

# HOW TO GROW YOUR BOOTY - INTRO TO THE GLUTES

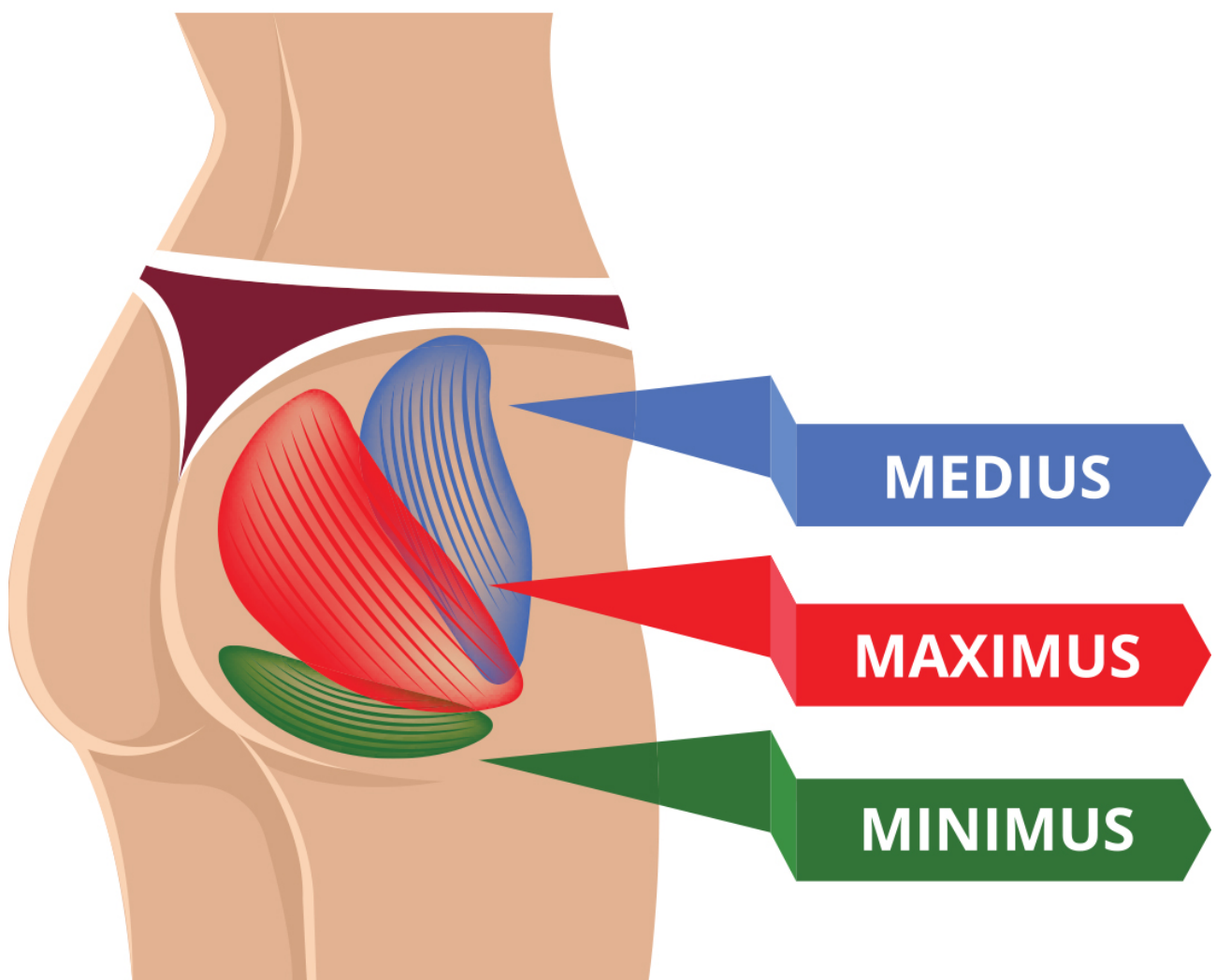
Let's talk about glutes. The popularity of all things fitness has skyrocketed and with that, the interest within the aesthetic nature of the bum.

The bum is the largest muscle group within the body and is comprised of 3 muscles; the gluteus minimus, medius and maximus (glute min, med and max for short).

The glute max being the bigger of the 3 muscles is normally the focal point of many glute targeted programmes, however, the glute med is roughly half of the size contributing massively to the glutes as a whole therefore mustn't be overlooked. The glute min acts as a stabiliser and aids the larger muscles of the glute to contract therefore won't be a heavy focal point in this post.

Training glutes are important, some might even say a necessity to living a healthy lifestyle. Aside from the aesthetics...(I'm going to let that one breathe) the glutes are the biggest muscle group within the body and will play a vital role in the global development of a lean muscular physique. The glutes will directly affect how we perform everyday tasks such sitting, walking, running. From a health perspective, Glutes offer an important stabiliser to the hips which will directly reduce undue stress onto the lower back which tends to be a problem that is plaguing modern sedentary society.

The body is such an interconnected system, other than your core the glutes are at the centre of that system and will underpin all of the additional structures within the body, and therefore need to be a focal point in training. In the words of the someone a lot smarter than me "a foolish man, is a man who built his house on sand". **Give yourself a good foundation - train your bum!**



Now that we know the necessity of the glutes, we need to understand the best approach to building them. Muscles have a funny way of dealing with stress, simply put, once subjected to stress (damage caused by exercise) they repair and grow in order to be more resilient i.e. GAINS. But what training stress is necessary for glute development? This is a question that in my experience many people don't consider prior to training and they will tend to follow the same general approach when training all muscle groups. All muscles get bigger by lifting heavier. As a general rule of thumb, yes, however not all muscles work as well in

the same training conditions as another. Ever had a stubborn muscle that just won't grow? This is possibly why.

To understand what stress needs to be applied to any muscle we must first understand how they are made. Each muscle in the glutes (glute max, med, min) are comprised of different proportions of muscle fibre types, fast twitch and slow twitch. The glute max has roughly a 50:50 split between fast and slow twitch fibres whereas glute med has a 42:58 split in favour of slow twitch fibres. Each of these muscle fibre types are very different in terms of structure and function therefore to get the most development out of each we must train them slightly differently.

Fast twitch are your bulkier muscles and will add a large portion of mass to the glutes therefore for general bum growth we must tap into them. This type of muscle fibre will respond better to fast, powerful movements which tend to be on the heavier end of the spectrum (75% - 100% of your 1 Rep Max) i.e. your heavy Barbell Hip Thrusts. Fast twitch fibres aren't very resilient to fatigue as they work anaerobically (without oxygen), therefore, to optimise their output, shorter working sets with few reps will be more beneficial to growth. This usually sits within the rep range of 4-8 reps for 5 working sets, with a break of usually 2-3min between each working set to ensure that the fast twitch muscle fibres are rested and ready to go for the next set.

On the other hand, slow twitch fibres are usually involved in endurance-based activity. They work aerobically (with oxygen) and therefore more responsive during longer sets (of 8-15 reps) where the fast twitch fibres become fatigued. Slow twitch have poor contractile strength therefore aren't tapped into when performing heavier movements, so a lighter option of 50-75% of your 1RM will be a better choice to training them. They are usually also smaller in terms of mass and get neglected, however their development is essential for training the bum as a whole, in addition to their important role in postural support and injury prevention. Understanding the composition of the glutes will act as a blueprint to training.

To optimally train the glute max we must use an even combination of strength work (heavy weight, low reps, long rest) and an endurance-based approach (low to moderate weight, high reps, short rest). Whereas to optimally train the glute med for a fuller development a more endurance approach will be more beneficial to growth.

In tomorrow's post we will be covering how to activate the glutes before a session to ensure optimal targeting the booty. Stay tuned.