

BICEPS

THE TALE OF *TWIN HEROES*

PROLOGUE

A HERO'S JOURNEY TO THE PEAK

Strength. Power. Confidence. These are exuded by our legendary figures and endlessly pursued by mortal men.

Humanity idolizes gargantuan heroes, from the demi-gods of Greece to the caped crusaders that dominate the silver screen. We paint their powerful physiques and we immortalize their chiseled form. Their mere thought inspires confidence and self-efficacy. A hero can do anything.

But a hero is not always the strongest. They do not have to be the smartest or the fastest. They are not a hero because they are infinitely powerful. They are a hero because they remind us what we are capable of.

Heroes help us feel strong and courageous. Their mere presence awakens the dormant courage in all of us.

There is one muscle group above all else that has become ubiquitous with our heroic pursuit. A muscle that may not be the largest nor the strongest. For many, it was the first muscle group that we instinctively targeted in the pursuit to be more. We naturally flex them when we want to show our progress or feel powerful.

The bicep is our hero.

From the first moment you stepped in the gym, you undoubtedly picked up a dumbbell and attempted to curl it. You yearned for biceps that bulged from your flexed arm, tearing at your shirt sleeves. You wanted a constant reminder that whether you were in the gym or at a 9-5- day job, there was an undeniable strength that laid in wait beneath the fabric's flimsy disguise. Subconsciously you wished to mold your body into the timeless visage of a hero.

PROLOGUE

A HERO'S JOURNEY TO THE PEAK

Your first trip into the gym could have been 10 years ago or it could've been yesterday. You may have accepted that you weren't meant to carry the mighty arms of your idols. You may have convinced yourself that your genetics do not map to the holy grail of muscularity. Today is the day you accept that gargantuan biceps are yours for the taking.

In the next pages you will learn what powers you possess, who your allies are on this journey, and how to navigate your path. We can show you what you have, but only you can show us who you are.

It's time to move through perilous workouts to progress along your hero's journey. It's time you peaked.



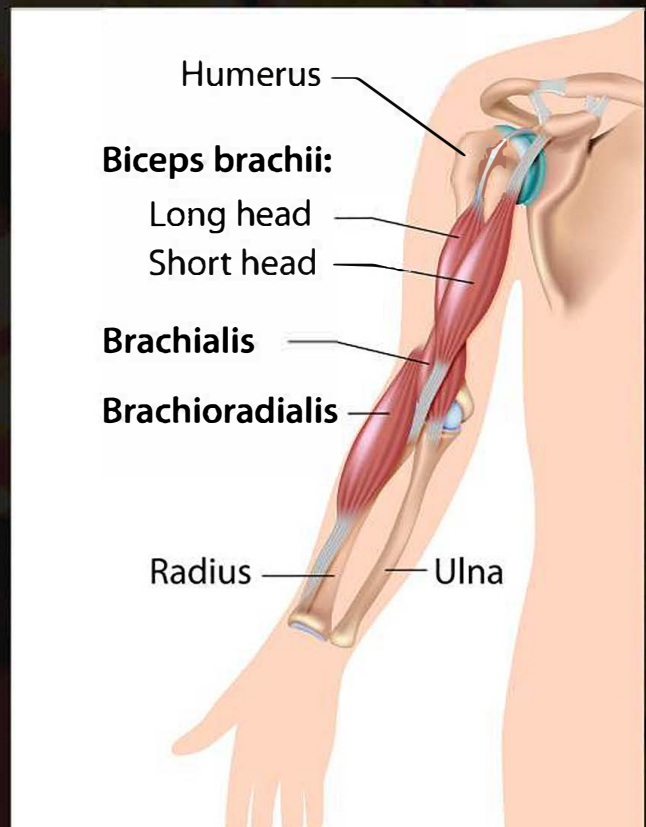
HEROES AND ALLIES

HEROES COME IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

Like any hero's journey, we must begin at the origin. The word bicep means "two heads". This is because the bicep is made up of two heads: the long (outer) head and the short (inner) head. Each has its own path, origin, and insertion point, but work together to accomplish the same goal. These are our twin heroes of your arm workout.

These muscles are attached to your bone by strong connective tissue known as a tendon. Your bicep brachii are attached by tendons to your bones. Any good hero is only as strong as its roots, so it is very important that your biceps are anchored to your bone to allow for legendary feats of strength.

The long head of the bicep originates from the supraglenoid tubercle (a small protrusion of the shoulder blade above the shoulder socket) while the short head originates at the coricoid process (a portion of the shoulder blade that juts forward).



HEROES AND ALLIES

HEROES COME IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

As you know from popular myth, most teams of heroes do not have the same origin story. They may meet by chance, by choice, or may not even be aware of each other. Still, their varied backgrounds allow them to accomplish tasks that would be impossible alone. Our biceps brachii begin at two separate origin points in the scapula, but as they progress along your humerus (upper arm) they become one. Together, these powerful muscles insert into the radial tuberosity (a rough portion of bone at the top of your forearm).

The bicep brachii's main function is to flex the elbow and supinate the forearm. It allows you to raise up your fist to your enemies and curl that weight in defiance of the very laws of nature.



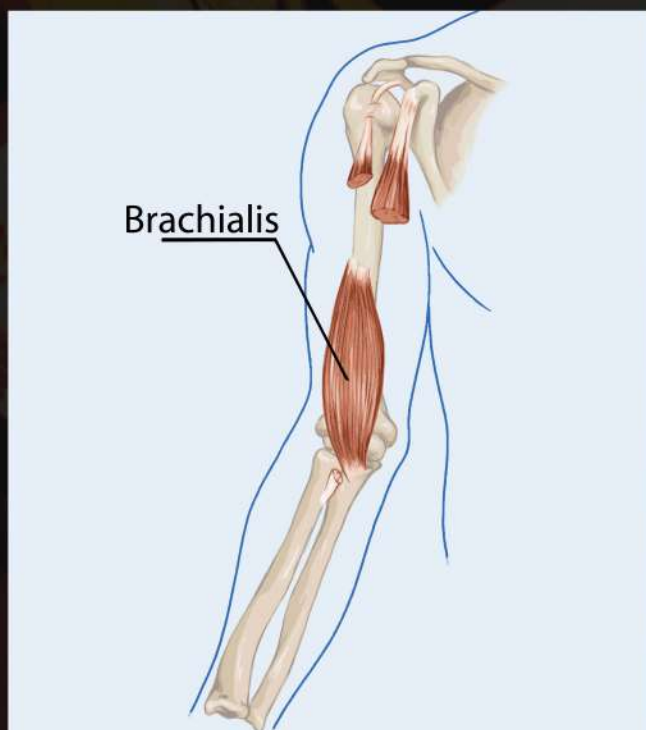
HEROES AND ALLIES

THE SIDE KICK

Heroes are characters who contain some special spark. They are imbued with gifts of the divine, whether it be a magic scepter or the herculean strength of the gods themselves. Still, they are not complete beings. None is perfect on their own. Even the most powerful warrior must rely on helpers to aid them in their quest for their reward. Perseus was granted winged sandals of Hermes, an adamant sword of Zeus, a helmet of darkness of Hades, and a bronze shield of Athena to vanquish his foes. Batman relies on Alfred and Robin to track criminals, bring them to justice, and protect his identity. This is the noble creed of your oft forgotten muscle: the brachialis.

The brachialis lies deep beneath the biceps brachii. It is a name seen as a footnote on physiology journals that will never attain the acclaim of its bicep brothers. Its power is barely seen directly, shown only during certain moves such as the back-double bicep. This dormant champion leverages its powerful muscle belly to make the biceps appear much larger when flexed and to provide girth to the arm. Help the brachialis to grow and it will allow your biceps to ascend to new heights.

The brachialis originates halfway down the arm at the medial and lateral intermuscular septa of the arm (a divider that separates the extensor and flexor muscles of your arms) and inserts into the ulna (a bone in the forearm).



HEROES AND ALLIES

THE SIDE KICK

The brachialis works alongside the biceps brachii to flex your elbow. The brachialis attaches closer to the joint and thus, can produce a larger flexion of the forearm with less force. It also helps protect the elbow joint from damage caused by overextension. Like any trusty friend of the hero, the brachialis ensures the hero looks his best, can work more efficiently, and protects him should he overreach in a delusion of grandeur or wayward quest.



MASTERING YOUR MOVES

Many bicep exercises will test your mental fortitude as much as your physical might. Remember to control your breathing with regular rhythm and purposeful control. It is natural to hold your breath when exerting yourself, but this will only limit your exercise capacity. Listen to your body and position yourself to provide the most tension on your biceps. Heroes can only grow in times of adversity, so make sure your biceps are in for the fight of their lives.

Each of the below moves can be performed either bilaterally or unilaterally (two arms simultaneously or one arm at a time). If you find one arm pulling considerably more weight than another during bilateral movements, switch to one arm at a time to allow your biceps to be worked evenly.



MASTERING YOUR MOVES

EXERCISE: DUMBBELL HAMMER CURLS

GUIDE:

1. Stand shoulder width apart and grab one dumbbell in each hand.
2. Hold the dumbbells with your palms facing towards the sides of your body in a neutral grip.
3. Keep your elbows close to your sides and curl the weight upwards.
4. Flex your bicep at the top of the motion and slowly return it to the starting position.

COMMON MISTAKES:

1. Swinging the weight. **It is easy to use momentum and allow other muscles to compensate for the movement. This not only diminishes the effectiveness of your workout but can also put you at risk of bicep injury.**
2. Resting the weight on the shoulder. **Some people will swing the weight up and rest it upon your shoulder. While this appears to be full, 180-degree range of motion, it vastly limits the tension on the bicep. Your bicep has little mechanical stressors placed on it when the dumbbell is held fully up and upon your shoulder.**



MASTERING YOUR MOVES

EXERCISE: DUMBBELL CURLS



MASTERING YOUR MOVES

EXERCISE: DUMBBELL CURLS

SHORT HEAD FOCUS (SHOULDER FLEXION) GUIDE:

1. Stand with your feet shoulder width apart.
2. Grab two dumbbells and allow them to hang at your sides.
3. Push your shoulders forward and bend your torso slightly for balance.
4. Curl your forearms up to shoulder height while rotating your palms to face you. Be sure to keep your elbows in at your sides.
5. Flex your bicep at the top of the motion before returning it to the starting position.
6. Perform for the desired amount of reps.

LONG HEAD FOCUS (SHOULDER EXTENSION) GUIDE:

1. Stand with your feet shoulder width apart.
2. Grab two dumbbells and allow them to hang at your sides with your palms facing in.
3. Pull your shoulders back and stand up straight.
4. Curl your forearms up to shoulder height while rotating your palms to face you. Be sure to keep your elbows in at your sides.
5. Flex your bicep at the top of the motion before returning it to the starting position.
6. Perform for the desired amount of reps.

COMMON MISTAKES:

1. Using a weight that is too heavy. **It is hard to deny the endorphin rush you feel as you pick up someone's dumbbell press weight for a bicep curl. It is also hard to deny your elbows moving and your back arching. You are training to sculpt your body, not just move weight. This egocentric style of lifting decreases the effectiveness of the movement by using a host of secondary muscles and puts yourself at risk.**
2. Curling your wrist. **Flexing your wrist requires forearm muscles that take away tension during the bicep focused workout. Make sure you keep your wrist almost limp to ensure you are using your bicep strength to move the weight.**

MASTERING YOUR MOVES

EXERCISE: ALTERNATING DUMBBELL PREACHER CURLS

GUIDE:

1. Stand against a preacher curl pad with the pad just below your chest.
2. Place one arm down fully with your lower tricep just on the pad. You may use your other arm to hold onto the pad for stability.
3. Have your shoulders flexed forward and your elbow in line with your shoulder.
4. Curl the weight up as you twist your hand until your wrist is fully supinated. As you curl up lean forward to maintain tension. Be sure to keep your elbows in at your sides.
5. Keep tension on the bicep, flex for 1 second, then return to the starting position.
6. Repeat for desired reps before switching hands.



MASTERING YOUR MOVES

EXERCISE: ALTERNATING DUMBBELL PREACHER CURLS

COMMON MISTAKES:

1. Performing a wrist curl. **When we curl a weight up, we may naturally try to use our forearms to help move the weight even further. This takes tension off the bicep and can reduce the mechanical stressors we need to grow.**
2. Leaning back during the curl. **Leaning back is a natural response as you try to coax the weight upwards. However, leaning back takes away from flexion of the elbow and reduces tension on the bicep. Lean in during the curl to make sure you are maximizing your efforts.**
3. Not extending the forearm. **This is the most egregious and common error during the preacher curl. The difference between keeping mechanical tension on the forearm and only doing quarter reps is the difference between night and day. Extend your forearm almost back to the starting position during your reps to complete full range of motion instead of moving the weight at the most advantageous angle.**



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MASTERING YOUR MOVES

EXERCISE: CONCENTRATION CURLS

STANDING GUIDE:

1. Stand shoulder width apart and bend over at a 30-degree angle
2. Grab a dumbbell in one hand and place the elbow of your weighted arm on the inside of your knee. You may rest your free hand on your opposite leg.
3. Curl the dumbbell upwards towards your shoulder while keeping your upper and upper body completely stationary.
4. Turn your wrist as you lift to provide complete supination.
5. At the top of the rep, squeeze as hard as you can.
6. Slowly lower the weight to the starting position.
7. Complete the desired amount of reps before switching hands.

SEATED GUIDE:

1. Sit on a flat bench with your legs spread and bend over at a 30-degree angle.
2. Grab a dumbbell in one hand and place the elbow of your weighted arm on the inside of your thigh. You may rest your free hand on your opposite leg.
3. Curl the dumbbell upwards towards your chin while keeping your upper and upper body completely stationary.
4. Turn your wrist as you lift to provide complete supination.
5. At the top of the rep, squeeze as hard as you can.
6. Slowly lower the weight to the starting position.
7. Complete the desired amount of reps before switching hands.



MASTERING YOUR MOVES

EXERCISE: CONCENTRATION CURLS

COMMON MISTAKES:

1. Locking out your elbow. This will remove mechanical tension from the bicep and reduce your growth potential.
2. Not turning your pinky upward. This will remove supination from the movement and limit your recruitment of your biceps brachii which control forearm supination.
3. Moving your elbow from its pivot point. This will add momentum for your lift and limit tension on the bicep. If this occurs, lower your weight and focus on the contraction. The best heroes are the least boastful so leave your ego at the door.



WORKOUT TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

HEROES ARE MADE

No one is born a hero. It takes the arrogance to believe you can ascend beyond the realm of man and the heart to make it so. Perform these two workouts twice per week during your training. Make sure you have at least 3 days rest between each workout for optimal recovery and performance. Weeks 1 to 3 are designed to build volume, endurance, and strength. It all leads up to Week 4. Week 4 will be a gauntlet of skin tearing exercises that will force your muscles to burn and truly test whether you are worthy to wield such otherworldly arms.



WORKOUT TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

WORKOUT #1

EXERCISE	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Dumbbell Hammer Curl	3 Sets of 12	4 Sets of 10	4 Sets of 12	4 Sets of 12, 1 set of same weight to failure
Seated Incline Dumbbell Curl	3 Sets of 12	4 Sets of 10	4 Sets of 12	3 Sets of 20 1 set with 3 drop sets to failure
Alternating Dumbbell Curl (long head focus)	3 Sets of 12	4 Sets of 10	4 Sets of 12	4 Sets of 20
Seated Concentration Curl	3 Sets of 12	4 Sets of 10	4 Sets of 12	4 Sets of 20 with a 3 second eccentric portion

WORKOUT #2

EXERCISE	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Reverse Grip EZ Bar Curl	3 sets of 12	4 sets of 10	4 sets of 12	4 sets of 12, 1 set of same weight to failure
Dumbbell Preacher Curl	3 sets of 12	4 sets of 10	4 sets of 12	3 sets of 20 1 set with 3 drop sets to failure
Alternating Dumbbell Curl (short head focus)	3 sets of 12	4 sets of 10	4 sets of 12	4 Sets of 20 with a 3 second eccentric portion
Seated Concentration Curl	3 sets of 12	4 sets of 10	4 sets of 12	4 sets of 20