

Foundations of Weight Training: Part 4

* Consult with your doctor before embarking on any fitness program.

The final part of “Foundations of Weight Training” focuses on basic exercises for the arms. Like exercising the legs, you must keep the torso stable to isolate the proper muscles. Also, like leg training, a balanced program must include exercises for the anterior and posterior regions of the upper arm.

Do each exercise 12-15 repetitions to complete one set, rest 30-45 seconds, and then repeat the set. Any two, equally weighted objects can be substituted for dumbbells; milk jugs filled with liquid make excellent dumbbell substitutes.

1) Bicep curls

The basic curl for the development of the anterior muscle of the upper arm.



- 1) Hold the dumbbells by the sides with palms facing forward. Pack the shoulders (See *Foundations: Part One*). Now take a deep breath in.
- 2) Exhale and raise the dumbbells by bending at the elbows. Make sure that only the forearms are moving.
- 3) Inhale slowly while lowering the dumbbells to the starting position.

Tips:

- Bend knees slightly when standing.
- Make sure the shoulders remained packed so that they do not move during the exercise.
- Keep the abdominals engaged so that the body remains stable during the exercise.
- Keep elbows by the sides at all times.

2) Hammer curls

This exercise works both anterior muscles in the upper arm and muscles of the forearm.



- 1) Hold the dumbbells by the sides with palms facing in. Pack the shoulders (See *Foundations: Part One*). Now take a deep breath in.
- 2) Exhale and raise the dumbbells by bending at the elbows. Make sure that only the forearms are moving. This exercise should mimic the movement made when using a hammer.
- 3) Inhale slowly while lowering the dumbbells to the starting position.

Tips:

- Similar to the Biceps Curl.

3) Elbow presses

This push-up variation is great for building the triceps, the posterior muscles of the upper arm.



- 1) Begin from the knees with your hands placed directly under your shoulders and your elbows extended. Maintain a straight line from the crown of your head to your tail bone by tightening the glutes and abs.
- 2) Inhale and bend the elbows so that the elbows go back tight along the rib cage.
- 3) Exhale while pushing through the palms until the elbows are extended.

Tips:

- Keep the elbows right against the rib cage to engage the triceps.
- Allow the body to move forward slightly; lead with the chest and not the head.

4) Lying triceps extensions

Working the triceps overhead works a different part of the muscle than usually used



- 1) Lay down on the back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor.
- 2) Hold two dumbbells or weighted objects above the shoulders with arms extended. Palms face each other. **This is the starting position.**
- 3) Inhale and bend the elbows so that dumbbells move toward each side of the head. Keep the elbows stable during this movement.
- 4) Exhale and extend the arms back to the starting position.

Tips:

- Elbows must remain shoulder width at all times; do not allow them to flare out when lowering the weight.