

'Don't Be Duped by the Scoop': Comparing Pre-Workouts

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Do you remember the first time you purchased a significant item 'new' or 'used'? The unsettling feeling in your stomach; your parent's advice of *'be smart with your money'* replaying in your head, or your high school business teacher's caution of *'buyer beware'*? It could have been a car, gaming system, or phone; whatever it was you never forgot the feeling associated with it, especially if it did not turn out in your favour. Those internal cautions should also be alerting you when you are shopping for your supplements.

A recent social media ad popped up on my feed with the bold statement *"Strongest Pre-Workout!"*. That statement grabbed my attention, and I am sure the attention of a wide range of individuals; if the statement was true, it would undoubtedly be the next big thing.

Out of pure curiosity, I put it to the test against my 'go-to' pre-workout, *'mano- a -mano'*.



Here are the results:

1. Comparing Price - Equal Serving (18g):

My 'go-to' pre-workout	18g serving	The one claiming to be the 'strongest'	18g serving
Price per Serving:	\$1.66	Price per Serving:	\$2.50
Servings per Container:	30	Servings per Container:	20

The Result: They are NOT the best-priced gram for gram.

Let's break it down evenly. Here is what you get for each dollar spent, maybe that's where they are 'stronger':

2. What you get per \$1 Spent: *

My 'go-to' pre-workout		The one claiming to be the 'strongest'	
B6	12mg	B6	0mg
B12	120mcg	B12	0mcg
Citrulline Malate	3614mg	Citrulline Malate	3200mg
Beta-Alanine	1807mg	Beta-Alanine	1400mg
Taurine	1205mg	Taurine	0mg
Creatine HCl	904mg	Creatine HCl	400mg
Agmatine Sulfate	602mg	Agmatine Sulfate	240mg
Tyrosine	602mg	Tyrosine	240mg
Caffeine	241mg	Caffeine	130mg
Grape Seed E do extract	30mg	Grape Seed Extract	0mg
Black Pepper Extract	18mg	Black Pepper Extract	0mg

** using the price per serving for each product at 18 grams, each ingredient is cross multiplied to reflect the amount of each ingredient in the product a the consumer gets per \$1 paid.*

The Result: When comparing the amount of product the customer is getting on a dollar-to-dollar basis, the 'strongest' was NEVER the strongest...like EVER! Ok, to be fair, let's do a side by side comparison (approx 500 g):

3. Comparing Serving Size listed on the Label:

my 'go-to' pre-workout		the one claiming to be the 'strongest'	
Serving Size:	9g	Serving Size:	40g
Price per Serving:	\$0.83	Price per Serving:	\$4.40
Serving per Container:	60	Servings per Container:	12.5

OHHH, that's when I got it!! Do you see it?

We have just found out is how this brave callout was made...a 40-gram scoop!!! WOW, that will definitely make it strong-est!

Question: *So are they the 'strongest' though? OR Do they just have the customer taking the 'largest' dose?*

Duped by the Scoop

The more we start to compare what is written on the front of a label versus what is on the back label, the sooner we will realize we may be getting duped by the sneaky marketing tactics of a supplement company. *(This is when you should probably go grab the new pre-workout you just bought to check if the claims on the front line-up with the dosage & ingredients on the back label)*

The current trend in pre-workouts is to adjust the scoop size. It affects the *servings per container* and *cost per serving* (aka the cost to you). It also increases your stimulants to questionable levels. It is not uncommon to find labels with claims like “significantly increased performance and enormous doses of ingredient-X per scoop!” But what they are really saying is ‘*we have increased the size of our scoop from 10 grams to 30 grams – so now you pay more and get less - isn’t that fantastic!?!’*

Being fully aware that I am poking fun at some of the marketing around pre-workouts to make a serious point, as a consumer, it is important to know you are comparing things ‘mano a mano’ or ‘apples to apples’.

As mentioned, a number of companies are dropping the standard 7-9 gram size and simply doubling, tripling or even quadrupling it! It is *our* job and *your* job to be aware of what to look for in order to make the best choice for you.

Regardless of the marketing on the label, the specific scoop size information is found on the back of the container. Side note: If the scoop size is not disclosed at all, walk away; just printing ‘serving size’ is not full disclosure.

You will most likely come across any of the following, based on the companies’ philosophy and sales techniques:

1. The standard full dose 9-gram scoop:

Medicinal Ingredients Ingrédients médicinaux:	
Serving size 1 scoop (9 g) / Par portion individuelle (1 mesure / 9 g).	
Servings per container: 60 / Portions par contenant: 60	

2. A standard 8-gram scoop with a double-scoop option listed:

Medicinal Ingredients / Ingrédients médicinaux		
Serving Size: 1–2 scoops (8–16g), Servings Per Container: 21–42		
/ Portion: 1 à 2 mesures (8g à 16g). Portions par contenant: 21 à 42		
Amount Per Serving / Quantité par portion	42 Servings / portions 1 Scoop / mesure	21 Servings / portions 2 Scoops / mesures

3. The new approach, double-scoop listed as the serving size at 18 grams (with ½ scoop option):

M e d i c i n a l I n g r e d i e n t s			
Serving Size: 9g (1/2 scoop) / 18g (1 scoop)			
Servings per container: 40 (1/2 scoop) / 20 (1 scoop)			
Amount Per Serving	1/2	1	%DV*

4. The concerning super-scoop option:

Each scoop (40 g) contains / Chaque mesure (40 g) contient:
Medicinal Ingredients / Ingrédients médicinaux:

The reality is, the difference between a mediocre and great pre-workout comes down to the formula, NOT simply taking more! So, verify what is *in* the pre-workout and most certainly, check the *scoop size* (dosage) before you buy. It is also strongly encouraged to look into how taking too much caffeine and other pre-workout ingredients can actually decrease performance. Studies already exist, so please do your personal research; it is your body after all. No dose of a properly formulated and effective pre-workout should ever be higher than 18 grams.

It is best to stick with a 7-9 gram scoop and if you're really having a bad day, like really bad, then double scoop!

My "Go-To" Pre-workout:

Believe it or not, even before I was part of the #mamfam, **Mammoth PUMP** was the pre-workout I spent my money on. While I do try new brands and popular flavours, I have used PUMP consistently as my choice for almost 5 years. It increases my focus, provides an amazing boost with intense pumps; without artificial colours, dyes and the nasty crash associated with some pre-workouts. My favourite flavour is a solid tie between **Purple Rain** and **Black Cherry**.

The other factors that lead me this way are:



- ✓ Best Price Per Serving*
- ✓ Most Servings per Container: *minimum 10 more servings vs competitors!**
- ✓ Most Value for the same Price*

*based on figures stated above: equal serving size, container size, servings per container