

# Biceps



## THE CLASSIC SYMBOL OF A POWERFUL PHYSIQUE

**T**he bicep muscles are crucial for pulling and lifting movements you perform constantly throughout the day. But perhaps the most compelling reason to train your biceps is the almost immediate effect you see in the mirror. The bicep muscles, when flexed, are the classic symbol of a powerful physique.

The biceps are also the most visible muscle to train. When you curl a weight, you

can easily watch yourself in the mirror and see the biceps swell enormously under the strain. We promise you'll enjoy training these muscles—and showing them off.

It is important to remember to focus on form and smooth, controlled movement. Resist the temptation to use your body weight for leverage when performing curls. To create a growth-producing

burn, you have to isolate the biceps by paying strict attention to form.

Variety is also key here. By performing a variety of exercises, you'll emphasize different areas of the biceps, creating a fuller, rounder shape. You'll also force your body to keep adapting to the changing types of stress. This means your biceps get bigger faster.

## 1 alternate dumbbell curls

When performing a high-intensity weight routine, include exercises that stretch the muscles. This exercise is great for stretching the biceps and for overall biceps development.

**Starting Position:** Either stand upright, or sit on an incline bench holding a dumbbell in each hand. Keep your shoulders square and your chest up. Press your upper back and shoulders against the bench. Let your arms hang downward with your palms facing each other.

**The Exercise:** Slowly curl the weight in your right hand out and up to shoulder level, while turning your wrist so that your little finger is on the inside and your thumb is on the outside. Contract the muscle as hard as you can at the top, then slowly lower the weight back to the starting position while, at the same time, raising the weight in your left hand.



**TIP** DON'T LET...  
your shoulders creep up off the bench. This allows you to use your body for leverage, and may cause neck strain.



MID-POINT



MID-POINT

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## 2 barbell curls

This is the classic biceps exercise of all time, and rightly so: performed correctly, this exercise will help you develop overall size in the biceps.

**Starting Position:** With your hands shoulder-width apart, grip a barbell with an underhand grip. Stand up straight with shoulders squared and with feet shoulder-width apart. Let the bar hang at arms length in front of you, with your shoulders, arms and hands in a straight line.

**The Exercise:** Without leaning back or swinging the weight, curl the bar up toward your chest in an arc. Keep your elbows stationary and close to your sides. Bring the weight up as high as you can, and focus on holding the contraction at the top. Lower the weight slowly along the

same path, resisting all the way down until your arms are nearly straight but you can still feel a contraction in the biceps.



**TIP** DON'T LIFT YOUR ELBOWS...  
during the curl. This will move the focus of the exercise away from the biceps and onto the front deltoids.

**TIP** RESIST THE TEMPTATION...  
to lean too far back or swing the weight. Make it a habit to stand tall and move the weight in a slow and controlled motion.

“The meaning of life is to live a meaningful life!”

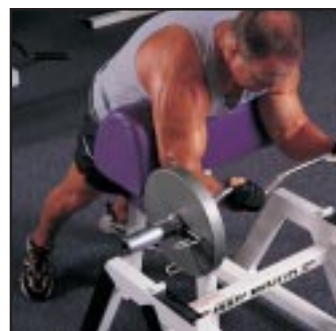
### 3 preacher curls

The pad on the preacher-curl bench forces you to keep your elbows stationary, as well as giving you a stable base for the exercise. If the EZ curl bar places too much strain on your wrists, try using dumbbells for this exercise and training one arm at a time.

**Starting Position:** Use a preacher-curl bench and an EZ curl bar. It's crucial that the seat on the preacher-curl bench be adjusted to the right height. When you sit, the seat should not be so low that the shoulders are elevated nor so high that you're hunched over the pad. Grasp the EZ curl bar using a shoulder width grip.

**The Exercise:** Curl the barbell upward in an arc. As you begin, be careful not to lurch or rock the weight to get it moving. The goal is to make the exercise hard on the biceps, not to use the deltoids and give the biceps a free ride. Curl the bar towards your chin, but keep in mind that the resistance is greater at the beginning than at the

end. If the resistance starts to let up, you've gone too far. Concentrate on the eccentric part of the exercise, lowering the bar slowly and resisting all the way.



**TIP** TO MAKE IT HARDER...  
to use your upper body for leverage, try doing the exercise from a standing position, leaning over the pad with your legs stretched out behind you so that your whole body is in a straight line.

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## 4 concentration curls

This one really isolates the “peak” of the biceps. You need to concentrate on the contraction of the biceps and on strict form to make the exercise effective.



**Starting Position:** Seated on the end of a bench, spread your legs apart into a “V” and lean forward slightly. Grasp a dumbbell in one hand with your palm facing upward. Rest your elbow on the inside of your thigh and let the dumbbell hang. Rest your other hand on the top of your opposite thigh for support.

**The Exercise:** Slowly curl the weight up, keeping the torso, upper arm and elbow still. As you lift, twist your wrist so that your little finger turns toward your body. Contract the muscle hard at the top of the curl, then lower the weight slowly. Resist the weight all the way down until your arm is nearly straight, but you can still feel a slight contraction in the biceps.

### TIP BE CAREFUL...

not to use your upper body to “swing” the weight up. Lower the amount of weight if you need to so you can focus on correct form.

“Quality only happens when we care enough to do our very best!”

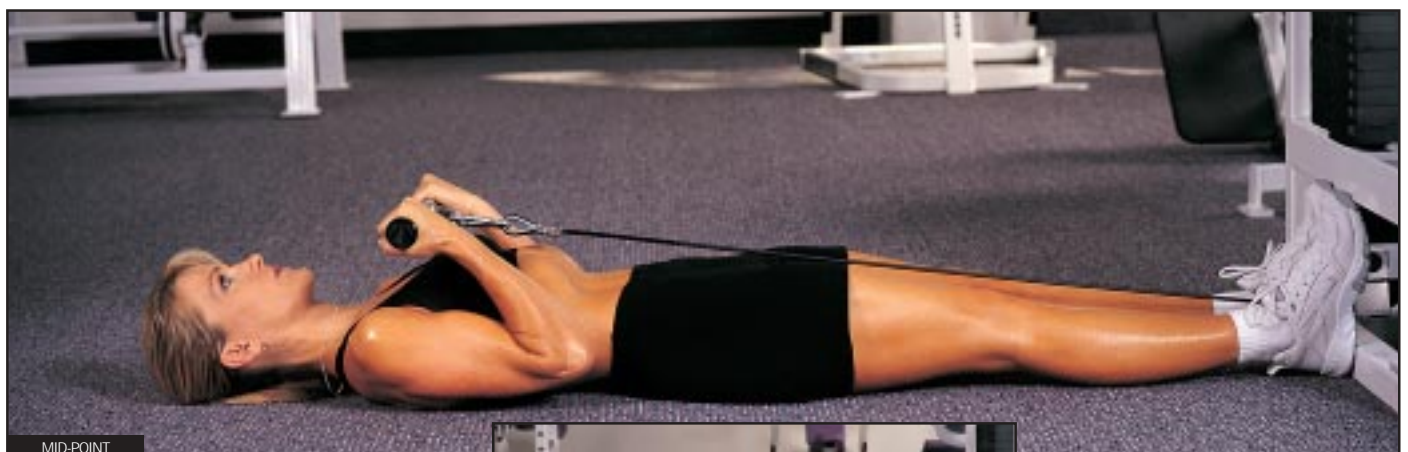
## 5 cable curls

This is a great exercise for finishing off your biceps workout. Lying flat on the floor ensures that your whole body remains in a straight line throughout the exercise so you can't "cheat."

**Starting Position:** Grasp a short straight bar attached to the high-cable pulley in both hands, using an underhand grip. Lie flat on your back in front of the weight stack, with your feet

flat against the frame of the Universal machine. Your legs should be straight, not bent. Let the bar rest on your thighs. Your arms should be slightly bent.

**The Exercise:** Without moving your elbows, curl the bar slowly up toward your chest, pause to contract fully at the top. Slowly lower back to the starting position.



**TIP** KEEP YOUR BODY IN A STRAIGHT LINE.

Do not "cheat" by bending your knees, lifting your head and shoulders off the ground, or lifting your elbows.



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## 6 hammer curls

This exercise stretches out the biceps and also gives the muscles of the forearm a workout. Really focus on the contraction at the top to give your biceps a full, round look.

**Starting Position:** Stand with a dumbbell in each hand and your arms hanging by your sides, palms facing each other. Keep your elbows locked into your sides. Your upper body and elbows should remain stationary throughout the exercise.

**The Exercise:** Keeping your palms facing each other, curl the weight in your right hand up in a semi-circle toward your right shoulder. Contract the biceps hard at the top, then slowly lower the weight while raising the weight in your left hand.

Do not turn your wrists during this exercise. Your palms should face each other throughout the exercise.



START/FINISH

**TIP** AVOID LEANING...

too far forward or backward. Keep your abs tight and your torso upright throughout the exercise.



MID-POINT

**TIP** DON'T LIFT ...

with your palms facing down as in a reverse wrist curl. The proper form is to keep the palms facing each other.