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Get a Grip! Get More Out Of Your Biceps Curls

By Nick Nilsson

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by: **Nick Nilsson**

Would you like to know how to get more out of every single dumbbell curl you do? Amazingly enough, you can do this simply by changing where you grip the dumbbell.

First, I'm going to tell you what the trick is, then I'm going to tell you exactly how and why it works. Then I'm going to finish by telling you how to make the trick so powerful it'll blow your mind!

In a nutshell, instead of gripping the handle in the middle (as is normally taught), grip the handle with the thumb and forefinger side of your hand pressed up against the inside of the dumbbell plates. There will be a space of several inches between your pinky and the other side plates.

To take full advantage of this change in your grip, start the curl with your palms facing in to your thighs, otherwise known as a neutral or hammer grip. As you curl up, rotate your forearm so that your palm is facing up at the top of the movement. You should feel a strong cramping in your biceps.

For pictures demonstrating exactly how to execute this technique go to:

<http://www.fitstep.com/Misc/Newsletter-archives/issue7-bicep-tip.htm>

Here's how and why it works:

The biceps muscle has two main functions. The first is flexing the elbow (in essence, bringing the forearm closer to the upper arm like when you bend your arm to scratch your nose). The other function is called supination, which is a biomechanical term for forearm rotation. Supination occurs when you turn your hand from a palms-down position to a palms-up position.

The traditional dumbbell curl without forearm rotation addresses the flexing function of the bicep. Rotating your forearm as you curl the dumbbell up invokes the supination function of the bicep, working

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more of the muscle mass of the bicep and giving you a stronger contraction.

Holding the dumbbell off-center essentially adds resistance to the supination function of the bicep muscle. If you think about it, when you hold your hand in the middle of the dumbbell, the two ends are balanced like two identical-weight people on a see-saw. You get very little, if any, resistance on the supination.

By holding the dumbbell off-center, you tip the balance of the dumbbell towards the pinky side of your hand. Your bicep must then work against resistance to accomplish the supination, adding in more resistance to the curl movement.

This resistance translates into more efficient work for the bicep and, ultimately, more results for you!

Now I'm going to tell you how to adapt this trick into something that will make your jaw hit the floor on the first rep you do.

You've learned about supination and adding resistance to the supination movement by holding the dumbbell off-center. You've felt the difference this makes in your biceps.

Now imagine how much more effective this trick will be if you add actual weight for resistance instead of just shifting your hand over!

In order to accomplish this, you're going to need one of two things: do-it-yourself dumbbells with which you can add or remove weight or Plate Mates (TM), which are small magnetic weight plates that stick to the metal of the dumbbell.

The execution is simple: make a dumbbell with more weight on one end than the other. That's it. For example, place 20 pounds of weight on one end and 25 pounds of weight on the other.

Grip the dumbbell in the middle when you use it, making sure that the heavier end is on the pinky side of your hand. If you are using Plate Mates (TM), stick a few of them onto only one side of the dumbbell to accomplish the same imbalance.

Now when you curl up and supinate, your bicep is going to have that added resistance on the supination movement. The cramping sensation you get on the very first rep as you come to the top and squeeze the muscle hard will show you just how powerful this technique is. The pump you get in your biceps after your set will seal the deal!

You will also notice that your forearm and grip are getting a lot of work with this trick. This is just icing on the cake and will not decrease the tension on your bicep in any way.

Note: If you are using dumbbells that weigh less than 30 pounds total, I would recommend you use a 2 1/2 pound plate on one side rather than a 5 pound plate. Any more than 30 and you should use a 5

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pound plate.

Being a dedicated trainer myself, I love to hear how well my tips work for other people. It would be really gratifying to hear from you about how this technique worked for you or any suggestions you might have as to how to make it more effective.

You can send your comments to me at betteru@fitstep.com.

And, when your biceps are so pumped and sore that you can barely brush your teeth the next day, be sure to tell everyone who will listen to you who did this to you:

Nick Nilsson at Fitstep.com!

For more information about the anatomy of the biceps, go to

<http://www.fitstep.com/Advanced/Anatomy/Biceps.htm?news>

Nick Nilsson is Vice President of BetterU, Inc., an online exercise, fitness, and personal training company. Check out his latest eBook "The Best Exercises You've Never Heard Of" at

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Secret Training Tip #242 – Be 10% Stronger in Leg Curls Instantly!

By Nick Nilsson

This is a trick to be done on a leg curl machine. By simply changing where you grip your hands on the machine, you can increase your strength in the movement by as much as 10% instantly!

Lie face down on the bench as you normally would when doing the exercise. Instead of gripping the

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machine on the handles below the bench with your arms bent, extend your arms straight overhead in front and grab on to whatever is there. This is generally the frame on either side of the weight stack. Be aware that this trick will not work if there is nothing there to grab – some machines just end at the bench and have the weights stack to the side or behind.

Do your leg curls as you usually would but using this different grip. You should feel stronger when doing them.

One of the best ways to see this principle in action is to do a set as you normally would with your normal grip for about 10 to 12 reps. When you can't do any more reps, switch to the grip as explained above. You should be able to get a few more reps out.

When using this grip you should also find that you can use a little more weight than you usually do for reps.

The reason this trick works is that having your arms straight removes your biceps as the limiting link in the exercise. It transfers the force through your stronger back muscles instead, resulting in instant increased strength!

For information on how to do the leg curl exercise, go to

http://www.fitstep.com/Library/Exercises/Leg_curls.htm

Nick Nilsson is Vice President of BetterU, Inc., an online exercise, fitness, and personal training company. Check out his latest eBook "The Best Exercises You've Never Heard Of" at

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