



BICEPS WORKOUT GUIDE

**MUSCLE
& FITNESS**

THIS BEGINNER BICEPS ROUTINE

is built around three can't-miss movements. If you want big bi's, you'll want to get familiar with these moves and keep them close at hand as you build your arm-training arsenal.

➤➤ In all your biceps exercises, do your best to eliminate momentum. Don't rock your body forward to initiate a rep, and don't swing the weights up.

➤➤ This workout also includes forearms; building strength in your forearms helps on numerous other exercises, especially back moves. Ideally, you should continue to train forearms for as long as you weight-train.

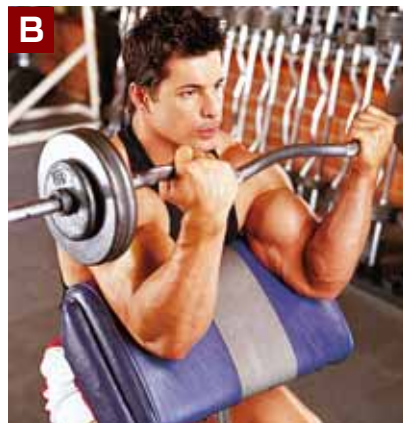
#53

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Standing Barbell Curl	3	12, 10, 10
EZ-Bar Preacher Curl	2	10
Alternate Incline Dumbbell Curl	2	10
Forearms:		
Reverse Wrist Curl	1	12
Wrist Curl	1	12

STANDING BARBELL CURL

START: With your knees slightly bent and your feet about hip-width apart, grasp a barbell with a shoulder-width, underhand grip. Let the bar hang to your thighs. Keep your abs pulled in and your elbows stationary.

MOVE: Without swaying, slowly curl the bar in an arc toward your shoulders as you exhale. Pause at the top of the movement, squeeze your biceps and slowly lower the bar almost to the start. Don't lift the bar completely to your shoulders, and don't let it touch your thighs at the bottom in order to keep continuous tension on the biceps.



EZ-BAR PREACHER CURL

START: Position the seat height so your armpits are flush against the pad. Place your feet forward to help stabilize your body, and grasp the EZ-bar with an underhand grip so your little fingers are higher than your thumbs (your palms supinate out). This helps keep your elbows in and better isolates the lower biceps.

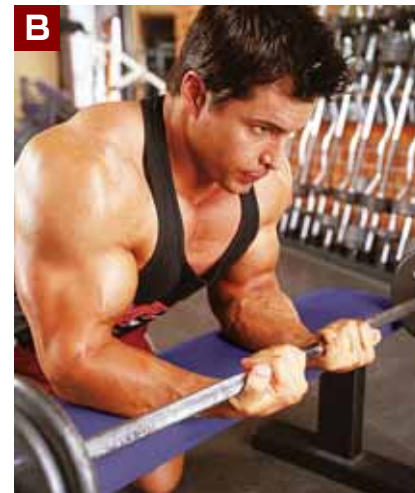
MOVE: Slowly raise the bar to shoulder level, pause and squeeze your biceps, then lower the bar to just short of elbow lockout.



ALTERNATE INCLINE DUMBBELL CURL

START: Set an incline bench to about a 45-degree angle. With a dumbbell in each hand and using a neutral grip (palms facing each other), let your arms hang straight down below your shoulders.

MOVE: Keeping your elbow still, slowly bring your right hand up, turning your hand as you lift so your palm faces your shoulder. Pause and squeeze the biceps at the top, then lower the weight slowly to the start. Repeat with your left hand to complete one rep.



REVERSE WRIST CURL AND WRIST CURL

START: Grasp a straight bar with an overhand grip, hands about 10 inches apart. Kneel on the floor along one side of a flat bench. With your forearms on the bench, let your hands and wrists hang over the edge.

MOVE: Curl your hands up as high as possible, then lower the weight to the start position. To maximise your range of motion, keep your thumbs on the underside of the bar. Repeat for reps, then use an underhand grip with your hands about 4 inches apart (thumbs under the bar) and perform the same movement.



WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE TIME ON your side, the cable apparatus can be your best friend. Easy to use and adjust, and with myriad options built in, cables can provide a rock-solid workout.

➤➤ The high-cable curl is basically a double-biceps posing shot against resistance. Take advantage of the feel of this by squeezing your biceps hard as you slowly approach the peak of every rep. Done quickly and ballistically, you won't get much from this, but if you take the time to do it deliberately, the pump can be unbelievable.

➤➤ The three different grips used in this routine (palms up, palms facing and palms down) attack your arms from three important angles.

#54

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Two-Arm High-Cable Curl	3	10
Standing Cable Curl With Rope	2	10-5-5 To failure*
Reverse EZ-Bar Curl	3	10, 8, 6**

* Each of the two sets is a drop set. Do 10 reps, drop the weight, do 5, drop the weight, do 5, drop one more time and go to failure on the last drop. Don't rest between drops; rest one minute before starting the second set. The second time through, you'll use less weight for each set.

** Pyramid up the weight each set.



TWO-ARM HIGH-CABLE CURL

START: Stand between two cable stations, gripping stirrup handles attached to the upper pulleys. Your body looks like a perfect T in the starting position.

MOVE: Curling the handles in, supinate your forearms slightly so that your little fingers, rather than your knuckles, come closest to your ears, and squeeze your biceps hard before fully extending your arms back to the start.

STANDING CABLE CURL WITH ROPE

START: Grasp a rope handle attached to the low pulley of a cable machine, with your palms neutral, knees slightly bent and feet shoulder-width apart. Grab the rope right at its ends, not higher up, to ensure that you can perform the exercise through a full range of motion.

MOVE: Flex your arms and bend your elbows powerfully, keeping them stationary at your sides as you do so. Bring your hands all the way up to your shoulders (as close as you can without shifting your elbows forward) and pause for a second at the top. Lower the rope, stopping short of fully extending your arms to keep constant tension on the muscles, and go right into the next repetition.



REVERSE EZ-BAR CURL

START: Take a shoulder-width stance, knees slightly bent and back straight, and grasp an EZ-bar with an overhand grip. (In the photo shown, the athlete's thumbs aren't wrapped around the bar, but for better safety and control we recommend that you do put your thumbs under the bar.)

MOVE: Curl the weight up, contracting forcefully at the top, then lower the bar under control to a point just shy of full extension, maintaining tension in your arms. As shown in the photo to the left, if you have one handy, a spotter can help you through a few forced reps at the end of a set when you can't complete another rep with good control on your own.

BICEPS

AT HOME

A LITTLE CREATIVITY CAN GO A

long way when you work bi's at home. With a few twists to some old favourites, this routine packs a huge punch and is worthy of home or gym use.

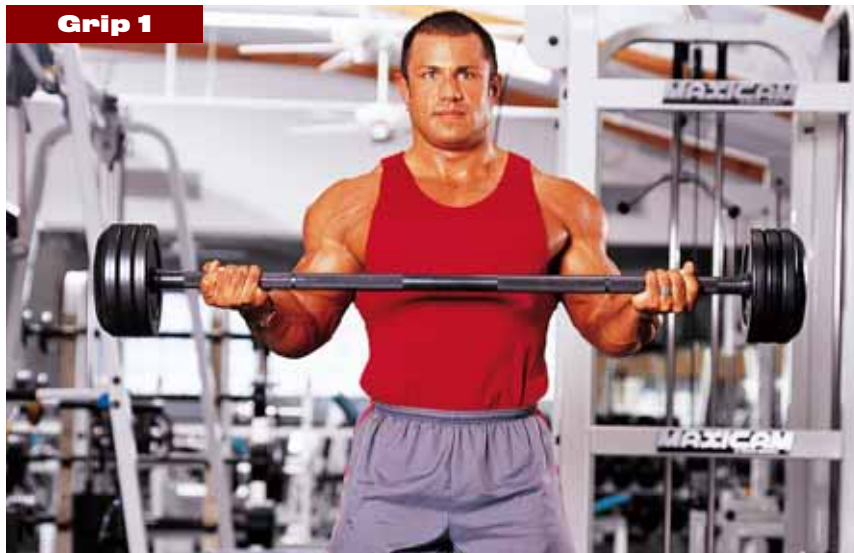
➤➤ The basic movement of any biceps exercise is a curl, but there are two significant ways you can alter your attack for complete development. One is through different grips (for instance, the three underhand grips of the first exercise, or the palms-facing grip of the hammer curl); and the other is through putting your biceps on stretch, as in the incline curl, which can lead to a stronger contraction during the lifting phase of the rep.

#55

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
3-Grip Barbell Curl	3	6 per grip per set
Seated Barbell Curl	3	8, 6, 6*
Dual Dumbbell Hammer Curl	2	10, 8*
Multi-Angle Incline Dumbbell Curl	4**	8-10

* Pyramid up the weight each set.
**Set 1: 30-degree angle; Set 2: 45-degree angle; Set 3: 60-degree angle; Set 4: 90-degree angle.

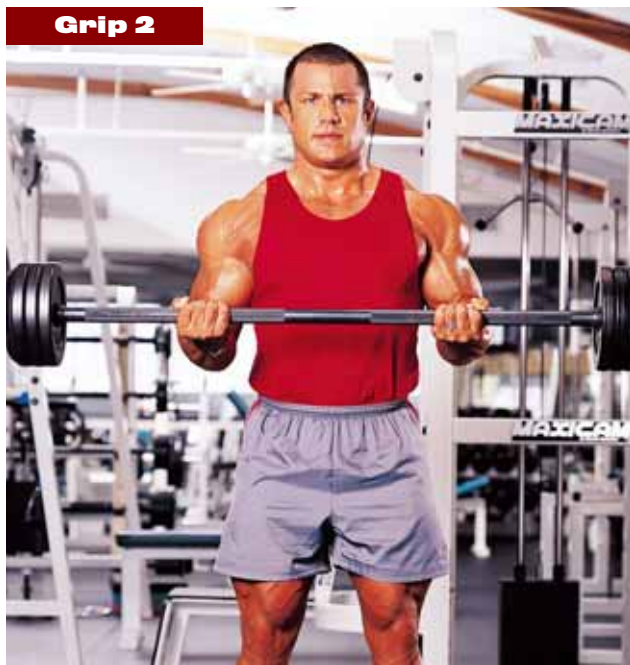
Grip 1



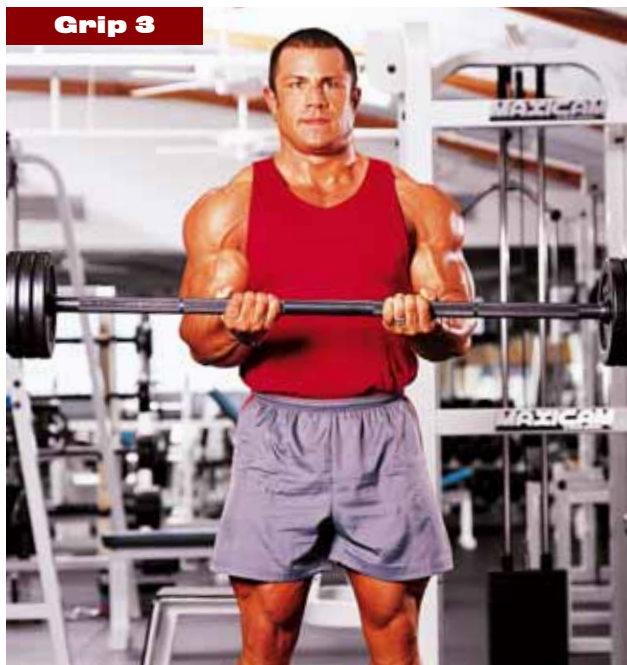
3-GRIP BARBELL CURL

START: Stand upright and grasp a barbell with a slightly wider than shoulder-width, underhand grip.
MOVE: With your elbows fixed at your sides, curl the bar until your forearms are vertical. Lower until your arms are fully extended. Complete 6 reps, rest a minute, then adjust your grip to shoulder-width for 6 more reps. Rest again and adjust so your hands are 4-6 inches apart, and perform 6 reps.

Grip 2



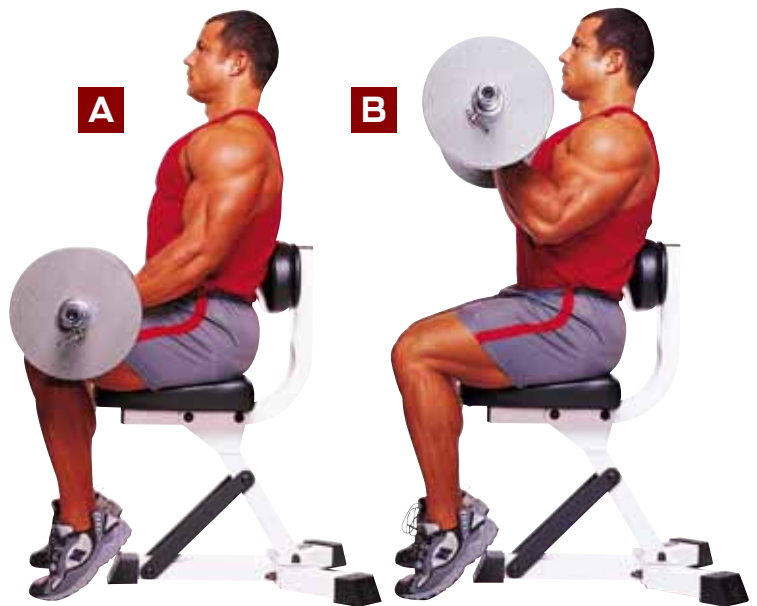
Grip 3



SEATED BARBELL CURL

START: Load a barbell with 10–20 pounds more than you can do for 6–8 reps of regular barbell curls. Sit on a short-back bench or an adjustable bench set to 90 degrees and rest the bar on your thighs.

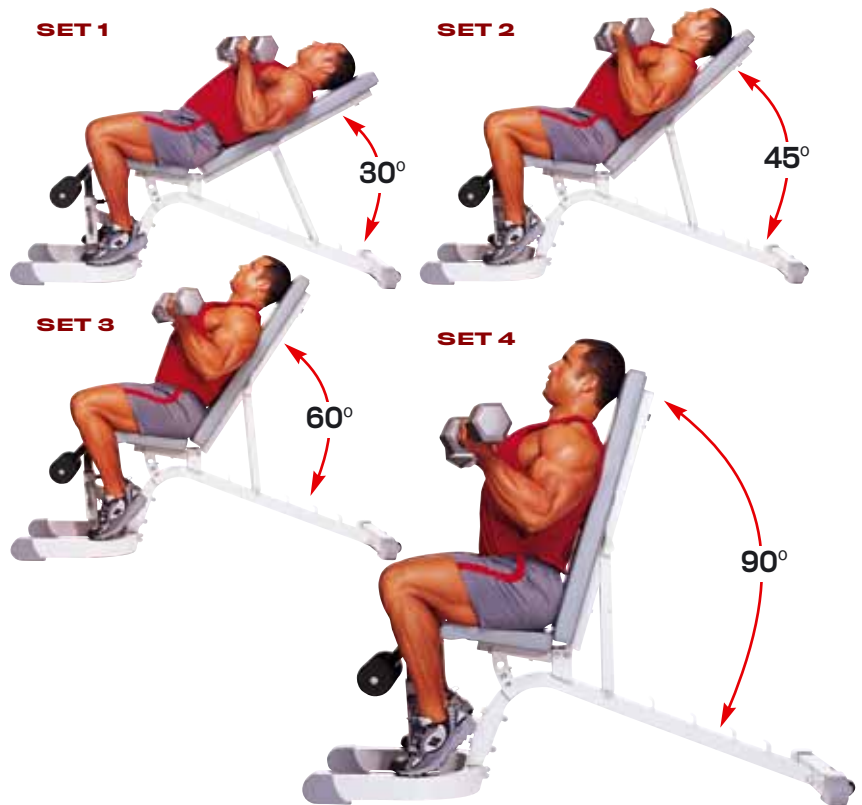
MOVE: With an underhand, shoulder-width grip, curl the weight toward your shoulders, keeping your torso perpendicular to the floor (don't lean back). Slowly lower the weight and repeat. To keep constant tension on your biceps, don't let the bar rest on your thighs between reps. Stop it just before it touches your legs.



DUAL DUMBBELL HAMMER CURL

START: Stand erect, holding a pair of dumbbells by your sides with your palms facing each other.

MOVE: Curl both dumbbells toward your shoulders without turning your wrists or letting your elbows move forward. Extend your elbows to slowly return to the start.



MULTI-ANGLE INCLINE DUMBBELL CURL

START: Grasp a pair of dumbbells and lie back on an incline bench set at about 30 degrees, allowing your arms to hang straight down toward the floor by your sides. Use a neutral grip, with your palms facing in.

MOVE: Keeping your shoulders back and upper arms in a fixed position perpendicular to the floor, lock your elbows at your sides and curl both dumbbells toward your shoulders. Turn your little fingers up and continue to curl until you reach a peak contraction in your biceps. Reverse along the same path and repeat for reps. For subsequent sets, adjust the incline bench to 45, 60 and finally 90 degrees for the fourth set.

YOU CAN COUNT ON IFBB PRO

Mike Matarazzo to give it to you straight. Battling in the pro ranks since 1991, he knows what it takes to build better biceps, starting with the routine here.

➔ Throughout the workout, keep your mind on the task at hand. “Focus on making the muscles as big and strong as possible,” Mike says. “Tune out your surroundings and concentrate solely on the deep contraction of the muscle as you rep.”

SEATED ALTERNATE DUMBBELL CURL

START: Sit at the edge of a flat bench with your arms fully extended and a dumbbell in each hand.

MOVE: Slowly curl one arm up while supinating your wrist. After you lift the weight as high as possible and reach full contraction of the biceps, lower the weight back down, maintaining tension within the muscle all the way. Do the same with the opposite arm, alternating arms for reps. “Your elbows should remain stationary throughout the exercise, eliminating any unwanted help from the shoulders,” Mike recommends.



#56

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Seated Alternate Dumbbell Curl	4	10-12
One-Arm Dumbbell Preacher Curl	4	10-12
Standing EZ-Bar Curl	4	10-12
One-Arm Cable Curl	4	to failure



ONE-ARM DUMBBELL PREACHER CURL

START: Grasp a dumbbell in one hand and place the back of your upper arm flush against the angled side of the preacher-bench pad. Brace yourself with the opposite arm for stability.

MOVE: Lift the weight toward you, keeping your elbow in contact with the pad the entire way. Don't go fast; if you don't feel tension building in your biceps, you're swinging the weight instead of using the muscle to do the work. Once you reach the top — stop just short of your forearm going perpendicular to the floor to maintain tension — lower the weight until your elbow is just short of full extension. Complete one set with that arm and switch to the other.

STANDING EZ-BAR CURL

START: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your knees slightly bent, and grasp an EZ-bar with a hip-width grip.

MOVE: Initiate the movement with both arms fully extended and your elbows tight against your body. As you lift the weight, focus on keeping your elbows near your sides, resisting the urge to flare them out or shift them too far forward or back. After a two-second squeeze at the top, slowly lower the bar to the start position, straightening your arms completely at the bottom.



“Don’t try to impress people by lifting huge amounts of weight,” Mike says. “Pick a weight you can handle and control it.”



ONE-ARM CABLE CURL

START: Stand facing a cable stack and hold a low pulley handle in one hand. Turn your wrist out by shifting your body slightly sideways. Your working arm should still face the weight stack so the movement occurs in a vertical plane, not across your body.

MOVE: Slowly curl the handle up, concentrating solely on your biceps; hold the contraction at the top. For balance and stability, keep a slight bend in your knees and lean in toward the weight stack. “Turning your wrist out at the top will place the emphasis squarely on the biceps, increasing the peak contraction,” Mike says.



FOUR-TIME IRONMAN PRO CHAMPION

Chris Cormier, one of the elite competitors in the pro ranks, boasts a bodybuilding résumé almost as bulky as his arms.

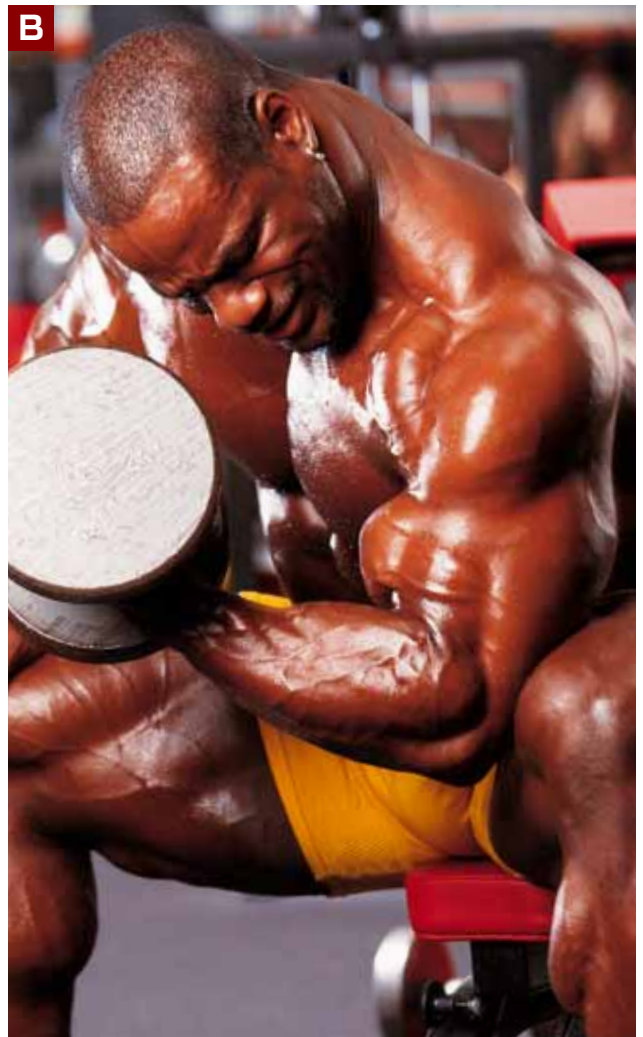
➤➤ When training bi's, Chris goes for the pump. "You need to flush blood into the biceps to get the shape," he says. "I never go lower than eight reps."

➤➤ Chris also "pumps" up the intensity. "I try to make it hard for myself," he says. "Toward the end of a set, when the muscle is fatigued, I start to squeeze the biceps even harder."

#57

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Standing Alternate Dumbbell Curl	2	warm-up
	4	12-15
Machine Curl	4	12-15
Dumbbell Concentration Curl	4	12-15

Chris substitutes other biceps exercises depending on his energy and the availability of equipment, including standing cable curls and one-arm Preacher curls.



DUMBBELL CONCENTRATION CURL

START: Sit at the end of a bench, plant your elbow against your inner thigh and let your arm hang straight down.

MOVE: Using strict form, contract your biceps to curl the dumbbell up, then lower it under control all the way down. "You can also do this standing up like Arnold used to do it, with one arm on the dumbbell rack for support and just letting your working arm hang in the air," Chris says. "The key is to keep the line from your shoulder to your elbow vertical and don't let it swing. I actually do these both ways."



STANDING ALTERNATE DUMBBELL CURL

START: Stand in front of the mirror and hold two dumbbells at your sides, palms facing your sides.

MOVE: Keeping your wrists aligned with your forearms, use a full range of motion as you curl one weight at a controlled tempo to your shoulder. Then lower and repeat with the opposite arm. One curl with both arms equals one rep.

Chris' advice for building a peak? "Go as heavy as you can, but still get those high reps," he says.



MACHINE CURL

START: Sitting in the machine so your arms rest firmly on the horizontal pad, keep your wrists, elbows and delts in straight lines.

MOVE: "When I curl the weight up, it's a very controlled movement," he says. "Try to keep it as strict and hard as possible: Fully extend all the way out to stretch your bi's, then curl up as far as you can and squeeze. Toward the end of my workout, I'll sometimes hold and squeeze for 2-3 seconds, then bring the weight down very slowly."

AARON MADDRON BELIEVES in the maxim of “short, sweet and intense” for his biceps training. “I think it’s a mistake to do too much in one workout,” the IFBB pro states. “If you feel the need to increase your workload, you’re better off training your biceps again later in the week than trying to annihilate them all at once.”

➡➡ He recommends a slow descent on the negative part of each rep, taking 2-3 times as long on the descent as on the ascent.

➡➡ For his working sets, Aaron starts with his heaviest weight for 6-8 reps, then decreases the weight if necessary to still get 6-8 reps in the following set.

TO-THE-FRONT HAMMER CURL

START: Stand holding a pair of dumbbells at your sides, palms facing each other.

MOVE: Curl one of the dumbbells straight up in front of your chest without twisting or bending your wrist. As you approach a fully contracted position, lean slightly into the dumbbell to make sure that your arm and the weight clear your body. After squeezing the muscle hard, lower the weight down slowly. Once that dumbbell reaches a resting position, begin curling with the other arm.



#58

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
To-The-Front Hammer Curl	1 2	warm-up 6-8
Standing Barbell Curl* (or) One-Arm Preacher Curl**	2	6-8
Standing Concentration Curl (or) Standing One-Arm Cable Curl	2	10-12

*See exercise description in **BEGINNER** section.
See exercise description in **MIKE'S workout.



STANDING CONCENTRATION CURL

START: "I saw Arnold doing these years ago in *Pumping Iron*," Aaron recalls. "Rather than sitting on a bench and using the inside of his thigh to support his elbow, he'd lean over and just let his arm hang down. I tried it and I really like it. With my feet shoulder-width apart, I bend my knees and lean forward at the waist, keeping my back flat. Using my other arm for support — I either rest it on my thigh or grab a rack or a bench — I let the dumbbell hang straight down, thumb facing forward."

MOVE: Curl the weight up across your body. Once the dumbbell is right in front of your chin, contract your biceps even harder, then lower the weight straight back down.



STANDING ONE-ARM CABLE CURL

START: "I stand sideways to a cable stack and grasp a handle attached to the high pulley," Aaron explains. "In the start position, my arm is almost fully extended, although not locked out."

MOVE: From there, curl the handle inwards until your biceps is fully contracted and the handle approaches your head. After squeezing out a peak contraction, slowly release and return the handle to near-full extension. Your upper arm and elbow shouldn't move during the exercise, and your elbow should stay in alignment with your shoulder.

IRVIN GELB

MORE WORKOUTS TO TRY:

#59) Take no prisoners on biceps day. You can hit your biceps hard, and from all angles, with this expert-crafted workout.

#60) This routine employs the forced reps technique, in which a partner gives you just enough assistance to help you finish a rep when you can't complete any more on your own.

#61) This workout contains some basic power moves — push yourself hard, lift as much as you can with good form, and strive for incremental strength increases from week to week.

#62) As the name implies, this programme is constructed to shock your biceps out of their doldrums and put them on track to new growth.

#63) Burn in the detail with this high-rep regime. Don't let yourself get lazy — as you would in a strength-building, low-rep regime, take your time on every rep, slowly contracting and releasing your biceps on each repetition.

#64) Do these moves as a circuit — one time through all four exercises equals one "set". Try not to rest any longer than it takes to move from exercise to exercise within the circuit-training set, and rest 30–60 seconds between each circuit.

#65) There's always enough time for your biceps with this super-fast routine.

#59 MASS BUILDER

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
EZ-Bar Preacher Curl	4	12, 10, 8, 6
3-Grip Barbell Curl	3	12*
Seated Dual Hammer Curl†	3	10, 8, 8
Dumbbell Concentration Curl	2	12, 10

* Four reps per grip; see description in **AT HOME** section.

† Like hammer curl in **AT HOME** section, except seated on a bench.

#60 "FORCED" GROWTH

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Standing EZ-Bar Curl*	4	15, 10, 8, 8
Standing Dual Dumbbell Curl	3	8–10
Machine Curl*	3	10

* Have a partner help you through 2 to 3 forced reps on the last two sets.

#61 POWER & STRENGTH

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Standing Barbell Curl	5	12, 10, 8, 5, 3
Close-Hammer-Grip Pull-Up**	3	10, 8, 6
Incline Dumbbell Curl	3	10, 8, 8
Reverse-Grip Cable Curl†	2	10, 8

** Like regular pull-up, except with a close, palms-facing grip.

† Use a short straight bar attachment to a low-pulley; grasp the bar with an underhand grip and perform a curl.



#62 SHOCK ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Power-Rack Barbell Curl*	4	15, 10, 8, 6
Dual Dumbbell Hammer Preacher Curl**	4	8, 8, 10, 12
Seated Barbell Curl (compound set with) Alternate Dumbbell Curl	3	10
	3	To Failure

* Set the safety bars in a power rack to just below the height of your hips. Do standing barbell curls with a heavier weight than usual, and rest the bar on the safeties between reps. ** Hold Dumbbells with a hammer grip and curl both arms simultaneously.

#63 HIGH DEFINITION

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Standing EZ-Bar Pole Curl*	3	20, 15, 12
Standing Dumbbell Hammer Pole Curl*	3	20, 15, 12
Lying Cable Curl†	3	15
Cable Concentration Curl	3	15

* Stand with your back to a pole or wall while repping.

† Lie on the ground in front of a cable station, grasp a short straight bar attached to a low pulley, and do curls.

#64 FOUR-MOVE CIRCUIT

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Standing EZ-Bar Curl	4	12, 10, 8, 8
Seated Alternate Dumbbell Curl	4	12, 10, 8, 8
Rope Hammer Cable Curl	4	10
Reverse EZ-Bar Curl	4	8

Perform these exercises back-to-back with no rest in between; rest 30 to 60 seconds between circuits.

#65 5-MINUTE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Tri-Set:		
Reverse Incline-Bench EZ-Bar Curl*	2	12, 10
Dual Incline Dumbbell Curl†	2	12, 10
Two-Arm High-Cable Curl	2	12, 10

Perform as a tri-set, back-to-back-to-back with no rest in between; rest 30 to 60 seconds between tri-sets. Pyramid up the weight each set. * Stand or sit backwards on an incline bench, your chest against the pad, your arms hanging straight down toward the floor. Grasp an EZ-bar and curl.

† Curl both Dumbbells at the same time.