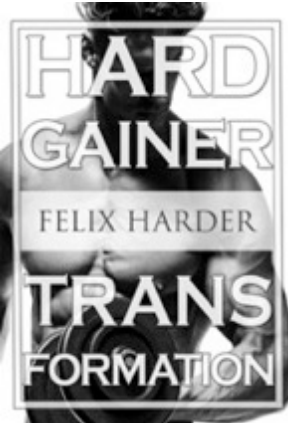
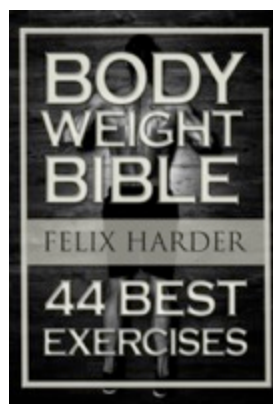
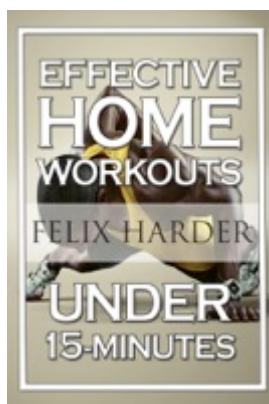
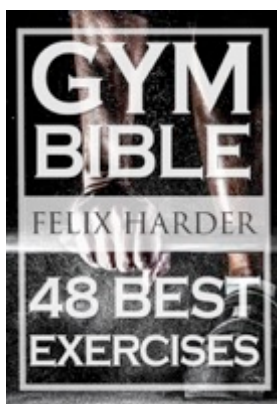


BODY WEIGHT BIBLE

FELIX HARDER

44 BEST EXERCISES

Other Books By Felix Harder



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Introduction

This book teaches you the 44 best bodyweight exercises for building strength and gaining muscle. Most of these exercises are timeless and have been performed by athletes for decades. They should be included in every bodyweight workout routine and are proven to work.

Unfortunately, many beginners, and even some experienced trainees, don't use proper form. Oftentimes, they simply copy their friends, which can lead to long-term joint problems and injuries. To avoid such issues, you should educate yourself on how to train correctly.

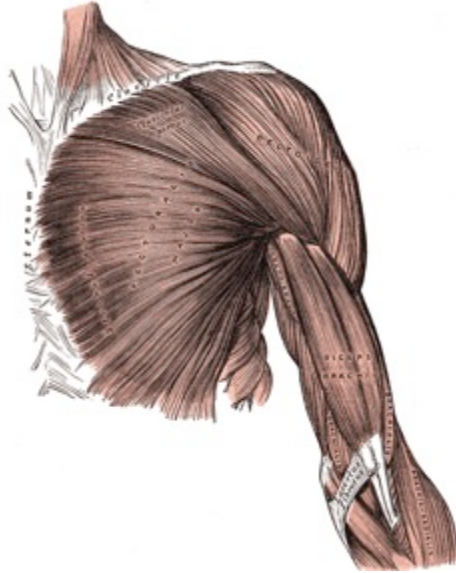
I divided the book into six parts - Chest, Back, Legs, Arms, Shoulders/Neck, Abs – to cover all important muscle groups. Every muscle group contains 4 – 8 exercises, each with an illustration, safety tips and possible variations.

Before each segment you will find a short introduction about the muscle group and how to train it. Not all muscles are created equal and you have to know how to train every single one properly.

I promise you that if you follow the exercises in this book, you will increase both size and strength within a few weeks. Remember to always have fun and patience.

- Felix Harder

Chest



About the muscle:

Your chest is made up of two main muscles, the *Pectoralis Major* and the *Pectoralis Minor*. The pectoralis major is a fan-shaped and thick muscle, located at the chest (anterior) of your body. It makes up the majority of the chest muscles in men and lies under the breast in women. The pectoralis minor is a thin, triangular muscle underneath the pectoralis major. In bodybuilding both are referred to as "pecs".

How to train chest:

Most athletes agree that the chest is best trained using compound pressing movements. Your muscle fibers will respond by growing in size and strength. Interestingly, the chest is only a medium sized muscle group, meaning you don't need too many sets to trigger muscle growth. As for reps, there isn't a one-number-fits-all solution but beginners should keep in mind that form

always comes first, especially when doing a high number of repetitions, to avoid risking shoulder problems.

Push-up

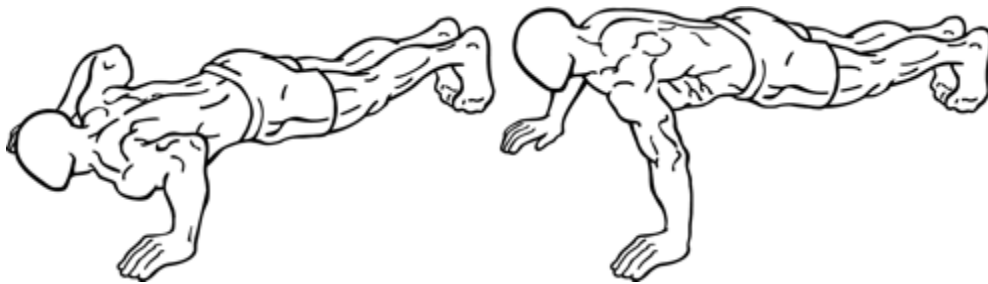
Muscle: Chest (Upper and lower pectorals)

Secondary Muscle: Shoulders, Triceps

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

Lie on the floor face down and place your hands slightly wider than shoulder width, while holding your torso up at arm's length. As you inhale, lower yourself downward (while keeping your body straight) until your chest almost touches the floor.

2. Execution

Now breathe out and push your upper body back up to the initial position while squeezing your chest. Pause at the top contracted position, then lower yourself downward again. Repeat for as many repetitions as needed.

Tips & Safety

- Try squeezing your core to avoid rounding your spine. This makes the push-up a full body exercise and reduces the risk of injury.
- A common mistake during push-ups is to flare the elbows wide. This can lead to rotator cuff and shoulder problems. It's better to pack your elbows in towards your sides, having less space between your armpits.
- Imagine pushing the floor away instead of pushing yourself off the ground. You will work more muscles making the push-up more of a full body exercise

Wide Push-up

Muscle: Chest (Upper and lower pectorals)

Secondary Muscle: Shoulders, Triceps

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

With your hands more than shoulder width apart, support your body on your hands and toes in a plank position. Keep your body straight and your elbows extended. Don't allow your hips to sag.

2. Execution

While inhaling, allow your elbows to flex and lower your chest to the floor. While exhaling, press your upper body back up to the initial position by extending the elbows and contracting your pectoral muscles. Hold the contracted position for a few seconds. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- For general safety, see normal push-up.
- This is a variation of the traditional push up, one of the best exercise for working out the chest (pectorals), arms (triceps and biceps) and core.
- Compared to the normal push-up, this version will work your chest more and your triceps less.

Exercise Ball Push-up

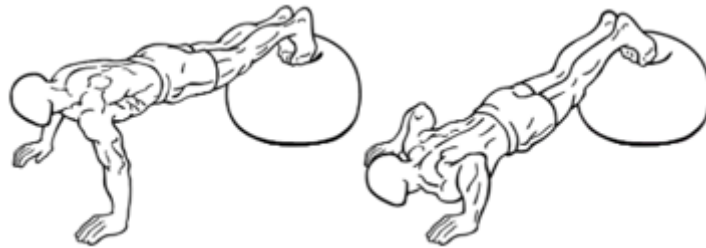
Muscle: Chest (Upper and lower pectorals)

Secondary Muscle: Shoulders, Triceps

Equipment: Exercise Ball

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

Lie on the floor face down and place your hands slightly wider than shoulder width, while holding your torso up at arm's length. Position your toes on top of an exercise ball, which will allow your body to be elevated.

2. Execution

As you inhale, lower yourself downward (while keeping your body straight) until your chest almost touches the floor. Now breathe out and push your upper body back up to the initial position using your pectoral muscles. Pause at the top contracted position, then lower yourself downward again. Repeat for as many repetitions as needed.

Tips & Safety

- Remember to keep your back straight and use an exercise ball that allows your body to be parallel to the ground when you have your arms fully extended.
- Instead of an exercise ball you can also use a flat bench to elevate your body.

Bosu Ball Push-up

Muscle: Chest (Upper and lower pectorals)

Secondary Muscle: Shoulders, Triceps

Equipment: Bosu Ball

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

Position a Bosu ball on the floor with the half-ball facing down. Get into a pushup position, placing your hands on the sides on the ball's platform. Keep your glutes and core straight.

2. Execution

While inhaling, lower yourself downward until your chest almost touches the floor.

Remember to keep your upper body straight. While exhaling, push your upper body back up to the original position by contracting your chest muscles. Hold the contracted position for a second and lower yourself downward again. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Keep your back flat and your core tight throughout the exercise.
- Don't let your elbows flare out to the sides.
- Make sure to fully extend your arms at the top of the pushup.

Push-up With Feet Elevated

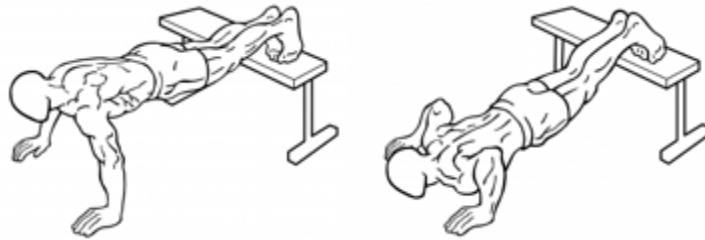
Muscle: Chest (Upper and lower pectorals)

Secondary Muscle: Shoulders, Triceps

Equipment: Flat Bench

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

Lie on the floor face down and place your hands slightly wider than shoulder width, while holding your torso up at arm's length. Position your toes on top of a flat bench, which will allow your body to be elevated.

2. Execution

As you inhale, lower yourself downward (while keeping your body straight) until your chest almost touches the floor. Now breathe out and push your upper body back up to the initial position using your pectoral muscles. Pause at the top contracted position, then lower yourself downward again. Repeat for as many repetitions as needed.

Tips & Safety

- The higher the elevation of the flat bench, the higher the resistance of the exercise.
- Instead of a flat bench you can also use an exercise ball to elevate your body. This increases the level of difficulty due to the instability provided.

Chest Dip

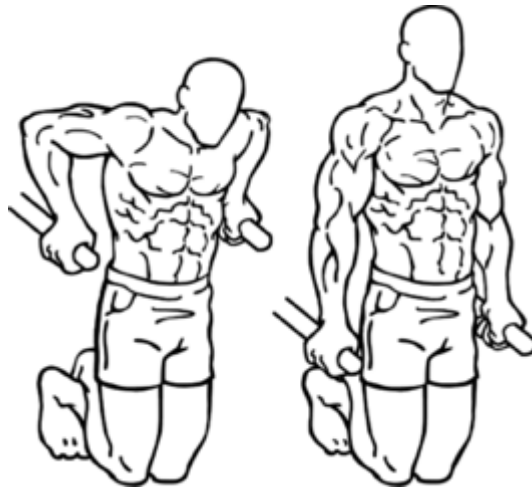
Main Muscle: Triceps

Secondary Muscles: Chest, Shoulders

Equipment: Parallel Bars

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

With your arms almost locked, hold your body above the bars.

2. Execution

While inhaling, slowly lower yourself with your torso leaning forward (no more than 30 degrees) until there is a 90 degree angle formed between the upper arm and forearm. You should now feel a slight stretch in the chest. While exhaling, push your body back to the original position using your chest. Repeat.

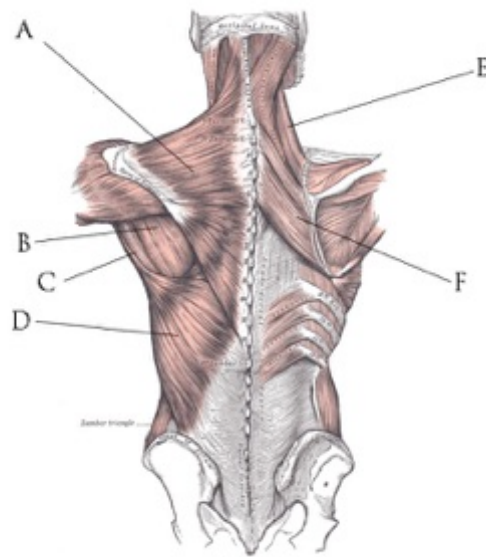
Tips & Safety

- If you don't have enough strength to perform this exercise, ask a spotter to hold your legs or use a dip assist machine.
- Don't forget to squeeze the chest at the top of the movement.
- By using a weight belt, you can increase the difficulty.

Variations

- Dips can be done as either a triceps or a chest exercise. The more you lean forward while performing the exercise, the more your chest will be involved.

Back



About the muscle:

The back, as a whole, is made up of several muscle groups: latissimus dorsi, erector spinae, rhomboids (major and minor), teres major, trapezius and posterior deltoids. Some of these muscles might also be considered parts of other muscle groups (e.g. shoulders). For training purposes, these muscles can be broken up into three categories: upper back, lower back and trapezius.

How to train back:

Since the back is composed of so many individual muscles, it is a difficult body area to train. In general, the best exercises to target the latissimus dorsi and teres major should allow you to bring your arms towards your sides (e.g. pull ups). The best exercises for the middle and lower traps, along with the rhomboid major and minor, are exercises which make you squeeze your shoulder blades together (e.g. body row).

Body Row

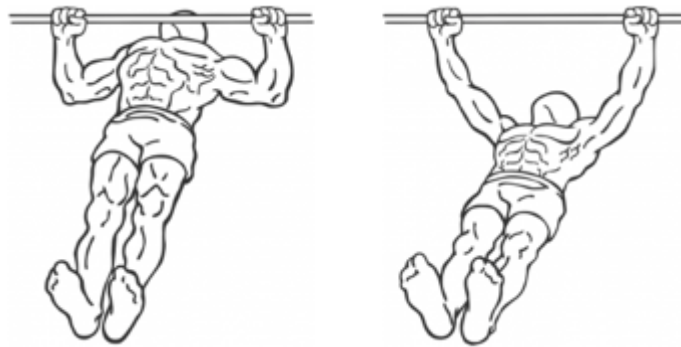
Muscle: Middle Back

Secondary Muscle: Biceps

Equipment: Low Bar

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Place a bar in a rack to about waist height. Using a wider than shoulder width grip, grab the bar with the palms facing forward and position yourself hanging underneath the bar. Keep your body straight with your arms fully extended and your heels on the ground.

2. Execution

While exhaling, pull your chest towards the bar by flexing your elbows. Retract your shoulder blades as you perform the movement. Pause at the top of the motion and return, lowering yourself to the initial position. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Your forearms should not move and only hold the bar.
- The closer your body is to horizontal the more difficult the exercise becomes.
- If you don't have a bar available at the correct height you can try holding on to the edge of a table.

Pull-up

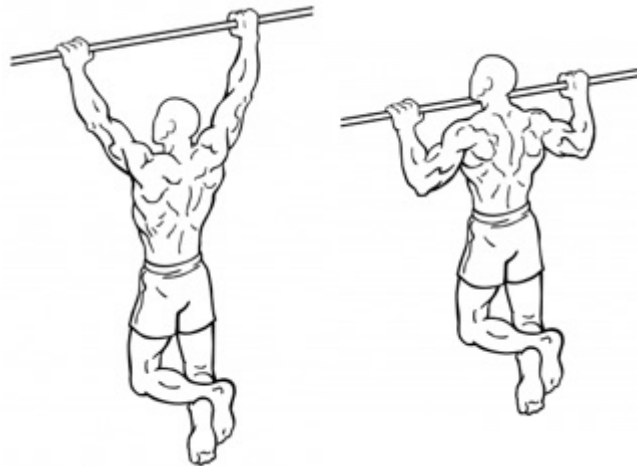
Muscle: Back (latissimus dorsi)

Secondary Muscle: Biceps

Equipment: Pull-Up Bar

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Using a wider than shoulder width grip, grab the pull-up bar with the palms facing forward. With your arms extended and holding the bar, bring back your torso around 30 degrees and stick your chest out.

2. Execution

While breathing out, pull your upper body up until it touches your chest by drawing the upper arms and the shoulders down and back. The pulling is done primarily with your back muscles rather than your biceps. Draw your shoulders and upper arms down and back while raising your torso. Pause for a moment and then return to the original position. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Your forearms should not move and only hold the bar.
- If you don't have enough strength to perform this exercise, ask a spotter to hold your legs or use a chin-assist machine
- By using a weight belt, you can increase the difficulty

Variations

Hand placement:

- Pronated grip (palms face away from you)
- Supinated grip (palms facing you)
- Mixed grip (one palm facing away, 1 palm facing you)

Other:

- Side to Side pull-up: Pull yourself up towards one hand.
- Alternating Climber pull-up: Pull yourself up towards one hand. Stay at the position, and move your body towards the other hand and lower yourself.
- Uneven pull-up: Hang a towel over the bar and grab it with one hand. Grab the bar with the other hand. Pull yourself up until your chin is just over the bar.

Side To Side Pull-up

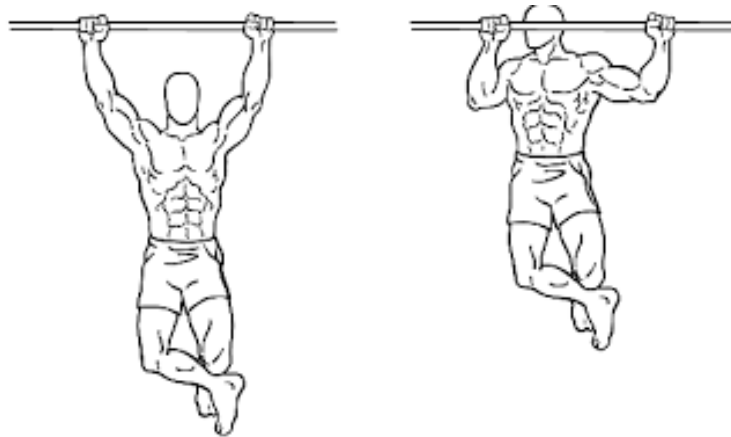
Muscle: Back (latissimus dorsi)

Secondary Muscle: Biceps, Forearms, Middle Back, Shoulders

Equipment: Pull-Up Bar

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Using a wider than shoulder width grip, grab the pull-up bar with the palms facing forward. With your arms extended and holding the bar, bring back your torso around 30 degrees and stick your chest out.

2. Execution

While exhaling, pull your torso up while leaning to the right hand side until your upper chest almost touches the bar. Do this by drawing the shoulders and the upper arms back and down. Pause for a moment and then return to the original position. Now, pull your torso up while leaning to the left hand side until your upper chest almost touches the bar. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Your forearms should not move and only hold the bar.
- Once you reach the full contracted position, concentrate on squeezing the back muscles. Don't swing your upper torso while you perform this exercise.
- If you don't have enough strength to perform this exercise, ask a spotter to hold your legs or use a chin-assist machine
- By using a weight belt, you can increase the difficulty

Gironda Sternum Chin-up

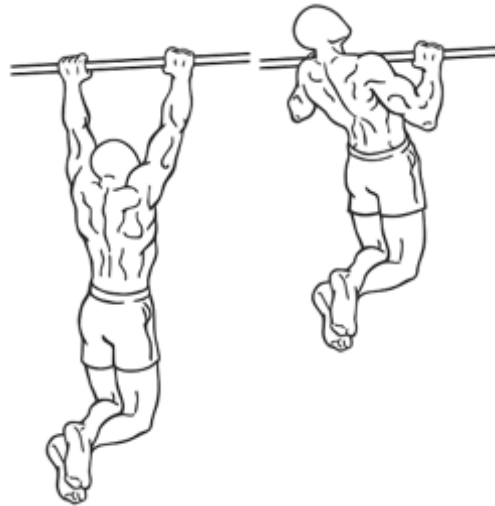
Muscle: Back (latissimus dorsi)

Secondary Muscle: Biceps

Equipment: Pull-Up Bar

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Using a wider than shoulder width grip, grab the pull-up bar with the palms facing you (unlike shown in the picture). With your arms extended and holding the bar, bring back your torso around 30 degrees and stick your chest out.

2. Execution

While exhaling, start pulling yourself towards the bar with your head leaning back as far away from the bar as possible and your spine arched throughout the movement. Continue pulling until your lower chest touches the bar. Your collarbone should now be past the bar and head parallel to the floor. Pause for a moment and then return to the original position. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Your forearms should not move and only hold the bar.
- If you don't have enough strength to perform this exercise, ask a spotter to hold your legs or use a chin-assist machine
- By using a weight belt, you can increase the difficulty

V-Bar Pull-up

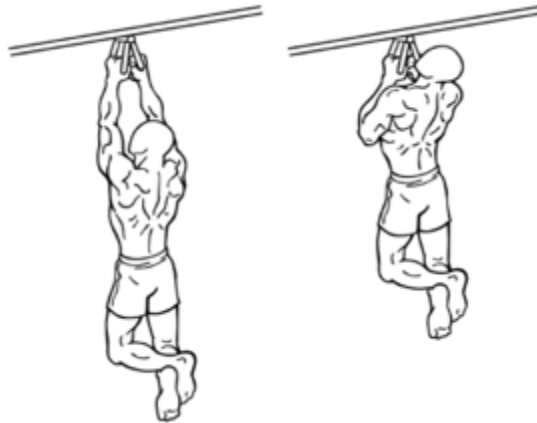
Muscle: Back (latissimus dorsi)

Secondary Muscle: Biceps

Equipment: Pull-Up Bar

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Grab a set of parallel bars or the v-bar so that your palms are facing each other. With your arms straight let your body hang from the bar.

2. Execution

While exhaling, start pulling yourself up while contracting your arms until your chin passes the bar. While inhaling, lower yourself to the initial position while extending your arms. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Keep your legs in line with your torso throughout the entire exercise.
- Fully extend your arms at the bottom of the exercise before pulling yourself up again.
- For additional resistance hold a dumbbell between your feet.

Supermans

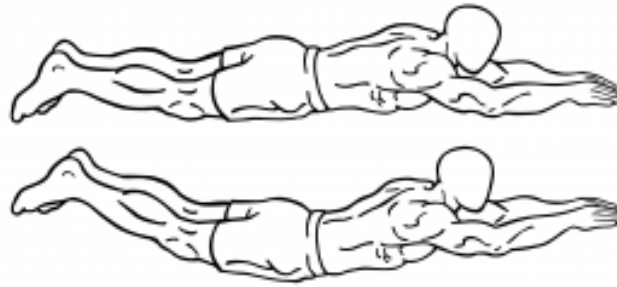
Muscle: Lower Back

Secondary Muscle: Glutes, Hamstrings

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Lie straight and face down on an exercise mat or the floor. Extend your arms fully in front of you.

2. Execution

While exhaling, simultaneously raise your legs, arms and chest off of the mat and hold this contraction for 2 seconds. Make sure to squeeze your lower back during this contraction. While inhaling, slowly begin to lower your legs, arms and chest back down to the initial position. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- You should look like superman when he is flying when in the contracted position.

Variations:

- Supermans can also be performed using one arm and leg at a time. Simply elevate your right arm, leg and side of your chest and do the same with the left side.

Hyperextensions

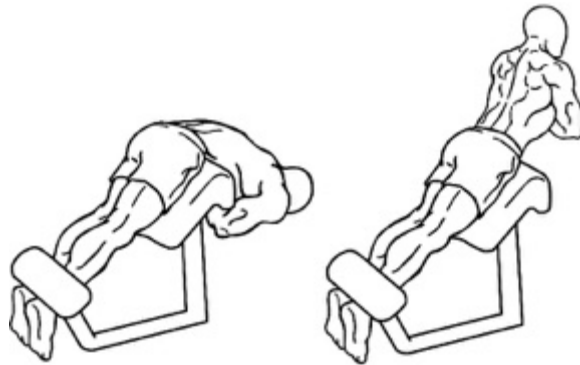
Muscle: Lower Back

Secondary Muscle: Glutes, Hamstrings

Equipment: Hyperextension bench

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Lie face down on a hyperextension bench and tuck your ankles securely under the footpads. Adjust the upper pad so you can bend at the waist without any restriction while your upper thighs lie flat across the wide pad. Cross your arms behind your head or in front of you.

2. Execution

While inhaling, bend forward at the waist as far as you can while keeping your back straight. Continue moving forward until you feel a slight stretch on the hamstrings. While exhaling, slowly raise your torso back to the original position. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- For extra resistance you can also hold a weight plate in front of you.
- Do not round your back while you perform this exercise.
- Hyperextensions can also be performed without a special bench, but in this case you will need a spotter.

Hyperextensions On Exercise Ball

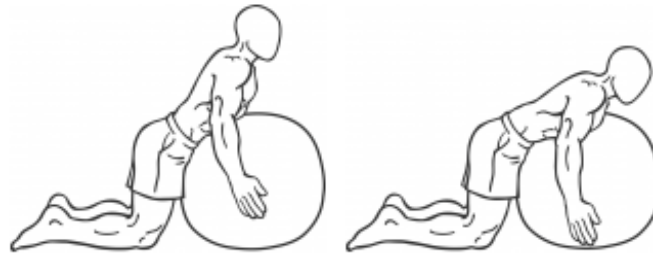
Muscle: Lower Back

Secondary Muscle: Glutes, Hamstrings

Equipment: Stability Ball

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



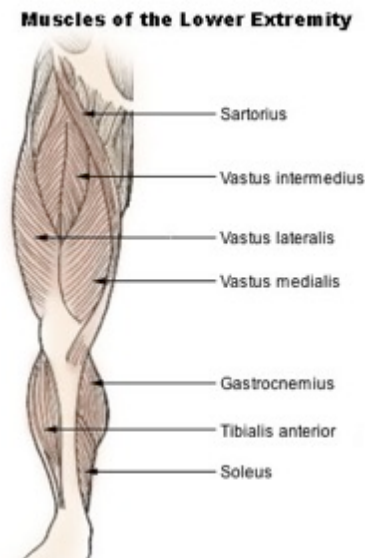
1. Position

Lie down on an exercise ball parallel to the floor with your torso pressing against the ball. Press the balls of your feet against the floor to keep you balanced. Hold the sides of the ball with your hands.

2. Execution

While exhaling, slowly bend at the waist and raise your torso up. Hold the contracted position for a second and while inhaling lower your torso back down to the initial position. Repeat.

Legs



About the muscle:

Just as the back, your legs are made up of many individual muscles: Hamstrings (form the back of the thigh), Adductors (a.k.a, the inner thigh muscles), Quadriceps (at the front of your thigh), Gastrocnemius (uppermost of your two calf muscles), Soleus (underneath the gastrocnemius), and Tibialis anterior (strip of muscle that makes up your shin).

How to train legs:

If you want big legs, you will need to push your muscles (close) to failure and then let them rest and grow. This can be done as part of an overall body workout with simple exercises such as the bodyweight squat or lunges. However, some athletes dedicate an entire day just to their leg training.

Bodyweight Squat

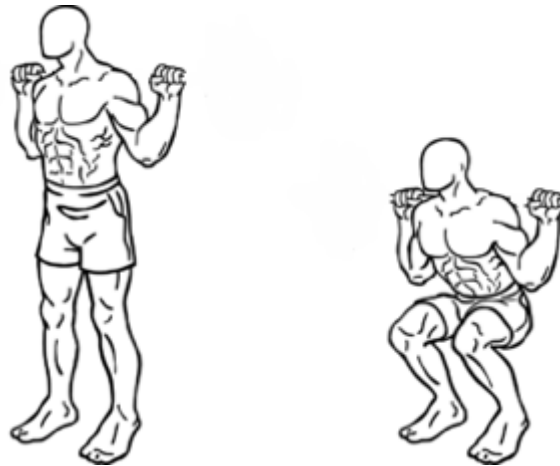
Main Muscle: Quadriceps

Secondary Muscles: Calves, Glutes, Hamstrings, Lower Back

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and place your hands behind your head or to your sides.

2. Execution

While inhaling, bend your knees and slowly lower your upper body. Descend until your thighs are just past parallel to the floor. Then raise your upper body as you exhale. Imagine pushing the floor with the heel of your foot as you straighten your legs. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Keep your head facing forward and your back straight at all times.
- As you squat, push your knees out and keep your chest up.
- Watch out for equal distribution of weight throughout your forefoot and heel.

Bodyweight Lunges

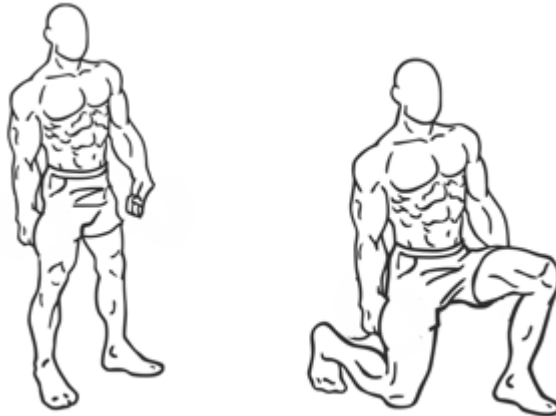
Main Muscle: Quadriceps

Secondary Muscles: Calves, Hamstrings, Glutes

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and your hands on your hips.

2. Execution

While inhaling, step with one leg forward and flex your knees to drop the hips. Your rear knee should nearly touch the floor. Keep your back straight and your front knee above the front foot. While exhaling, extend the knees and drive through the heel of your lead foot to raise yourself back up. Step forward and repeat the exercise on the opposite leg.

Tips & Safety

- A long lunge targets the gluteus maximus, while a short lunge targets the quadriceps.
- Your lead knee should point in same direction as your lead foot throughout the exercise.

Variations:

- For less intensity, try split squats (same movement, but your body remains in the same place).

Glute Bridges

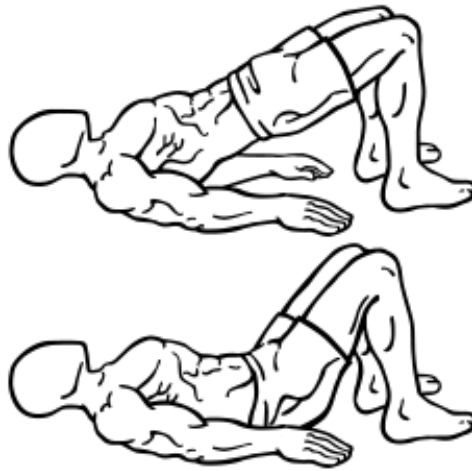
Main Muscle: Glutes

Secondary Muscles: Hamstrings

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Push



1. Position

Lie flat on a mat on your back and position your hands by your side. Your knees should be bent and your feet be placed around shoulder width.

2. Execution

While exhaling, lift your hips off the floor, pushing mainly with your heels. Keep your back straight and hold the contracted position for a second. While inhaling, slowly go back to the initial position.

Leg Lifts

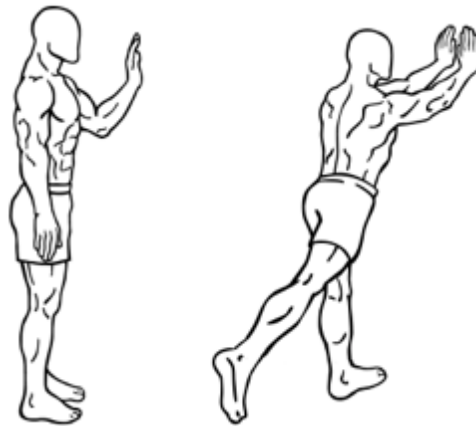
Muscle: Glutes

Secondary Muscle: Hamstrings

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Pull



1. Position

Stand up straight with your feet next to each other at around shoulder width. Grab a sturdy surface such as the top of a chair or the sides of a weight rack to keep balance.

2. Execution

While exhaling, lift one leg while keeping your body and the other leg straight. While inhaling, slowly lower the raised leg back to the floor. Repeat for the recommended amount of repetitions and switch to the opposite leg.

Tips & Safety

- For increased difficulty, you can perform the same exercise with a low pulley attached to your ankle using an ankle attachment or an ankle weight.
- Remember to keep your upper body straight during the entire exercise.

Standing Leg Curl

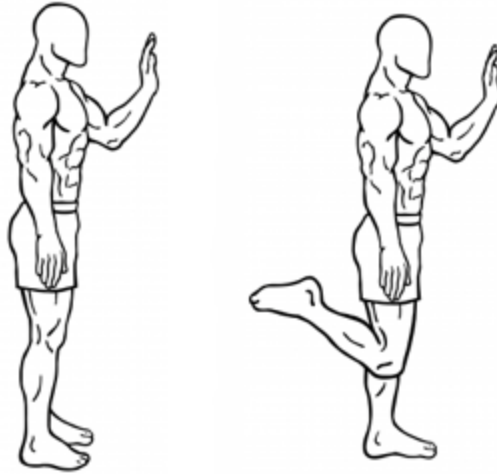
Muscle: Quadriceps

Secondary Muscle: Hamstrings, Calves

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Pull



1. Position

Stand with your legs shoulder-width apart and your hand against the wall.

2. Execution

While exhaling, flex your right knee and kick the right heel up toward your glutes. While inhaling, bring the right foot back down. Repeat with the opposite leg.

Tips & Safety

- For increased difficulty, you can perform the same exercise with an ankle weight.
- A variation of this exercise is the cardio exercise called “butt kicks”. Here you quickly alternate between both legs and raise one while you lower the other. Your arms should be bent at your sides and imitate a jogging motion.

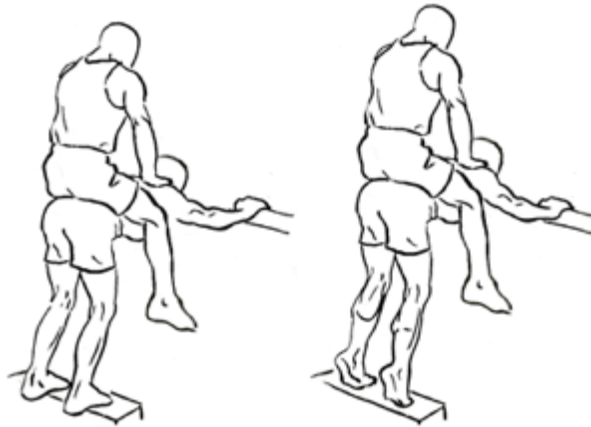
Donkey Calf Raises

Muscle: Calves

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Push



1. Position

Bend your waist and place your hands against a bench that is waist height or a weight rack. Carefully have a partner sit on top of your lower back. Align the toes forward while keeping your knees straight without locking them.

2. Execution

While exhaling, raise your heels by flexing your calf and extending your ankles as high as possible. Hold the contracted position by a second before going back down. While inhaling, slowly lower your heels to the initial position as you bend your ankles until your calves are stretched.

Tips & Safety

- Make sure you can hold your partner's weight without any problems.
- Remember to keep your knee stationary at all times.

Flutter Kicks

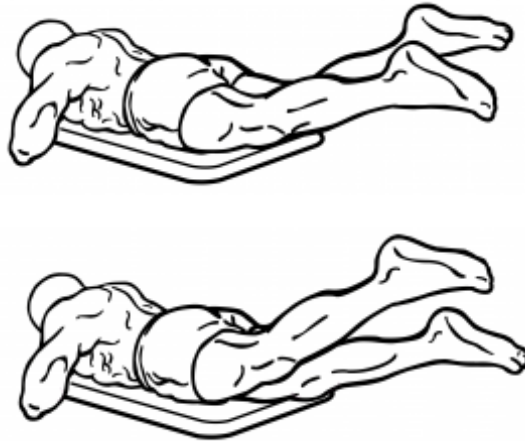
Muscle: Glutes

Secondary Muscle: Hamstrings

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Pull



1. Position

Lie facedown on a mat. If you are using a flat bench, your hips should be on the edge of the bench, your legs straight with the toes high off the floor while your hands are holding on to the front edge. Squeeze your hamstrings and glutes and straighten your legs until they are level with your hips.

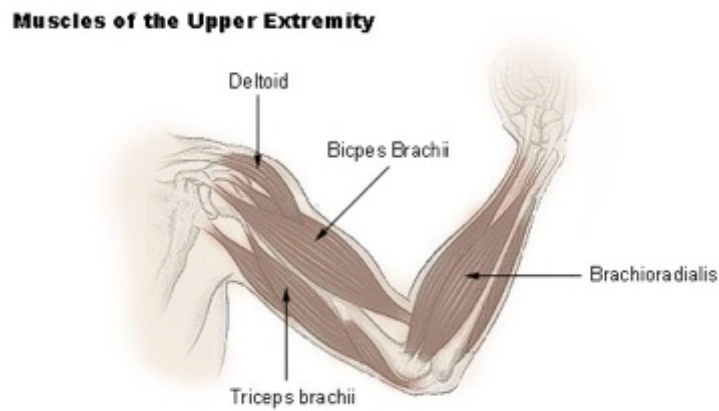
2. Execution

Lift the right leg higher than the left leg. Now lower the right leg as you lift the left leg. Continue alternating and kicking your legs until you have reached the recommended amount of repetitions for both legs.

Tips & Safety

- Keep a controlled movement during the entire exercise.
- Breathe normally while performing the movement.
- More advanced lifters can use ankle weights to increase the difficulty.

Arms



About the muscle:

Both our arms are composed of different muscles. The most important arm muscles in bodybuilding are:

- Biceps (formally known as the biceps brachii muscle), which rests on top of the humerus bone. It flexes the elbow and rotates the forearm.
- Triceps (formally known as the triceps brachii muscle), which helps straighten the arm.
- Brachioradialis, which rotates the forearm and also flexes it at the elbow.

How to train arms:

In order to get strong arms, you will need to do both compound and isolation exercises. The compound movements are needed to increase strength, but by themselves won't get you significantly bigger arms. To target specific arm muscles you will also have to do some isolation exercises.

Chin Up

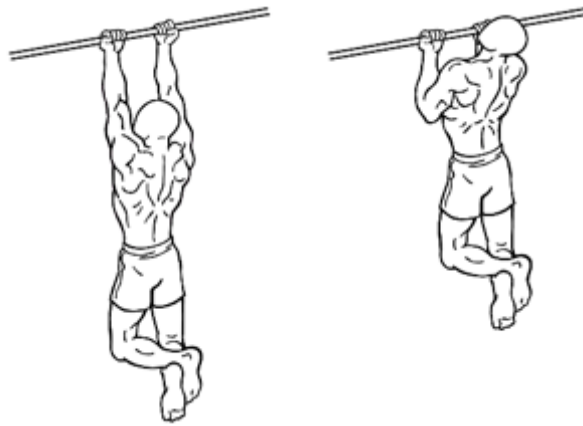
Main Muscle: Biceps

Secondary Muscles: Forearms, Lats, Middle Back

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Using a closer than shoulder width grip, grab the pull-up bar with the palms facing inward.

With your arms extended and holding the bar, bring your torso back around 30 degrees and stick your chest out.

2. Execution

While breathing out, pull your upper body up until your head is around the level of the pull-up bar. The pulling is done primarily with your biceps. Keep your elbows close to your body.

Pause for a moment and then return to the original position. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Your forearms should do no other work other than hold the bar.
- If you don't have enough strength to perform this exercise, ask a spotter to hold your legs or use a chin assist machine.
- By using a weight belt, you can increase the difficulty.

Variations

Hand placement:

- Pronated grip (palms face away from you).
- Supinated grip (palms facing you).
- Mixed grip (one palm facing away, one palm facing you).

Triceps Dip

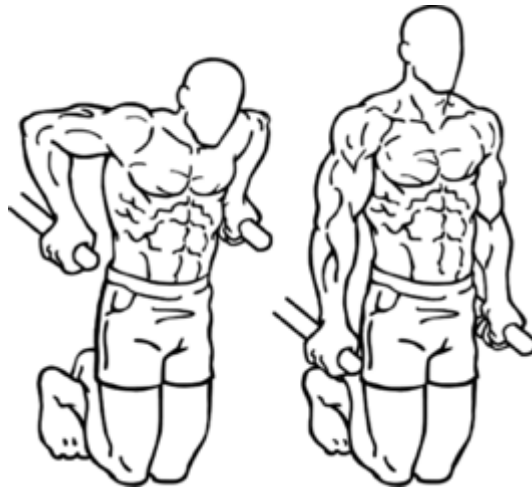
Main Muscle: Triceps

Secondary Muscles: Chest, Shoulders

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

With your arms almost locked, hold your body above the bars.

2. Execution

While inhaling, slowly lower yourself downward until there is a 90 degree angle formed between the upper arm and forearm. Your upper body should remain upright while keeping your elbows close to your body. While exhaling, push your body back to the original position using your triceps. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- If you don't have enough strength to perform this exercise, ask a spotter to hold your legs or use a dip assist machine.
- By using a weight belt, you can increase the difficulty.

Variations

- Dips can be done as either a triceps or a chest exercise. The more you lean forward while performing the exercise, the more your chest will be involved.

Bench Dip

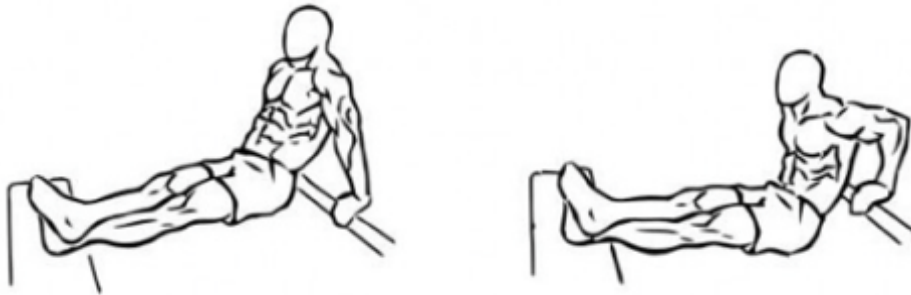
Main Muscle: Triceps

Secondary Muscles: Chest, Shoulders

Equipment: Flat Bench

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

Position a bench behind your back and hold on to its edge with your hands fully extended at shoulder width. Your legs should be extended forward and perpendicular to your torso, with your heels resting on another bench (or similar object).

2. Execution

While inhaling, lower your body by bending at the elbows until your upper arm and forearm create an angle slightly smaller than 90 degrees. Bring your torso up again by contracting your triceps and lift yourself back to the initial position. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Keep your elbows as close as possible throughout the exercise.
- Your forearms should always be pointing down.
- By placing a weight on your lap, you can increase the difficulty.

Variations

- The exercise can also be done with your feet on the floor. This variation is recommended for beginners.

Triceps Push-up

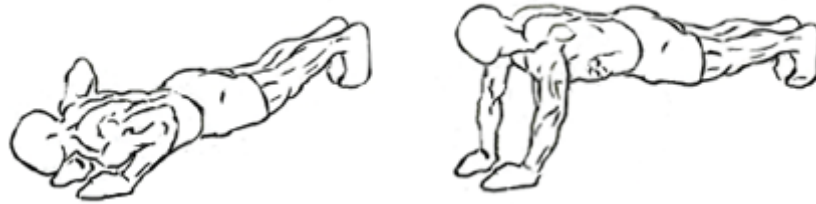
Muscle: Triceps

Secondary Muscle: Shoulders, Chest

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

Lie on the floor face down and place your hands closer than shoulder width, while holding your torso up at arm's length. As you inhale, lower yourself downward (while keeping your body straight) until your chest almost touches the floor.

2. Execution

Now breathe out and push your upper body back up to the initial position using mainly your triceps and parts of your pectoral muscles. Pause at the top contracted position, then lower yourself downward again. Repeat for as many repetitions as needed.

Tips & Safety

- If you are a beginner and don't have enough strength to perform the exercise, you can bend your legs at the knees to take off resistance. Another possibility is performing the push up against the wall instead of the floor.
- More advanced lifters can place their feet on a high surface such as a bench in order to increase the resistance.

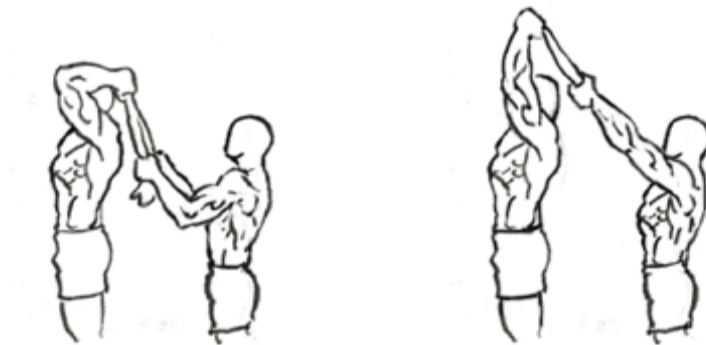
Standing Triceps Extensions With A Towel

Muscle: Triceps

Equipment: Towel

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Push



1. Position

Stand up with your feet shoulder width apart and both arms fully extended above your head. Both hands should be holding one end of the towel with the palms facing each other.

2. Execution

Tell your partner to grip the other end of the towel and apply resistance. While inhaling and keeping your elbows in and your upper arms close to your head, lower the towel behind your head in a semicircular motion until your forearms touch your biceps. While exhaling, raise the towel to the initial position by contracting your triceps. Repeat.

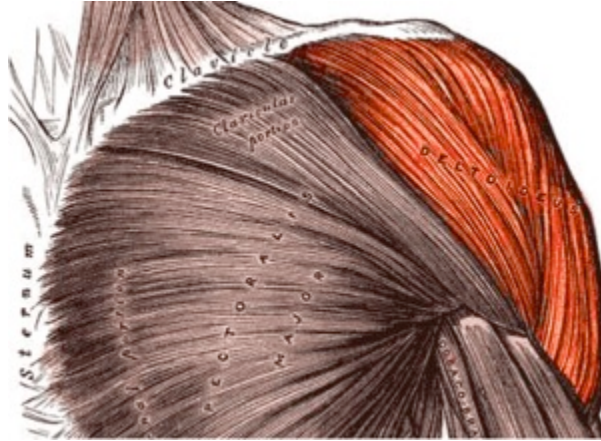
Tips & Safety

- Keep your upper arms stationary. Only the forearms should move!
- Remind your partner to not apply too much resistance or suddenly jerk the towel. This could cause injury and/or muscle tears.

Variations

- This exercise can also be performed with one arm at a time or sitting down for more back support.

Shoulders / Neck



About the muscle:

The shoulders are a complex system of muscles responsible for a great amount of movement. In bodybuilding, you will focus on two layers of muscles called the deltoid and the rotator cuff. The deltoid is composed of the anterior head, the middle head and the posterior head. Usually all three work together, for example, when you take your arm overhead. Underneath this first layer you find the rotator cuff, which is made up of four more muscles (teres minor, infraspinatus, subscapularis and supraspinatus). These muscles help stabilize and rotate the arm.

How to train shoulders:

You don't need to do hundreds of isolation exercises for your shoulders. They get a good workout doing compound movements like the push-up. Because the shoulders are prone to injury, remember to watch your form at all times.

Pike Press

Muscle: Shoulder

Secondary Muscle: Triceps

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

Begin in the push-up position with your hands in a wide diamond. Your fingers should be pointing toward each other. Bend at the waist, lift your hips up and place your feet so your body forms an upside-down V.

2. Execution

While inhaling, bend your elbows and lower your head toward the floor. While exhaling, press yourself up by contracting your triceps and shoulders. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- The Pike Press (targeting the shoulders) differs from the Pike Push-up (targeting the upper chest). In the Pike Press your feet are at closer distance to your hands so the body is more inverted in the lowest position.
- Keep your back and knees straight at all times.

Variations

- Performing the exercise on a bench with your hands positioned higher than your feet can reduce the difficulty.

Handstand Push-up

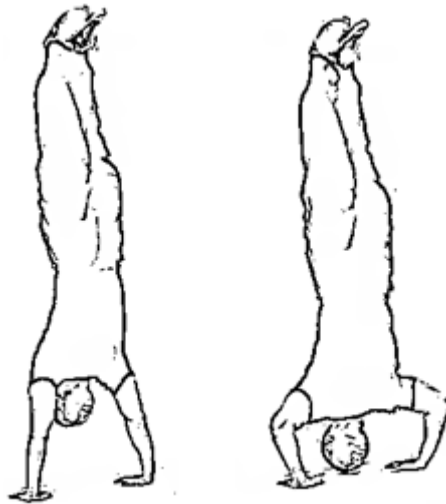
Muscle: Shoulder

Secondary Muscle: Triceps

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Push



1. Position

Go into a handstand position and place both hands on the floor at shoulder width. Now kick yourself up against the wall with your legs and arms straight. Keep your whole body as straight as possible.

2. Execution

While inhaling, bend your elbows and slowly lower yourself to the ground until your head almost touches the floor. While exhaling, push yourself back up by contraction your shoulder and triceps. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Beginners should ask a spotter to help them get into the handstand position.
- Keep facing the wall with your head, instead of looking down.
- Make sure that the floor surface is not slippery.

Variations

- If this exercise seems too dangerous, try the pike press instead.

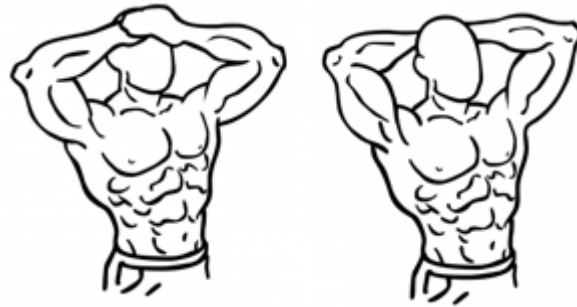
Static Neck Flexion And Extension

Muscle: Neck Side Flexors

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isometric

Force: Push



1. Position

Stand with your feet at shoulder width or sit on a flat bench. With your head in neutral position, place your both hands on your forehead.

2. Execution

Now contract your neck muscles and press your head against your hands. Hold this position for at least 30 seconds and keep your head from moving forward. Repeat with your hands on the back of your head, pressing against them.

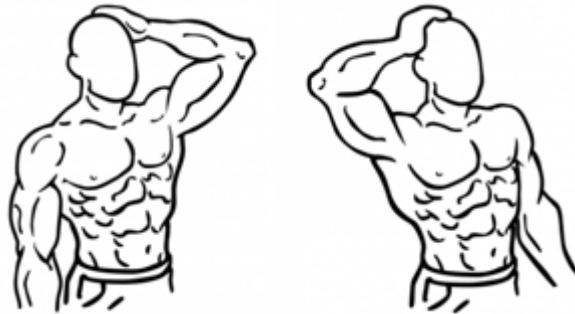
Static Neck Side Flexion

Muscle: Neck Side Flexors

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isometric

Force: Push



1. Position

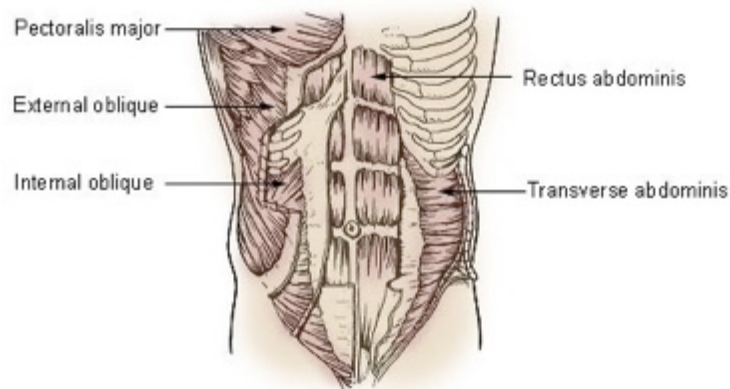
Stand with your feet at shoulder width or sit on a flat bench. With your head in neutral position, place your right hand against the right side of your head, above your ear.

2. Execution

Now push your head against your hand, while keeping your neck straight. Hold this position for 30 seconds. Remember to position your chin at a 90 degree angle to your neck. Repeat with your left hand on the left side of your head.

Abs

Muscles of the Trunk



About the muscle:

The abdominal muscles are comprised of three layers: the deep-, the intermediate- and the superficial layer. The superficial layer is what we usually talk about, when referring to a six-pack. It is made up of the external oblique (runs from the ribcage down to your hips) and the rectus abdominis (the muscle "packs" in the six-pack).

How to train Abs:

If you are already doing compound exercises such as the body row, all you need is 10-15 minutes at the end of your workout routine. An entire ab-day is useless in my opinion, but some athletes disagree. Never do abs first, because you will lack core strength in later compound exercises. Remember to hit your abs from different angles and try out new exercises every once in a while.

Ab Crunch

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Pull



1. Position

Lie flat on your back with your feet resting on a bench with your knees bent at a 90-degree angle, or flat on the ground.

2. Execution

With hands lightly on either side of your head or neck, begin to roll your shoulders off the floor. They should come up off the floor only about 4 inches, while your lower back should remain on the floor. At the top of the motion, contract your abdominals hard and maintain the contraction for a second. Then, slowly lower to the original motion.

Tips & Safety

- Keep your lower back against the floor and your hips straight during the exercise.
- Focus on slow, controlled movement. Don't cheat yourself by swinging your upper body.

Variations

- There are hundreds of variations for the ab crunch. You can perform the exercise on top of an exercise ball or on a decline bench or with weights.

Twisting Crunch / Cross Body Crunch

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Pull



1. Position

Lie flat on a mat. Position your hands behind head or neck.

2. Execution

Flex and twist your waist to raise your upper torso while bringing your left knee in toward your left shoulder at the same time. Reach with your elbow and try to touch your knee. Return until the backs of your shoulders touch the mat. Repeat on opposite side, alternating twists.

Tips & Safety

- While you cannot add weight to this exercise, you can concentrate on slow speed and perfect execution.
- Don't cheat yourself by jerking your upper body.

Variations

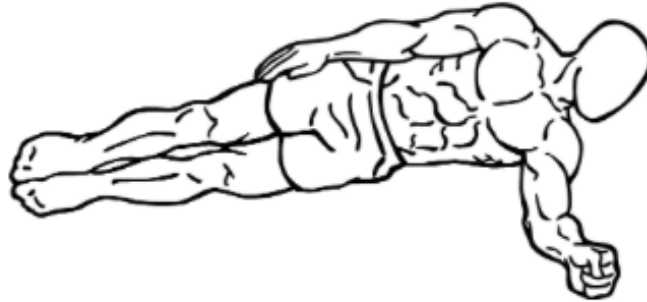
- You can also do all of your reps for one side and then switch to the other side.

Side Plank Exercise

Main Muscle: Obliques

Secondary Muscle: Shoulders

Equipment: Body



1. Position

Lie on one side and support your body between your forearm and knee to your feet.

2. Execution

While drawing your abs in, slowly raise your body so you are balanced on your feet and your forearm (see picture). Hold this position for about 30 - 60 seconds and slowly return back to the initial position. Switch sides and repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Do not let your waist sag. You will need to keep your upper body and legs straight while holding your own weight on your forearm.
- Gradually increase the time you hold the top position in future workout routines.

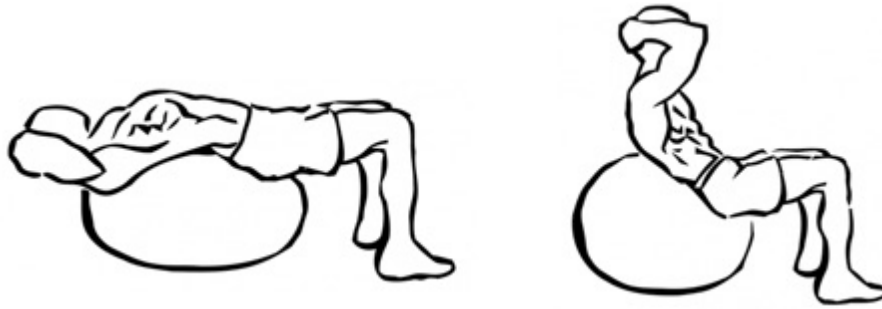
Stability Ball Ab Crunch

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Equipment: Exercise Ball

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Pull



1. Position

Lie with your lower back pressed against the exercise ball and your feet pressed firmly against the floor. Make sure that your upper torso is hanging off the top of the ball. To avoid possible neck strains, you might want to cross your arms on top of your chest.

2. Execution

While exhaling, flex your waist by contracting the abdominals. Keep your neck stationary during this motion. At the top, contract your abdominals hard and maintain the contraction for a second. Then, slowly lower your upper body to the initial position while inhaling. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Make sure that your lower back always stays in contact with the ball.
- Focus on slow, controlled movement. Don't cheat yourself by swinging your upper body.

Variations

- You can also perform this exercise with a low pulley behind you with a rope attachment. The added resistance will increase the difficulty.

Exercise Ball Jackknife

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Equipment: Exercise Ball

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Pull



1. Position

Place your lower shins on top of an exercise ball and your hands on the floor in a push-up position around shoulder width apart. Fully extend your legs.

2. Execution

While exhaling, pull your knees in towards your chest. Keep your back completely straight as the ball rolls forward under your ankles. At the top, contract your abdominals hard and maintain the contraction for a second. While inhaling, slowly straighten your legs and let the ball roll back into the original position. Repeat.

Decline Crunch

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Pull



1. Position

Lie down on the decline bench and secure your legs at the end of the bench. Keeping your elbows in, position your hands lightly on either side of your head.

2. Execution

While exhaling and keeping your lower back on the bench, roll your shoulders off it. They should come up off the bench not more than five inches. Contract your abdominals hard at the top of the movement. While inhaling, slowly return to the starting position. Repeat.

Tips & Safety

- Do not lock your fingers behind your head.
- Do not swing your body and focus on slow movement.

Variations

- Advanced lifters can also add weight by holding a dumbbell on their chest.

Decline Cross Crunch

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Lie down on the decline bench and secure your legs at the end of the bench. Position one hand beside your head and the other on your thigh.

2. Execution

While exhaling, raise your upper body off the bench while turning your torso to the left. Continue crunching up until your right elbow touches your opposite knee. While inhaling, slowly lower your body to the initial position. Repeat for recommended amount of repetitions and switch to other side.

Tips & Safety

- Try to keep your abs tight and the movement controlled and slow.
- Don't cheat yourself by swinging your upper body.

Variations

- You can also alternate from side to side in each repetition.
- You can also perform this exercise on a flat surface (see twisting crunch).
- Advanced lifters can also add weight by holding a dumbbell on their chest.

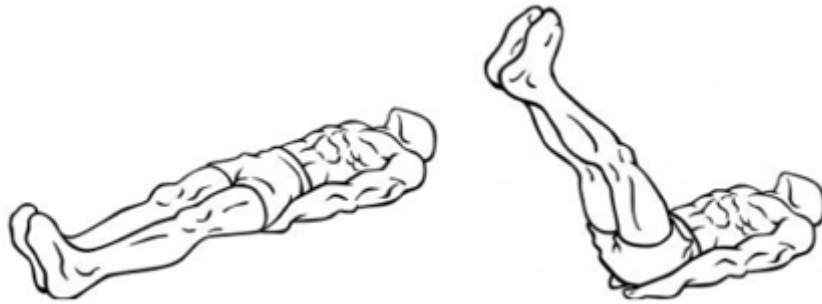
Leg Raise

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Pull



1. Position

Lie flat on a mat. Position your hands under your glutes with your palms down.

2. Execution

While exhaling and keeping your legs as straight as possible, raise your legs until they create a 90-degree angle with the floor. Hold the contraction at the top for a second. While inhaling, slowly lower your legs back down to the original position.

Tips & Safety

- Keep your lower back against the floor and your hips straight during the exercise.
- Focus on slow, controlled movement. Don't cheat yourself by swinging your legs.

Variations

- You can also perform this exercise on a bench with your legs hanging off.
- Advanced lifters can also add weight by holding a dumbbell in between their feet.

Bent Knee Hip Raise

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Lie flat on a mat with your knees bent at around a 75-degree angle. Your arms should be right next to your sides. Now lift your feet off the floor by around two inches.

2. Execution

While exhaling, bring your knees in towards you as you keep your knees bent. Using only your lower abs, continue this movement and raise your hips off of the floor by rolling your pelvis backward (this part is not shown in the picture). Your knees should now be just above your chest. Contract your abs at the top of the movement and slowly return to the initial position slowly while inhaling.

Tips & Safety

- Focus on slow, controlled movement. Don't cheat yourself by swinging your legs.

Variations

- You can also straighten your feet or add ankle weights for increased difficulty.

Air Bike

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Lie flat on a mat with your lower back pressed to the ground. Position your hands lightly on either side of your head and bring the knees up until your lower legs are parallel to the floor.

2. Execution

Simultaneously kick forward with the right leg and bring in the knee of the left leg. While exhaling, bring your right elbow close to your left knee by crunching to the side. The entire movement should simulate a cycle pedal motion. While inhaling, return to the initial position. Repeat the exercise with the opposite leg and continue alternating.

Tips & Safety

- Concentrate on perfect execution and slow speed.
- Keep your shoulder blades off the mat during the entire exercise.

Hanging Leg Raise

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Pull



1. Position

Using a slightly larger than shoulder width grip, hang from a chin-up bar with both arms extended at arms length. Your legs should be straight down and the pelvis rolled slightly backwards.

2. Execution

While exhaling, raise both legs until your torso makes a 90-degree angle with the legs. At the top, hold the contraction for a second. While inhaling, slowly lower your legs to the starting position.

Tips & Safety

- Perform the leg raise slowly and deliberately as it takes some getting used to.
- Don't cheat yourself by swinging your legs.

Variations

- For increased difficulty, you can hold a dumbbell in between your feet.
- Hanging leg raises can also be performed using a vertical bench, which supports your upper back and allows you to place your elbows and arms on the side pads.

Ab Rollout

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Secondary Muscles: Deltoids, Lats, Lower Back

Equipment: Barbell

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Go into a push-up position and grab on to a barbell loaded with 5-10 lbs. on each side.

2. Execution

While exhaling, lift your hips and roll the barbell towards your feet. Remember to keep a slight arch on your back. Your arms should remain perpendicular to the floor throughout the movement. Otherwise, you will work out your back and shoulders more than the abs. Hold the contraction at the top for a second, then start to roll the barbell back and forward to the initial position slowly as you inhale.

Tips & Safety

- This exercise should not be done if you have back problems or difficulties maintaining stability.
- Keep your arms straight throughout the exercise.

Variations

- For less advanced athletes, this exercise can also be done on your knees (see next exercise).

Ab Rollout On Knees

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Secondary Muscles: Deltoids, Lats, Lower Back

Equipment: Barbell

Exercise Type: Compound

Force: Pull



1. Position

Go into a push-up position with your knees on the floor and grab on to a barbell loaded with 5-10 lbs. on each side.

2. Execution

While exhaling, lift your hips and roll the barbell towards your knees. Remember to keep a slight arch on your back. Your arms should remain perpendicular to the floor throughout the movement. Otherwise, you will work out your back and shoulders more than the abs. Hold the contraction at the top for a second, then start to roll the barbell back and forward to the initial position slowly as you inhale.

Tips & Safety

- This exercise should not be done if you have back problems or difficulties maintaining stability.
- Keep your arms straight throughout the exercise.

Abdominal Draw In

Main Muscle: Abdominals

Equipment: Body

Exercise Type: Isolation

Force: Static



1. Position

Get down on a mat on your hands and knees, forming a square or four-point rectangle shape. Keep your hips and pelvis in a neutral position and your back straight.

2. Execution

Draw your abs in and crunch your abs while keeping your back still.

Hold for the contraction for around 20 seconds and then release. Returning to the initial position and repeat.

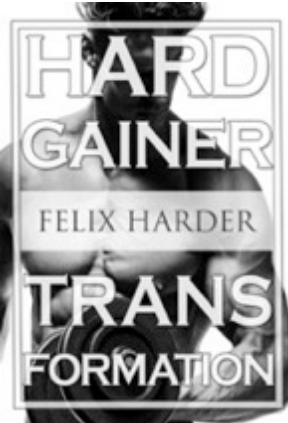
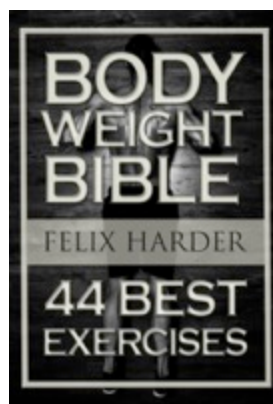
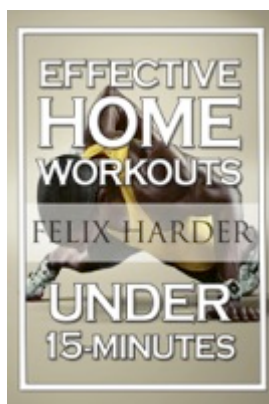
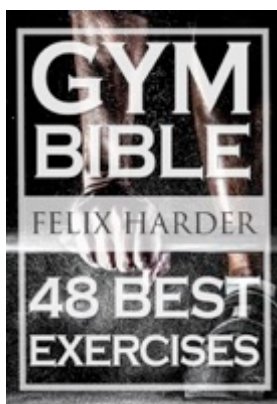
Tips & Safety

- Your back should be kept still all throughout the contraction and relaxation.
- Once you get some practice, you can try holding the contraction for 40-60 seconds.

Variations

- You can also do this exercise standing up (feet shoulder width apart and hands on your hips).

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