

6 EXERCISES FOR STRONGER TRICEPS

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The triceps, along with the biceps, are responsible for most powerful forearm movements. The triceps is a three-headed structure and is the only muscle located on the posterior upper arm. The three heads include the long head, the lateral head and the medial head. The three heads originate at different spots, but attach to the same tendon that inserts at the olecranon process of the ulna. The places of origin include:

- * Long head – lower edge of the glenoid cavity of the scapula
- * Lateral head – posterior humerus
- * Short head – distal two-thirds of the posterior humerus

Functionally, the triceps brachii is the prime elbow extensor. Although the triceps are responsible for elbow (arm) extension, the muscle also acts as a weak mover for other upper-body movements. For example, because the long head originates from the scapula, it also acts as a weak extensor of the shoulder. Exercises such as push-ups, shoulder presses and bench presses can also indirectly train the triceps.

Body builders use isolated exercises to “target” the triceps; specifically, to train certain heads. It is important to remember that all three heads will be “used” for elbow extension exercises. Muscles do not turn on or off like a light switch because they work as a unit. Most triceps exercises activate all three heads, but certain exercises can challenge certain heads more, especially as the grip changes.

The following exercises include a combination of traditional isolation and innovative functional movement exercises. The three isolation exercises were chosen because the resistance either moves through, against or with gravity. Sets and repetitions depend on your client's training protocol and fitness goals.

CABLE ROPE EXTENSION



Start by adjusting the cable's height and weight. With a split-foot stance, slightly hinge forward from the hip so you maintain a neutral spine. Bring the rope overhead and keep your elbows bent. Extend the elbows, splitting the rope at full arm extension. Return back to center and repeat this motion.

BENCH DIPS WITH ROTATION



Sit on a bench and place your palms next to your hips with the fingers pointing down. This pose is easier with bent knees versus straight legs. Lift your hips off the bench and dip the body low enough to where your elbows bend at 90 degrees. Extend the arms back to the starting position. Once your arms are extended, take your right hand and reach it across the midline of the body. You want to rotate from the torso so you train your core. The left arm will stabilize. Return the right hand to center, dip and then reach the left hand across the midline of the body. This trains as both an isolated and an isometric exercise.

2-4 PUSH-UPS



Position the body into a plank. If needed, elevate the push-up on a smith bar or use a stability ball if you can't perform a full-body push-up against gravity. Lower the body toward the floor for a count of two. Next, extend the arms back to the plank position for a count of four. The closer the elbows are to the torso, the more this exercise will train the triceps.

SKULL CRUSHERS



For this exercise, you can use a heavy dumbbell or a weighted barbell. Lie on a bench and bring the weight over the shoulders. Lower the hands toward the forehead, making a 90-degree angle at the elbow. Extend the arms to the starting position. Repeat this movement.

CABLE PRESS-DOWNS



For this exercise, use a flat bar on the cable. Start by adjusting the cable's height and weight. The cable should be adjusted to a height so that when you perform the exercise there is resistance on the bar the entire time. Bring the elbows under the shoulders with the arms at 90 degrees. Extend the arms and press the bar down toward the hips. Return back to center and repeat this motion.

4-COUNT PLANK-UPS



Assume a forearm plank with the hands flat on the floor and the feet shoulder-distance apart. Place the right hand onto the ground, as you would normally do when performing a plank-up. Hold this position for four seconds. Next, place the left hand onto the floor so the body comes into a high plank. Lower the right forearm onto the ground and hold this position for four seconds. Return the left forearm onto the ground. Repeat this pattern, alternating the lead arm.



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