

# BEST EXERCISES FOR BICEPS.

**Q. I have been training for a couple of years but my arms remain my weak point. My biceps in particular never get sore and refuse to grow. I know you believe the basic exercises are best for biceps as with all body parts and I for one agree with you but how do I perform them?**

A. I am a bit concerned your biceps are never sore as they get worked so much with other basic bodybuilding movements like pull downs and rowing and indeed, these movements themselves should stimulate bicep growth. There is a limit to what you can curl effectively because of your bodyweight e.t.c. but even if those poundage's stabilize, heavy barbell or dumbbell rows and underhand pull downs will still stimulate bicep growth and development. I always feel my biceps are just as pumped from training back as when I'm training biceps directly.

Anyway, the basics should be performed like this:

Standing barbell curls. With your feet roughly shoulder width apart for stability hold the curl bar shoulder width or on the extreme outer edges of an EZ curl bar. Keep your shoulders square and your back arched as you lift the bar up and perform this exercise. Bend your knees slightly to prevent straining your back and to help with your centre of gravity and to keep your balance so you can fully concentrate on your curling action. Keeping your arms by your sides, contract your biceps to lift the bar up and towards your chest. Squeeze your biceps at the top of the movement and lower slowly and under control. Be sure to fully straighten your arms but don't release the tension.

**DON'T!** Allow your elbows to wander outwards or dig into your side for leverage. This will allow other muscles to help out shifting the emphasis from the bi's.

**DON'T!** Arch your back or lean backwards or forwards to help lift the weight using momentum or gravity.

**DON'T!** Rush through your movements when curling. Slow down and keep control.

Standing or Seated alternate dumbbell curls. The best

way to perform dumbbell curls is alternatively in order to fully maintain concentration. Start with the palms facing inwards and move the dumbbell in a hammer position until your arms are at a 45% angle and then supinate your wrist so that your palm faces up. Drive through hard, contracting your bicep as you do so. Your fist ending close to your front deltoid (shoulder) but not leaning on to it. This movement correctly allows the flexors in your forearms to be utilized and is the most natural way for the arm to flex. If you do these seated position the bench on less than a 90% angle so that when you arm is straight it's actually behind your torso slightly. This will provide an extended range of motion and help keep your style as strict as possible.

**DON'T!** Start with the palm facing forward as you see many bodybuilders do when using dumbbells, this will put unnecessary stress on the bicep tendon connecting the upper and lower arm.

**DON'T!** Release the tension at the bottom of the movement and let your arm hang limp. This can lead to a torn bicep or tendon.

Preacher curls. Most preacher curl benches are adjustable so be sure to get the right seat height for you. Most of your triceps should rest comfortably on the pad. Using the same grip as the first exercise, move the bar in a smooth arc towards your forehead. The mechanics of this movement mean the resistance is greater at the bottom of the movement than the top so when you feel the resistance let up, you've gone too far. This is an isolation exercise so keep the tension on the biceps.

**DON'T!** Allow the shoulders to 'creep' in and take over most of the work.

**DON'T!** Try to make it easier on your biceps by shifting in the seat or leaning back. It's meant to be hard on them!

**DON'T!** Rush or try to constantly increase the weight on this exercise. Form is vital.

Work with a weight you can control.

