Men's Health

TOTAL BODY

WORKBOOK

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Chapter One: The Arms

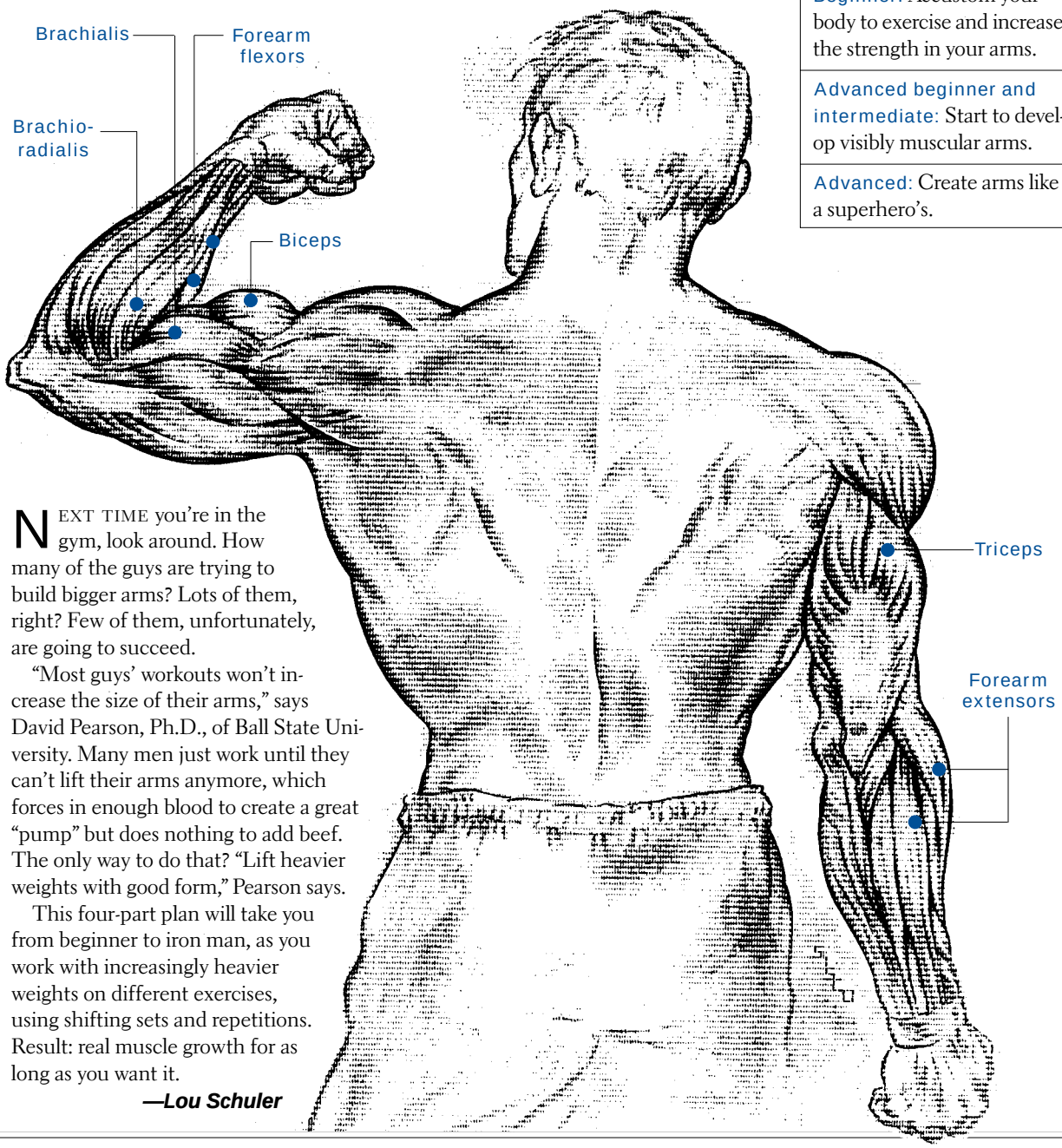
Editor's note: This is the first in a series of chapters that will teach you how to build the body you want, one muscle group at a time.

GOALS

Beginner: Accustom your body to exercise and increase the strength in your arms.

Advanced beginner and intermediate: Start to develop visibly muscular arms.

Advanced: Create arms like a superhero's.



NEXT TIME you're in the gym, look around. How many of the guys are trying to build bigger arms? Lots of them, right? Few of them, unfortunately, are going to succeed.

"Most guys' workouts won't increase the size of their arms," says David Pearson, Ph.D., of Ball State University. Many men just work until they can't lift their arms anymore, which forces in enough blood to create a great "pump" but does nothing to add beef. The only way to do that? "Lift heavier weights with good form," Pearson says.

This four-part plan will take you from beginner to iron man, as you work with increasingly heavier weights on different exercises, using shifting sets and repetitions. Result: real muscle growth for as long as you want it.

—Lou Schuler

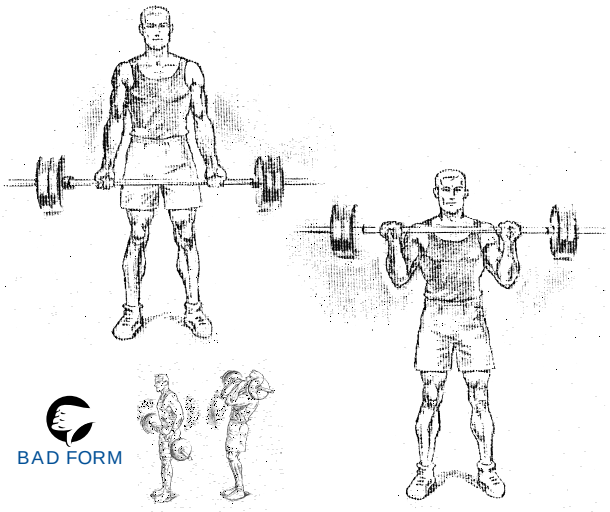
Illustrations: Sam Sisco; icons: Jim Nuttle

BEGINNER

Frequency: Do these exercises as part of a total-body weight workout three times a week.
Rest: 1 minute between exercises
Progress: Increase weights each week, shooting for increases of 2½ to 5 pounds at a time.
How long: Follow this program for your first 4 to 8 weeks of exercise, or your first few weeks after returning from a break. When you stop making strength gains, you're ready for the Advanced Beginner program.

BARBELL BICEPS CURL

Sets: 1 **Repetitions:** 12–15

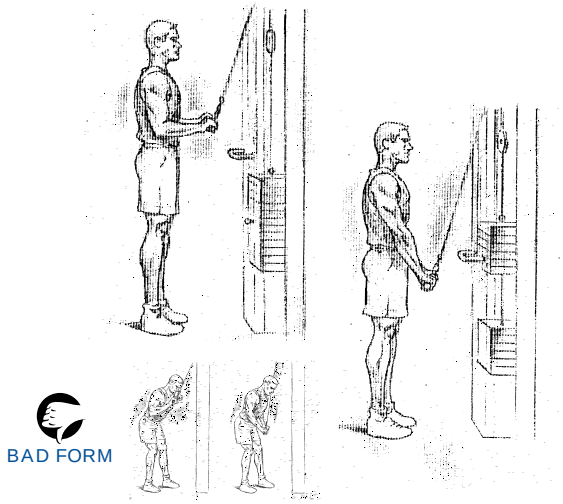


KEY INFO

Stand in front of a mirror with your arms straight down at your sides, palms facing forward. Note that your hands aren't directly under your shoulders; they're a few inches out to the sides. This is called your carrying angle, and it's the most comfortable and natural position for your hands when you perform biceps curls.

TRICEPS PUSHDOWN

Sets: 1 **Repetitions:** 12–15

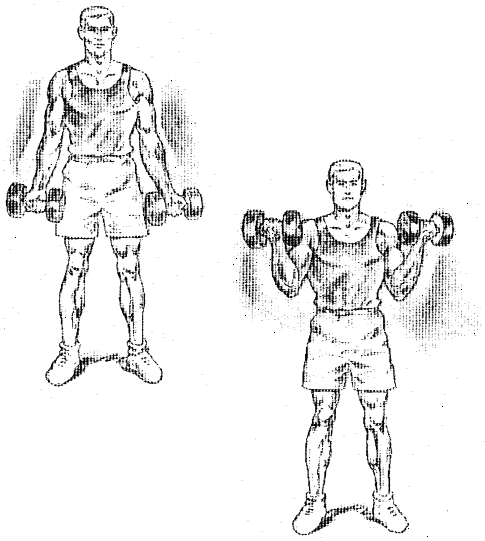


ADVANCED BEGINNER

Frequency: Do these exercises as part of a total-body weight workout three times a week.
Technique: Increase weights by 2½ to 5 pounds for each set.
Rest: 2 minutes between sets
Progress: Start each week using your heaviest weight from the week before.
Variety: After 3 or 4 weeks, go back to the Beginner exercises, but use the guidelines above.
How long: When your strength and muscle size stop improving, or when you have the time and energy to do more exercises, move to the next level.

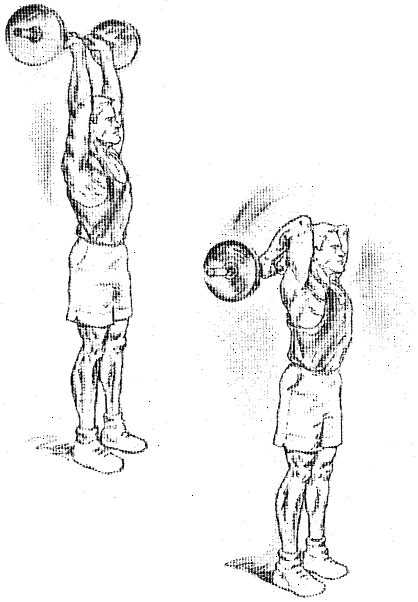
DUMBBELL CURL (BICEPS)

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 12, 10, 8



FRENCH PRESS (TRICEPS)

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 12, 10, 8



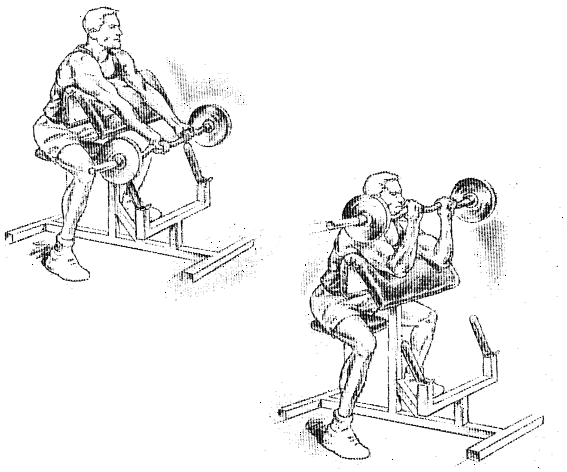
INTERMEDIATE

Frequency: Do these exercises as part of a split routine. Divide your workout into two sets of exercises—see "Key Info" below—and perform each workout twice a week.
Technique: Start each exercise with the heaviest weight you can use for eight to 10 repetitions—no fewer, and not many more. Drop the weight slightly for subsequent sets if you need to.
Rest: 2 minutes between sets
Progress: Increase weights each week by 2½ to 5 pounds.

Variety: After 3 weeks, rotate exercises. Mix in some from both Beginner programs and from the Advanced program. In any workout, avoid doing both biceps exercises or both triceps exercises from the same angle and with the same apparatus. For example, if a standing barbell curl is your first biceps exercise, do a preacher curl or incline curl with dumbbells for your second.
How long: Train like this for as long as you're satisfied with the results. If you have the time and ambition to work even harder, move up to the Advanced program.

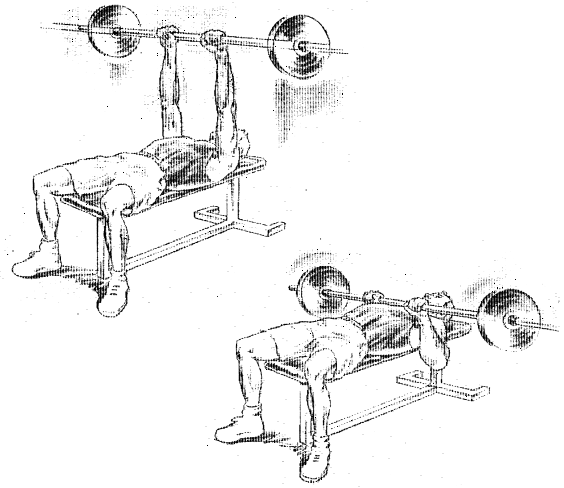
PREACHER CURL WITH EZ BAR (BICEPS)

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 8–10



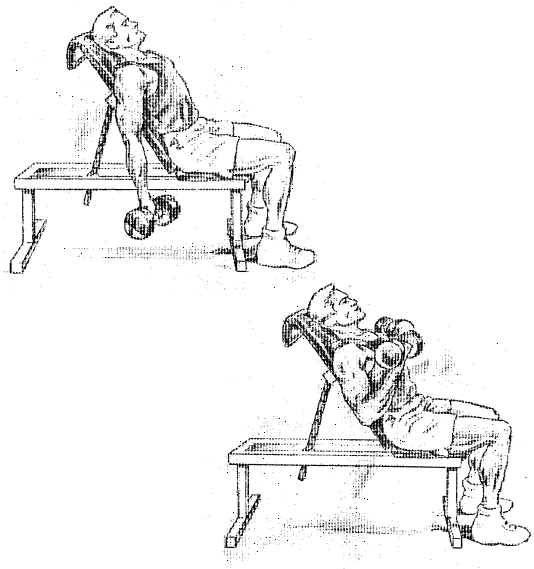
CLOSE-GRIP BENCH PRESS (TRICEPS)

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 8–10



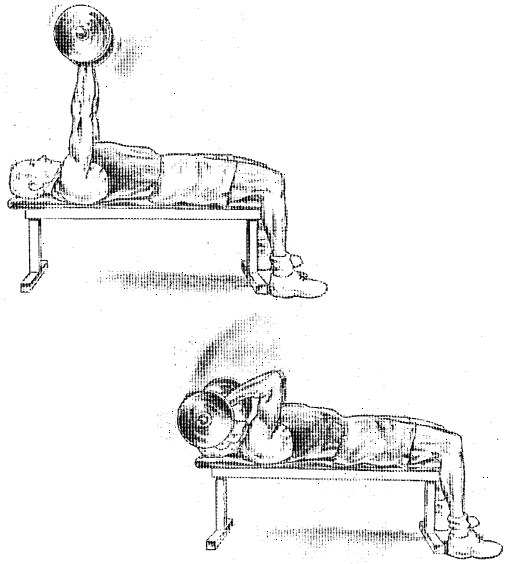
INCLINE DUMBBELL CURL (BICEPS)

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 6–8



"SKULL CRUSHER" TRICEPS EXTENSION

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 10–12



KEY INFO

By the time you're an intermediate lifter, you'll need to split your workout into two parts, doing each twice a week. There are dozens of different ways to divide up your exercises, but Pearson says to follow this rule: Always work your triceps on the same day you do chest and shoulder presses. If you do these exercises on separate days, you end up working your triceps hard four times a week. "This is one reason many lifters don't make gains in their bench presses," Pearson says. "Their triceps are simply tired all the time."

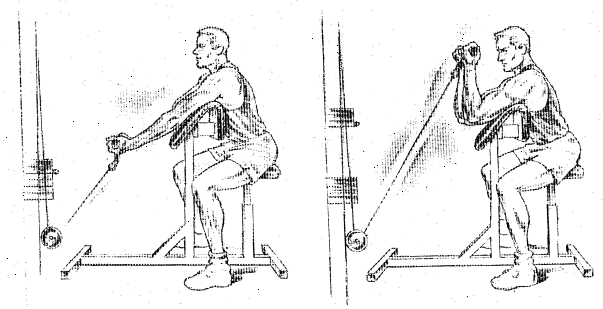
ADVANCED

Frequency: Perform these exercises as part of a split routine twice a week.
Technique: Start each exercise with the heaviest weight you can use for the required repetitions. Drop the weight slightly for subsequent sets if you need to.
Rest: 2 minutes between sets

Progress: Add 2 1/2 to 5 pounds of weight a week.
Variety: Shift exercises after 3 weeks; include some from the other programs if you want. Do each exercise from a different angle and with different equipment.
How long: Three to 4 weeks at a time, two or three times a year. If you do it year-round, you'll burn out.

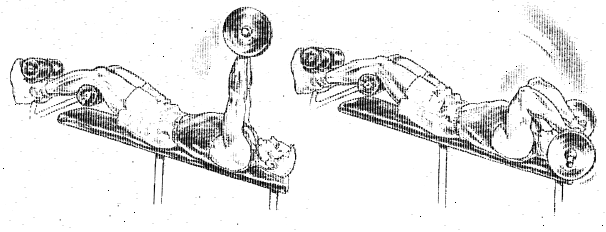
CABLE PREACHER CURL (BICEPS)

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 8–10



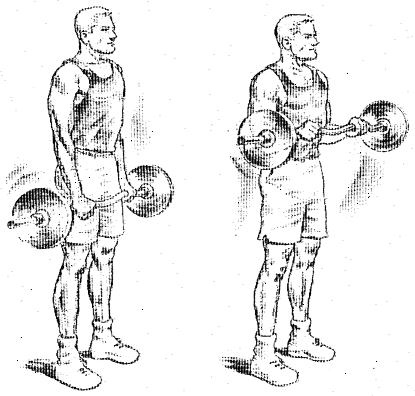
DECLINE EXTENSION WITH EZ BAR (TRICEPS)

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 6–8



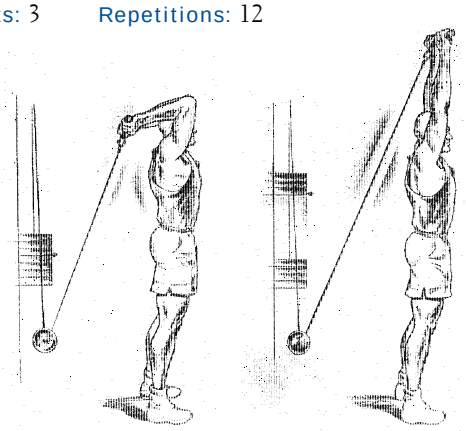
STANDING REVERSE-GRIP CURL WITH EZ BAR (BICEPS)

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 6–8



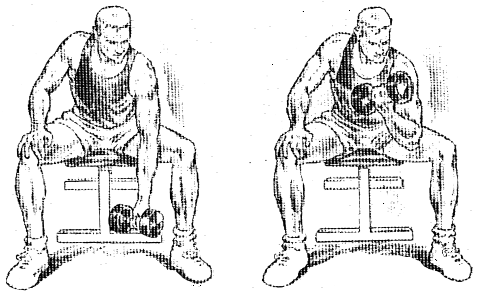
CABLE FRENCH PRESS (TRICEPS)

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 12



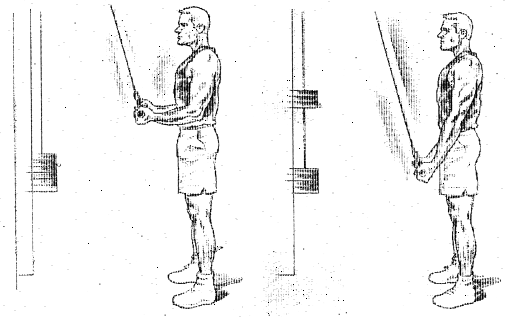
SEATED CONCENTRATION CURL (BICEPS)

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 12 per arm



REVERSE-GRIP CABLE EXTENSION (TRICEPS)

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 8



A FEW WORDS ABOUT FOREARMS

Few men do separate exercises, such as wrist curls and extensions, for their forearm muscles. One reason is that with a limited amount of time, you should focus on the biggest muscles. Another is that forearm muscles tend to get a decent workout even if you're not targeting them, since you use them to grip the bars and dumbbells on every exercise. ♦

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Chapter Two: The Chest

BUILDING YOUR chest takes two exercises: one for your muscles, one for your ego. The ego-builder is an easy choice—the bench press, which has long been the standard of strength. The muscle-builder is a bit of a surprise. "Flies build your chest muscles faster than any other exercise, including presses, because they work mostly the pectorals," says Dave Pearson, Ph.D., C.S.C.S., of Ball State University. Of course, flies bring no bragging rights at all. That's why this four-stage program starts off with both exercises. Then at the intermediate and advanced levels, it becomes a bench-press program that will give you a one-repetition maximum far beyond anything you've ever thought you'd lift.

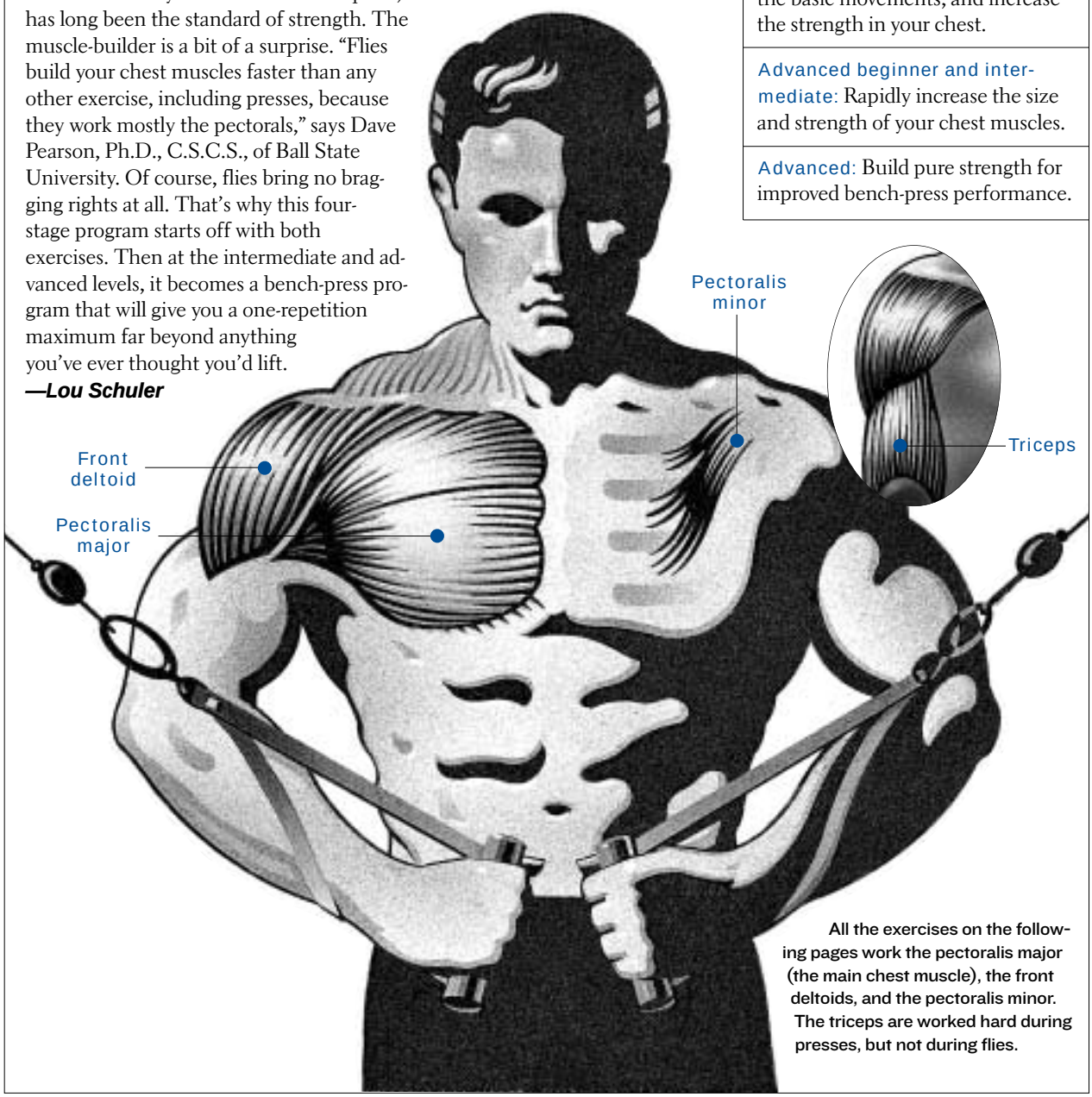
—Lou Schuler

GOALS

Beginner: Accustom your body to the basic movements, and increase the strength in your chest.

Advanced beginner and intermediate: Rapidly increase the size and strength of your chest muscles.

Advanced: Build pure strength for improved bench-press performance.



All the exercises on the following pages work the pectoralis major (the main chest muscle), the front deltoids, and the pectoralis minor. The triceps are worked hard during presses, but not during flies.

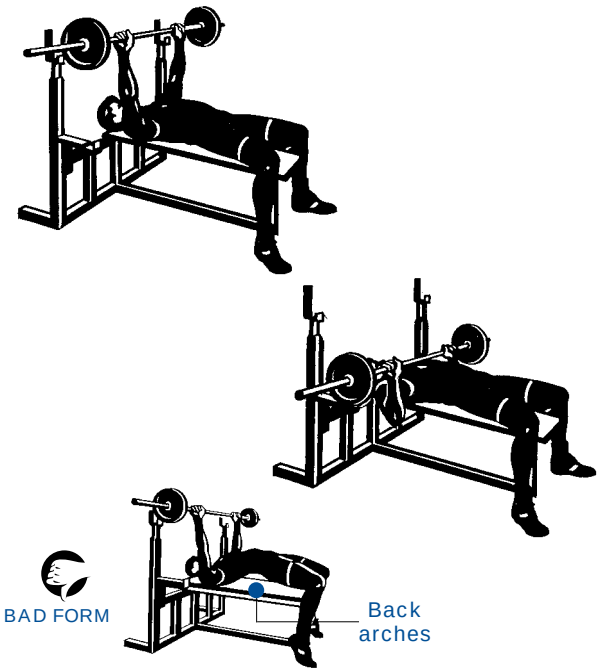
Illustrations: John Hull; icons: Jim Nuttle

BEGINNER

Frequency: Do these exercises as part of a total-body weight workout three times a week.
Rest: 1 minute between exercises
Progress: Increase weights each week.
How long: Follow this program for your first 4 to 8 weeks of exercise. (If you haven't been lifting weights for a while, follow this program for the first few weeks after you return.) It's usually time to move on to the Advanced Beginner workout when you can't increase the weight from one week to the next.

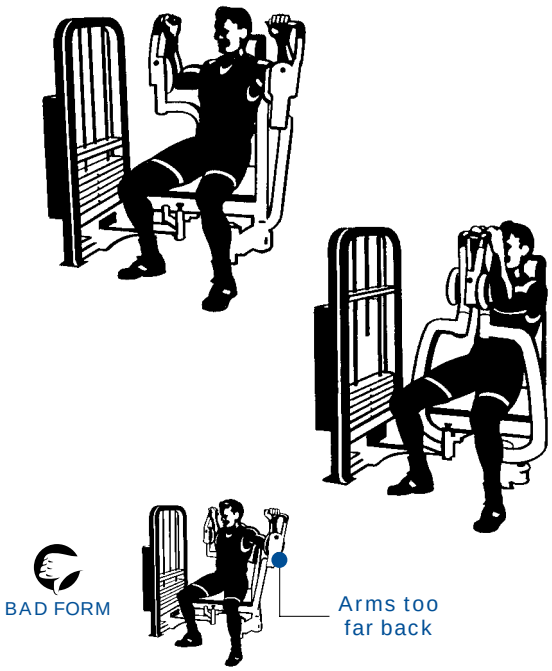
BARBELL FLAT BENCH PRESS

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 12–15



PEC-DECK MACHINE FLY

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 12–15

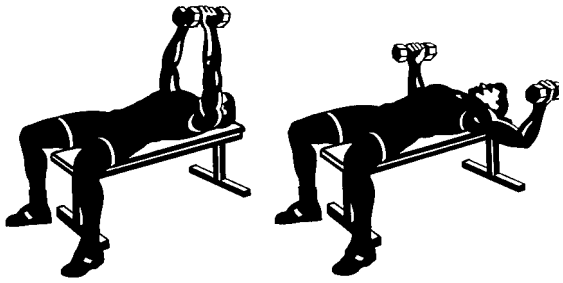


ADVANCED BEGINNER

Frequency: Do these exercises as part of a total-body weight workout three times a week.
Technique: Increase weights on each set.
Rest: 2 minutes between sets
Progress: Start each exercise with a heavier weight each week.
Variety: After 3 or 4 weeks, determine your one-repetition maximum on the bench press—the most weight you can lift once with good form. Warm up with two sets of six to eight slow repetitions using light weights, adding weight on the second set. Then do one-repetition sets with increasingly heavy weights, resting 2 to 5 minutes between attempts, until you hit a weight you can't lift.
How long: When your strength and muscle size stop improving, or when you have the time and energy to do more exercises, move to the next level.

FLAT DUMBBELL FLY

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 12, 10, 8



BARBELL FLAT BENCH PRESS

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 12, 10, 8

See the bench-press illustration above.

KEY INFO

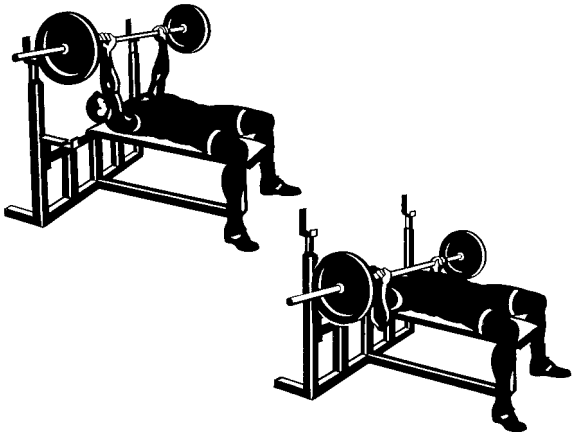
You probably think the object of a bench press is to push the weight straight up off your chest. In reality, the bar moves slightly backward as it rises, in a sort of J-shaped trajectory. Don't fight nature: Lowering the bar to your throat so you can push it straight up would put an unnatural strain on your shoulders, not to mention the hurt you'd suffer if the bar slipped. This J shape also explains why doing presses on machines doesn't replicate the free-weight exercise.

INTERMEDIATE

Frequency: Divide your workout into two sets of exercises: one for the chest, shoulders, and arms; one for the back, legs, and abdominals. Perform each workout twice a week.
Technique: Warm up with two slow sets of eight to 10 bench-press repetitions. Use more weight on the second set, but don't make these preliminary sets too challenging. Then start each exercise with the heaviest weight you can use for eight to 10 repetitions. Drop the weight slightly for subsequent sets if you need to.
Rest: 2 minutes between sets, including the warmup sets
Progress: Increase the weights each week. On dips, add up the repetitions you're able to do in your three sets, and try to add at least one more dip to your total each week.
Safety: Use a spotter on each set of barbell flat bench presses. You'll be able to do more repetitions, and you'll have the confidence to work with heavier weights.
Variety: After 3 weeks, rotate the exercises. Substitute dumbbells for barbells and vice versa. Return to the original exercises after 3 more weeks, but change the order, doing the inclines before the flat bench presses.
Overtraining alert: To avoid injury and burnout, keep exercises for smaller muscles to a minimum during this stage. Do just one additional exercise for shoulders (the lateral raise is a good choice), one for biceps, and one for triceps. Or you can skip triceps work altogether, since the presses and dips will give those muscles plenty of incentive to grow.
How long: Train like this for as long as you're satisfied with the results. If you really want to improve your bench-press performance, move up to the Advanced program.

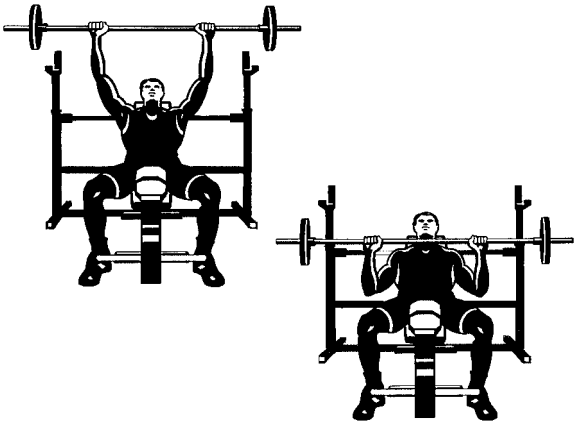
BARBELL FLAT BENCH PRESS

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10



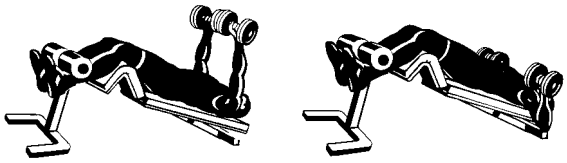
BARBELL INCLINE BENCH PRESS

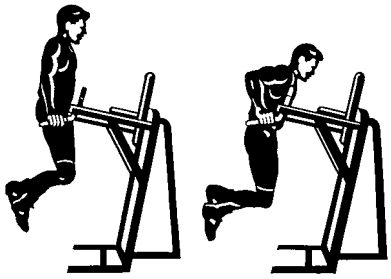
Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10



DUMBBELL DECLINE BENCH PRESS/DIP*

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10/max

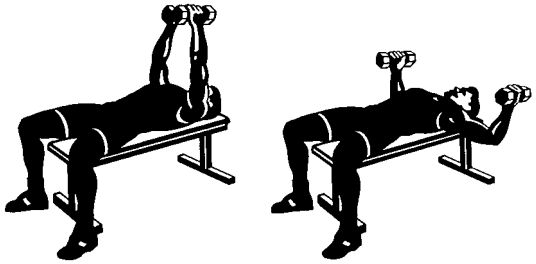




* Substitute dips for decline presses once a week. Always go for maximum repetitions on dips.

MULTI-ANGLE DUMBBELL FLY

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 10–12



Every 3 weeks, change the angle at which you do the flies—flat for 3 weeks, on an incline for 3 weeks, on a decline for 3 weeks, then flat again.

KEY INFO

KEEP YOUR WRISTS STRAIGHT

Your wrists could be limiting the weight you lift during bench presses. The bar should rest on your palms, directly over your wrist bones. But many guys allow their wrists to hyperextend—bend backward—during bench presses. This places tremendous strain on the muscles and connective tissues on the insides of your forearms and reduces the amount of force you can generate with your upper body. If you can't keep your wrists perfectly straight during presses, decrease the weight you're using until you can. Then gradually increase the weight as your wrists grow accustomed to working in that position.

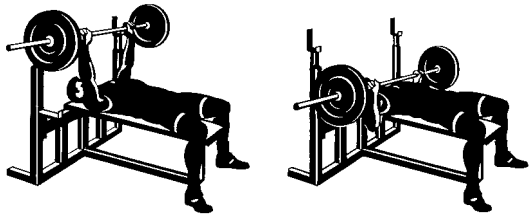
ADVANCED

Frequency: Perform each of these routines once a week—the first on Monday and the second on Thursday, for example.
Technique: After a warmup, start each exercise with the heaviest weight you can use for the recommended number of repetitions. Be sure to use a spotter.
Rest: 2 to 3 minutes between sets
Progress: Increase the weights each week.
Overtraining alert: Skip arm and shoulder exercises altogether while following the Advanced program.
How long: Only 3 to 4 weeks. Test your one-repetition maximum at the end of that period.

WORKOUT 1

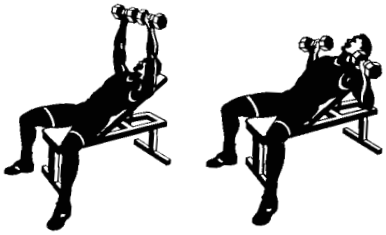
BARBELL FLAT BENCH PRESS

Sets: 4 **Repetitions:** 6–8



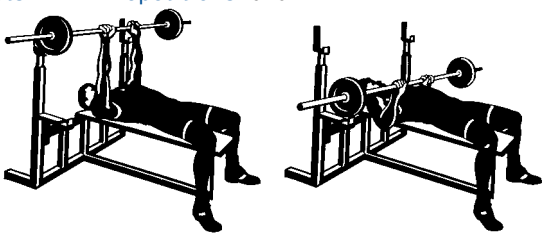
DUMBBELL INCLINE PRESS

Sets: 4 **Repetitions:** 6–8



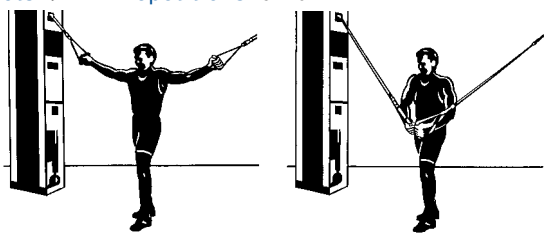
CLOSE-GRIP BENCH PRESS

Sets: 4 **Repetitions:** 6–8



CABLE CROSSOVER

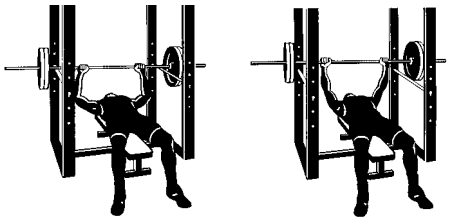
Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 8–10



WORKOUT 2

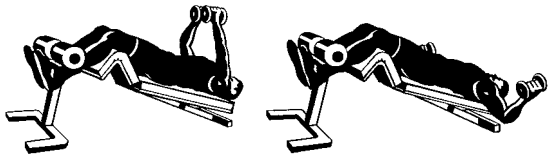
RACK LOCKOUT PRESS

Sets: 4 **Repetitions:** 6–8



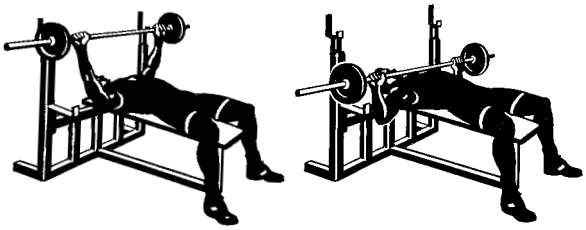
DUMBBELL DECLINE FLY

Sets: 4 **Repetitions:** 6–8



WIDE-GRIP BENCH PRESS

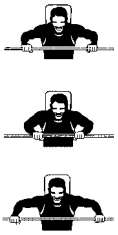
Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 8–10



DUMBBELL INCLINE FLY

Sets: 3 **Repetitions:** 8–10

THREE ESSENTIAL GRIPS



This Advanced program features three different bench-press grip widths. In your normal grip, which balances chest and triceps work, your thumbs should be roughly over your shoulders. Olympic barbells have a ring marked where most men will place their index fingers. For the close-grip press, which puts more emphasis on the triceps, your hands should be 12 to 18 inches apart, depending on the width of your torso. You want your elbows to descend below your torso when you bring the bar to your chest, just as they would in a standard bench press. On the wide-grip press, which works your chest harder, your hands should be 3 to 4 inches farther apart on each side than with your normal grip. ♦

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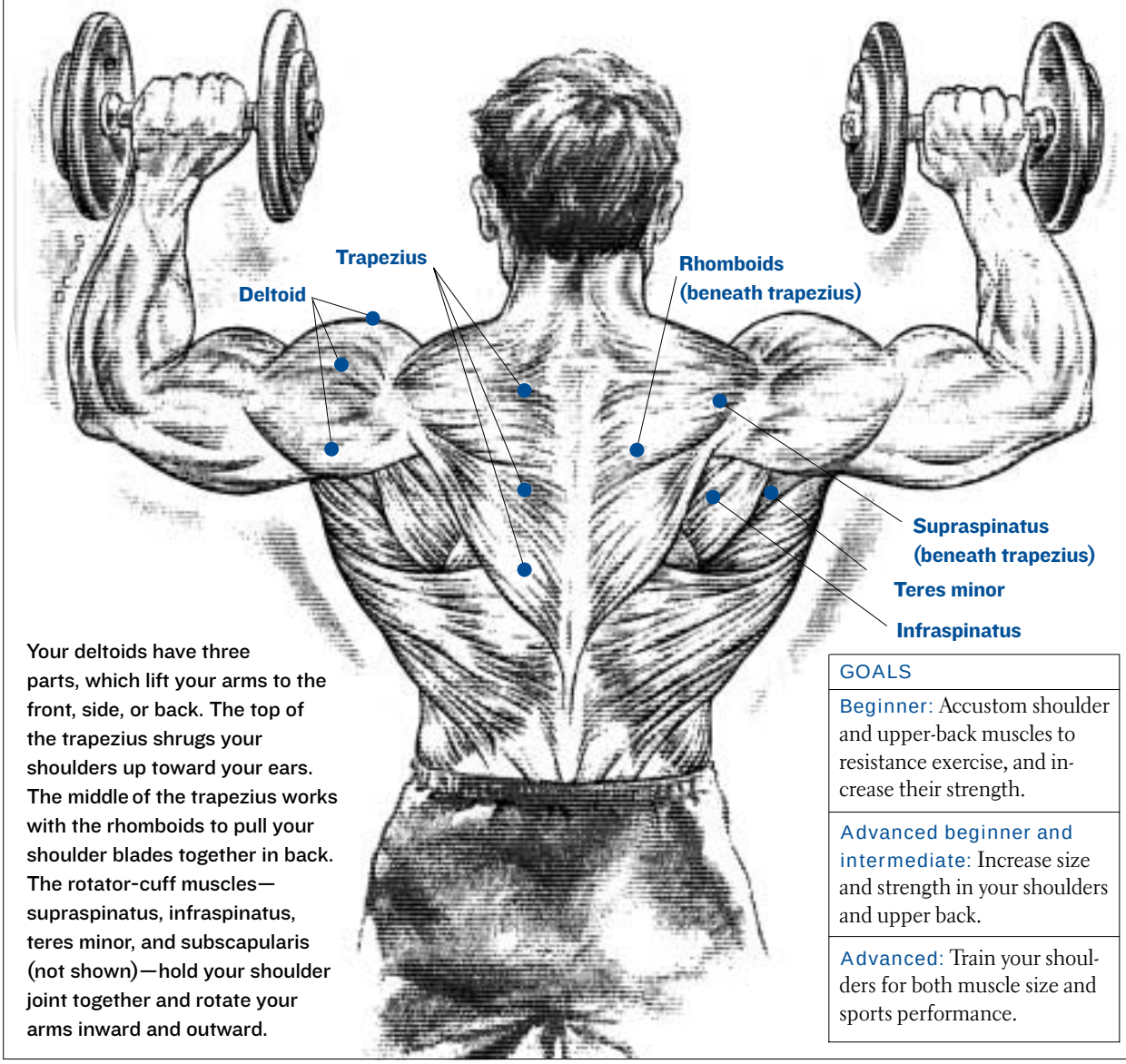
WORKBOOK

Chapter Three: The Shoulders

SHOULDER MUSCLES DO so many things that it's no wonder they come unhinged easily. "Your shoulders have such great range of motion because their underlying structure is unstable," says Dave Pearson, Ph.D., of the Ball State University human-performance laboratory. The muscles surrounding the joint can be easily strained or torn, and the joint itself can separate.

That's why this chapter emphasizes not only strength but safety. You'll build the big, showy muscles that put the "tank" in tank top. But you'll also target the rotator cuff—the four small muscles responsible for keeping the shoulder joint in place. After all, what's the point of having broad shoulders if your arm's in a sling?

—Lou Schuler



Your deltoids have three parts, which lift your arms to the front, side, or back. The top of the trapezius shrugs your shoulders up toward your ears. The middle of the trapezius works with the rhomboids to pull your shoulder blades together in back. The rotator-cuff muscles—supraspinatus, infraspinatus, teres minor, and subscapularis (not shown)—hold your shoulder joint together and rotate your arms inward and outward.

GOALS
Beginner: Accustom shoulder and upper-back muscles to resistance exercise, and increase their strength.
Advanced beginner and intermediate: Increase size and strength in your shoulders and upper back.
Advanced: Train your shoulders for both muscle size and sports performance.

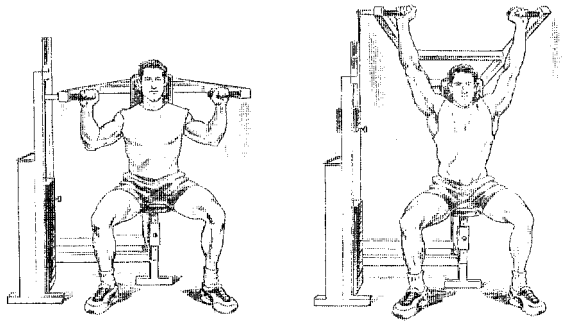
Illustrations: Sam Sisco; icons: Jim Nuttle

BEGINNER

Frequency: Do these exercises as part of a total-body weight workout three times a week.
Rest: 1 minute between exercises
Progress: Increase weights each week.
How long: Follow this program for your first 4 to 8 weeks of exercise, or for your first few weeks after returning from a break. When you peak on this program—when you can't increase the weight from one week to the next—you're ready for the Advanced Beginner workout.

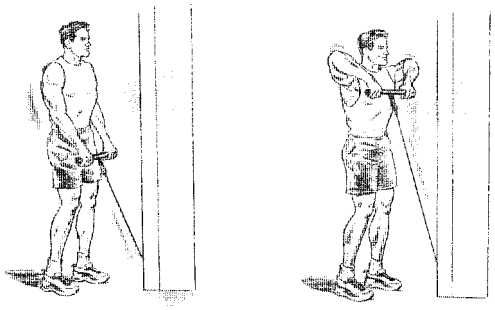
MACHINE SHOULDER PRESS

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 12–15



CABLE UPRIGHT ROW

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 12–15

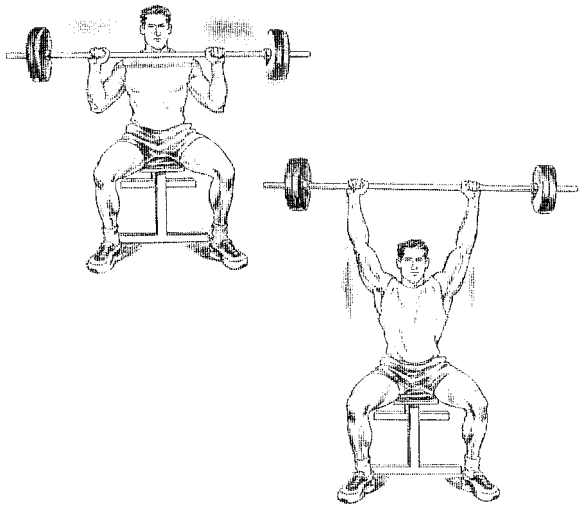


ADVANCED BEGINNER

Frequency: Do these exercises as part of a total-body weight workout three times a week.
Technique: Increase weights on each set.
Rest: 2 minutes between sets
Progress: Use heavier weights each week.
Variety: After 3 or 4 weeks, switch to seated dumbbell presses and standing dumbbell shrugs, both of which are shown in the Intermediate section. Continue with the sets and repetitions recommended here.
How long: When your strength and muscle size stop improving, or when you have the time and energy to do more exercises, move to the next level.

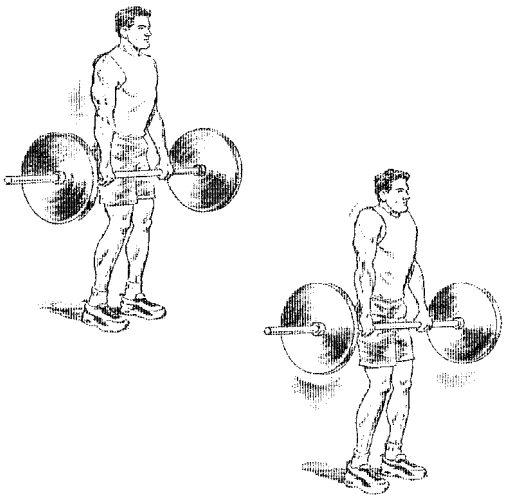
SEATED BARBELL OVER HEAD PRESS

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 12, 10, 8



CABLE UPRIGHT ROW

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 12, 10, 8



KEY INFO

Unless you're hoisting major tonnage overhead, you probably don't need to wear a weight belt. A study at the Albany Medical Center in New York tested 50 men who did identical workouts: Half wore belts, half didn't. The groups had similar strength gains and injury tallies, but the beltless guys developed stronger abs and lower backs. And nobody mistook them for baggage handlers.

INTERMEDIATE

Frequency: Divide your workout into two sets of exercises—one for chest, shoulders, and arms; one for back, legs, and abdominals—and perform each workout twice a week. In this split routine, exercises that work your trapezius, such as shrugs, are included in your shoulder workout. There are two different shoulder workouts at this level; you'll do each once a week.

Technique: Start each exercise with the heaviest weight you can use for eight to 10 repetitions. (If you do a chest exercise at the start of your workout, your shoulders should be sufficiently warmed up to use this technique safely.) Drop the weight slightly for subsequent sets if you need to.

Rest: 2 minutes between sets

Progress: Try to increase weights each week on the presses and shrugs. On the lateral raises, which involve much smaller muscles, it would be very difficult to increase weights that often, especially since dumbbells usually increase only in 5-pound increments. So for those exercises, try to increase weights every 2 or 3 weeks.

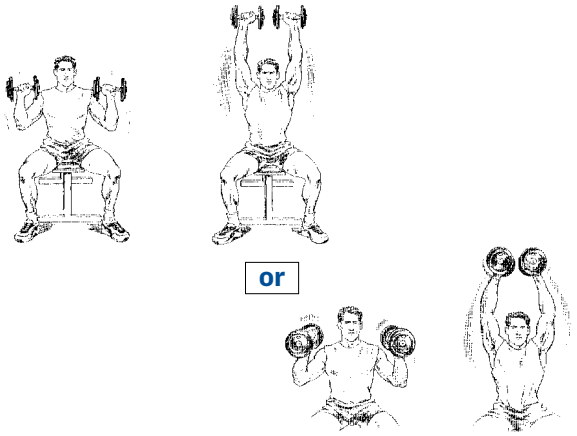
Variety: When you can't increase the weights from one week to the next on the presses and shrugs, switch to a barbell. When progress stops, switch back. You always want to be able to chart progress from one workout to the next.

How long: Train like this for as long as you're satisfied with the results. But if you want to develop your shoulders for improved sports performance, move up to the Advanced program.

WORKOUT 1

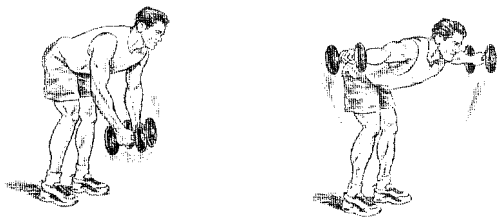
SEATED DUMBBELL PRESS

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10



BENT-OVER LATERAL RAISE

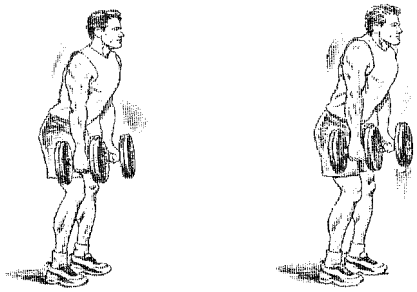
Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10



WORKOUT 2

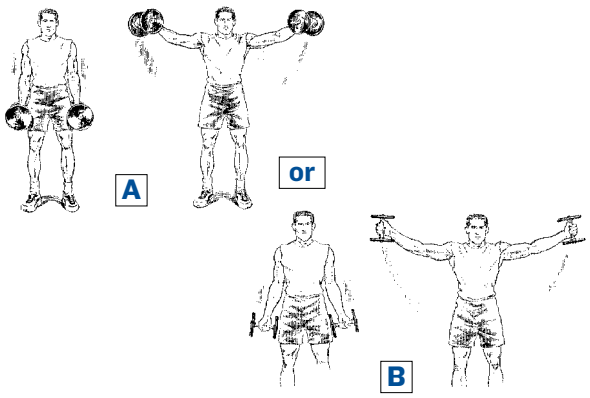
STANDING DUMBBELL SHRUG

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10



LATERAL RAISE

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10



Joint Maneuvers Check out the two variations on the lateral raise. In the first, you start with your palms turned toward the outside of your thighs, and you finish with your palms facing the floor [A]. This isolates the middle part of your deltoid muscle—a hard thing to do—but it can also cause impingement, a painful pinching inside the shoulder joint. If this exercise irritates your shoulder joints, switch to the palms-out lateral raise [B]. You won't work your middle deltoids as effectively, but you will work your rotator cuffs, creating more stability in your shoulders. If both versions are comfortable, you can shift back and forth every three or four workouts to work your shoulders in different ways.

ADVANCED

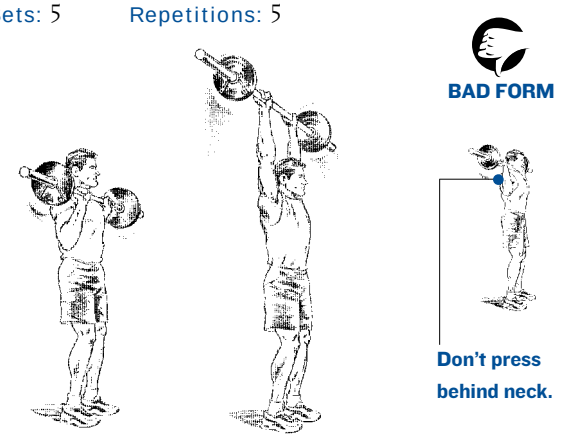
Frequency: Do this workout twice a week, using the same split routine as in the Intermediate program.
Technique: You'll perform five sets of five repetitions on the hanging high pulls and the barbell presses, using more weight on each set. But you'll do these exercises with different techniques. You'll do the high pulls explosively—pulling upward as fast as you can while maintaining perfect form, then lowering the weight without pausing at the top position. This explosive movement teaches your upper-body muscles to perform quickly and powerfully in competition.

Conversely, you'll do the barbell presses slowly, pausing for a second in the top position. This keeps tension on the muscles for a longer time, increasing their size.

To see why both are important, imagine that you're in a basketball game. You need muscle size to establish and maintain your position against an opponent, but you also need explosive strength and speed to beat him to a rebound or to block his shot.
Rest: 2 or 3 minutes between sets. You can also perform supersets of the exercises, doing a set of each and then resting before repeating them both.
Progress: Increase the weight you use on your final set each week.
How long: Try these exercises for 3 to 6 weeks, or until you can no longer increase the weight each week. Then switch to other exercises in this program for a few weeks before you try the Advanced exercises again.

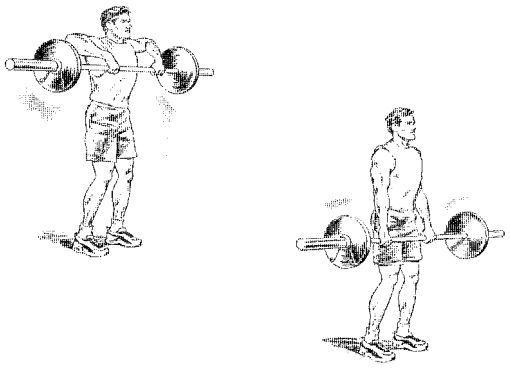
STANDING BARBELL PRESS

Sets: 5 Repetitions: 5



HANGING HIGH PULL

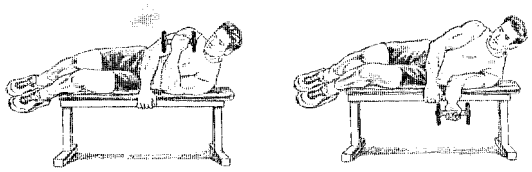
Sets: 5 Repetitions: 5



OPTIONAL EXERCISES

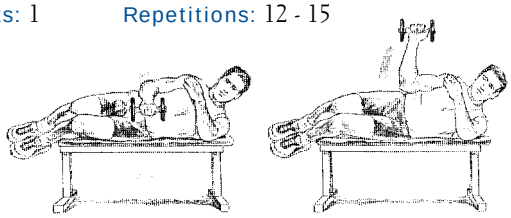
INTERNAL SHOULDER ROTATION

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 12 - 15



EXTERNAL SHOULDER ROTATION

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 12 - 15



Cuffed Around This workout includes two optional rotator-cuff exercises. They appear only in the Advanced section because long-term lifters often have muscular imbalances in their shoulders that can lead to rotator-cuff problems. Athletes whose sports require overhead motions—serving in tennis or volleyball, pitching in baseball, passing in football—are also candidates for these exercises. They often have strained or overworked rotators. "But there's very little reason for a beginner to worry about his rotators," says Pearson. "Fine-tuning the rotator-cuff musculature generally comes after deltoid development." ♦

Men's Health

Men's Health

TOTAL BODY

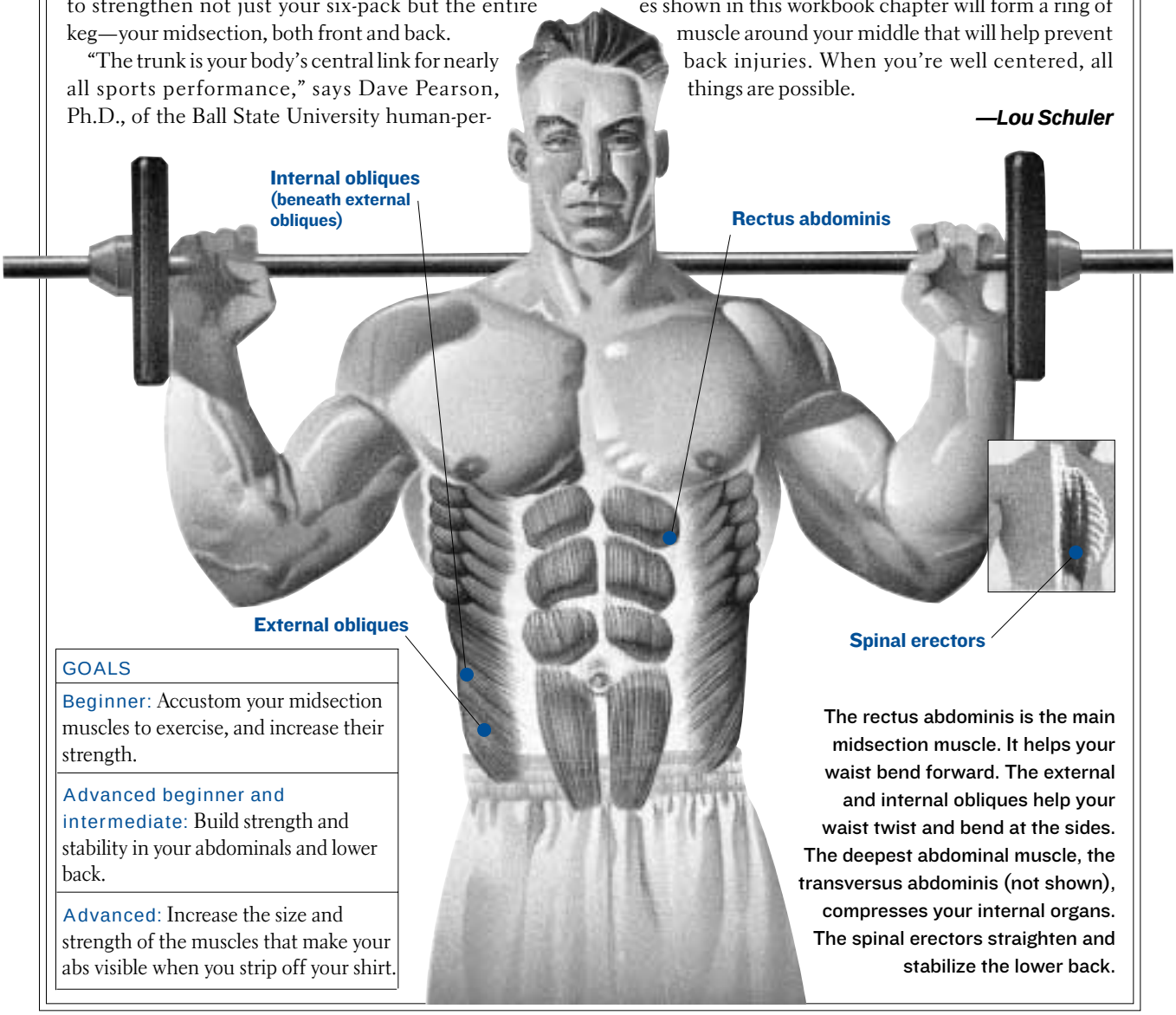
WORKBOOK

Chapter Four: The Abdominals and Lower Back

EVERYBODY HAS GREAT ABS. That's right, even you. Even your mailman. The trick is getting them out from under all that abdominal fat, so people can see them. The only way to do it is to lose fat through aerobic exercise and to strengthen not just your six-pack but the entire keg—your midsection, both front and back.

"The trunk is your body's central link for nearly all sports performance," says Dave Pearson, Ph.D., of the Ball State University human-performance laboratory. You need a powerful midsection to throw, kick, blast a serve, or change directions quickly. Working the midsection muscles not only will help you play games, it'll keep you in the game as well. The exercises shown in this workbook chapter will form a ring of muscle around your middle that will help prevent back injuries. When you're well centered, all things are possible.

—Lou Schuler



GOALS
Beginner: Accustom your midsection muscles to exercise, and increase their strength.
Advanced beginner and intermediate: Build strength and stability in your abdominals and lower back.
Advanced: Increase the size and strength of the muscles that make your abs visible when you strip off your shirt.

The rectus abdominis is the main midsection muscle. It helps your waist bend forward. The external and internal obliques help your waist twist and bend at the sides. The deepest abdominal muscle, the transversus abdominis (not shown), compresses your internal organs. The spinal erectors straighten and stabilize the lower back.

Illustration: Richard Waldrep

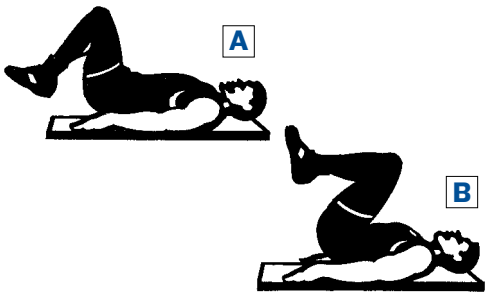
BEGINNER

Frequency: Do these exercises at the end of a total-body weight workout three times a week.
Rest: 1 minute between exercises

Progress: Increase repetitions until you can do two sets of 20 pelvic tilts and two sets of 10 Supermen. Then you're ready for the Advanced Beginner workout.

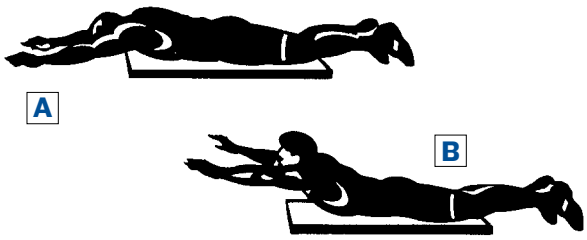
PELVIC TILT

Sets: 2 Repetitions: 15–20



SUPERMAN

Sets: 2 Repetitions: 8–10*



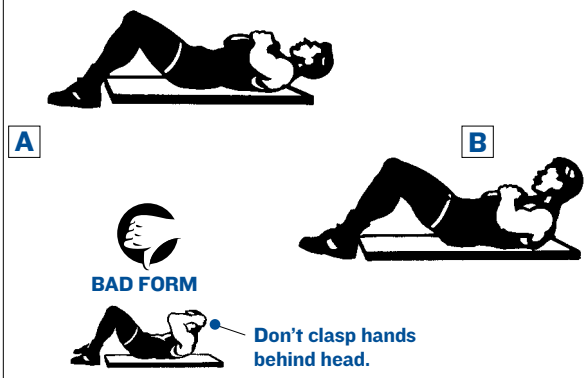
** Hold for 2 seconds at the top of the movement.*

ADVANCED BEGINNER

Frequency: Do these exercises at the end of a total-body weight workout three times a week.
Technique: Do supersets of these exercises—one set of crunches, then a set of reverse extensions—then rest 30 seconds and repeat.
Progress: As the crunches and reverse extensions become easier, don't do more; 20 is the upper limit on each set of crunches, and 10 is the limit on extensions. Instead, do the exercises more slowly.
Variety: Once every five or six workouts, go back and do the pelvic tilt and Superman from the Beginner section. But do three supersets instead of the two sets that are recommended for beginners.
How long: When you can complete three supersets of 20 slow crunches and 10 slow reverse extensions, move up to the Intermediate program.

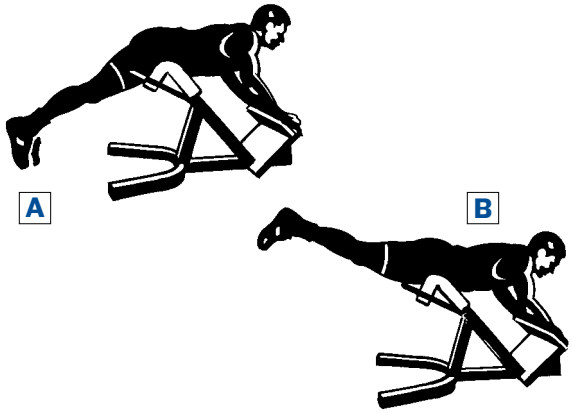
CRUNCH

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 15–20



REVERSE EXTENSION

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10



KEY INFO

Low Down The more fat you accumulate in your midsection, the worse it is for your lower-back muscles. They have to compensate for a center of gravity that keeps moving forward. But even slimming down can be tough on a guy's lower back, says Pearson. "He sees a bulging gut and thinks he needs to do ab exercises to reduce it." If he tones only his abdominals, his lower back will be weak. Result: a great-looking body that'll get hurt as soon as he takes it out on the playing field or tries to do more in the gym. That's why this workout includes both abdominal and lower-back exercises. If you always do them together, your muscles will stay in balance, creating a protective belt around your torso.

INTERMEDIATE

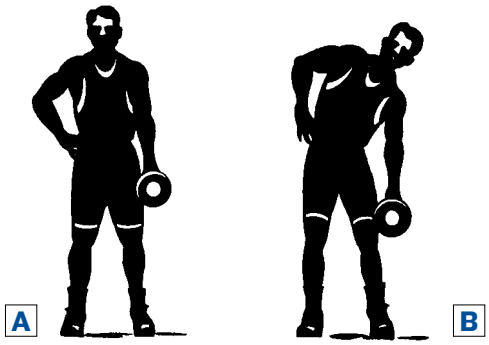
Frequency: Divide your workout into two sets of exercises—one for chest, shoulders, and arms, and one for back, legs, and abdominals—and perform each workout twice a week.
Technique: Do these exercises as supersets: one set of crunches, followed by a set of side bends, then a set of either good mornings or back extensions. (You'll alternate the last two exercises between workouts.) Rest for a minute, then repeat the superset two more times.
Progress: When you can perform all the recommended repetitions in each set, focus on making each repetition a little more difficult by performing it more slowly or, in the case of crunches, by going more slowly and holding your body in the top position for an extra second or two. Then add weight to the bar on the good mornings, and increase the weight you use on the side bends. To make the crunches even more challenging, see the tips at the bottom of this page.
How long: When you can complete all the repetitions even using added weight, and when you have the time to add exercises to your workout, move up to the Advanced program.

ADVANCED CRUNCH

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 10

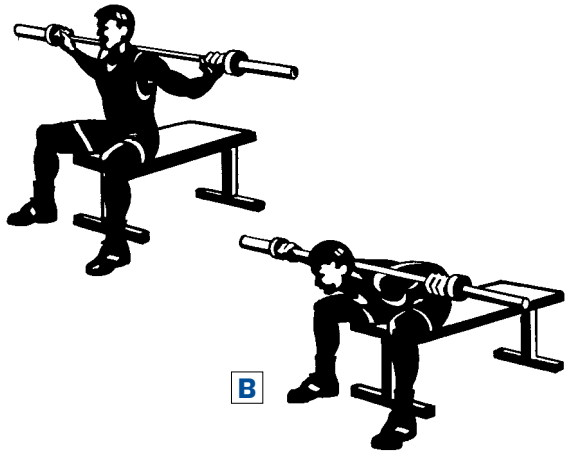
STANDING DUMBBELL SIDE BEND

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 10 on each side



SEATED GOOD MORNING

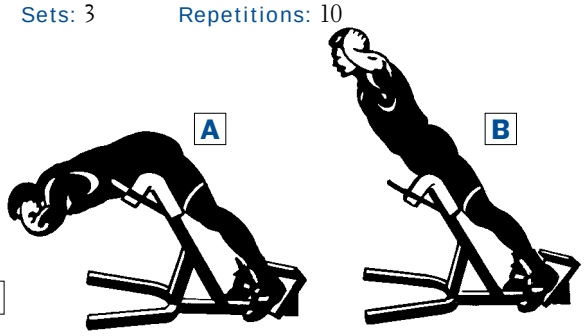
Sets: 3 Repetitions: 10–15

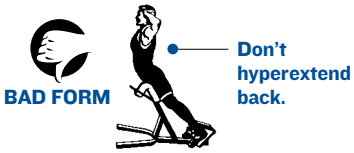


OR

BACK EXTENSION

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 10





Hard and Harder

Here are four ways to make crunches more challenging to your abdominal muscles.

1. Hands over ears.
2. Hands extended overhead.
3. Hands across chest, holding weight plate.
4. Hands overhead, holding weight plate.

ADVANCED

Frequency: Follow the same split routine you used in the Intermediate program, and perform each of these abdominal and lower-back workouts once a week.
Technique: Do these exercises in the order listed—V-ups, followed by twisting crunches, followed by deadlifts for the first workout—but take a 30-second break after each set of each exercise. These exercises are much more challenging than the previous ones, and after a good set you'll probably be out of breath.
Progress: Increase weights each week on the stiff-legged deadlifts, cable crunches, and good mornings. On the other moves, when you can perform all the repetitions in each set, try to hold the top position for 1 to 3 seconds.
How long: Try this program for 6 weeks. After that, your abdominal and lower-back muscles will probably need a break. Take a week without performing any midsection exercises, then return to whichever part of the program you like the best.

If you still don't see your abdominals:

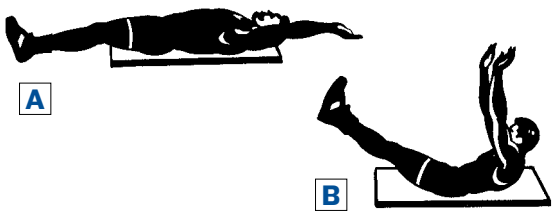
- ▶ *Lift more slowly, helping to build more muscle.*
- ▶ *Do cardiovascular exercises with more intensity.*

Ever seen a fat sprinter? ♦

WORKOUT 1

V–UP

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 15 - 25

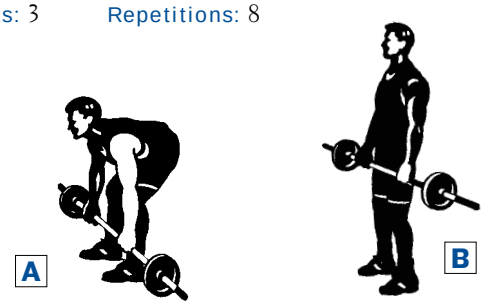


TWISTING CRUNCH

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 10 on each side

STIFF-LEGGED DEADLIFT

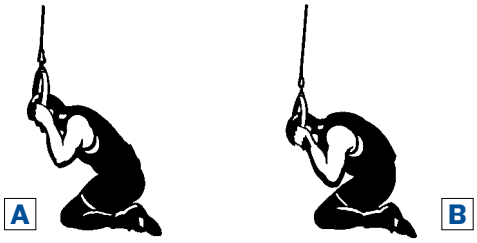
Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8



WORKOUT 2

CABLE CRUNCH

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 10 - 15



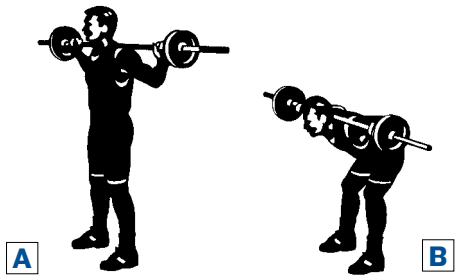
SIDE CRUNCH

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 10 - 12 on each side

Reach down your left side with your left arm, feel the squeeze in your obliques, repeat on your right side.

STANDING GOOD MORNING

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8



Men's Health

Men's Health

TOTAL BODY

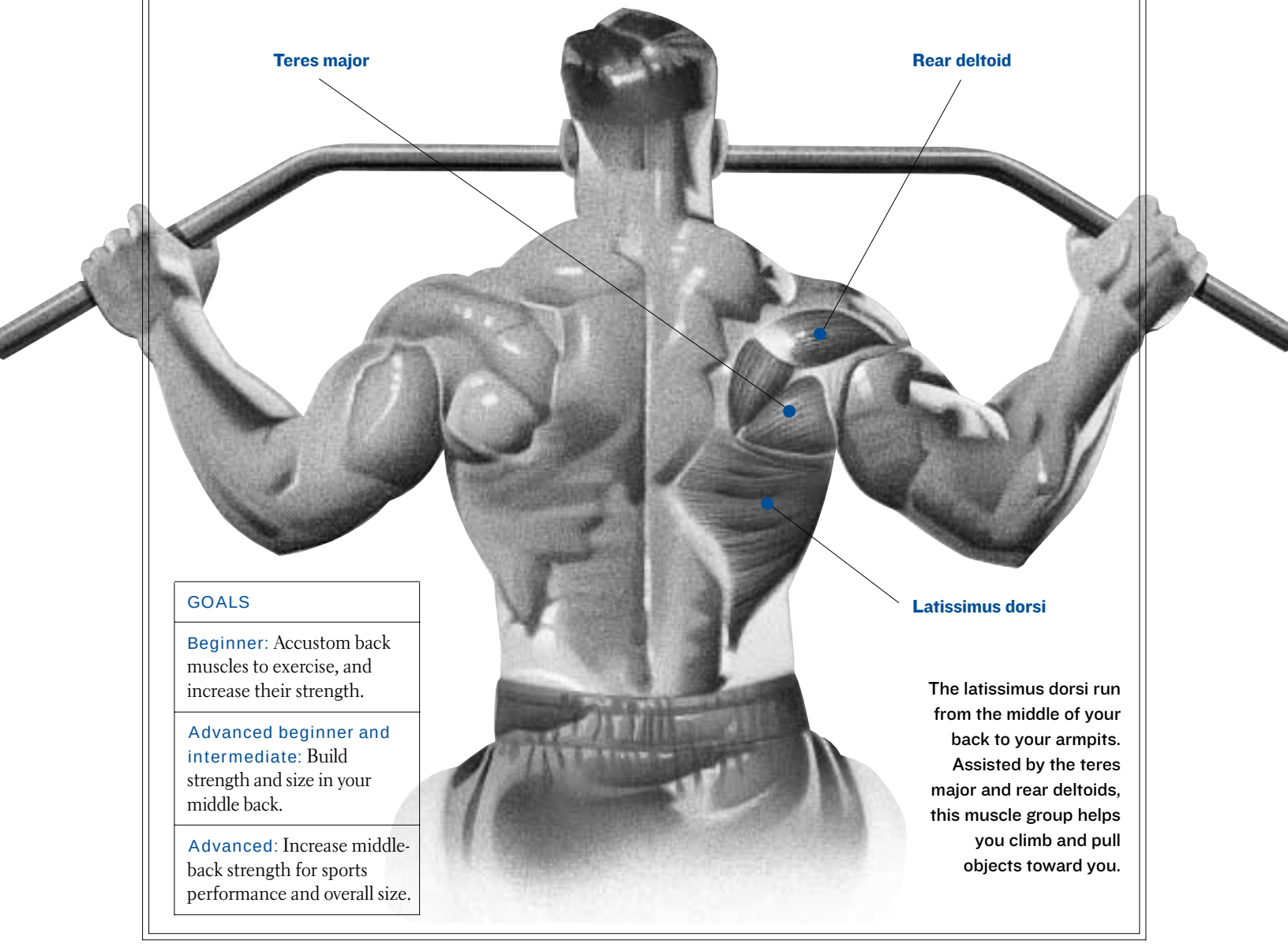
WORKBOOK

Chapter Five: The Back

BEHIND EVERY GREAT ATHLETE is a great back. You can't swing a bat, throw a ball, or fling an opponent to the ground without using the big, fan-shaped muscles—called the latissimus dorsi—that spread across the middle of your back.

Even if the closest you get to a playing field is the box seats, building your lats will make you look as if you *could* be in the game if you chose. "Lats are responsible for the athletic, V-shaped physique," says Dave Pearson, Ph.D., of the Ball State University human-performance laboratory. So whether you're a player or a poser, these workouts are for you.

—Lou Schuler



GOALS
Beginner: Accustom back muscles to exercise, and increase their strength.
Advanced beginner and intermediate: Build strength and size in your middle back.
Advanced: Increase middle-back strength for sports performance and overall size.

The latissimus dorsi run from the middle of your back to your armpits. Assisted by the teres major and rear deltoids, this muscle group helps you climb and pull objects toward you.

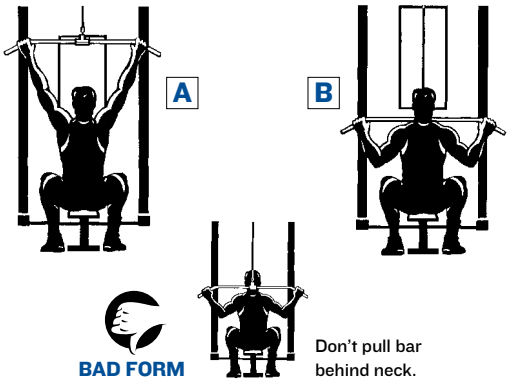
Illustrations: Richard Waldrep; John Hull; icons: Jim Nuttle

BEGINNER

Frequency: Do these exercises three times a week as part of a total-body weight workout.
Rest: 1 minute between exercises
Progress: Increase weights each week.
How long: Follow this program for your first 4 to 8 weeks of exercise, or for 2 to 3 weeks after returning from a break. When you peak in the Beginner program—when you can't increase the weight from one week to the next, in other words—you're ready to move on to the Advanced Beginner workout.

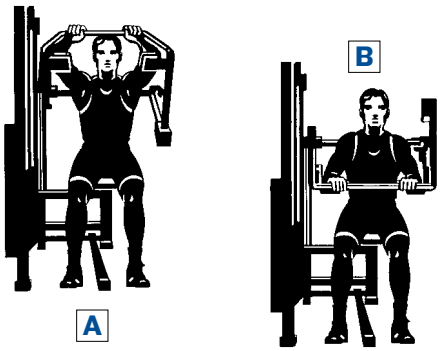
LAT PULLDOWN

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 12–15



MACHINE PULLOVER

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 12–15

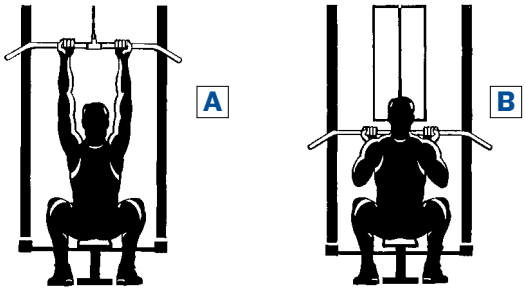


ADVANCED BEGINNER

Frequency: Do these exercises three times a week as part of a total-body weight workout.
Technique: Increase weights on each set.
Rest: 2 minutes between sets
Progress: Use heavier weights each week.
Variety: After 3 weeks to a month, switch back to the exercises described in the Beginner program. But this time you should do three sets of each exercise, increasing the weight on each set.
How long: When your strength and muscle size stop improving, or when you have the time and energy to do more exercises, move to the next level.

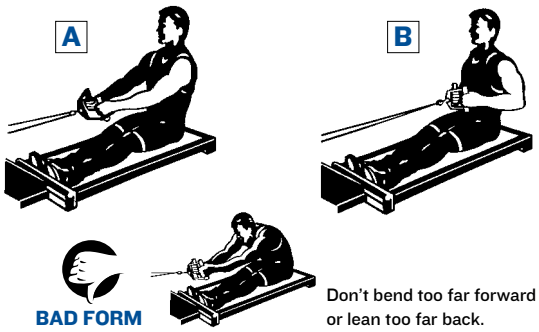
UNDERHAND–GRIP LAT PULLDOWN

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 12, 10, 8



SEATED PULLEY ROW

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 12, 10, 8



KEY INFO

Wide vs. Thick Gym lore has it that pullups and pulldowns only make your lats wider and that rows only make them thicker. The gym rats are wrong about what the muscle fibers can and can't do, but partially right about how the exercises affect your back's appearance, says Pearson. Muscle fibers can't choose to grow wider or thicker based on which exercise you do. Either they grow bigger or they don't. When your lats grow larger, they make your entire back look wider. And rowing exercises do make your back appear thicker because they use other upper-back muscles, including your trapezius and rhomboids. Pullups and pulldowns are better for isolating your lats, thus adding width. If you want to look both wide and thick, do both the pulldowns and the rows each time you work your back.

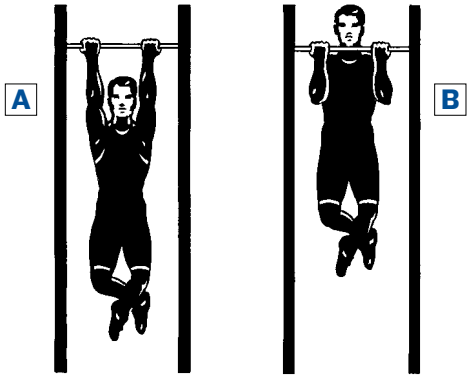
INTERMEDIATE

Frequency: Divide your workout into two sets of exercises: one for chest, shoulders, and arms, and one for back, legs, and abdominals. There are two different back workouts at this level. Do each once a week.
Technique: Start each workout with the heaviest weight you can use for eight to 10 repetitions. (On chinups, of course, you'll use only your body weight.) Drop the weight slightly for subsequent sets if you need to.
Rest: 2 minutes between sets
Progress: Try to increase the weights each week on the pulldowns and rows. Also try to do more total chinups each week: That's the sum of your repetitions in all three sets; don't go beyond 10 in any set until you can do 10 in every set.
Variety: When you can't increase the weight from one week to the next in any exercise—that is, you're stuck on one weight for 2 or 3 consecutive weeks—switch back to exercises from the Beginner or Advanced Beginner sections. You should be able to do them with much more weight. When you stop making progress with those, return to the Intermediate program.
How long: Train this way for as long as you're satisfied. with the results, or until you can do at least 10 chinups in each set. Then it's time to try the Advanced program.

WORKOUT 1

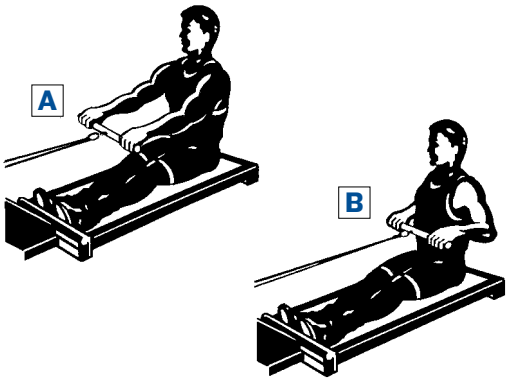
CHINUP

Sets: 3 Repetitions: up to 10



OVERHAND–GRIP PULLEY ROW

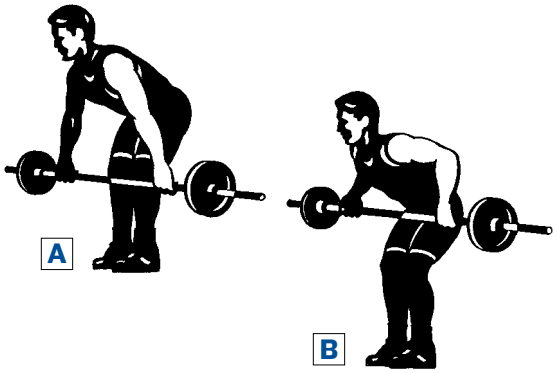
Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10



WORKOUT 2

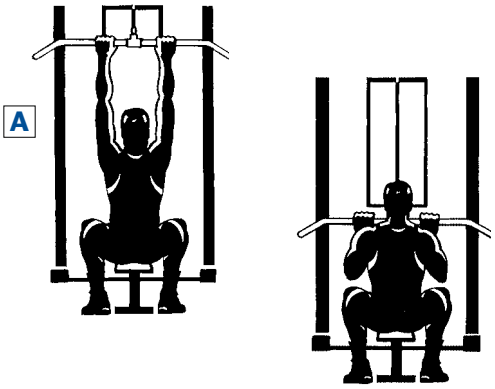
WIDE–GRIP BENT–OVER BARBELL ROW

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 12–15



NARROW–LAT PULLDOWN

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10



Straps or Strapless? One of the fastest ways to develop back strength is to use lifting straps to help you grip the weights. Your back muscles are stronger than your wrist and hand muscles, so with a little help from straps you'll be able to use a lot more weight on pulldowns and rows, and do a few more pullups. But many trainers will tell you never to use straps—that they limit your ability to develop a strong grip, which in the long run is more important than back strength. Pearson says it depends on your reason for doing back exercises. "If you're a rock climber and you're after maximum grip strength, don't use straps," he says. "But if you're just trying to develop your back muscles, grip strength is a secondary concern, and by all means you should use straps."

ADVANCED

Frequency: Follow the same split routine you used in the Intermediate program, and perform each of these two lat workouts once a week.
Technique: Start each exercise with the heaviest weight you can use for the recommended number of repetitions. For Workout 1, warm up with an easy set or two of lat pulldowns.
Rest: 2 to 3 minutes between sets
Progress: Increase weights each week on the weighted exercises, and increase the total number of pullups you perform in each workout.
Variety: When you can't increase the weights from one week's workouts to the next, or when you can't increase the number of pullups, switch the exercises around as follows:

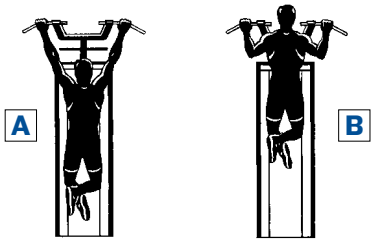
Instead of...	Do...
▶ *Overhand-grip pullup*	▶ *Neutral-grip pullup*
▶ *One-arm cable row*	▶ *Machine row (Hammer Strength–style is best)*
▶ *Dumbbell pullover*	▶ *EZ-curl–bar pullover*
▶ *Neutral-grip lat pulldown*	▶ *One-arm lat pulldown*
▶ *Bent-over dumbbell row*	▶ *Underhand-grip bent-over barbell row*
▶ *Stiff-arm lat pulldown*	▶ *Machine pullover*

How long: When you find that you've hit a plateau with the alternate exercises, switch back to the first group; but this time use lighter weights, do more repetitions, and take shorter rest periods. Your body will need a break from the heavy weights.

WORKOUT 1

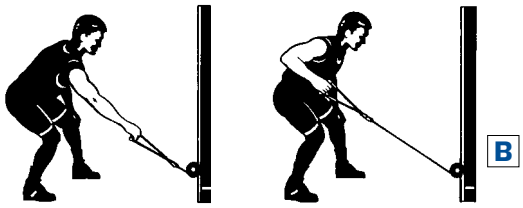
OVERHAND–GRIP PULLUP

Sets: 3 Repetitions: Max out



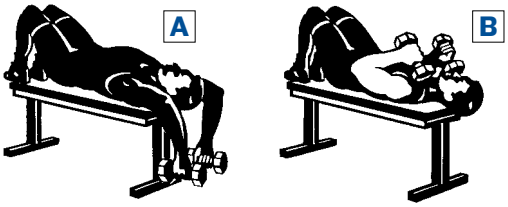
ONE–ARM CABLE ROW

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 6–8 with each arm



DUMBBELL PULLOVER

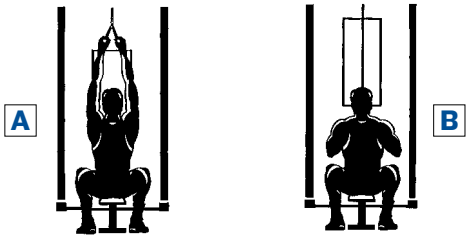
Sets: 1 Repetitions: 10-12



WORKOUT 2

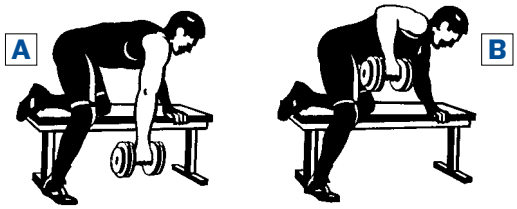
NEUTRAL–GRIP LAT PULLDOWN

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 6–8



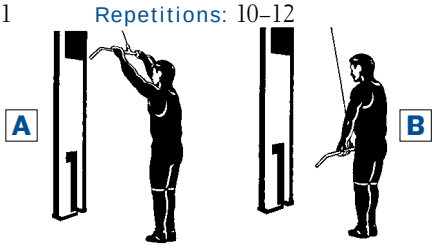
BENT–OVER DUMBBELL ROW

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 6–8 with each arm



STIFF–ARM LAT PULLDOWN

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 10–12

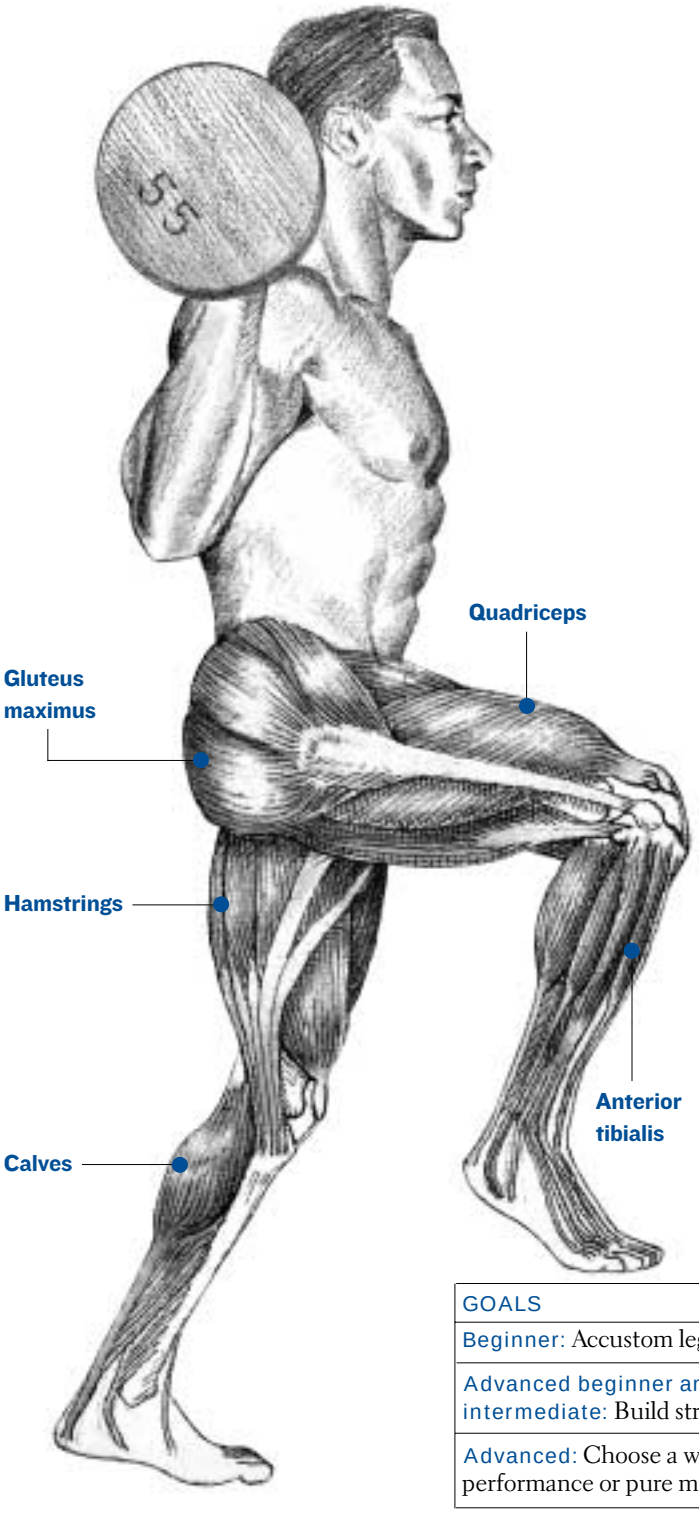


Men's Health

Men's Health

TOTAL BODY

WORKBOOK



Chapter Six: The Legs

YOU ENJOY A SLY GLANCE at her legs, right? Well, she'll return the favor if you give her something to look at. And though it's nice to have legs that women gawk over, they also serve a purpose: They hold up the rest of your body. So make sure you have a solid foundation. If you've ever pulled a hamstring or had shinsplints, the cause is probably simple: You have an imbalance. Your hamstring muscles are overpowered by your quadriceps, and the shin muscles are bullied by the more powerful calf muscles. "Most people overtrain their stronger parts, and that increases the imbalance, which can lead to injuries. You should work on the weak areas, not shy away from them," says Dave Pearson, Ph.D., of the Ball State University human-performance laboratory.

These workouts can normalize relations between your warring lower-body muscle groups, helping you play better, stay in the game longer, and look better when you take off your pants. What more could you ask? ***—Lou Schuler***

The gluteus maximus and hamstrings push your body up and forward when you're jumping and running. The hamstrings also bend your leg at the knee, and the quadriceps straighten your leg again. Your calves lift your heels up off the ground, and the anterior tibialis muscles lift your toes up toward your knees; both actions occur when you walk or run.

GOALS
Beginner: Accustom leg muscles to exercise, and increase their strength.
Advanced beginner and intermediate: Build strength and size in your lower body.
Advanced: Choose a workout that matches your goals: improved sports performance or pure muscle-building and great-looking legs.

Illustrations: Dugald Stermer

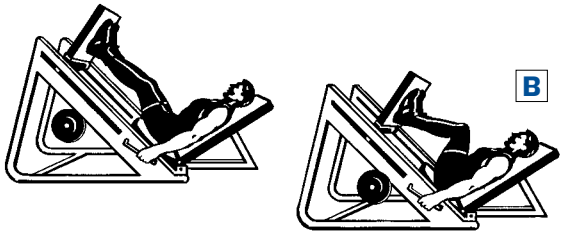
BEGINNER

Frequency: Do these exercises three times a week, as part of a total-body weight workout.
Rest: 1 minute between exercises
Progress: Increase weights each week.

How long: Follow this program for your first 4 to 8 weeks of exercise, or for 2 to 3 weeks after a break. When you can't increase the weight from one week to the next, move to the Advanced Beginner workout.

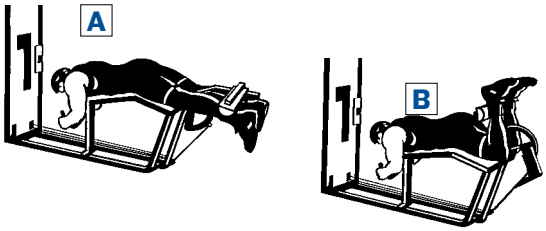
LEG PRESS

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 12–15



LEG CURL

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 12–15



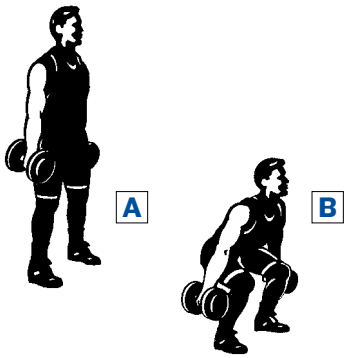
ADVANCED BEGINNER

Frequency: Do these exercises three times a week, as part of a total-body weight workout.
Technique: Increase weights on each set.
Rest: 2 minutes between sets
Progress: Use heavier weights each week.

Variety: After 3 or 4 weeks, switch to the exercises in the Intermediate program, but do them as shown here, increasing the weight on each set.
How long: When you have the time and energy to do more exercises, move to the next level.

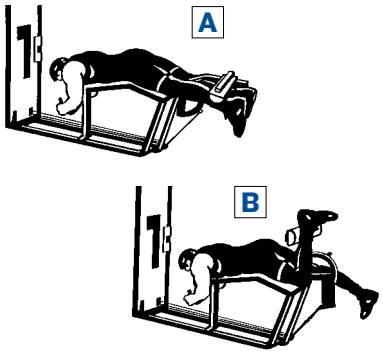
DUMBBELL SQUAT

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 12, 10, 8



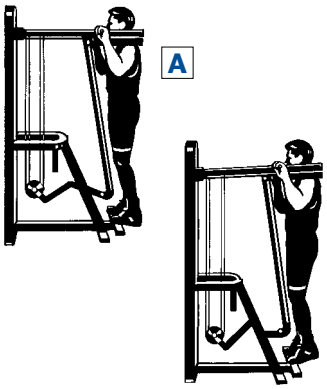
ONE-LEGGED CURL

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 12, 10, 8 each leg



CALF RAISE

Sets: 1 Repetitions: 15

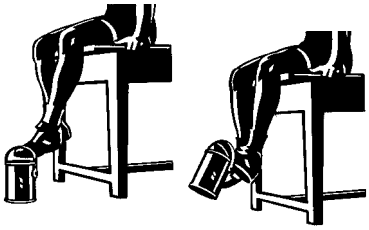


KEY INFO

No More Shinsplints Nearly all shinsplints involve overusing your anterior tibialis—the strip of muscle on the front of your lower leg—without first strengthening it, Pearson says. Actually, it's a simple muscle to exercise: Raise your toes toward your knee, and you've worked it. Here are moves you can do to strengthen your shins. One set of 10 to 12 repetitions of any one of these exercises should give your anterior tibialis all the work it needs.

ISOMETRIC CONTRACTION: Hold for 5 seconds on each repetition.

PLATE LIFT: Perform slow repetitions.



BUCKET LIFT: Increase resistance by adding water or sand to the bucket.

Illustrations: John Hull; icons: Jim Nuttle

INTERMEDIATE

Frequency: Divide your workout into two sets of exercises—one for the chest, shoulders, and arms, and one for the back, legs, and abdominals. There are two different leg workouts at this level. Do each once a week.
Technique: Begin the first set of each exercise with the heaviest weight you can use for eight to 10 repetitions. Reduce the weight slightly for subsequent sets if you need to. If you start your workout with barbell squats, however, you'll need one or two warmup sets before you're ready to work with a truly challenging weight.
Rest: 2 minutes between sets
Progress: Increase the weights each week. If you increase the weight on squats and lunges, you may be too pooped for the others, but don't worry about it. It's more important to push yourself on the full-body exercises.
Variety: If you get stuck on one weight for 2 or 3 consecutive weeks, switch to exercises from the previous sections—you should be able to do them with much more weight—or try some of the moves in the Advanced section. When you stop making progress with those, switch back to the Intermediate program.
How long: Train this way for as long as you're satisfied with the results, or until you feel ready to push yourself with higher weights and fewer repetitions.

WORKOUT 1

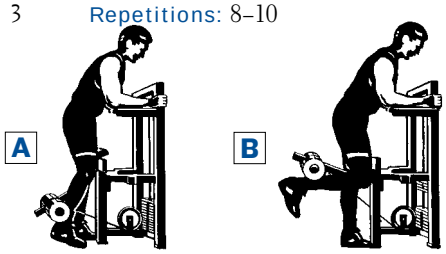
BARBELL SQUAT

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10

Don't bend forward or let your heels lift off the floor.

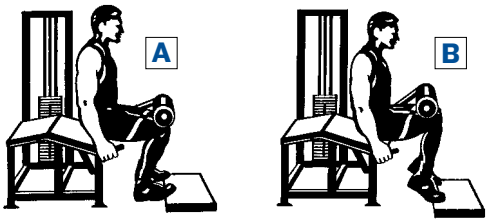
STANDING LEG CURL

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10



SEATED CALF RAISE

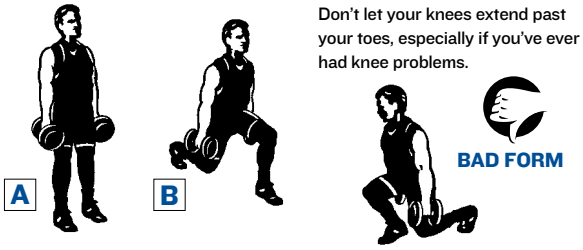
Sets: 1 Repetitions: 15–20



WORKOUT 2

LUNGE

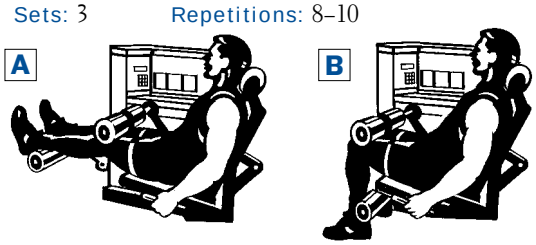
Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10



Don't let your knees extend past your toes, especially if you've ever had knee problems.

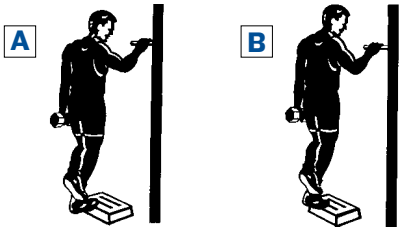
SEATED LEG CURL

Sets: 3 Repetitions: 8–10



ONE-LEGGED CALF RAISE

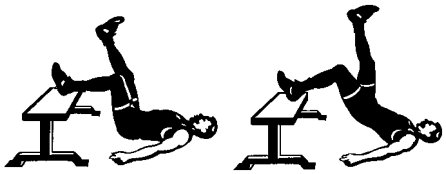
Sets: 1 Repetitions: 12–15 each leg



KEY INFO

Homegrown Hamstrings Don't have access to a gym? Here are two hamstring exercises that require no special equipment. You can substitute them for the exercises shown above.

DUMBBELL LEG CURL



LYING HIP EXTENSION

ADVANCED

Frequency: Choose the program you'd like to follow and do it twice a week, following the same split routine you used in the Intermediate program.

Technique: Schedule heavy and light days each week.

For the **Power Workout,** use more weight on each set on the heavy day, and on the light day stay at the same weight—a much lighter one—for all three sets. On the light day, use about 60 percent of the weight you lifted for your last set on the heavy day. For example, if you used 185 pounds on your last set of squats on the heavy day, try about 115 pounds for all your sets on the next light day.

For the **Muscle-Building Workout,** start each exercise with the heaviest weight you can lift for the recommended number of repetitions. This rule holds for your light day as well as your heavy day.

Rest: 2 to 3 minutes between sets on the heavy day, 1 minute between sets on the light day

Progress: Increase weights each week on all exercises.

Variety: If you're doing the **Power Workout,** vary your foot position every 2 or 3 weeks. Instead of the wide-stance powerlifting squat, try the barbell squat shown in the Intermediate program. And instead of the deadlift shown here, try the sumo deadlift, in which your feet are wide and you use a narrow grip.

If you're doing the **Muscle-Building Workout,** substitute other exercises every 3 or 4 weeks.

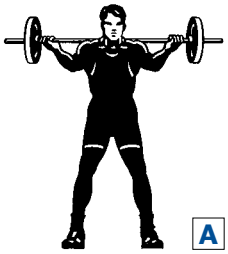
How long: When you can't increase the weights from one week's workouts to the next in the **Power Workout,** take a 1-week break from weight training, then return to the Advanced Beginner or Intermediate program for a month or so.

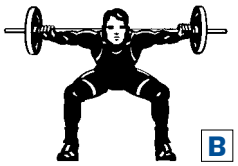
For the **Muscle-Building Workout,** you can train like this as long as you feel you're producing results. When your body stops responding to this system, go back to the Advanced Beginner or Intermediate program. ♦

POWER WORKOUT *To improve your game*

POWERLIFTING SQUAT

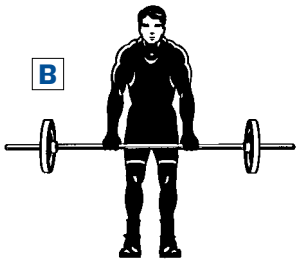
Heavy day Sets: 2 Repetitions: 5
Light day Sets: 3 Repetitions: 10





DEADLIFT

Heavy day Sets: 5 Repetitions: 5
Light day Sets: 3 Repetitions: 10



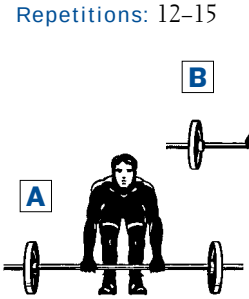
MUSCLE-BUILDING WORKOUT *To build more brawn*

FRONT SQUAT

Heavy day Sets: 3
Repetitions: 6–8
Light day Sets: 3
Repetitions: 12–15

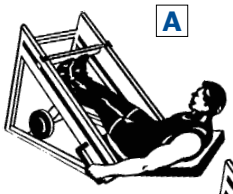
STIFF-LEGGED DEADLIFT

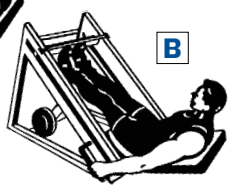
Heavy day Sets: 5
Repetitions: 6–8
Light day Sets: 3
Repetitions: 12–15



CALF RAISE ON LEG-PRESS MACHINE

Heavy day Sets: 3
Repetitions: 10–12
Light day Sets: 3
Repetitions: 15–20





Men's Health