

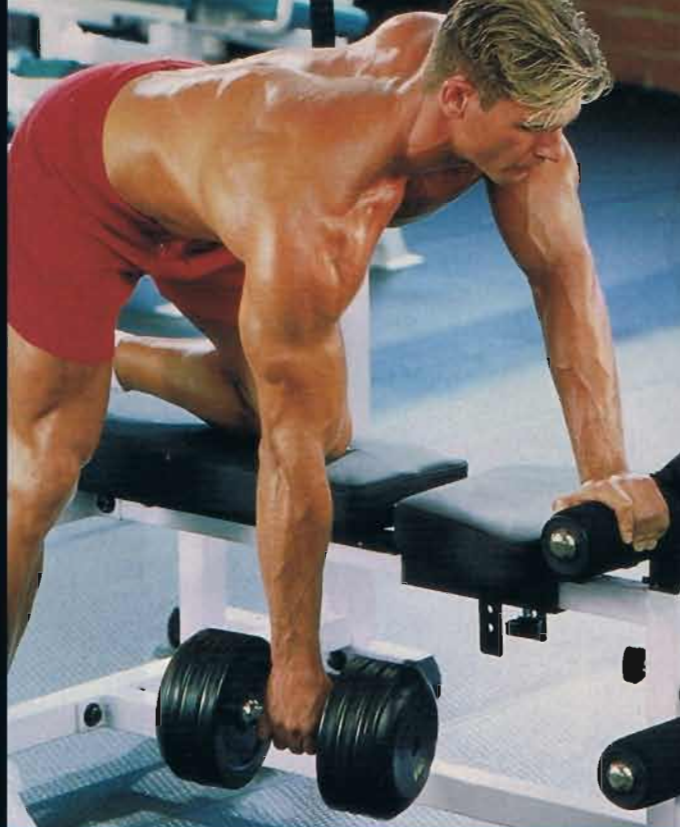


I know, you can't even think about putting in more time at the gym. It's all you can do to drag yourself in before or after work for some quick bench presses, a few squats and then a shower. Anything more just seems annoying. Okay, but isn't it annoying when you look in the mirror and don't see the results you want? The biceps look flat, the chest is underdeveloped and there's no symmetry between your right and left side. ¶ The reason for this may be a lack of individual attention to your muscles. You can never fully develop your right or left biceps by doing barbell curls, but you can with one-handed dumbbell curls. Same thing for your right and left quad – using one leg on the leg press instead of two will help balance things out. Point being, your right or left anything will improve with individual attention. So let's look at the exercises to do one at a time – hopefully, for double the results.

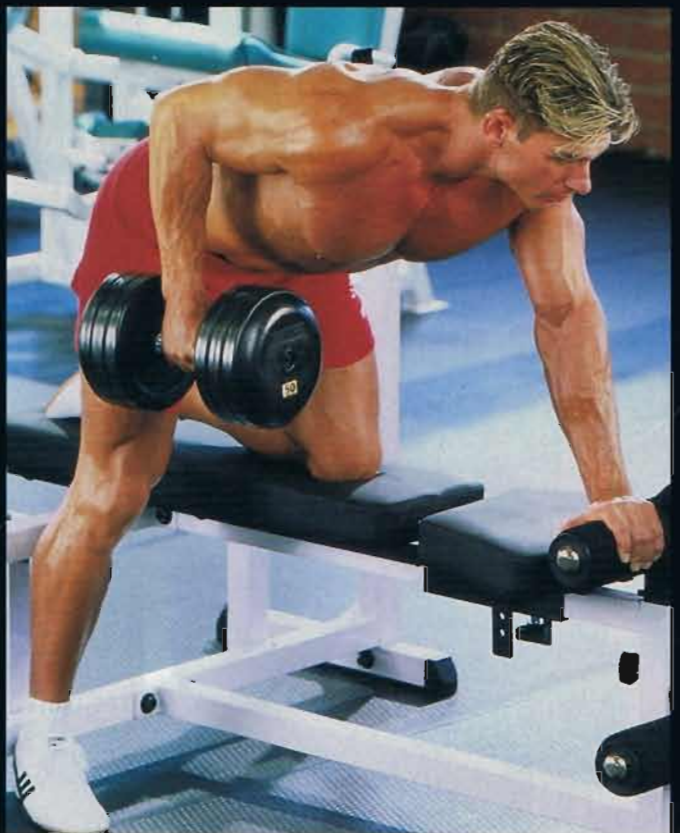
## Arms

Triceps often get under-trained even though they make up two thirds of your upper arms. Part of the reason is, they take a lot more time to see results than, say, your biceps. Well, one way to see results quicker is by concentrating on the right or left triceps individually. The best exercise for this is the one-arm pulley pushdown. Using a D-handle cable attachment at a moderate weight and with your feet shoulder width apart, push the weight down under control and squeeze at the bottom. Make sure to flex your triceps hard at the bottom of each rep for full definition before returning to the starting point. Important: always start with your weakest arm. That way you won't do more reps with one arm than the other – an easy way to lose symmetry. An alternative to surprise the triceps into further growth is to occasionally use an underhand grip on the handle.

Preacher curls are an effective exercise for developing the bottom part of the biceps. And the best way to do them is one hand at a time. To begin, let your arm dangle off the preacher bench with a dumbbell in your hand, then curl the weight to the top and hold for a moment, really squeezing the biceps. Then emphasise the negative as you extend to the bottom, lowering the



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weight very slowly. Throughout the movement, make sure your arm stays pressed to the pad, or else you will be employing other muscles to get the weight up. For an even more intense contraction, supinate your wrist (turn your hand out) at the top of each rep and squeeze. Another advantage of this one-handed movement is that you can concentrate harder on getting the biceps split.

The single-arm wrist curl is a useful exercise because of the detail it can add to your forearms when done one arm at a time, and also because it requires the kind of light dumbbell you can keep anywhere around the house. With your forearm pressed down on a bench (or on your leg if you want to try it at home), let your fingers dangle off the edge. Slowly lower your fingers all the way down, hold for a beat, and then raise to the starting point. Make sure you have control of the weight, as it's very easy for it to roll backwards during the movement. You can do these for as many reps as you feel comfortable with – and don't forget, by turning your palms down, you can do reverse wrist curls to get those wrist extensors in the game.

## Upper Body

Shoulders are a key muscle group to all upper body pressing movements, so full development is



important to achieve. Side raises are one of the best ways to bring out the medial delt, and much easier to do properly with one arm than two. Begin with a light dumbbell at your side and, with the elbow slightly bent, raise your arm until level with your shoulder. Hold for a count before lowering slowly to feel the negative. If you feel you need a little stability, there's nothing wrong with putting your opposing hand on your hip. Regardless, make sure it's only your shoulder doing the work and not body English that gets your arm up.

Developing back width and thickness is paramount in attaining that coveted V-shape, and the one-arm dumbbell row is great at isolating each side of the back for better width. Grab a moderate-to-heavy dumbbell and place your opposing knee on a flat bench. Lower the weight slightly forwards, feeling a full stretch in your back, then pull back to the starting position. Try to keep your body facing downwards as much as possible, as there's a tendency to jerk your hips up when the weight starts to feel heavy. Do 10-12 reps, then switch sides.

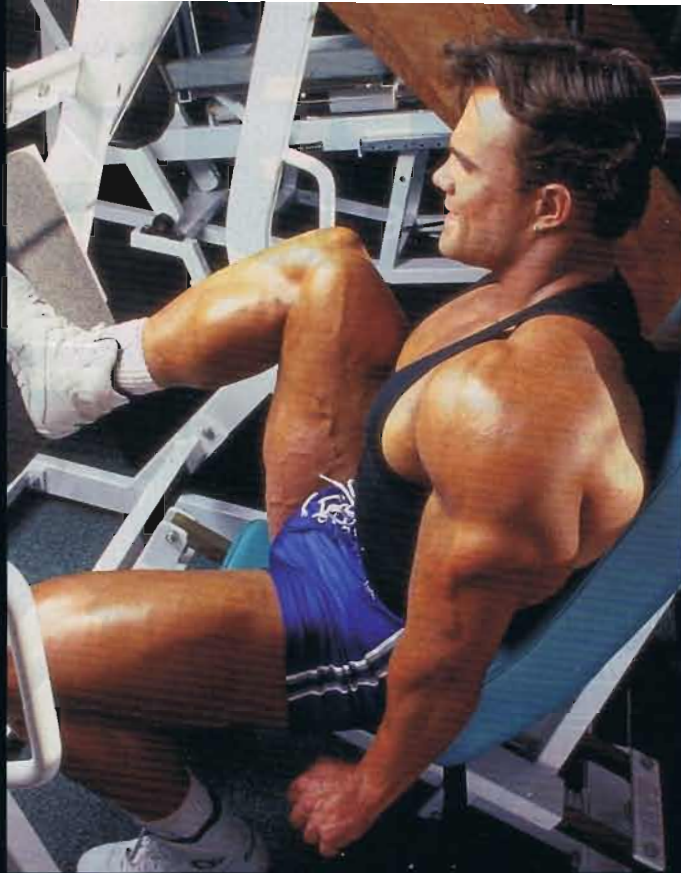
One-arm dumbbell bench presses allow for the kind of isolation and range of motion for your pecs that a traditional bench press could never achieve. Lying on a bench with a moderate sized dumbbell over your chest, lower it down to your side like you would for a bench press. Hold for a moment at the bottom, then explode to the starting position, squeezing at the top to fully contract the pec. Remember, 15 light reps on this one with good form beats seven shaky reps of the barbell bench press any day.

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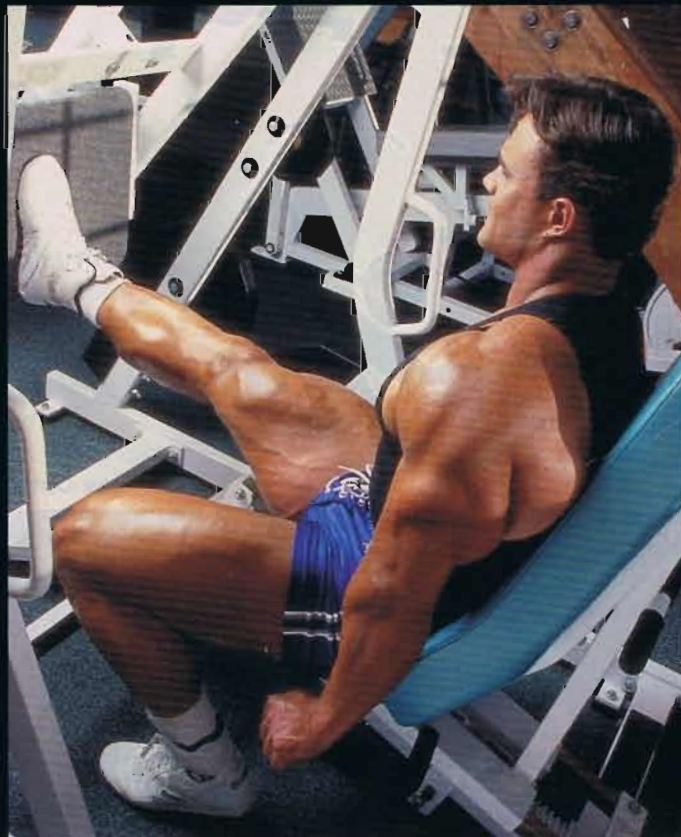
## Lower Body

One of the toughest muscles to attain definition on is quads. Leg extensions are the best movement for 'cuts', and doing them one leg at a time gives that added attention to speed up results. With a moderate weight, raise the leg just short of lock-out. Squeeze the quads at the top for a count then lower. Again, it's critical to start with your weaker leg to avoid having one quad more developed than the other. Another thing to watch out for is using body English to get the weight up as a way of compensating for using only one leg.

Probably the first time you ever heard the term 'hamstring' was when you were watching a sporting event. "He pulled his hamstring," is something you can count on reading every week on the sports page. Well, it's just as easy to pull it in the gym. One-legged lying hamstring curls are an effective movement when it comes to isolating this muscle and avoiding injury. Begin with the weaker leg and curl it up until your foot almost touches your glutes, taking in the negative on the way down. It's easy to swing the weight up when the reps get tough, but that's cheating and can also cause the muscle to tear. This can be a high-rep exercise, so feel free to do 20-rep sets if your form is



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solid with the chosen weight.

A lot of people feel like they have to load the leg press forever to do calf raises on it. So why not make it half the load by doing one leg at a time? You'll also add that extra concentration on a muscle that too often is an afterthought. With only the top half of your foot on the leg press, push your toes forwards until you're just short of being on your tiptoes. Lower the weight to its lowest comfortable point, feeling a good stretch at the bottom. Hold for a moment, and return to the starting point. Note: Calves respond to high rep movements, so feel free to do 30 or more reps.

## Work on your Weaknesses

Like in other aspects of life, we tend to spend more time on our strengths than our weaknesses in the gym – and that's a big mistake. By working a muscle unilaterally (one arm or leg at a time), it allows you to have greater symmetry and quality in lagging parts. There may be times when you don't want to do one-handed exercises because it will take twice as long, but not everything in life is easy. If you want the results, don't walk around the exercises that will get you to your goals. After all, watching two hours less television wouldn't kill you, but an unhealthy body might. **M&F**