never had this chance and because I wasted 4 years of training in the gym just experimenting on my own body. I did not really waste my time, because in this 4 years I avidly collected all these information and tried out so many things, which I probably wouldn't have learned if I had been genetically gifted and blessed with the ability of building muscle and getting strong easily.

So yes, I admit that deep inside myself it made me angry to see everybody working out like douchebags, but it also made me angrier to see people who can be qualified as hard-gainers, taking advices from these douchebags. I felt like it was my mission to share my knowledge and experience as a former skinny guy, with the metabolism of a hard-gainer, to give these youngsters a shot.

So I took my time and author this little book, mainly based on experience which I gained over the years, in order to have a pile of information that I could easily share with people asking for my help. Let's start off!

What is a hardgainer?

The popular definition of a hardgainer is a person who practices bodybuilding/strength sport, but has a hard time putting on muscle. Six weeks of working out can go by and no significant changes in muscle size are noticed other than perhaps a bit of an increase in muscle tone and definition.

My definition of a hardgainer is the naturally skinny person, who no matter what he or she eats, always seems to remain at the same body weight. Human bodies are divided into three main somatotypes; the ectomorph, the endomorph and the mesomorph. A hardgainer has an "ectomorphe" bodytype.



The ectomorph is the naturally skinny person who has trouble gaining weight, whether in the form of muscle or fat.

The endomorph on the other hand has the opposite problem; it is too easy for a person with this body type to gain weight. While endomorphs are easy muscle gainers, provided they diet and train correctly, they are cursed with a slow metabolism, which makes it imperative for them to be strict with their diet year round if they wish to have any abdominal definition.

The mesomorph however, is the naturally muscular person, who also has a quicker metabolism than the endomorph. Mesomorphs make excellent bodybuilders and for them, gains in muscle and reduction in body fat come rather easily provided they maintain a great training and nutrition program; life is not fair.

The mesomorphs are the people we all look up too, but as I already said in the introduction, those are (most of the time) not the guys who know the most about muscle building because they never had a hard time in the gym and nearly everything they try out makes them grow.



The first Step not to be skinny anymore (the MOST important step)

Well I know you probably expect me to give you a forgotten training method or the name of a secret pill, to get the Superhero Body you always wanted, but there's a much more basic thing you need to fix in order to build muscle.

Your Diet!!

I know this might sound trivial and I exactly know what you're thinking right now: "Goddamn' I've read this all the time, I'm already eating like a pig, this guy doesn't know a shit,...."

Well, if this is exactly what you think right now, let me tell you two things:

- First of all, trust me, you don't know a shit about what you're putting in your mouth (otherwise you wouldn't be reading this)
- Second, cheer up buddy, because this actually means that we're going to fix almost 80% of your hardgaining problem.

Finish reading my document before you dump it, cursing at me and asking for refund.

Let's get back to basics. The body gains weight when it is in a state of a caloric surplus and it loses weight when he has a caloric deficit. Simple, isn't it?

But in order to gain weight you have to find out what your **basic metabolic rate (BMR)** is. Your BMR is the calories that your body burns just to keep you alive and allowing it to work normally. These are the calories needed, while doing no exercise at all, for instance while sleeping.

In my case for example:

I'm a male, 25 years old, 187cm and 98kg, so my BMR is approximately 2100 kcal a day.
2100 kcal just to survive!

I could drop the formula here but there are plenty of webpages which have integrated calculators so **make sure** to go to your favorite search engine, type in "calculate my basic metabolic rate" and find out how much it is!

Now you also need to calculate your **daily caloric needs**. Again, go to your favorite search engine, type in "calculate my daily caloric needs" and find out how much it is!

In my case:

I walk about 3 hours a day at a moderate pace, due to my professional activity and I also do heavy weight lifting three times a week. Wanna know what my daily caloric needs are?

Approximately 5000 kcal! Yes dude, almost 5000!

Now just for the record: I sometimes go to Muay Thai workouts, where we do a lot of gymnastic and cardiovascular work and sparring's. This easily adds 1000 kcal to my daily caloric needs. So on these days I would aim for 5500-6000 kcal (depending on the fact, if I worked that day, or had additional weight lifting workouts).

Are you still with me?

What I'm trying to tell you is that as a hard gainer the most important thing.....again, **THE MOST IMPORTANT** thing is counting your calories!

And I know what you're thinking by now: "oh no, I have no fucking time, to count those goddamned calories...."

Okay playboy, cheer up (once again)! I have good news for you. We live in the 21st century and aside many great things that have been built by men, there's one thing that most of us have and makes our life sooooo much more enjoyable. No, I don't talk about TV you lazy ass, but about SMARTPHONES! You see, you can do great things with smartphones apart from playing stupid games, taking selfies while doing duckfaces and posting tons of stuff on social networks using a whole bunch of hashtags.... No, for once in your life use your phone the way it was meant to: smartly!

Download a calorie tracker app, and start tracking now.

I use the app "Myfitnesspal" which I think is one of the best designed and user friendly app. No, I'm not affiliated with them and maybe there are lots of other cool calorie tracker apps out there, but I use "Myfitnesspal", I like using it and I recommend it.

Once downloaded, the app will calculate your "daily caloric needs" based on the information you'll give it, but remember one thing: this app was designed for "normal" people. We're not normal, we're hardgainers who want to build muscle, our metabolism works differently (faster) and our needs and goals are different. In my case the app said that I had to consume approximately 3600 kcal a day....bitch please ;)

Go in the app, edit your profile and enter the caloric goal you want to reach. I simply added 1000 kcal, knowing that my body would otherwise start losing weight.

If you are a hardgainer, you're REALLY skinny and you never lifted weights or paid attention to your diet, go ahead and add 1500 calories to your needs (dictated by "Myfitnesspal"), because you need to kick-start your metabolism, show it that it has to grow. It needs to understand that changes are coming up!

You must force your body so it understands that it lives in another environment now. This is kind of a harsh method, so keep an eye on your scale and on your overall bodycomposition because your body fat percentage might raise too quick if you go too crazy on adding calories.

Where to take these calories from?

This depends mainly on one thing: your budget. And if you're a student: your parents ;)

I know the "parents-problem" because I had to deal with it. My father had no understanding for this whole Muscle Building thing and actually I can't blame him for that, nobody who doesn't lift weights is supposed to know what a hardgainer is. So I often had arguments with him, because he didn't understand the fact that I emptied a whole tub of peanut butter in 2 days or ate 250 grams of pasta twice a day and most of all, why I didn't have the same dinner as the rest of the family.



Parents care about us and I can totally understand their annoyance when mother cooks chicken with plenty of vegetables and doesn't understand why you're asking for some extra 300 grams of potatoes. Try to explain the concept to your parents, let them read the book if they want to. Believe me, it's better to have them on your side because muscle building is an everyday process which happens over years....you don't want to argue with your parents every day for 4 years in a row ;)

Ok, where to get your calories from:

- Organic Peanut butter (no palm oil, no salt or added sugar).
- Rice
- Pasta 100g gives you +/- 375kcal....if you're not a girl you should easily be able to eat 250 grams at once.
- Oats and Oatmeal!!
- Meat
- Olive oil, Flax Seed oil, Fish oil
- Lentils (awesome source of fibers, carbs, protein and calories!)
- Nuts! Not roasted or salted! (They have so many calories, good fats, and a lot of protein)
- Fish! salmon, tuna, mackerel

You probably always thought that you eat a lot. Trust me, once you start tracking your calories you'll see that you actually didn't eat that much. I once tracked calories for a friend, two days in a row....guess what!? He barely ate enough to cover his BMR. He ate the wrong things, filling him up, but not giving him any micro and macronutrients.

You've probably read in a bodybuilding magazine that you need to eat every 2-3 hours in order to grow and keep your metabolism active etc.. Trust me, meal timing is almost irrelevant. The most important thing is to hit your daily caloric needs every day!

So if you have a busy lifestyle, and you're just able to eat three times a day, make sure that these three meals hit your needs! I have a busy lifestyle too and while I work, I don't always have time to eat. But I'll give you an example of what my diet consists of:

Breakfast (1275 kcal):

- 30g Whey Protein : 111 kcal
- 4 slices of Toast bread : 444 kcal
- 100g Peanutbutter: 670 kcal
- Strawberry jelly: +/- 50 kcal

if I needed more calories I would add, 50g of peanutbutter and 1-2 scoops of instant oats in my shake. this would add some extra 600-700 kcal to this breakfast.

Lunch (1275 kcal):

- 250g of pasta (880 kcal)
- 1 can of Tuna (176 kcal)
- 1 table spoon of Olive oil (119) kcal
- 10-15g of light Ketchup (100kcal)

if I needed more calories I would add, maybe 2-3 scoops of olive oil to it or 50g of cheese. I often alternate between pasta and rice or tuna and lean ground beef. When I cook the same meal with lean ground beef it easily goes up to 1500 kcal.I sometimes add 100g of Lentilles which I mix with rice...tastes awesome, keeps you full and has plenty of nutrients and calories.

Post-workout (412 kcal):

- 60g of Whey Protein
- 50g of Maltodextrine

if I needed more calories I would add, 2-3 scoops instant oats to my shake. This fills you up, has a good amount of fibers, and can easily add 400kcal to you shake.

My dinner depends on the other meals of the day. If I was able to cover most of my calories during the day, my dinner will consist of fish or meat with just vegetables. If I'm lacking a few calories I'll add rice to it.

Most of the time I like having Salmon with spinach or broccoli for dinner which would be:

- 300g Salmon (618 kcal)
- 200g Spinach (50 kcal)

At the end of this day (as listed above), I would be at approximately 3600kcal.

During the day I often have snacks, like Brazilian Nuts which are an unbelievable source of nutrient: 100g provides you with: 687 kcal, a lot of protein and healthy fats.

So make sure to have some snacks for in-between. You can also prepare yourself peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and take them with you in a Tupperware box, these are some easy calories, it keeps you away from craving.

You can also easily bake some protein muffins or protein cake to keep in a Tupperware and eat during the day.



Let's do the summary of this chapter:

- Track your calories! (I explained you how to do it easily)
- Eat the right food in the right amounts
- Eat big! Stop with those children portions: cook 250g of pasta or rice, with a good piece of fish or meat, you want to be big and strong than eat like it!!

- Remember: you can lift weight as much as you want; if you don't have a caloric surplus your body won't be able to build muscle. You can't build a house if you don't provide your workers with the right material!

It's very simple Boy! If you skip this chapter or don't pay attention to what I explained, than I promise you can dump this book, bitchslap yourself in the face and keep living as a skinny and weak guy.

The supplements

Normally people give supplement advices at the end because they want you to learn how to eat and train properly first. Well that's totally right but, in our special case (hardgainers, ectomorphs...) I thought it would be good to talk about supplements after the previous chapter of nutrition, which might have discouraged some of you guys.

Why?

Because we talk about supplements and this always cheers people up, because they think it's the magical shortcut to muscle. And I can understand if you need to be cheered up a little, because I have to admit: It is difficult to eat all these amounts of food, every single day.

Cook every evening, prepare Tupperwares, go shopping to the grocery store. I'm not superman. Just as you I struggle with the same tight schedules and yes, I'm lazy. Sometimes I simply can't manage to cook three times a day. It's legitimate.

So what supplements do you need? (as a hardgainer)

Must have:

- Whey Protein
- Carbohydrates: Instant Oats and Maltodextrine
- Fish Oil
- Multivitamin

Should have:

- Creatine Monohydrate
- Beta-Alanine (combine it with creatine, for great results)
- Caffeine Caps

Nice to have: (if your budget allows it)

- BCAA
- Citruline-Malate

....

Avoid!!!! (they are worthless):

- Fatburners
- Testosterone boosters

Everybody knows that muscles are built with protein blocks. The only problem is that too many people focus on protein and skip the caloric surplus. For years, I drank and ate plenty of protein but my caloric deficit was so big that nothing was growing. If you work out and only drink protein after it, your body will turn it into carbohydrates through a process called "Gluconeogenesis". But you need protein.



If you follow a solid hardgainer diet, with meat and fish and nuts you'll already have a lot of proteins, but nonetheless you should aim for 2g – 2,5g of protein per kg of bodyweight. And this isn't always easy to achieve with food. That's when you're whey Protein steps in. You might have a shake with 30g of whey first thing in the morning and 60g of whey directly after your workout to boost muscle building. Carbohydrates are the hardgainers friend! You MUST have instant oats in your kitchen. They are a natural and healthy way to fuel your body with energy. They are not like crappy sugar, they provide you with long term energy and they even make you feel full. And they are CHEAP AS HELL! No excuses, buy instant oats, and buy lots of it!

Maltodextrine is a fast acting sugar, which also provides long energy. But you should only use it directly after your workout together with your whey protein to help replenish your body's energy stores. If you have a lack of energy before a workout because you skipped a meal (never do that!!), you can drink 50-100g of instant oats 30min before your workout to boost yourself.

If you get up late and don't have time for breakfast, you can easily blend 60g of whey and 200g of instant oats and drink it. This will give you about 900 kcal. You can add a banana in it or a spoon of peanutbutter.

Creatine combined with Beta Alanin gives you more energy, more power, more strength, more endurance in the gym and it's cheap as hell! Buy it, take 5g a day in your post workout shake, let it work. P.S: Buy "Creapure" this is german creatine, it is the purest on the market and there is no price difference.

Buy also Beta-Alanin and mix it on a 1:1 ratio. 5g Creatin and Beta Alanin a day, every day, for ever, that's it. Simple and effectiv. (Don't expect steroid-like strength gains ;)

Massgainers.....yeah well, I'm not a big fan of them because they are a blend of what you just read but they are way more expensive and often bad quality. Massgainers simply combine whey protein, carbohydrates and creatine in one tub. But the carbohydrates which are used are often bad quality carbs like dextrose, fructose or even sugar. The protein is often mediocre quality, so is the creatine. The only positive thing about them is that they taste really sweet because of all that freaking loads of sugar and they are very convenient because you don't need to mix everything yourself. But TRUST ME, they are WAY MORE expensive than buying everything separately and mixing it. So except if you are on a VERY tight schedule, have no room to stock your powders and have no money issues (I'm thinking about a rich student in his University Apartment) buy a massgainer otherwise STAY AWAY of them.



Ok why you should have fish oil (Omega 3) and multivitamins: because they are good for you. No discussion, it helps your body, your joints, your immune system, your brain! You can get all of them if you eat fruits, vegetables, nuts and fatty fish like salmon on a regular basis. If not, give those supplements a try. No, you won't get big and muscular by taking them, but they will definitely help you staying fit and healthy, which will indirectly make you big, since a sick person with a cold, won't be able to lift heavy ass weight!

Omega 3 is really a must have supplement, since our diets include way too much Omega 6 fatty acids which are responsible for inflammation in the body. You should really aim for 5-10g of Omega 3 a day, to balance it.

The next category is for people trying to experiment a little bit.

If you don't have money issues, go ahead and try BCAA's, those will help you with recovery. They will give you some small extra edge, maybe you'll gain 5-10% on your recovery but they won't make the difference, if all of the other components of a healthy lifestyle are in check! So if you have enough money, go ahead, those are good supplements, but they are expensive and only worth the try if you REALLY have everything else in check.

Pre-workout boosters can be cool, but are also REALLY expensive. But just like massgainers, they are a combination of the things listed above: creatine, bcaa, beta-alanine, few other products which give you big pumps, and a lot of caffeine. If you have the money, do your research about the products and try them out, they can really give you the extra boost in the gym, but if you're caffeine sensitive, just go for 2-3 cups of coffee, not espresso, and you'll have the same energy boost. Or just buy some caffeine pills. They are really cheap and work perfectly!

Ok, I won't waste my time on the Fatburners and boosters: they don't work! I've used lots of them, I spend a lot of money on them because they are so expensive and they don't work! Studies proved it, their effect is irrelevant! Yes, they are produced in huge amounts and on every forum you'll find some guys who will tell you that they work but none of them has some evidence to back up his claims.

Actually 99% of the time it's just a placebo effect. Please do your wallet a favour: stay away from them. Trust me! Spend that money on solid food, whey protein and carbohydrates! And you're a hardgainer, you don't need fat burners ;)

All those supplements can be SUPER expensive, I know that. But there's a web page where you can buy all this stuff in bulk! Yup it is great quality and it's cheap! You don't pay any marketing, you don't pay for a brand, and you pay for what you get. On this page you'll find nearly everything you need, from

proteins to vitamins, minerals. It is safe, you can pay with paypal or credit card, I've done it countless times and there has never been a problem.

visit: www.myprotein.com

Oh and no, I'm not affiliated with them and I don't get paid by them, I just buy my stuff there, I love their products and I recommend it to everybody who wants to build muscle on a budget. You'll find there all those products I mentioned: whey protein isolate, instant Oats, maltodextrine.... Trust me dude, buy everything in supersize. It will cost you maybe 200€ but you'll be provided for months!! Remember you want to get big.

A few random advices:



Stop worrying about things that don't matter in your case. You may be read once that you have to eat every 2 hours in order to get big or you need to supplement your diet with some bogus supplements....

Believe me: these are small details that don't matter for the average Joe. You're not a Pro Bodybuilder so all those fancy (let's call them) "techniques" to get the extra edge are just a waste of time and they make you lose your focus on what really counts.

Stop worrying about "lean and healthy recipes, which are low carb and low fat". Bitch please....once again, how many times did you read

this kind of sentence in a muscle-building article? So called "Strength Gurus" tend to overflow the reader with information, which is basically true but if it is put in the wrong context it turns out to be useless. Go ahead and try to build muscle while eating lean chicken breast with three different sorts of vegetables and one potato.... I think I already explained you how to calculate your calories didn't I? Now try to figure out how fucking many of these "pussy meals" you need to eat in order to hit your daily caloric needs. Honestly, before you even come close to your caloric needs you would throw up from all the quantities you'd have to eat.....everyday, the whole week, for years.....enjoy! :). Chicken breast and vegetables with potatoes are GREAT in a FAT LOSS DIET, which is definitely not our purpose!! Or did you buy this book because you felt too huge?

In case you start growing too fast, by which I mean: building muscle but also TOO MUCH bodyfat, reduce your CARBS progressively. Cut them in the evening. Try to cut 200-400 calories on your diet and watch your progression for 2 weeks. If you maintain your body composition (meaning you don't lose fat but also don't build some new one) then stay with it. (Maybe just cut 100 kcal more, but that's it) Why? Because by the time you'll build more and more muscle, meaning: higher BMR. So by getting bigger your

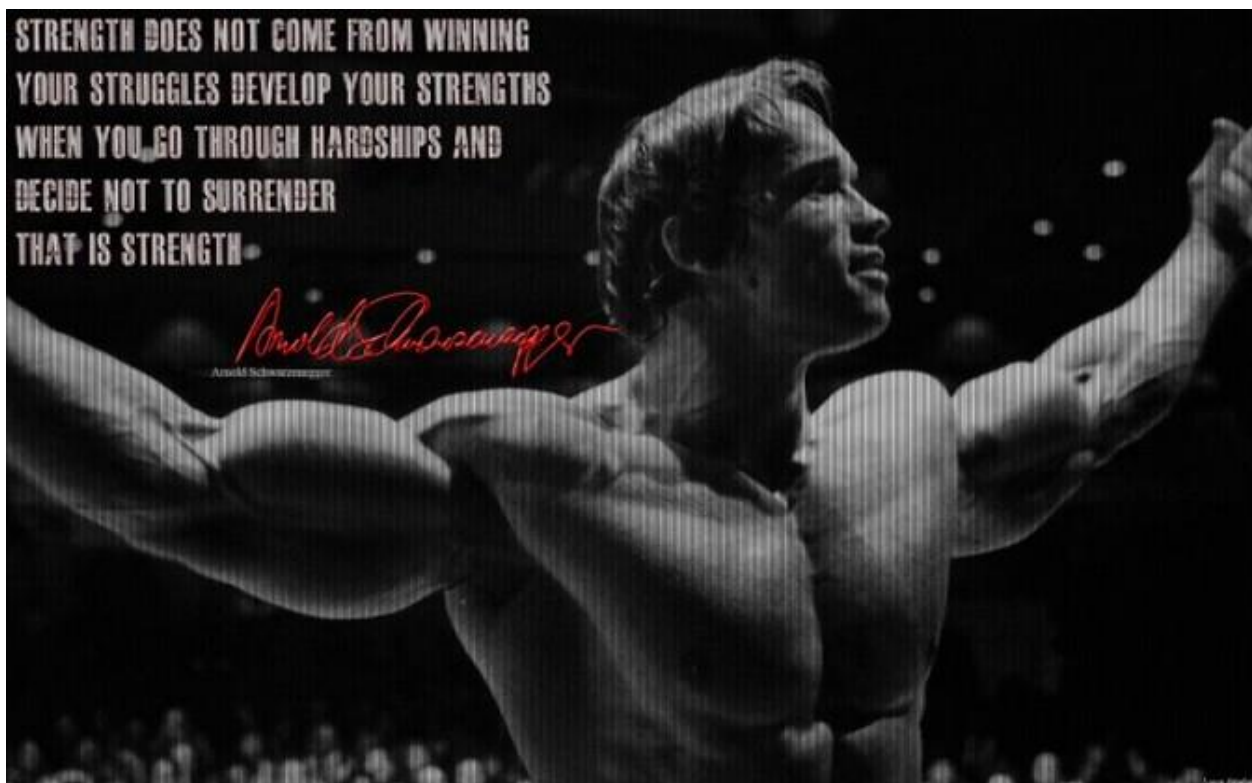
body will be forced to burn more calories which will automatically burn fat. Got it? So if you understand the logic behind this explanation then it's needless to say that once you see your body fat going down, you'll be in a caloric deficit which is bad for muscle building. In this case start again by gradually adding some calories, to keep the muscle building process going. Also, try to keep your daily fat intake at 1g / kg of Bodyweight. Don't overeat on fat!

Another thing which you'll experience is that a lot of people will notice the change. They will come to you and say "hey dude, you put on a lot of mass" which will be great for your training moral. BUT there will also be some people who are absolutely retarded and don't know a shit about the principles of muscle building who will tell you "you got big, but you got fat too". Yes sure, you'll put on some fat due to the extra calories which cannot be turned into muscles. But this is normal.

You can't develop your body and grow from skinny to muscular and always have a nice six pack and shredded muscles. This is a myth. But there are still people out there, who most of the time have no clue about building muscles and who by the way are mostly girls, who only admire the end results but don't respect your dedication. If you only knew how many girls criticized my bulky mass as I was bulking and transforming myself, but are now complimenting me about my manly physique.

No, I don't have six pack abs, but I do look like a man! A strong man. I lost my extra belly fat which I gained from bulking and now I don't look like a skinny ectomorph anymore, but neither like a Surfer Boy.

I simply look like a very strong man!



About the author:

Pierre Wurth – nicknamed PeterPancake – 1988 – since 8 years is a passionate Muay Thai, Fitness, Strength Training athlete part of the ATC team – living in Luxembourg. He holds a degree in Nutrition from the BSA Akademie. Pierre lives and promotes a successful and no-nonsense approach toward training and nutrition.

Height: 1,88 cm

Bodyweight progression: 2010 -> 82kg / 2012 -> 97 kg / May 2015 99kg / Oct 2015 106kg

Bodytype: ectomorph (hardgainer ;))

Current training system: Wendler 5/3/1+ (main focus on powerlifting)

All-time PR: Deadlift: 215 kg / Benchpress: 137,5 kg / Squat: 160kg / Overhead press: 87,5 kg

Nutrition background:

Graduated in March 2015 from BSA Akademie, with a B-Licence in nutrition.

For questions, tips, or coaching requests, simply write him on Facebook: PeterPanCake