

20 Months to a Champion Physique

month 11 - intermediate

select a program

We now come to the point in the program, where you switch to a split system of training. Unlike the previous 10 months, when you trained your entire body at every workout, this month you train half your body at one workout and the other half at the next.

In the first workout of this split routine you train your midsection, chest, back, deltoids, forearms and calves - in that order. In the second workout you train your midsection, thighs, hamstrings, triceps, biceps, forearms and calves. So you could say this split routine consists of a chest-back-shoulders workout and a legs-triceps-biceps workout.

Since I am recommending that you do four workouts per week this month, as opposed to the three you were doing before, you actually work most of your body parts only twice a week now instead - of three times. This is more than compensated for by the fact that you do more exercises and reps per body part and train with greater intensity than you did previously. The whole purpose of a split routine, after all, is to enable you to train each body part with greater intensity while at the same time giving it more time to recuperate from the added workload. And that's exactly what happens here: You train each body part harder and at the same time allow greater recuperation time.

Split-routine training is a specialized bodybuilding concept that answers the specific requirements of more advanced bodybuilders who need to train with greater intensity yet not overtax their overall capacity. For less experienced bodybuilders whose training intensity and total workloads are relatively low, a full-body routine is the best choice, but as trainees progress and the number of sets and exercises and the training intensity increase, continuing on a full-body program would make each workout so long and strenuous, it would take a lot of the fun out of training. Moreover, the intensity level would be too low to achieve maximum progress.

The answer to this problem is split training, which appeared on the bodybuilding scene in the early 1950s, as far as I know. I think Reg Park and I were the first ones to use this approach. Although Reg lived in England at that time and I lived in the United States, we used to collaborate a lot by long-distance telephone calls and letters. In some respects we were working as training partners on separate continents.

At that time it was not uncommon for us to do as many as 20 sets per muscle group. Imagine doing 20 sets per body part in a full-body routine! It got to the point where we just didn't have enough energy or time to do a full-body workout with that volume and intensity. We'd just run out of gas - mentally and physically - spending five to six hours in the gym several days a week attempting to train the whole body.

So we started breaking the workouts up into different muscle groups, and that's how the split concept evolved. Today, of course, all advanced bodybuilders follow this approach, but back then it was something entirely new. Nowadays it's virtually unheard of for a serious, advanced-level bodybuilder to train his or her entire body in a given workout.

This month I am adding another new concept to the program - specifically, a variable-reps approach on most of the exercises. The purpose of using a 10-8-6-10 pattern is to add variety, versatility and intensity to your training. So there are psychological and physiological reasons for trying this approach. For instance, you can increase the intensity tremendously by pyramiding up in weight as the reps decrease from set to set-10, 8, 6-and then, when you go back up to 10 reps with a lighter weight on the final set, you can get more blood flowing back into the muscle to flush it out.

Believe me, you will definitely recognize a significant change in how your body responds and feels when you use this approach compared to, say, doing four sets of eight reps or four sets of 10. In fact, this approach will be such a radical change, your body will need a month or two to acclimate to it. So even if everything else in this training program were to stay the same, your body would respond simply because the rep scheme is so different from what you have been doing.

When using a rep sequence such as this, ideally you should pyramid up in weight as discussed above. For instance, if you do 100 pounds on an exercise for 10 reps, you should theoretically be able to do 110 pounds for eight reps and 120 for six reps - or if you are working a smaller muscle group, you might go up in five-pound increments. To finish off, if you really want to put forth some effort on the last set, you might go back to the original 100 pounds for 10 reps. you are likely to find that ungodly difficult to do, however, because you have pre-exhausted the muscle by using increasingly heavier weights on the previous sets. Consequently, you may have your hands more than full trying to do 10 reps with the original weight on the last set.

A word of caution: While I recommend that you take advantage of this variable rep scheme to increase the intensity and therefore the training benefits of each exercise, I want to remind you that my standard guideline, which I've repeated month after month, still holds: Do not train to failure.

Finally, you will notice that many of this month's exercises are ones you have done before in this program. In other words, I've simply recycled and rearranged many of them. When you think about it, that's what any good exercise regimen really is - a constant rearrangement of exercises and routines.

Medical Warning and Disclaimer: Please get a physical before starting any of the programs at billpearl.com, especially if you are overweight, have not exercised for a while, have had any health problems or if there is any history of health problems. We also recommend that you then visit your doctor on a regular basis while training and report any problems to your doctor.

Should any exercises in these routines be uncomfortable or dangerous to do because of some sort of physical impairment you have, please substitute another exercise for the same body part which will not aggravate the condition. There is a tremendous variety of exercises available for any body part, as you know if you have seen or read my book, Keys to the Inner Universe, so there's absolutely no reason to be doing some particular exercise that aggravates a back problem, a weak knee or whatever condition you may have simply because you see it in a workout routine somebody put together.

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Workout A

Exercise	Sets	Reps
1) Over-a-Bench Sit-Up - Upper Abdominals	1	25-50
2) Dumbbell Side Bend - Obliques	1	25-50 each side
3) Flat Bench Weighted Leg Raise - Lower Abdominals	1	25-50
4) Barbell Good Morning - Lower Back and Abdominals	1	25-50
5) Incline Lateral - Upper Pectorals	4	10,8,6,10
6) Medium-Grip Bench Press - Chest	4	10,8,6,10
7) Decline Lateral - Lower Pectorals	4	10,8,6,10
8) Close-Grip Front Lat Pull-Down - Lower Lats	4	10,8,6,10
9) Straight-Arm Dumbbell Pullover - Pectorals and Rib Cage	4	10,8,6,10
10) Standard Bent-Over Two-Arm Long Bar Rowing - Upper Back and Lower Lats	4	10,8,6,10
11) Bent-Over Low-Pulley Rear Deltoid Raise - Rear Deltoids	4	10,8,6,10 each side
12) Standing Military Press - Front and Outer Deltoids	4	10,8,6,10
13) Seated Side Lateral - Deltoids	4	10,8,6,10
14) Seated Palms-Up Barbell Wrist Curl - Outside Forearms	4	10,8,6,10
15) Toe Raise on Seated Calf Machine - Main Calf Muscles	4	10,8,6,10

1) Over-a-Bench Sit-Up - Upper Abdominals

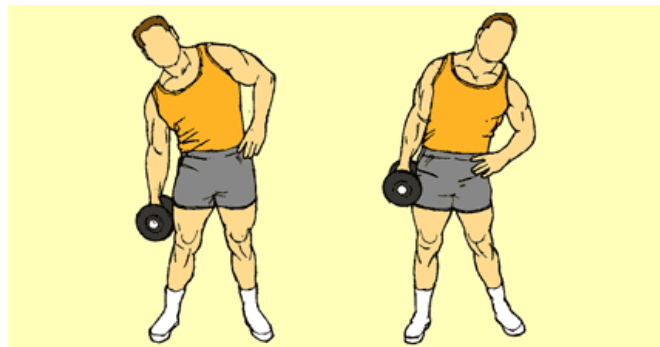
- Sit on bench.
- Put feet under something to support body.
- Keep knees slightly bent.
- Bend back and down until you are just below parallel to floor.
- Return to starting position.

- Inhale down, exhale up.
- To make harder, hold light weight on chest.



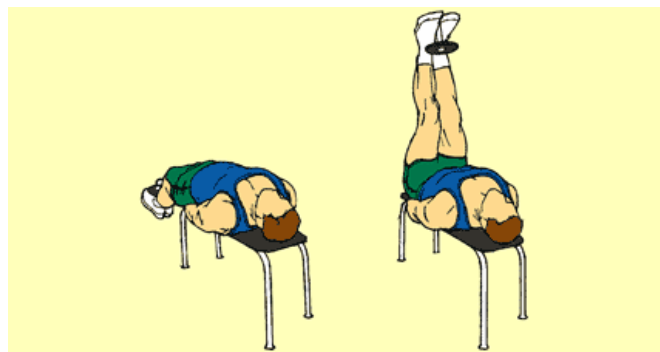
2) Dumbbell Side Bend - Obliques

- Stand erect, feet 16" apart.
- Hold a dumbbell in your right hand, palms in.
- Place left hand on waist.
- Keep back straight.
- Bend to right as far as possible, then bend to left as far as possible.
- Change weight to left hand and repeat movement.
- Bend at waist only, not at hips or knees.
- Inhale to right, exhale to left.
- Can be done with free hand on side of head.



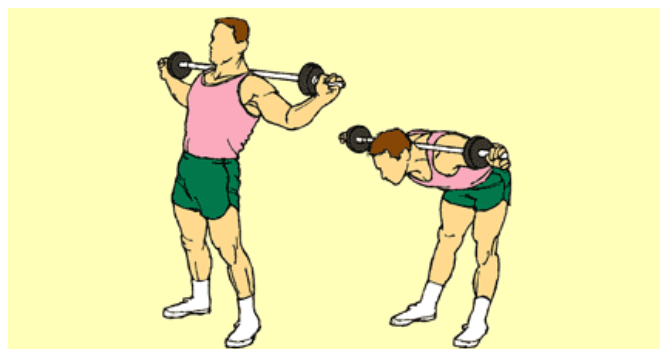
3) Flat Bench Weighted Leg Raise - Lower Abdominals

- Place a light dumbbell between your feet and lie on a flat bench with your legs off the end of the bench.
- Place your hands under your buttocks with your palms facing down.
- Keep your legs straight and your knees locked out.
- Inhale and raise your legs to a vertical position over your hips.
- Let your legs down until they are about three inches off the floor and exhale..



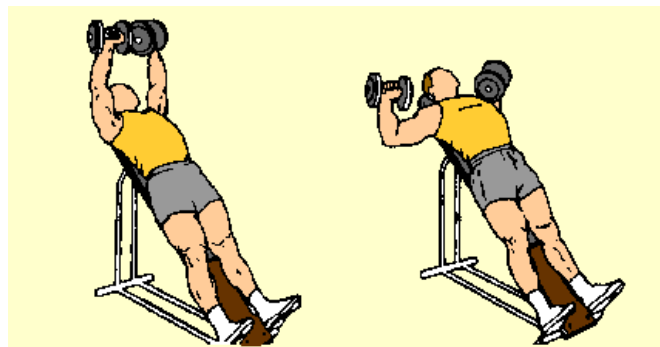
4) Barbell Good Morning - Lower Back and Abdominals

- Stand erect, feet 16" apart.
- Place light barbell on shoulders.
- Keep back straight, head up.
- Bend forward until upper body is parallel to floor.
- Return to the starting position.
- Keep knees locked.
- Inhale down, exhale up.



5) Incline Lateral - Upper Pectorals

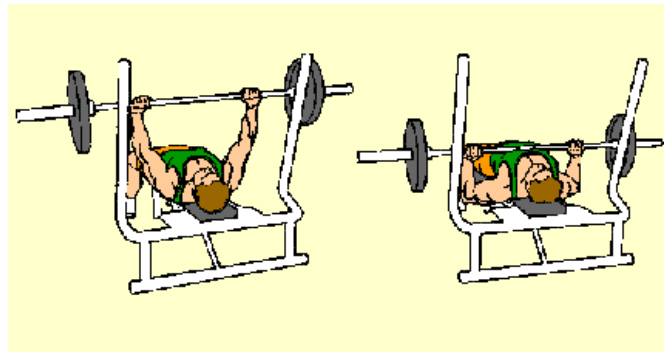
- Lie on incline bench.
- Hold dumbbells together at arms' length above shoulders, palms forward.
- Slowly lower dumbbells to chest until 10" from each side of chest.
- Elbows in line with ears.
- Forearms slightly out of vertical position.
- Return to starting position using same path.
- Inhale down, exhale up.



6) Medium-Grip Bench Press - Chest

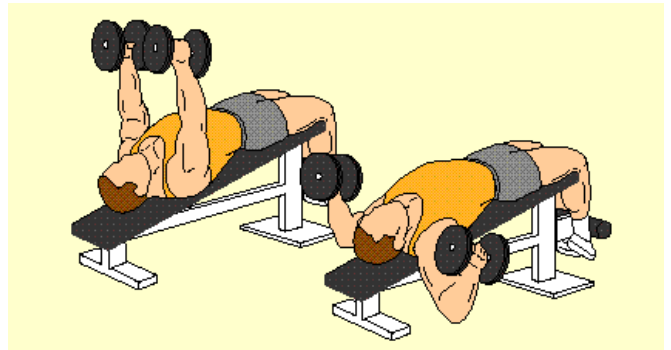
- Lie on your back on a bench with your feet flat on the floor.

- Hold a barbell over your chest with a grip that's about six inches wider than shoulder width.
- Lower the bar to your chest and touch about one inch below your nipples.
- Push the bar to arm's length.
- Keep your elbows out and your chest high.
- Lower the weight with complete control and pause at your chest.
- Keep your head on the bench, and don't arch your back too sharply.
- Don't raise your hips off the bench.



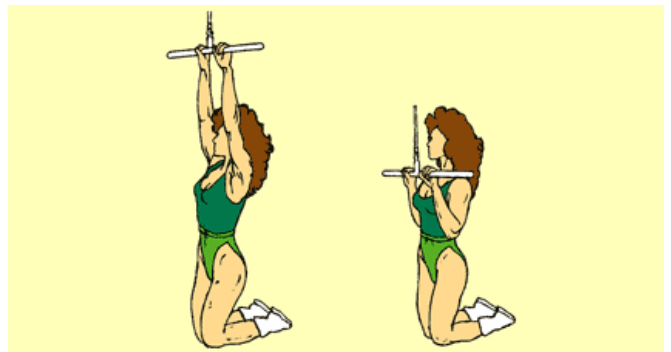
7) Decline Lateral - Lower Pectorals

- Lie on a decline bench with two dumbbells together at arm's length above the shoulders.
- The palms of the hands should be facing each other.
- Slowly lower the dumbbells to the down position so the dumbbells are approximately even with the chest but out about 10" from each side of the chest.
- Notice that the elbows are drawn downwards and back so they are in line with the ears.
- The forearms are slightly out of a vertical position.
- The press back to starting position is done by using the same arc as in letting the dumbbells down.
- Inhale at the beginning of the exercise and exhale at the finish.



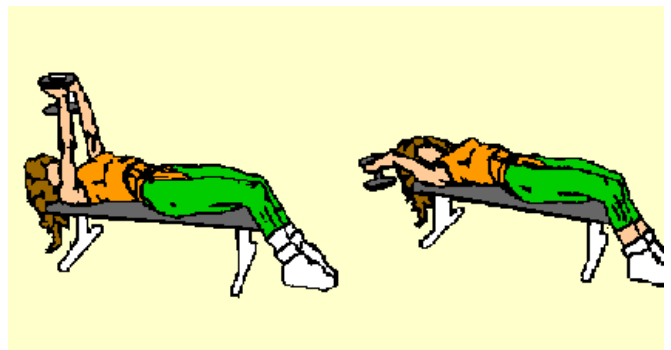
8) Close-Grip Front Lat Pull-Down - Lower Lats

- Hold bar with hands about 8" apart.
- Kneel down far enough to support weights with arms extended overhead.
- Pull bar straight down until even with upper chest.
- Return to starting position.
- Inhale down, exhale up.
- Can also be done with medium grip.



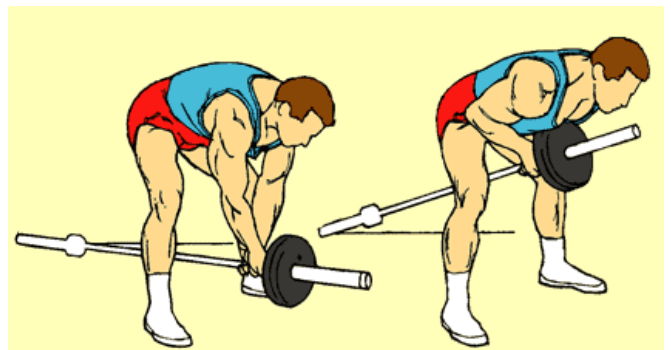
9) Straight-Arm Dumbbell Pullover - Pectorals and Rib Cage

- Lie on a flat bench with your head extending over the end and your feet flat on floor, straddling the bench.
- Hold a dumbbell at arm's length above your chest. Your hands should be flat against the inside plate of the dumbbell.
- Keep your elbows locked and lower the dumbbell in a semicircular motion behind your head as far as possible without causing pain.
- Return the dumbbell to the starting position.
- Breathe deeply, keeping your head down and your chest high.



10) Standard Bent-Over Two-Arm Long Bar Rowing - Upper Back and Lower Lats

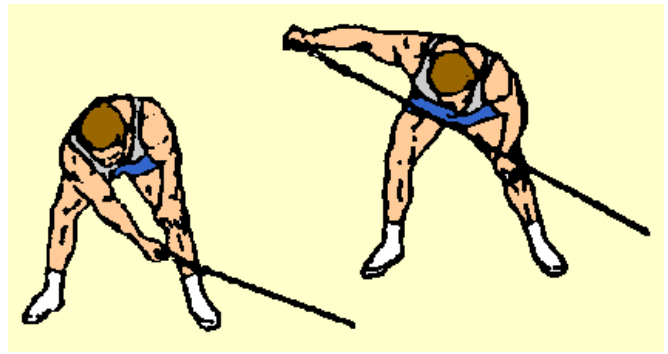
- Place empty barbell bar in a corner or against something.
- Put weights on other end of bar.
- Straddle bar and bend forward until torso is parallel to floor.
- Keep knees slightly bent.
- Hold bar just behind plates with both hands.
- Pull bar straight up, elbows in, until plates touch chest.
- Lower bar to starting position.
- Inhale up, exhale down.
- Do not let plates touch floor during exercise.
- Keep back straight.



11) Bent-Over Low-Pulley Rear Deltoid Raise - Rear Deltoids

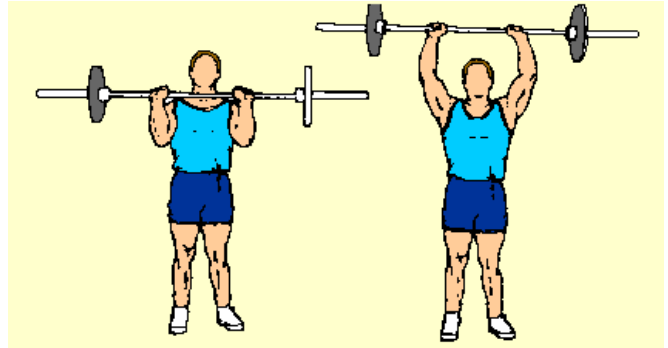
- Stand with left side facing wall pulley.

- Hold bottom handle of pulley with right hand.
- Stand erect, far enough from machine to create tension on cable.
- Bend until torso is nearly parallel to floor.
- Place left hand on left thigh just above knee.
- Keep right elbow locked, arm straight.
- Pull weight up and out in semicircular motion until right hand is as high as shoulder, in line with ear.
- Inhale up, exhale down.
- Reverse position and repeat with left arm.



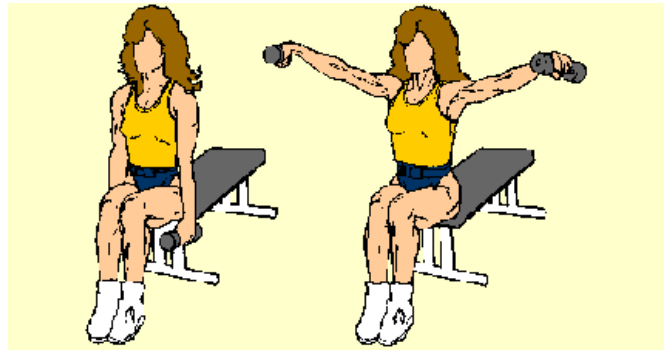
12) Standing Military Press - Front and Outer Deltoids

- Raise barbell to chest, hands shoulder width apart.
- Lock legs and hips solidly.
- Keep elbows in, slightly under bar.
- Press bar to arms' length overhead.
- Lower to upper chest.
- Be sure bar rests on chest and is not supported by arms between reps.
- Hold chest high.
- Inhale up, exhale down.



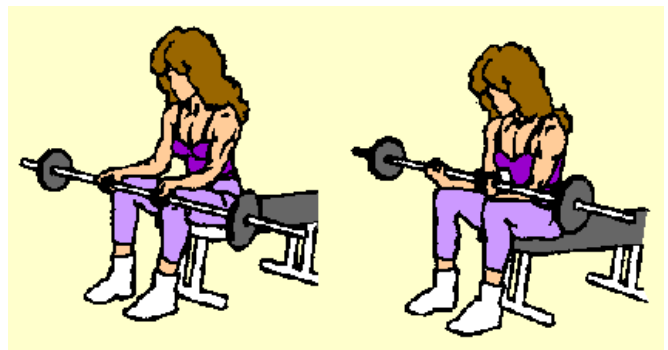
13) Seated Side Lateral - Deltoids

- Sit at the end of a flat bench with your feet firmly on the floor and a dumbbell in each hand, with your hands hanging down at your sides and your palms facing in.
- Inhale and maintain a slight bend in your arms as you exhale and raise the dumbbells out in a semicircle until they're slightly above shoulder level.
- Pause at top, then inhale as you lower the dumbbells to the starting position.
- Return the dumbbell to the starting position.
- You can also do this exercise standing.



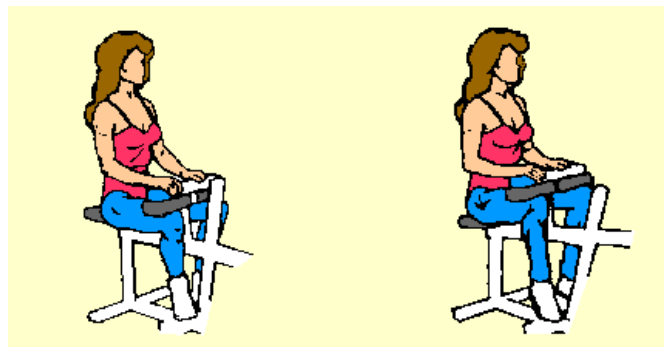
14) Seated Palms-Up Barbell Wrist Curl - Outside Forearms

- Hold barbell with both hands, palms up, hands 16" apart.
- Sit at end of bench, feet on floor about 20" apart.
- Lean forward, place forearms on upper thighs.
- Place backs of wrists over knees.
- Lower bar as far as possible, keeping tight grip.
- Curl bar as high as possible.
- Do not let forearms raise up.
- Inhale up, exhale down.



15) Toe Raise on Seated Calf Machine - Main Calf Muscles

- Sit on seat of machine.
- Place upper thighs under leg pad just above knees.
- Raise up on toes and release safety stop.
- Lower heels to lowest possible comfortable position.
- Raise up on toes as high as possible.
- Hold momentarily, then return to starting position.
- Inhale up, exhale down.



Workout B

Exercise

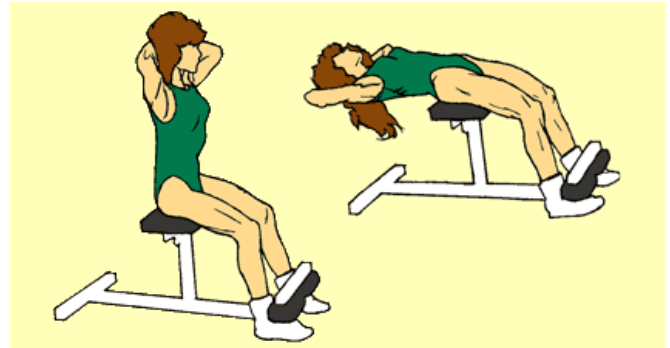
Sets

Reps

1) Over-a-Bench Sit-Up - Upper Abdominals	1	25-50
2) Dumbbell Side Bend - Obliques	1	25-50 each side
3) Flat Bench Weighted Leg Raise - Lower Abdominals	1	25-50
4) Barbell Good Morning - Lower Back and Abdominals	1	25-50
5) Thigh Extension on Leg Extension Machine - Lower Thighs	4	12,10,8,12
6) Thigh Biceps Curl on Leg Extension Machine - Hamstrings	4	12,10,8,12
7) Medium-Stance Hack Machine Squat - Upper Thighs	4	12,10,8,12
8) Standing Close-Grip Triceps Press-Down on Lat Machine - Outer Triceps	4	10,8,6,10
9) Incline Close-Grip EZ-Curl-Bar Triceps Curl - Triceps	4	10,8,6,10
10) Head-Supported Triceps Extension - Triceps	4	10,8,6,10
11) Standing Alternated Dumbbell Curl - Biceps	4	10,8,6,10 each side
12) Standing Close-Grip EZ-Curl-Bar Curl - Outer Biceps	4	10,8,6,10
13) Incline Alternate Dumbbell Curl - Biceps	4	10,8,6,10 each side
14) Seated Palms-Down Barbell Wrist Curl - Inside Forearms	5	20
15) Toe Raise on Seated Calf Machine - Main Calf Muscles	5	20-25

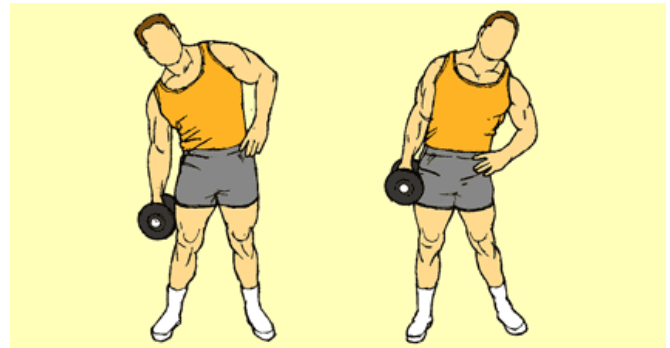
1) Over-a-Bench Sit-Up - Upper Abdominals

- Sit on bench.
- Put feet under something to support body.
- Keep knees slightly bent.
- Bend back and down until you are just below parallel to floor.
- Return to starting position.
- Inhale down, exhale up.
- To make harder, hold light weight on chest.



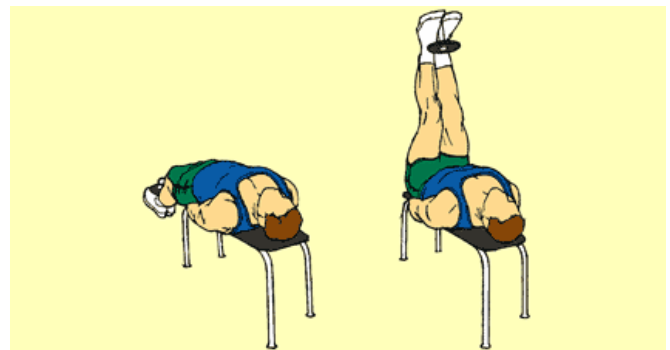
2) Dumbbell Side Bend - Obliques

- Stand erect, feet 16" apart.
- Hold a dumbbell in your right hand, palms in.
- Place left hand on waist.
- Keep back straight.
- Bend to right as far as possible, then bend to left as far as possible.
- Change weight to left hand and repeat movement.
- Bend at waist only, not at hips or knees.
- Inhale to right, exhale to left.
- Can be done with free hand on side of head.



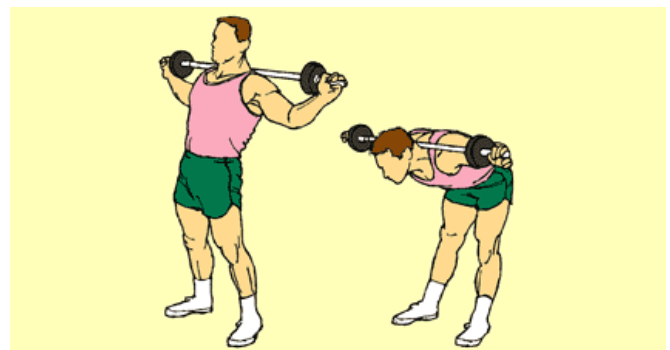
3) Flat Bench Weighted Leg Raise - Lower Abdominals

- Place a light dumbbell between your feet and lie on a flat bench with your legs off the end of the bench.
- Place your hands under your buttocks with your palms facing down.
- Keep your legs straight and your knees locked out.
- Inhale and raise your legs to a vertical position over your hips.
- Let your legs down until they are about three inches off the floor and exhale..



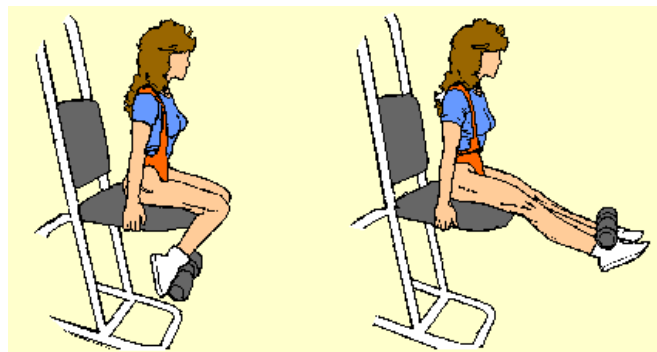
4) Barbell Good Morning - Lower Back and Abdominals

- Stand erect, feet 16" apart.
- Place light barbell on shoulders.
- Keep back straight, head up.
- Bend forward until upper body is parallel to floor.
- Return to the starting position.
- Keep knees locked.
- Inhale down, exhale up.

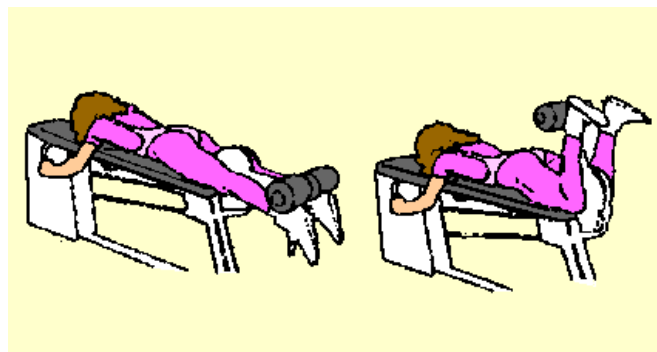


5) Thigh Extension on Leg Extension Machine - Lower Thighs

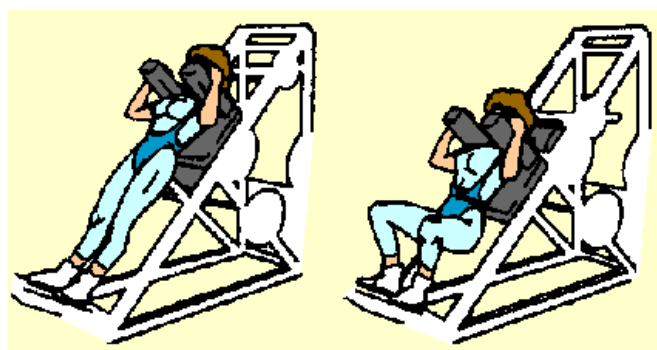
- Sit on machine with feet under lower foot pads as shown.
- Have seat against back of knees.
- Hold seat behind buttocks.
- Point toes slightly down.
- Raise weight up until legs are parallel to floor.
- Return to starting position.
- Inhale up, exhale down.

**6) Thigh Biceps Curl on Leg Extension Machine - Hamstrings**

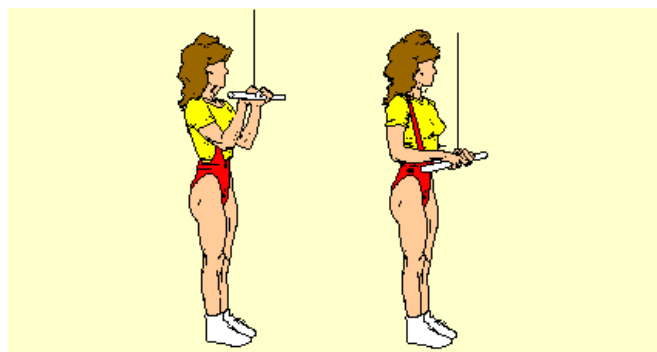
- Lie face down on machine.
- Place heels under top foot pad.
- Hold front of machine for support.
- Curl legs up until calves touch biceps.
- Return to starting position.
- Inhale up, exhale down.

**7) Medium-Stance Hack Machine Squat - Upper Thighs**

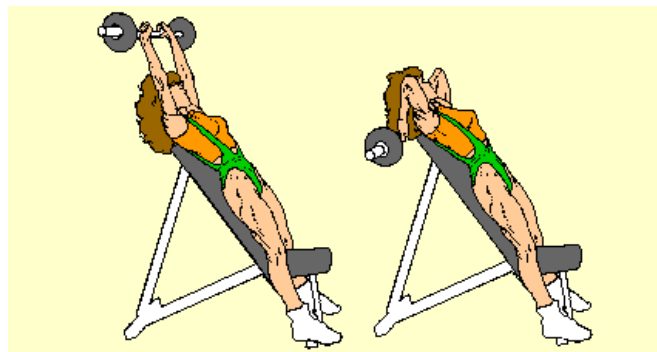
- Back in machine.
- Place shoulders under pads.
- Plant feet on slanted platform about 14" apart.
- Stand erect, head up, back straight.
- Release safety stops.
- Squat until upper thighs are parallel to machine.
- Keep head up, back straight, knees pointing out.
- Return to starting position.
- Inhale down, exhale up.
- Can also be done with close or wide stance or to half-squat position.

**8) Standing Close-Grip Triceps Press-Down on Lat Machine - Outer Triceps**

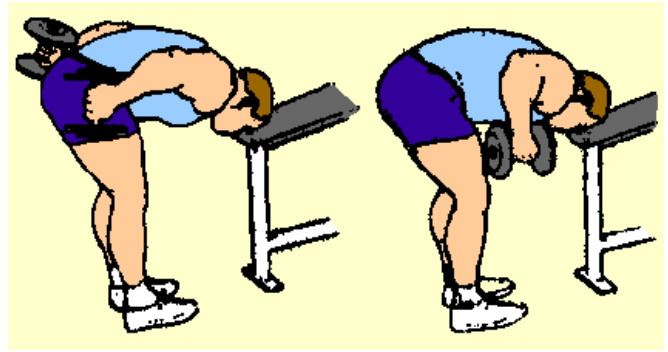
- Stand erect, head up, feet 16" apart, in front of machine.
- Hold bar with hands 8" apart, palms down.
- Bring upper arms to sides and keep them there.
- Start with forearms and biceps touching.
- Press bar down in semicircular motion to arms' length.
- Return to starting position.
- Inhale down, exhale up.
- Can also be done with medium or reverse grip.

**9) Incline Close-Grip EZ-Curl-Bar Triceps Curl - Triceps**

- Use closest hand grip spacing possible on EZ-Curl-Bar, palms down.
- Lie back on incline bench, with head over end.
- Press bar overhead to arms' length.
- Lower bar in semicircular motion behind head until forearms touch biceps.
- Keep upper arms close to head.
- Return to starting position.
- Inhale down, exhale up.
- Can also be done seated on incline bench.
- Can also be done with medium grip.

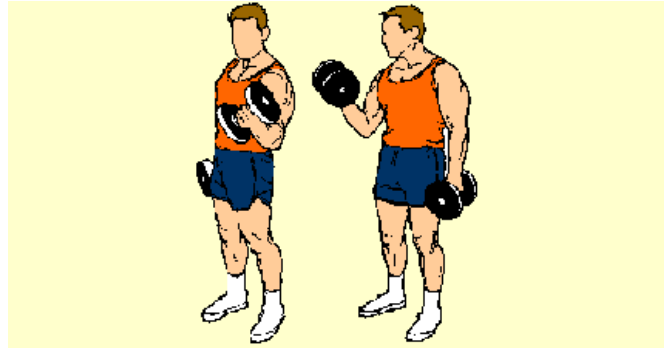
**10) Head-Supported Triceps Extension - Triceps**

- Hold a dumbbell in each hand with your palms facing in.
- Bend at the waist until your upper body is parallel with the floor and place your forehead on a comfortable object to help support your upper body during the exercise.
- Draw your upper arms to your sides and keep your lower arms vertical.
- Inhale and press the dumbbells back in a semicircular motion until your arms are parallel with the floor.
- Hold the dumbbells at the top position for a short period to contract the triceps muscles and then slowly lower the weights back to starting position and exhale.



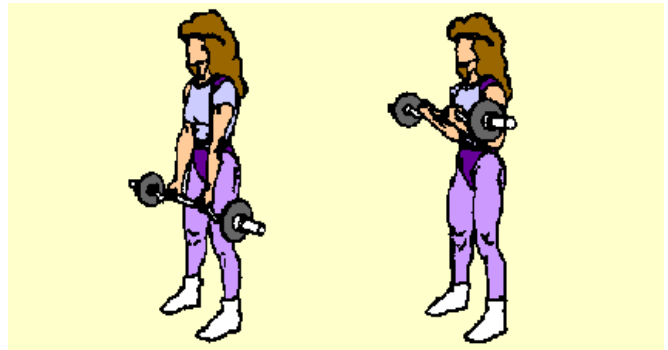
11) Standing Alternated Dumbbell Curl - Biceps

- Hold dumbbells.
- Stand erect, feet 16" apart.
- Keep back straight, head up, hips and legs locked.
- Start with dumbbells at arms' length, palms in.
- Curl dumbbell in right hand with palm in until past thigh, then palm up for remainder of curl to shoulder height.
- Keep palm up while lowering until past thigh, then turn palm in.
- Keep upper arm close to side.
- Do a repetition with right arm, then curl left arm.
- Inhale up, exhale down.
- Can also be done seated on flat bench or seated incline bench.



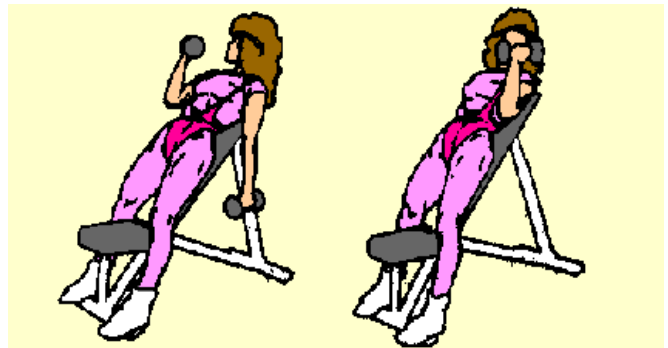
12) Standing Close-Grip EZ-Curl-Bar Curl - Outer Biceps

- Hold EZ-Curl-Bar with both hands on first curves or bar, palms up.
- Stand with legs slightly spread, knees locked.
- Hold bar at arms' length against upper thighs.
- Curl bar up in semicircular motion until forearms touch biceps.
- Keep upper arms against sides.
- Return to starting position using same path.
- Inhale up, exhale down.



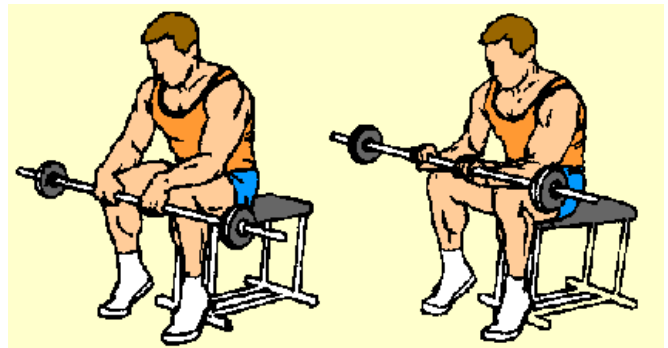
13) Incline Alternate Dumbbell Curl - Biceps

- Hold dumbbells.
- Lie back on incline bench.
- Start with dumbbells at arms' length, palms in.
- Curl dumbbell in right hand with palm in until past thigh, then turn palm up for remainder of curl to shoulder height.
- Keep palm up while lowering until past thigh, then turn palm in.
- Keep upper arms close to sides.
- Do a repetition with right arm, then curl left arm.
- Inhale up, exhale down.



14) Seated Palms-Down Barbell Wrist Curl - Inside Forearms

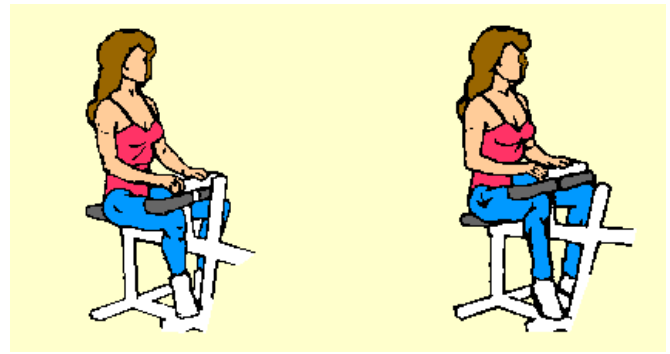
- Hold barbell with both hands, palms down, hands 16" apart.
- Sit at end of bench, feet on floor about 20" apart.
- Lean forward, place forearms on upper thighs.
- Place wrists over knees.
- Lower bar as far as possible, keeping tight grip.
- Curl bar as high as possible.
- Do not let forearms raise up.
- Inhale up, exhale down.



15) Toe Raise on Seated Calf Machine - Main Calf Muscles

- Sit on seat of machine.

- Place upper thighs under leg pad just above knees.
- Raise up on toes and release safety stop.
- Lower heels to lowest possible comfortable position.
- Raise up on toes as high as possible.
- Hold momentarily, then return to starting position.
- Inhale up, exhale down.



Training Suggestions for Month 11

- In months to come on this split system of training, you'll be building up to five and then six workouts per week. This month, however, I recommend that you train four times a week, doing the chest-back-shoulders workout on Monday and Thursday and the legs-triceps-biceps workout on Tuesday and Friday, with Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday as rest days.
- On the midsection exercises start with the minimum number of reps indicated for the first week and gradually add repetitions as the weeks go by until you reach the top of the range.
- **Do not train to failure.** The last rep of each set should feel difficult but should not be an all-out effort.
- Increase the poundages on each exercise as your strength increases, always concentrate on correct exercise form, and keep accurate records of your exercises, sets and reps from workout to workout so you can easily monitor your progress.
- Do 20 to 30 minutes of aerobic conditioning in addition to your weight-training program three days per week.

Do Not Train to Failure

People ask me why I don't believe in training to failure at a time when the popular notion in bodybuilding is that the only way to make maximum progress is to always go for that last impossible rep (in other words, train to failure). I tell them the answer is quite simple: If you do a workout of, say, nine exercises, three sets per exercise, and in each set you go to failure, which means you couldn't complete the last rep, what you have done in these 27 sets is trained yourself to fail 27 times! That doesn't sound like success in my book.

My approach to training has always been to push yourself in your workouts, but do not train to failure! The last rep should be difficult, but not impossible or unachievable. And I've always been a great believer that you should leave the gym each day feeling like you had a great workout but you've still got a little bit left in the gas tank, so to speak. Because if you don't leave the gym with the feeling of having something in reserve, you will sooner or later reach a point where your training begins to seem so hellish and burdensome, you will either start missing workouts or stop training altogether. And then where is your progress?

So speaking from experience, I urge you: Train hard, yes, but not to failure. Complete what you start -- and that means every rep. I believe that this approach will not only ensure that you'll stay with your training program year after year (obviously training longevity is a very important aspect of all of this) but you'll also make the greatest progress. Why? Because you'll be training yourself for success in each and every rep, set and workout. Your training will be a positive rather than negative experience. And you'll be much more likely to keep your enthusiasm high and to avoid injury, overtraining and mental burnout.

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Editor's Note: Bill Pearl, 84, is a five-time Mr. Universe and author of the best-selling bodybuilding books, **Keys to the Inner Universe**, **Getting Stronger**, and **Getting in Shape**. He has personally coached more major contest winners than anyone else in history. At his own peak as a bodybuilder when he last won the Universe in 1971 at age 41, he weighed 242 pounds at a height of 5'10" and his arms measured 21 inches!

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