

Can You Get Big with Resistance Bands?

Tied with weight loss, hypertrophy or muscle growth is still ranked as one of the top fitness goals.

Most of the YouTube videos and bro science blogs tend to focus on one way of packing on the pounds: weight training.

But is that the *only* proven way?

Resistance bands are popular among people who are new to fitness or looking to increase endurance or leanness. They are also used in a rehabilitation setting.

So, is it possible for bands to help you bulk up?

Let's take a closer look at how to build muscle with resistance bands.

Can Resistance Bands Replace Weights?

The short answer: absolutely.

Studies show that "elastic resistance training is able to promote similar strength gains to conventional resistance training." [1](#)

This is important to point out because if you asked the average person which was better for muscle building, most would say traditional weight training.

Now, you can confidently invest in an elite pair of resistance bands with the goal of muscle building.

With that said, the question becomes can resistance bands help you get huge?

Can Resistance Bands Bulk You Up?

We know that resistance bands support lean muscle building, but can you get noticeably bigger using them?

Yes, but there's a catch. You have to consistently do a few things and do them well. No slacking or half-assing it.

You Must Go Heavy

No matter if you're using weights or resistance bands, you have to go heavy to stimulate muscle growth.

You might be wondering how that works with resistance bands. How can a seemingly flimsy piece of rubber produce enough force for you to grow?

It has to do with variable resistance.

Resistance bands are based on the principles of variable resistance training. This is pretty much what it sounds like.

The weight load or resistance changes as you move through the exercise.

Let's take the resistance bands bicep curl as an example. As you lift the band up and toward your shoulder, the resistance increases. This is also when you're at your strongest range of motion.

As you lower the resistance band, the weight load decreases.

But that doesn't explain the amount of force you'll need to build bigger muscles.

Believe it or not, resistance bands can provide you with up to hundreds of pounds of resistance, depending on the quality and type of bands.

For example, the X3 Bar can provide you with over 500 pounds of force when the bands are doubled over.

And remember that this is going to be different from lifting 500 pounds right out of the gate.

When you're lifting with bands, the resistance increases as you reach your strongest range of motion. This ensures that you're lifting maximal loads when your body can handle it.

Focus on Protein in Your Diet

You'll need to be as serious about your nutrition as you are with your training.

And if there's one macronutrient that you need to focus on, it's protein.

Protein is broken down into amino acids, which are the literal building blocks of muscle tissue.

I can't stress enough how important protein is for optimal muscle recovery. Studies have demonstrated that a high protein diet supports protein synthesis, muscle tissue repair, and hypertrophy (muscle growth). [\[2\]](#)

Dr. Jaquish recommends at least one gram of protein per gram of body weight.

Always remember that your diet should be based on whole food options. Eat a healthy diet of lean proteins, healthy fats, and complex carbohydrates.

With that said, supplements can complement a healthy diet.

One of the easiest ways to get in the recommended amount of protein is with a whey protein supplement.

I recommend taking whey protein about an hour before your muscle building workout. Take a second serving within an hour after your workout.

And if you are really serious about packing on muscle, you can take a serving of casein protein before you go to bed.

Limit (Don't Eliminate) Cardio

The old school train of thought was that if you're trying to bulk up, you need to cut out all cardio.

In reality, you want to limit your cardio, but you don't want to eliminate it.

Perform no more than two days per week of cardio, and the cardio workouts should complement your muscle building workouts.

I would recommend high-intensity interval training (HIIT).

These workouts are intense, fast-paced, and short. You'll only need about 15 minutes to do a HIIT workout.

Best of all, the exercises tend to be based on your body weight, so you'll support your lean muscle growth.

How to Build Muscle with Resistance Bands?

Just like your recovery, there are a few things you'll want to focus on during your training:

Compound Movements

You want to select exercises that give you the most bang for your buck.

That means you want exercises that activate the greatest number of muscle fibers. For example, squats, deadlifts, and bench presses.

While isolation exercises for secondary muscle groups are important, compound exercises are the bread and butter of a bodybuilding routine.

Full-Body Workouts

To trigger muscle growth with resistance bands, I would recommend full-body workouts several times per week.

This ensures that all of the major muscle groups are being activated several times per week, providing the necessary stimulus for growth.

Time Under Tension

It can be tough to focus on counting as you're going through a tough workout, but the amount of time under tension your muscles are under during a set is crucial for results.

Dr. Jaquish suggests that the optimal amount of time under tension for muscle growth is between 48 and 60 seconds per set.

This is usually expressed as two seconds during the lifting portion and two seconds as you lower the weight.

X3 Bar: Resistance Bands for Muscle Growth

The X3 Bar is a proven resistance band system that provides over 500 pounds of resistance, allowing you to safely and effectively build the body you want.

Don't take my word for it. Check out our Facebook group to see some incredible before and after pictures from real-life users of the X3 Bar.

References

1. Lopes JSS, Machado AF, Micheletti JK, de Almeida AC, Cavina AP, Pastre CM. Effects of training with elastic resistance versus conventional resistance on muscular strength: A systematic review and meta-analysis [published correction appears in *SAGE Open Med*. 2020 Sep 9;8:2050312120961220]. *SAGE Open Med*. 2019;7:2050312119831116. Published 2019 Feb 19. doi:10.1177/2050312119831116.
2. Bosse, J.D., Dixon, B.M. Dietary protein to maximize resistance training: a review and examination of protein spread and change theories. *J Int Soc Sports Nutr* 9, 42 (2012). <https://doi.org/10.1186/1550-2783-9-42>.