Lee Hayward’s
Muscle Specialization Training Guide

Unique Weight Training Exercises For Improving Stubborn Muscle Groups
Introduction

In this Muscle Specialization Guide we’re going to dive in and cover some of the best exercises for building up stubborn body parts. If you have been working out for any length of time than I’m sure you have noticed that some of your muscle groups develop faster than others.

This is totally normal, very few people have perfectly proportioned body’s. Even most of the top pro bodybuilders have flaws in their physiques. For example, it’s common to see folks with big upper body’s and skinny legs (or vice versa). Sometimes it’s the individual muscle groups themselves that are lagging, someone could have big and well developed thighs that are stacked on top of scrawny little calves. Some folks may have big muscular arms, but flat chests. Some people have big biceps, but very weak triceps, etc...

Sometimes the flaws have to do with the symmetry between the left and right sides of the body. Generally we are stronger in our dominant side. So if you are right handed it’s quite common to have your right arm bigger and stronger than your left arm. And as crazy as it may seem, I’ve also seen the opposite where the non-dominant side is actually the bigger more developed side. These symmetry problems don’t just stop at the arms either. Some people have one leg bigger than the other, one pec larger and more developed than the other, one lat that’s wider than the other, etc...

Bottom line no body is perfect. However, with smart intelligent training you can make the most of your God given genetics and maximize your muscle building potential. That’s the whole purpose of this program.

Now before I actually jump into the “meat & potatoes” of this Muscle Specialization Guide I just want to clarify one thing. This program is meant to be an add on to your existing workout training program. This is NOT a stand alone training and nutritional program.
What I want you to do with this training guide is quickly read through it and get a good grasp on all the concepts and exercises that are covered here. Then I want you to choose the 1 or 2 body parts on your physique that you feel are lagging behind the most. Once you’ve done that go back and implement the body part specialization training tips for your most stubborn muscle groups.

Please note, you CAN’T specialize on every single muscle group at once. You have to limit yourself to a maximum of just 2 body parts. The whole concept behind specialization training is that you are going to put more effort and emphasis on the areas that need the most work. If you were to try and specialize in all your major muscle groups at the same time, you’d end up burnt out, overtrained and chances are you would make worse progress than if you never did any extra specialization training at all.

Be honest with yourself and decide what are your 1 or 2 body parts that need the most work. And if you are stuck on this and would like for me to help guide you personally then I recommend that you sign up for my Total Fitness Bodybuilding “Inner Circle” Coaching Club at: http://www.TotalFitnessBodybuilding.com

You can sign up as a member and I’ll work with you personally and guide you step-by-step along the way with the right program for you to maximize your lean muscle growth, burn off stubborn body fat, and ensure you are on the right track to building a well balanced athletic muscular physique.

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Chest Exercises

Who doesn’t want a thick muscular chest? After all the chest is one of the “show off” muscles when it comes to having the perfect beach body. For your chest training you really need to focus on building balance and symmetry between the left and right pecs. Then you need to focus on building proportional mass from top to bottom. Upper, middle, lower, inner & outer to really give your physique that powerful look.

Now the purpose of this program is NOT to demonstrate every single chest exercise that’s out there. But rather to focus on the select few moves that I have found to be the most effective for bringing up stubborn pecs with both myself and my personal coaching students.
Incline Dumbbell Bench Press

The incline bench press is a great exercise to work the upper chest. With secondary stress placed on the shoulders and triceps. For this exercise set the incline of the bench between a 30 to 45 degree angle. The higher the angle of the bench the more difficult the exercise will be because it uses more of the shoulders and less of the chest.

When using dumbbells for this exercise you get more muscle stimulation compared to using a barbell, because you have to balance and support 2 weights. Dumbbells force both the left and right sides to handle an equal workload. This is can help create balance and proportion, especially for people who have one side bigger or stronger than the other. It’s actually quite common to be more developed and stronger on your dominant side, so including dumbbell exercises in your workouts can help balance this out overtime.
Dumbbells also allow more freedom of movement with your hand positions. You’ll notice here in the pictures that I’m holding the dumbbells on a slight angle, with my elbows tucked in closer to my sides. This position takes stress off the shoulder joint and actually places you in a stronger position to press.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*If you have a symmetry imbalance between your left and right pecs you should use dumbbell bench press variations instead of barbell or machine bench presses.*

*If your upper chest is a weak area, you should do more incline bench work to target your upper pecs. So if your current chest routine has you doing flat bench press, adding incline dumbbell bench presses instead will help spur on some new growth in your upper chest.*

*Since this is a power building chest move, you can push yourself and train heavy. I recommend doing sets of 8-10 reps and strive to up the weights when ever possible.*
Flat Dumbbell Bench Press

You’ll feel stronger benching in the flat position compared to benching on an incline because you’ll bring more of the pec muscles into play and less of the shoulders. It also uses a shorter range of motion to bench flat compared to benching on an incline. The center of the chest is much thicker than the top of the chest, so you won’t have to bring the dumbbells down quite as far.

When using dumbbells for benching you get more muscle stimulation compared to using a barbell, because you have to balance and support 2 weights. Dumbbells force both the left and right sides to handle an equal workload. This is can help create balance and proportion, especially for people who have one side bigger or stronger than the other. It’s actually quite common to be more developed and stronger on your dominant side, so including dumbbell exercises in your workouts can help balance this out overtime.
Dumbbells also allow more freedom of movement with your hand positions. You’ll notice here in the pictures that I’m holding the dumbbells on a slight angle, with my elbows tucked in closer to my sides. This position takes stress off the shoulder joint and actually places you in a stronger position to press.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*If you have a symmetry imbalance between your left and right pecs you should use dumbbell bench press variations instead of barbell or machine bench presses.*

Flat dumbbell bench is great for building thickness in the center chest. Including dumbbell bench presses in your workouts helps to increase your barbell bench press strength as well because dumbbells utilize more stabilizer and supporting muscle groups. If you are stuck in a plateau with your regular barbell bench press, than changing to dumbbell bench for a few weeks can help you get past that training plateau.

*If you are currently stuck in a bench plateau and would like a killer specialized training program to help get you growing again, than be sure to check out my [Blast Your Bench](http://www.BlastYourBench.com) program. This is one of my flag ship programs that has helped literally thousands of guys from all over the world set new personal bench press records in the gym.*
Incline Dumbbell Fly

The incline dumbbell fly is a good isolation exercise that works the chest in a fully stretched position. The majority of the stress on your pecs is right at the bottom when your arms are extended out to the sides and your chest is fully stretched. It's always good to perform stretching exercises like this after the muscles are already pumped up with a mid range power exercise, such as the bench press.

Including a fully stretched exercise like this is great for aiding with muscle growth because they use Stretch Overload Training, also known as “Stretching With Weights”. This is something that will enhance muscle growth from hyperplasia (i.e. muscle-fiber splitting). This expands the connective tissue and fascia, which surrounds the muscles, and there by enable the muscles to grow bigger and stronger.
Since the main purpose of the dumbbell fly is stretching the muscles, lifting heavy weights is not as important as proper technique and getting a deep stretch. Strive to increase the weights gradually overtime, but never at the expense of exercise form.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*I always recommend including stretch exercises in your workouts especially when trying to bring up stubborn muscle groups. Most people never focus on training the muscles in the fully stretched position, so once you start doing it on a regular basis it usually helps spur on new muscle growth.*

*I personally find that doing the incline dumbbell fly provides more muscle stimulation and a better pump in the pecs than the flat dumbbell fly. It also places less stress on the shoulder joint as well. So if the upper chest is an area you want to improve make sure to include this one as a regular in your chest workouts.*

*Take your time when adding weight to the dumbbell fly. Due to the extreme stretch it’s easy to pull or tear a muscle, tendon, ligament, etc. Keep your reps higher (i.e. 10-15 reps per set) and focus on using perfect controlled form.*
Pec Deck Fly

The pec deck is a good isolation exercise that works the chest in a peaked contraction position. This is the opposite of a dumbbell fly, which works the chest in the fully stretched position. With pec deck flyes the majority of the stress on your chest is right at the top when your arms are together and your chest is fully contracted.

This move is great for getting a pump in your chest because there is constant tension throughout the entire exercise. You can’t lock it out at the top and get a little break like you can with free weight bench presses and flyes.
When setting up for the pec deck fly make sure to position the seat high enough so that your elbows are slightly lower than your shoulders when holding onto the handles. This position takes stress off the shoulder joint and rotator cuff and places more of the workload right on the chest muscles themselves.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

This is a great finishing exercise to do after your chest workouts, especially right after you do a fully stretched exercise like the dumbbell fly. When specializing stubborn muscle groups you should always do a mid-range power exercise (i.e. bench press), fully stretched exercise (i.e. dumbbell fly), and a peaked contraction exercise (i.e. pec deck fly). This will hit the muscles from all ranges of motion and ensure maximum muscular development.

Because this is an isolation exercise keep the reps higher, say in the 10-15 rep range and focus mainly on feeling the muscles working and going for the burn. This is NOT a heavy power move.
Push ups are one of my all time favorite chest exercises. Before I got involved with serious weight training I participated in martial arts and did lots of bodyweight exercises such as push ups.
In fact when I was a teenager I could bang out 100 push ups in a single set. All those push ups certainly helped give my chest development a boost and is one of the reasons why my chest is one of my best body parts today.

One thing you’ll notice in the pictures above is that I’m holding Hex Shaped Dumbbells while doing push ups. This position of holding a handle is more comfortable and natural on your wrist joint than keeping your hands flat on the floor. Most people feel stronger in this position and are able to perform a few addition reps, compared to having their hands flat on the floor.

Doing push ups with a close hand spacing really works your inner chest. Medium hand spacing (as shown in the pictures) works the overall chest. And wide hand spacing works more of the outer chest. The closer your hands are together the harder it is, so you can start your sets using a narrow grip, and with each set as you fatigue you can move your hands out a little wider.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*Push ups are a killer finishing exercise to do after your chest workouts. I often finish off my chest workouts with several sets of push ups, I usually strive for 100 total reps. You can also squeeze in extra push ups in between exercises (regardless if it’s a chest workout or not). You can also do them in your spare time at home.*

*In fact a super simple way to specialize your chest is to simply do daily push ups. If you did 2-3 sets of push ups in your spare time at home this will help spur on new muscle growth. Regularly exercising and pumping blood and nutrients into your muscles is a great way to speed up growth.*
Back Exercises

The back is one of the “power-house” muscles of the body. When you strengthen your back, that strength usually carries over into all of your other major exercises as well. Having that unique balance of wide sweeping lats along with thick muscular traps, rhomboids, and spinal erectors are the key components to great back development and giving your physique that V shape look.

Now the purpose of this program is NOT to demonstrate every single back exercise that’s out there. But rather to focus on the select few moves that I have found to be the most effective for quickly building a muscular back, especially if you’ve struggled with building this body part in the past.
Pull Ups / Chin Ups

Pull ups and chin ups are one of the best lat exercises you can do. If you show me someone who is good at doing pull ups and chin ups chances are you’ll show me someone who has a wide v-shaped muscular back.

Now some people will use the term pull up and chin up interchangeably. But generally a pull up is when you grab the bar with a regular overhand grip. And a chin up is when you grab the bar with an underhand curl grip. However, there’s a bit of grey area with the naming because most gyms these days have various different grips and handles that you can grab for doing pull ups / chin ups (i.e. parallel grip, angled grip, etc.)
I suggest that you use all the different grips and variations in your workouts. You can literally use a different grip for every set to hit your lats from all kinds of positions and angles.

Regardless of what grip you use, make sure to go through a full range of motion when doing pull ups. A lot of people make the mistake of using short choppy reps. You’ll get a better back workout and make better overall muscle gains if you make sure to get a full stretch at the bottom of each rep and then come up as high as you can at the top.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*Pull Ups / Chin Ups are a “must do” exercise in any back workout in my opinion. I personally do them as part of every back workout and I think they are one of the key reasons why my back is one of my stronger body parts.*

*If you find it difficult to perform pull up / chin ups than I’d recommend you check out my [Progressive Pull Up Program](http://www.LeeHayward.com/dvd). This is a graduated pull up workout that will take you from a bare bones beginner who can’t even perform a single pull up with bodyweight. And show you how to build yourself up to quickly doing multiple sets of weighted pull ups.*

You can pick up copy or this program at: [http://www.LeeHayward.com/dvd](http://www.LeeHayward.com/dvd)
The deadlift is the oldest and most basic of all weight-training exercises. Simply load up a barbell and lift it off the ground, it doesn’t get any more basic than that. The deadlift is a compound movement that works all of the major muscles in the body, with most of emphasis on the traps, spinal erectors, hips, glutes, and hamstrings. The remaining muscles are involved in stability control.

Stand in front of a barbell with your shins close to the bar. Feet shoulder width apart or closer. Grab the bar with your hands outside your legs, a bit wider then shoulder width. Keeping your arms straight, bend your legs and flatten your back. Position yourself so it is like you are doing a squat with the barbell at arms length in front of you.

You’ll notice in the pictures that I’m using an alternate grip, which is one hand facing forwards and the other hand facing backwards. The advantage of this grip is that as the bar is rolling out of one hand, it is also rolling into the other hand. Thus allowing you to hold onto heavier weights then you could with a regular overhand grip. I personally like to switch back and forth with the hand positions for each set to ensure equal development over the long term.
When To Use This Exercise:

Deadlifts are another one of those “must do” exercises for any back workout in my opinion. There are few moves that can match the deadlift for building raw brute power and a thick muscular back.

If you would like a complete deadlift cycle program that can help you pack on as much as 50 pounds to your max deadlift in just 7 weeks, than be sure to check out my deadlift training article at: http://www.leehayward.com/deadlifts.htm
Dumbbell Pullovers

I could have put this one under “chest exercises” or “back exercises” as it works the entire torso.

Dumbbell pullovers help to expand the rib cage and work all the supporting muscle groups along the torso, chest, lats, arms, and shoulders through a full range of motion. This can really help add thickness and depth to your torso, which is one area that a lot of people lack these days.

The pullover is a stretching exercise, so you'll make better gains from using a moderate weight, higher reps, and really working through a full range of motion. Add weight to the exercise in a gradual progressive fashion, but never at the expense of sacrificing your exercise form.
To expand your rib cage and getting a better stretch during the exercise try to set yourself up so that your hips are lower than the height of the bench, as shown in the pictures. If you are training with a partner it would be a good idea to get them to hand you the dumbbell at the beginning of this exercise and take it from you at the end. It’s much easier and safer to get in position this way.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

There are a very few exercises that can stretch out the torso like dumbbell pullovers. They are a good finishing move that you can add in at the end of a back or chest workout. If you are lacking depth in your chest / rib cage and your lats need more width, than this is one exercise that you can include to help target these areas.

I’ve got a YouTube video about this exercise that you may want to check out at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_3TJ_x-kzg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_3TJ_x-kzg)
Face Pulls

The face pull is an excellent exercise for building up the rear deltoids, trapezius, and upper back muscles.

This movement allows you to hit these muscles with relatively heavy weights and strict form. This is a very important exercise to include in your workouts because it helps balance out your upper back and shoulder development, which is an area that a lot of guys neglect in their workouts.

I prefer to use a rope attachment for this exercise because it allows for more freedom of movement with your hands. The rope also allows for a greater range of motion because you can pull the ends back until they are at the sides of your head.
As you work up to lifting heavy weights you may find that balance is an issue, as you lean back to counterbalance the weight. If this is a problem you can perform the face pull on a seated low pulley cable row machine with the rope attachment, this way your upper body will still be in the same position, but you'll feel more solid and secure as you do the exercise.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

This is another exercise that I really feel everyone should do on a regular basis. Not only does the face pull help build up the entire upper back, but it balances out your shoulder development. This can prevent future shoulder problems down the road. More often than not shoulder problems like rotator cuff issues are caused from the chest and front shoulders being over worked in proportion to the rear delts and upper back.

I recommend that you do a few sets of face pulls after a heavy chest workout, and again after a heavy back workout to keep these muscles in shape. It will really help with your overall muscular proportions and athletic performance.

Keep your reps for this exercise in the 10-15 range. I'd rather you go for the burn and feel the muscles working instead of trying to go too heavy. This is mainly an upper back isolation exercise, not a heavy power move.
Bent Over Barbell Row
(Reverse Grip)

Rowing with an underhand curl grip or a reverse grip, will target the lower lats to a greater degree and will also bring the biceps more into play as a secondary muscle group. For most people rowing with a reverse grip will feel stronger than rowing with a regular overhand grip.

Bent over barbell rows, especially using a reverse grip, were a favourite back exercise of former Mr. Olympia Dorian Yates, and he had one of the most developed backs and widest lat spreads in all of bodybuilding.

If you have one lat wider or more developed than the other, you could do bent over rows using dumbbells instead of a barbell. This will force both the left and right lats to handle and equal workload and thus balance them out over time.
**When To Use This Exercise:**

If you need more width on your lats, especially the lower lats, than you should substitute reverse grip rowing for at least one of your back exercises.

If you find that using a straight bar feels uncomfortable on your hands / wrists when grabbing with a reverse grip, than you can use an EZ curl bar instead. This will give you the same benefit to the lats while taking some stress off the wrist joints.

Rowing exercises like this are a combo of power and isolation all in one. I recommend that you shoot for sets of 8-10 reps and try to increase the weights only when you can do so using strict form.
Shoulder Exercises

Broad muscular shoulders are a trademark of a great physique. Round cannon ball delts and big meaty traps, that’s what every guy wants!

The shoulders are more of a secondary muscle group compared to the big power house muscles \textit{(i.e. chest, back, and legs)} but they are still critical to your overall development.

Strong shoulders will assist with all your pressing exercises for chest, and they will help you pull more weight with all your rowing exercises for back. The key thing you need to focus on with shoulders is training for balance and proportion between all 3 heads of the deltoids.

Now the purpose of this program is NOT to demonstrate every single shoulder exercise that’s out there. But rather to focus on the select few moves that I have found to be the most effective for building strong functional deltoids and traps that will give you the edge in your workouts.
The Bradford Press is named after former US Heavyweight Olympic weightlifting champion, Jim Bradford. This was one of his favorite exercises for building incredible overhead pressing power.

This exercise is a fantastic exercise to work all the muscles along the shoulder girdle. I like to use it as a regular part of my warm up routine, just pressing lightweights for high reps to loosen up the shoulder joints. But you can also work up to pressing heavier weights with this movement as well and use it as a mass building shoulder exercise.

The key with the Bradford press is to not lock out your arms, only press the bar high enough to clear your head. Keep alternating pressing to the front and back of the head in a non-stop continuous movement. You do not lock out and pause in between reps, just keep the bar moving at all times.
**When To Use This Exercise:**

If your shoulders are a weak area, than I recommend including this at the beginning of your shoulder workout as a pre-exhaust / warm up move for the shoulders. Just use light to moderate weight for high reps.

You can also do this again at the end of your shoulder workouts to really finish off your delts. Literally just take the empty 45 pound Olympic barbell and rep it out for as many reps as you can do until your delts are burning like crazy. Repeat this for 2-3 sets.

This exercise can really pump a lot of blood flow into the delts and help spur on new muscle growth. Your shoulders literally do not get a break and are under tension with this moment the entire time.
The seated dumbbell shoulder press works the deltoids with a basic compound power move. Most people actually find dumbbell shoulder presses more comfortable than barbell shoulder presses because you can hold the dumbbells at the sides of your head and press up in a straight line.

When using dumbbells for shoulder presses you get more muscle stimulation compared to using a barbell, because you have to balance and support 2 weights. Dumbbells also allow more freedom of movement with your hand positions. You are not locked into a fixed position as you are with barbell presses.
When doing dumbbell shoulder presses you should set the bench at about an 80 degree angle, tilted slightly back. This will place you in a stronger position to press and make the exercise much more comfortable compared to sitting on a totally upright 90 degree angle bench.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

I’m a huge fan of dumbbell pressing exercises. I think from a bodybuilding point of view dumbbell pressing exercises are better than barbell pressing exercises. So to get the most out of your shoulder workouts I recommend that you include dumbbell shoulder presses as a regular mass building move in your shoulder workout routine.

For mass building exercises like the shoulder press, I usually recommend doing heavy sets of 8-10 reps and pushing yourself. Each workout strive for some form of progressive overload by either upping the weights by 5 pounds or performing an addition rep on each set.
Bent-Over Lateral Raise

The bent over dumbbell lateral raise is an isolation exercise that works the rear head of the deltoids. Most people neglect the rear heads of the deltoids because they are not as visible when training. The whole “out of sight, out of mind” concept really does apply when it comes to training the back and rear delts.

Very often the root cause of most shoulder injuries is a muscular imbalance between the front, side, and rear heads of the deltoids, with the rear delts being the weakest link. That's why it extra important to ensure you include specialization exercises specifically for the rear delts.

When doing bent over lateral raises you don’t need to handle heavy weights, you'll get more benefit from this exercise by using moderate weights and strict form.
You can do this exercise seated on the end of a bench and bent over at the waist as shown in the pictures. Or you can stand up and bend over at the waist so that your upper body is in the same horizontal portion.

Generally the seated position is a stricter and harder version compared to the standing position, which allows for a little more momentum and leg drive when lifting the dumbbells.

If you had a high enough bench you could also lay chest down on the bench and do the exercise. This would be the hardest variation of all because there would be absolutely no upper body assistance or momentum used at all.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

You can do this exercise as part of your actual shoulder workout routine. And you can also do it after a chest workout routine. The reason for including it with your chest workouts is because the front delts come into play heavily while bench pressing. So adding in some rear delt work at the end can help keep your shoulders in balance.

I recommend that you do at least 1 rear delt isolation move with each shoulder / chest workout. Now it doesn’t always have to be the bent over dumbbell lateral raise. You could use cables, rubber fitness bands, or you could use face pulls (as shown in the back workout exercises). But regardless of the movement(s) you choose, just make sure to work the rear delts regularly.

Lighter weights and higher reps (i.e. sets of 12-15 reps) tend to work the best for training the rear delts.
The dumbbell shrug is an awesome power move that really works the traps and allows for heavy weights to be lifted. There isn’t a big range of motion when doing any shrug variation, what’s most important is fully squeezing and contracting the muscles at the top of each rep.

The thing I like the most about using dumbbell’s instead of a barbell is that the weights are hanging straight down by your sides, you don’t have to drag a bar across your body like when doing barbell shrugs.

You also work both the left and right sides in proportion as the dumbbells split the workload equally on both sides. In fact, if I was limited to just “one” trap / shrug exercise this would be the one that I’d choose.
For exercises like shrugs that allow for heavy weights to be lifted you can use lifting straps to help reinforce your grip.

Lifting straps can be a little bit tricky to figure out at first, but once you get the hang of them they can really help you hold on to heavier weights.

Just a word of caution here, don’t “overuse” lifting straps. Some guys become dependent on them and never build up their natural grip strength. My advice is to save them for your heavy working sets, when you really need them.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

If you need to quickly build up your traps, than this is the number 1 exercise that I’d recommend. When it comes to dumbbell shrugs you can work up to lifting heavy weights AND high reps. I often shoot for 100 total reps when doing this exercise (i.e. 4 sets of 25 reps).

Save your shrugs for towards the end of your shoulder workouts, after you’ve already done your basic power and isolation moves. They are a great finisher and will pump your entire shoulder complex like crazy!
Hand Stand Push Ups

What if I told you that there is a simple exercise that you could do that would pack on solid muscle mass to your shoulders. Dramatically increase your pressing power and functional strength. And this simple exercise would only take a few minutes per week.

Not only that it doesn’t cost a cent, doesn’t require any exercise equipment, and can be done practically anywhere... would you be interested?

Well there is such an exercise and it is the handstand push up. This is one of the best exercises that you can do for building functional strength and muscle mass throughout the entire upper body. You can consider the handstand push up to be the bodyweight equivalent to the barbell military press or shoulder press.

This exercise is certainly a more advanced movement, but I have an article and YouTube video clip showing how you can perform this exercise. Along with a progressive handstand workout that you can try.

You can get this right on my website for FREE at:

http://www.leehayward.com/handstand_push_ups.htm
Tricep Exercises

Triceps make up 2/3 of your upper arms. So the key to building big guns that stretch your shirt sleeves and cause people to stop and do a double take is building thick meaty triceps.

In addition to filling out your arms, triceps help you with so many of your upper body pressing moves as well. With bigger stronger triceps you’ll bench press more, shoulder press more, do more push ups, etc.

I’ve literally written the book on “arm specialization” training with my “Blast Your Biceps” program at: http://www.BlastYourBiceps.com

Now despite the name, this program covers everything from building big bis and tris as well as getting bigger and stronger all over. It’s a very complete system. And right here in this section I’ve taken some of the best tricep specialization exercises from the “Blast Your Biceps” program and have included them here for you.
Tricep Cable Push Downs

Tricep push downs are basically to triceps, what bicep curls are to biceps. They are a basic compound exercise that works the triceps through a full range of motion.

The grip and handle attachments that you use for push downs can change the exercise greatly. Holding a straight bar attachment with an overhand grip is the strongest position that brings all 3 heads of the triceps into play. Using an underhand grip or a rope attachment is a harder, more isolated tricep exercise that will target more of the outer head of the triceps.
When you do this exercise try to keep your elbows close to your torso at all times and make the triceps do the work. If you leg your arms flare out to the sides, it brings in more of the chest and shoulders, almost like a close grip cable bench press.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*Tricep push downs with a straight bar attachment are best done at the start of your workout as a power / mass building move for the triceps. Work up to heavy sets of 8-10 reps.*

You can also do them as an isolation / finishing move by using a rope attachment or grabbing the bar with an underhand grip. This tends to work more of the outer head of the triceps to help add shape. These other variations are a lot stricter and will require lighter weights and higher reps. *(i.e. sets of 12-15 reps work the best for isolation.)*
The decline bench tricep extension is very similar to the more popular flat bench tricep extension (aka: skull crusher). But the fact that you are doing the exercise in a decline position will actually increase the range of motion and give you a much deeper stretch through the long head of the triceps.

There is also less stress on the elbow joint when doing tricep extensions in the decline position, compared to doing them on a flat bench. When you are angled down your forearms can come down further and you can bend your elbows more than a 90 degree angle. This actually takes the stress off the elbow joint and places more of the workload on the tricep muscles themselves.
I personally prefer the decline bench tricep extensions in place of the flat bench tricep extensions. I suggest that you experiment and try doing both variations in your workouts and see which one feels best for you.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*This is one of the best exercises for both a mass and stretch movement. It allows for heavy weights to be lifted, and it fully stretches out the long head of the triceps. Since I've started including this as a regular in my tricep workouts I've seen a huge improvement in size, fullness, and shape.*

*Keep the reps in the moderate 8-10 rep range and strive to add weight whenever possible, but never at the expense of sacrificing your exercise form.*
Chances are you have never heard of the JM press before, unless you’re familiar with powerlifting. The JM press is a hybrid lift that was invented by JM Blakely, a man who held world records in the bench press. This is one of the key exercises that helped him develop impressive bench pressing power. It’s a combo of a close grip bench press and a lying tricep extension.

So instead of lowering the bar to your chest (like you do in a bench press). Or simply bending your elbows (like you do in a tricep extension). You’ll lower the bar higher up towards your head and let your forearms fold down to your biceps until they lock up in the bottom. So it’s a combo of an extension and press move.
It’s kind of tricky to explain it with words alone, you really need to see this exercise being done to truly understand how it’s properly performed so that’s why I’ve posted up a video clip of the JM Press at:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=09q-wob818M

**When To Use This Exercise:**

You can use this as a major compound power exercise in your tricep workouts. This allows for heavy weights to be lifted and really packs on size to the lower area of the triceps. As you get stronger in this exercise your bench press will get stronger as will all your pressing exercises.

Start off doing 3 sets of 10 reps until you get comfortable with the exercise. Then you can work on increasing the weights. In powerlifting it’s common to work up to doing 5 sets of 5 reps with this exercise.
The bench dip is a great exercise for working the triceps as well as the front heads of the deltoids. It’s good to use as a finisher move when your triceps are already pre-exhausted from your regular workout arm routine.

For this exercise space 2 flat benches the length of your legs apart. Rest the heels of your feet on one bench and the palms of your hands on the other. Lower yourself down between the benches, keeping your body in a L-shape position. Go down until your elbows are bent at 90 degree angles.

You could add weight to this exercise by having a spotter add weight plates on your lap if needed. But I personally prefer to use this as a high rep bodyweight finishing move for the end of a triceps workout.

Some people find this movement places a lot of stress on the shoulders. Especially when adding extra weight plates to the exercise. But as a bodyweight only move you shouldn’t have any problems. However, use your own discretion when performing bench dips or any exercise for that matter. Not every exercise works for every body. If something doesn’t feel right, don’t do it. Find another exercise alternative instead.
When To Use This Exercise:

Save this exercise for at the very end of your arm workout and just rep it out, going for the burn in the triceps. Shoot for 3-4 sets of as many reps as you can do. Eventually you can even work up to doing 100 total reps (i.e. 4 sets of 25 reps) with this move.

High rep / high volume training like this is great for pushing blood into the muscles and helping to stretch the facia tissue. Regularly getting that tight pumped feeling and then stretching the muscles while pumped actually increases the muscles potential for growth.
Tricep Dumbbell Kick Backs

A lot of people think tricep kick backs are a waste of time. After all it’s a small exercise and it doesn’t allow for heavy weights. But this is one of the few exercises that really provides a hard peak contraction in the tricep muscles.

Just think about most tricep moves; close grip bench, dips, tricep extensions, push downs, etc... With all of these exercises you can “lock out” the weights at the top and get a mini rest pause for your muscles and your joints support the weights.

However, with tricep dumbbell kick backs you can’t do this. Once you lock out your arm you have to fight to hold that dumbbell in place with a strong peak contraction throughout all 3 heads of the triceps.
In fact I find that this exercise when done towards the end of a tricep workout gives me the hardest peak contraction in the triceps. It’s almost a painful muscle contraction that burns like crazy and it really helps bring out shape and detail to the triceps. This is very important for competitive bodybuilders, or anyone who wants an impressive set of muscular arms!

**When To Use This Exercise:**

Save this exercise for after you do your main compound power moves. To get the most out of tricep dumbbell kick backs use them as a finisher to really blast your triceps and pump them up like crazy.

Do 3 sets of 15 rep at the very end of your arm workout. Really focus on locking out your arm and getting that full peak contraction throughout the triceps.
Bicep Exercises

Chances are the very first time you ever picked up a dumbbell you tried to perform some sort of bicep curl with it... It’s a toss up between bench presses and bicep curls as to which one people associate with more when it comes to weight training.

I mean even as a kid growing up if anyone ever asked you to “make a muscle”, I bet you rolled up your sleeves and flexed your bicep. Big arms, specifically big biceps, are the show off muscles when it comes to having a muscular physique. Heck, even the very first mandatory pose in a bodybuilding competition is the “Front Double Bicep”.

So I don’t need to tell you why having big biceps is important, that’s kind of been ingrained in you since you were a kid. Instead I’m just going to focus on sharing some of the best moves I’ve found for turning spaghetti noodle thin arms into muscular guns!

If you would like to really take your arm development to the next level, than I would highly recommend you pick up a copy of my “arm specialization” training system “Blast Your Biceps” at: http://www.BlastYourBiceps.com
Standing Barbell Curls

This is the most basic bread and butter bicep exercise there is. Simply grab a barbell with both hands and curl it up. It’s pretty simple, but it works. One major problem that we are facing these days is that with so many new fancy exercise machines in the gym, a lot of people are getting away from the basic free weight movements that have stood the test of time and have been proven to be the most effective movements for building real size and strength.

With the standing barbell curl you are better off using a straight barbell rather then an EZ curl barbell. The act of twisting your hands all the way so your palms are facing up in the supinated position, will fully activate the bicep muscles. Granted it may feel a little more uncomfortable on the wrists at first, but the little bit of discomfort is worth it in terms of fully stimulating your bicep muscles.
You can also target the different muscle heads of your biceps by varying the width of your hand placements. A wider grip will tend to focus more of the stress on the inner head of the bicep, and a narrow grip will tend to focus more of the stress on the outer head of the bicep. And of course, a medium width grip will target the entire bicep equally.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

You can use this as a major compound power exercise in your bicep workout. This allows for heavy weights to be lifted and really packs on size to the entire bicep muscle.

Keep your reps in the 8-10 range and focus on using strict form. Try to keep the cheating and swinging of the weights down to a minimum. But with that being said you don’t need to be so ridiculously strict to the point that you hold yourself back. Instead you should start off with a weight that allows for perfect form for at least 6 reps. Than if you need to use a little bit of “Body English” to complete another couple reps that’s ok.
Incline Dumbbell Curls

Incline dumbbell curls are a great stretch exercise for the biceps. In fact this was a favourite of the great Arnold Schwarzenegger and his bicep development was incredible!

The key here is to use an incline bench set at about a 50 degree angle. Sit on the bench with your back to the pad and let the dumbbells hang down by your sides. Curl them all the way up to the top and then lower them back down.

Don’t have the bench angle too far back and over stretch the biceps in the bottom. You just want a light stretch so you can rebound out of the bottom position. Not so much of a stretch that you are going to risk pulling or tearing a muscle.
To help keep more tension on your biceps and get a better stretch as you do this movement, keep your palms facing forwards at all times. Most people let their palms turn in at the bottom when they do this exercise and this actually takes the stress off the biceps. But if you keep your palms forward in the bottom you will really work your bicep muscles to the max and get more benefit from the exercise.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

There are a lot of benefits to incline dumbbell curl for bringing up stubborn biceps. First, it’s a dumbbell exercise meaning that both the left and right arms are getting equal muscle stimulation, this will help create balance and proportion between the left and right arms.

Second, it’s a stretch exercise. A lot of people don’t include exercises that fully stretch out the muscles and thus never get the potential growth that stretching can provide. However, because this is a stretch exercise you should save it for the middle of your workout when your biceps are already warmed up from doing at least 1 mid-range compound exercise first.

Keep your reps in the mid-range of 10-12 reps per set. The nature of the exercise will prevent excess body momentum and cheating. But make sure to go through a full range of motion, getting a full stretch and a full peak contraction with each rep.
Preacher Curls

Preacher curls are a personal favourite exercise of mine, they stretch out the biceps in the bottom and provide a strict movement to really pump up your biceps. Most people like to do preacher curls on the angled side of the pad, but I prefer to do them on the opposite side where your arms can hang straight down. Not all preacher curl benches allow you to do curls on the backside of the pad, but if the one at your gym does then by all means take advantage of it. However, if you only have a standard preacher bench with the 45 degree angle pad then you use that variation instead.

Doing preacher curls on the vertical side of the pad allows you to go all the way down and slightly rebound out of the bottom because your arms are pointing straight down and there is not a lot of strain on your elbows or tendons, you’ll just feel a light stretch in the muscles. It’s safer and easier on the tendons compared to using the 45 degree angle preacher bench.
I also recommend you do this exercise with the close grip of an EZ curl barbell. The angled grip and width works really well for this movement and the close grip will target the outside head of the biceps and help build more shape and peak.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*If you need to add more shape and fullness to your biceps then I would highly recommend including close grip preacher curls as a regular in your bicep workouts. The close grip will target the outer head of the biceps for more peak. And the full range of motion and good stretch you get will help stimulate new muscle growth.*

*However, because this is a stretch exercise you should save it for the middle of your workout when your biceps are already warmed up from doing at least 1 mid-range compound exercise first.*

*Keep your reps in the mid-range of 10-12 reps per set. The nature of the exercise will prevent excess body momentum and cheating. But make sure to go through a full range of motion, getting a full stretch and a full peak contraction with each rep.*
Hammer Curls

Hammer curls are a unique exercise that allow you to build up your arms from the “inside out”. There is a small muscle that runs underneath the biceps called the brachialis and when it is fully developed it can actually help push the peak of your biceps up higher and add lines and detail to your arms.

This isn't to say that just training the brachialis alone will result in the massive sleeve stretching arms that you want. But if you're neglecting the brachialis in your workouts, then you are cheating yourself out of getting maximum results in your arm development.

One of the best exercises that you can do to work the brachialis while adding mass to your biceps and forearms at the same time is with Hammer Curls. These are quite similar to the Standing Dumbbell Curl, but rather than twisting your wrists and supinating your biceps as you curl the dumbbells up, you simply keep them straight up and down.
**When To Use This Exercise:**

_Hammer curls can be used as a mass building power move if done at the beginning of your bicep workout. If you do them in an alternating fashion (curling one dumbbell at a time) you can actually handle heavier weights. Or you can do them towards the end of your workout as more of a finishing / shaping move._

_If using them for a power builder keep your reps to 5 per arm. Generally, the way I'll do them is alternate curling each dumbbell for a total of 10 reps (5 reps per arm). If using them as a shaping / finishing move go with higher reps (i.e. 10-12 reps per arm)._
Reverse Grip Barbell Curls

Most people consider the reverse grip barbell curl a forearm exercise. But it’s a great addition to add to a total arm workout. Using a reverse grip when curling places the biceps in its weakest curling position, but it can help add size and depth to the arms because it targets the brachioradialis muscles in the forearms and the brachialis muscles in the upper arms. Working these muscles is almost like building the arms from the inside out because these muscles are underneath the biceps. Just like with the Hammer Curls that we mentioned previously.

The first Mr. Olympia, Larry Scott, did a lot of reverse curls in his workouts and he was known for his exceptional arm development. Another twist that Larry Scott often did was performing reverse grip curls on the preacher curl bench. This really isolated the arms and made the exercise much more difficult by eliminating body momentum.
Either way you do them (i.e. standing or on the preacher curl bench) the reverse grip barbell curl is a great addition to add to any bicep workout routine.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

Reverse grip barbell curls are best used after your main power exercises as a finishing / shaping move. Keep the weights lighter and the form strict. Shoot for sets of 10-12 reps with this exercise and focus more on feeling the muscles working and getting a good pump, rather than trying to move heavy weights.
More often than not the forearms are a neglected muscle group in most people’s workouts. If they get worked at all, it’s usually nothing more than a couple sets of wrist curls at the end of a workout... *If they have time...*

Now while it’s true that the forearms are not a major muscle group like the back, legs, chest, etc. They are more important than most people give them credit for. After all, it’s your grip / forearm strength that connects you with the barbells, dumbbells, and machine handles during your workouts. If your grip and forearm muscles are weak that will limit your strength in all of these other major exercises as well.

When it comes to functional real world strength, the grip / forearms are right up there at the top in order of importance. In addition to the strength benefits, there is nothing that looks as impressive as a ripped set of muscular forearms when someone is wearing a short sleeve shirt.

So right now I’m going to share some of the best forearm exercises that will help give you a powerful grip and a set of thick meaty forearms that will make Popeye jealous :-)}
Most likely you have already tried using some cheap plastic handle department store hand grippers before. Theses are the type of grippers that you can mindlessly squeeze away all day long, often with a gripper in one hand and the TV remote in the other.

But Heavy Grips Hand Grippers are NOT like that. They are high quality steel hand grippers that range in tension from 100 pounds, and go up in 50 pound increments all the way to 350 pounds per gripper! Let me tell you squeezing a 350 pound gripper isn't something you'll be able to do while channel surfing at the same time...

Direct grip training will not only help you build a stronger grip, but it will also increase your forearm size as well. When I started using Heavy Grips Hand Grippers I added a full inch to my forearms in just 90 days. And this wasn’t the result of “newbie” muscle gains either. In fact I was working out for over 10 years before I ever touched a heavy gripper.

This is something that I firmly believe ALL muscle building enthusiasts should be using. By incorporating Heavy Grippers as a regular part of your training you’ll be able to build a stronger grip.
With a stronger grip you’ll feel much more secure when doing your other body part workouts. So indirectly this will allow you to lift heavier and hold onto the weights longer so that you get more reps done.

Don’t let your grip be the “weak link” that holds you back. A stronger grip can indirectly help you get stronger all over. You can get more information about Heavy Grips Hand Grippers along with a complete Hand Gripper Training Workout to follow at: http://www.leehayward.com/heavygrips.htm

Get a FREE 20 page Hand Gripper Training e-Book Manual with each Hand Gripper Order!

When To Use This Exercise:

The best time to train hand grippers is right after you have finished your regular workout routine. When you are all warmed up from a heavy weight training workout your grip will be stronger.

So you can either take your grippers with you to the gym and train them right after your workouts. Or you can wait until you get home from the gym and train them then. Either way it will only take about 10 minutes after your workouts.

Gripper training doesn’t take much time, but the bit of time you do spend training your grip is time well spent. It will help improve the overall quality of all your weight training workouts.

The best way to train your grip is NOT with high reps (like most weight training exercises). Instead you’ll get better gains by doing high intensity low rep and even single rep gripping exercises. This is all explained in the Hand Gripper Training Workout that you can get with every Hand Gripper Order at: http://www.leehayward.com/heavygrips.htm
In addition to training with Heavy Duty Hand Grippers, you need to do some direct work for the forearm muscles themselves. A lot of people think that their forearms get enough work as a side benefit of grabbing the barbells and dumbbells for their other workouts. But this is NOT the case. To give you an example, we walk on our feet all day long, but does that make your calves huge? Of course not, the calves need direct muscle stimulation in order to grow, and so do the forearms.

When doing wrist curls for the forearms I recommend using dumbbells over barbells. This allows you to target each arm individually (thus building balance and proportion). And it also allows for a better range of motion and more freedom of movement with your wrist joint.

To work your forearm flexors (the meaty part of the forearm) perform dumbbell wrist curls with your palms facing up. I prefer to do these on the end of an exercise bench and just let my hand hang over the edge (as shown in the pictures above).
Make sure to use a full range of motion, letting the hand bend over the bench for a full stretch in the forearm. Then curl your wrist all the way back up for a peak contraction in the forearm flexor.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

The best time to train your forearms is at the end of your workout routine as your last exercise of the day. This way any fatigue or lactic acid burn you get in your forearms will not affect the rest of your workout.

Stick with reps in the 10-15 range. Due to the small tendons and ligaments of the wrist joint you shouldn’t push it and lift excessively heavy weight for low reps. Now you can still train with progressive overload, but keep the reps in the double digits and go for more of a muscle burn, rather than straining the tendons.
Reverse Dumbbell Wrist Curls

To keep your forearms in balance you need to train both sides, the flexors and the extensors. One of the best moves for targeting the forearm extensors is the reverse grip dumbbell wrist curl.

Just like with the regular grip wrist curl you’ll get more muscle isolation and a better range of motion using dumbbells over a barbell. I personally find that holding your forearm across the bench as shown in the pictures, makes the movement more comfortable and allows for a better contraction in the muscles.

Make sure to use a full range of motion, letting your hand bend over the bench for a full stretch in the forearm. Then curling your wrist all the way back up for a peak contraction in the forearm extensor.
**When To Use This Exercise:**

The best time to train your forearms is at the end of your workout routine as your last exercise of the day. This way any fatigue or lactic acid burn you get in your forearms will not affect the rest of your workout.

Stick with reps in the 15+ range. Due to the small tendons and ligaments of the wrist joint you shouldn’t push it and lift excessively heavy weight for low reps. The reverse grip wrist curl is a very weak exercise, you won’t be able to handle much weight here, it’s even a lot weaker than the regular wrist curl. When it comes to progressive overload, you should focus more on increasing the sets and reps before you increase the weights.
Abdominal Exercises

The abs can be a very deceiving muscle group. We all want “six pack abs” but very often the key to getting those abs isn’t necessarily building more muscle, but rather simply losing excess bodyfat.

You see everyone has abs, it’s just that for 99% of the population their abs are covered by a layer of bodyfat so you can’t visually see them. Even if you are muscular and well developed you can still have an “ab-less midsection” until the skin is lean and thin enough to reveal those abs.

So while isolating and building the abdominal muscles will certainly help improve your core strength. It isn’t until you lose all the excess bodyfat around the middle before you’ll really have “Six Pack Abs”.

In this report I’ll cover some of the best exercises for building the abdominal muscles. But to lose the fat and get ultra lean you should check out my Extreme Fat Loss Program at: http://leehayward.com/dvd/xfatloss.tm
Decline Bench Sit Ups

The decline bench sit up is one of my personal all time favorite abdominal exercises. It works the entire abdominal region; the upper abs, lower abs, and also brings the obliques into play as well. It really is an all in one abdominal exercise.

The steeper you have the decline of the bench, the harder the exercise will be. So you may want to start with a lower decline at first and gradually build up to a steeper decline as you get more advanced.

When you do this exercise do not rest flat on the bench in the bottom position, keep tension on your abs at all times. Basically you shouldn’t let your shoulders touch the bench in between reps.
**When To Use This Exercise:**

You have a lot of flexibility when you do your abdominal workouts. Some people like to start their weight training workout with ab exercises. Some people like to save abs for at the end of a weight training workout. And other people like to do them separately and pair up doing an abdominal and cardio workout. There is really no right or wrong way to go about it, the main thing is that you simply do them consistently (i.e. 2-3 times per week).

One thing I do want to point out is that you should focus on doing resistance exercises for the abs. Many people fall into the trap of doing endless sets of easy crunches and leg raises for ridiculously high reps. But you’ll make better gains by training your abs with resistance and reps in the 15-25 range. Really try and feel the abdominal muscles flex and contract with each rep.
Pull Down Cable Ab Crunch

Pull down ab crunches are a good all around abdominal exercise. They work the entire frontal abdominals right along the rectus abdominis, intercostals, and serratus muscles.

The thing I really like about this movement is it is one of the few abdominal exercises that work the abs from a standing position. You’ll really hit your abs with some unique muscle stimulation by including this exercise in your routine. In addition to that, it also allows for gradual progressive overload because you can add weight via the cable pulley stack.
I find holding a short straight bar handle attachment with an underhand grip works the best for this exercise. As you stand facing away from the lat pull down machine, make sure to brace the back of your legs against the knee pad for stability. Bend forward at the waist as far as you can, until you feel a full contraction throughout the abs. Hold that position for a second and then return to the starting position.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*This is a good ab exercise to do first in your abdominal workout because it’s a heavy strength building move. You can train the pull down cable ab crunch just like any other exercise, with progressive overload.*

*Do sets of 10-15 reps and try to increase weights whenever you can, but just make sure that you maintain good form and control. The abs always respond better when you focus on feeling the muscles working, rather than simply trying to keep going heavier and heavier.*
If you are looking for the “Gold Standard” of abdominal exercises this one is probably it… The Hanging Overhead Leg Raise is one of the hardest and most effective core exercises you can do.

Regular leg raises where you just lift your legs half way up are hard enough. But once you lift your legs all the way up until they touch the bar you are hanging from, this engages your entire abdominal muscles like nothing else. You’ll work the lower abs, upper abs, and the obliques, lower back, etc. all your core muscles come into play with this one. Plus you’ll build up good grip strength from grabbing the bar and holding your entire bodyweight as well.

Work your way up to performing 5 sets of 10 reps of this exercise. Resting 1 minute in between each set. Now unless you are in awesome shape right now, chances are you won’t be able to do 5 sets of 10 (i.e. 50 total reps) of this exercise right off the bat. So just do the best you can.
You may have to start with regular leg raises or even bent knee leg raises at the beginning. But as you get stronger and more comfortable you can attempt the overhead leg raises, and then work up to performing the full 5 sets of 10 reps.

If you get really advanced with this movement you could add ankle weights to increase the resistance. But me personally, I prefer to do perform the exercise using slower and stricter form and increase the sets and reps, as this one is hard enough with just your bodyweight.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*It's important to work the lower abs with every abdominal workout. The hanging overhead leg raise is one of the hardest lower ab exercises you can do. So you may have to work up to being able to perform it. But regardless you should do some leg raise variation.*

*Since this is such a demanding ab exercise you may want to do it first while your abs are fresh. This may allow you to get some extra reps before moving on to some of the easier abdominal exercises.*
Leg Exercises

The tendency for most men when it comes to weight training is to focus primarily on the upper body, with secondary emphasis on the lower body. Guys are usually most interested in building up the “show off” muscles of the chest, arms, abs, etc. This kind of training often leads to CLS - “Chicken Leg Syndrome”. Where someone will have a well built upper body stacked on top of thin puny legs.

Competitive bodybuilders will often refer to this as having a good “gym physique”, but not a good “stage physique”. You see when someone is working out in the gym wearing a tank top and track pants they can hide their scrawny legs and look really good if their strong points are the chest, shoulders and arms.

But that same person will look really awkward when on the bodybuilding contest stage wearing posing trunks revealing the obvious flaw in their physique. Weak legs just makes everything look out of balance. Often times it looks like 2 different bodies connected at the waist.

Now even if you are not a competitive bodybuilder, this doesn’t mean you are off the hook when it comes to leg training. Besides keeping your physique balanced and in proportion, there is another advantage to hard and heavy leg training and that’s natural anabolic hormone production.

When ever you work the big power house muscles like the legs, back, chest, etc. this helps stimulate your body to release more testosterone and growth hormone. The body works as a whole unit, so by making your legs stronger this will indirectly make your upper body stronger as well.
So right here in this section we’ve going to jump in and cover some of the best exercises for building up powerful legs. Now even though you may already be familiar with some of these exercises. The kicker that makes all the difference is HOW we do them. There are ways to take basic exercises and milk them for all they are worth to make them even better muscle specialization exercises!
The squat is arguably one of the best exercises you can do for muscle growth. Not only do they heavily work the legs, hips, back, and traps. But squats provide a high level of stimulation to the central nervous system and this in turn helps trigger an anabolic response throughout the entire body.

When it comes to squat technique there is a lot of debate over doing full squats (as shown in the pictures above) or doing partial squats where you don’t squat all the way down. But in my opinion you are better off training a bit lighter and learning how to perform “full squats”.
Granted it takes more time and effort to master dong the full squat compared to simply doing a partial squat. But the overall gains you’ll make in your leg development are worth it.

Another important point I want to mention is that full squatting, when done properly, is actually easier on the knees than stopping half way down. When you squat deep you work the knees through their natural full range of motion and distribute the stress more evenly. But when you stop half way down the stress is directly placed right on the knee joint.

Olympic weightlifters always squat really deep and they have amazing leg development. And the owner of the best legs in bodybuilding, Tom Platz, was known for doing rock bottom “ass to the floor” squats. So my advice is take the time to learn how to do proper full squats, it will be better for your overall leg development in long run.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

Squats are the king of leg exercises hands down. It’s good to perform them early in your leg workouts when your strength and energy is high. You want to give your squat workout 100% effort.

There are a lot of different types of squat programs that you can follow. And it’s important to cycle through a variety of different routines to maximize your leg development.

Some of the more popular ones are:

**20 Rep Squat Routine** at: [http://leehayward.com/squats.htm](http://leehayward.com/squats.htm)

**Blast Your Squat** at: [http://www.BlastYourBench.com](http://www.BlastYourBench.com)
(Note: Blast Your Squat is included as a bonus with Blast Your Bench.)

**Hardcore Muscle Building 5 x 5 Routine** at: [http://leehayward.com/dvd](http://leehayward.com/dvd)
The stiff leg deadlift is a fantastic exercise for the hamstrings, glutes, and lower back. When it comes to working the hamstrings most guys will add in a few sets of leg curls at the end of their leg workout and call it a day. But stiff leg deadlifts will hit the hamstrings like nothing else.

It works the muscles through a full range of motion so that you feel a deep stretch in the muscles. This is critical for bringing up stubborn hard to grow body parts. Not only that, but the stiff leg deadlift is a big exercise so you can handle a lot of weight with this move.

The way I like to visualize doing this exercise is touching your toes while holding the barbell. Keep your knees slightly bent to take tension off the tendons, but do not squat down in the legs, keep your legs in a fixed position. Keep your back tight and maintain a natural arch in your lower back. Lower down until you feel your hamstrings stretch out, hold it for a split second, then return to the top position.
**When To Use This Exercise:**

Since the stiff leg deadlift is a stretch exercise, it’s important to do it in the middle or at the end of your leg workout when the muscles are fully warmed up and limber. You never want to stretch a cold muscle, nor do you want to do any stretching exercises for cold muscles.

This move works best when keeping your reps in the mid-range of say 10 reps per set. Start off with a couple lighter warm up sets and then keep the same weight and shoot for 3-4 sets of 10 reps.

You need to be more conservative with increasing your weights with stiff leg deadlifts, compared to regular deadlifts. Stiff leg deeds are more a stretching exercise, than a power exercise. So focus on stretching and feeling the hamstrings work and only up the weights when you can maintain perfect form and a full range of motion.
Leg Extensions

Leg extensions are a great isolation exercise for the quadriceps. They work the quads in a peak contraction position and are great for really bringing out the detail and separation in your legs.

As you are doing this exercise you should pull your toes up towards your shins as you extend your legs. This foot position will allow you to contract your quads harder than if you pointed your toes out straight and flexed your calves.
With this exercise lockout your legs fully at the top and hold it for a second before lowering back down. Because this is a peak contraction exercise the fully locked out position is actually the hardest one to hold, you can’t lock out the weights and get a little rest like with some exercises.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

To bring up stubborn quads and add lines and definition to your legs I recommend that you start your leg workouts with leg extensions. Very often guys have difficulty feeling their quads working when doing big power exercises like squats and leg presses. But by “pre-exhausting” your quads first with leg extensions you can actually get more muscle activation from them during your other exercises.

I’ll often start my leg workouts with 100 total reps of leg extensions, done in a rest pause fashion. So I’ll take a very light weight and just rep out as many reps as I can, rest 10-15 seconds, do another mini-set for as many reps as I can, rest 10-15 seconds, etc. and keep going for 100 total reps.

This will pump up your quads like crazy and bring a lot of blood flow into the muscles. Not only that, but it’s very therapeutic on the knee joints as well. So if you have knee problems, light high rep leg extensions can help you rehab the knees.
Bodyweight Lunges

Lunges are one of the best leg exercises you can do. And when you do them with your back leg elevated on a bench, as shown in the pictures, you’ll really maximize the muscle stimulation and get a better range of motion as you do the exercise.

This move really stretches out the quadriceps in your back leg, and you’ll feel your hamstrings and glutes working hard in your front leg.

Try to position the width of your stance so that your knee is centered over your front foot when in the bottom position of the lunge. This will be the strongest position. If you stand too narrow you will place more stress on the knees, and if you stand too wide you will place more stress on your hip joint.
Make sure to perform equal reps for both legs. One leg may feel stronger or more secure than the other. If that’s the case don’t worry about it, that’s totally normal. Virtually everyone has some muscle imbalances between their left and right sides. But you should make a point to start with your weaker side first and then do the exact same number of reps for your stronger side afterwards.

When To Use This Exercise:

High rep bodyweight lunges are a great way to finish off a leg workout and improve the quadriceps, hamstrings and glutes. In fact, virtually all the muscles of the legs are brought into play here because they recruit the smaller stabilizer muscles to balance and support your body during the exercise.

I like to save these for at the end of a leg workout after you have done your big compound power exercises as well as your smaller isolation work for the quads and hamstrings.

Just use your bodyweight and pump out as many reps as you can do. You can even alternate doing mini sets of 10-15 reps per leg until your legs are toast. I personally strive for 100 total reps! Granted this is advanced, but when you work up to doing that kind of high volume of lunges your legs will no longer be a weak muscle group.

Another option is to do walking lunges and literally lunge up and down the length of the gym floor. While you won’t get the same stretch from walking lunges as you will from bench lunges (as shown in the pics) it’s another good alternative you can use to add variety to your workouts.
The leg press is a great mass builder for the overall legs. They allow for heavy weights to be lifted in a safe manner. This exercise is a great complement to the squat because it works the legs hard, but doesn’t place hardly any stress on the back.

If possible I’d prefer you do squats as the main power house leg exercise of your workout. But there will be times when your back is extra fatigued or you just don’t feel up to squatting with a bar on your back. It’s times like this when you can do the leg press as a good substitution exercise.

When you are doing the leg press the higher you place your feet on the footplate the more you’ll work the hamstrings and glutes. And the lower you place your feet on the footplate the more you’ll work your quadriceps. You should experiment and see which position feels best for you.

As you lower the weight down stop when your quads touch your torso. Do not go too deep and have your lower back roll up off the bottom of the backrest. This will just increase your risk of injury and it has no additional muscle building benefits.
When doing heavy leg exercises like leg presses and squats you should take a deep breath at the start of each rep, hold your air in your belly, lower the weight down, and actually use the tension created in your core to help “rebound” out of the bottom position. Then when you extend your legs at the top you can take a couple breaths before doing your next rep. Controlling your breathing like this will stabilize your torso and make you stronger during the lift itself.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*Like I mentioned above, the best option for your leg workouts is the barbell squat. But for those days when you just need a break from having a loaded barbell across you back, you can do the leg press instead.*

*With leg presses you should push yourself hard and strive to do 10 reps per set. But a little trick that you can do to take the leg press from a “good” exercise to a “great” exercise is adding partial burn reps at the end of your set.*

*To do this simply perform your regular full range of motion leg presses for 10 reps, rack the weight, and then just continue on doing little mini reps from the top of the machine. Just pressing the weight about 6-10 inches. Now this will vary depending on the length of your legs and the set up of the leg press machine, but most guys can press the weight sled up about 6 inches or more while it’s still racked.*

*The great thing about this is you can safely rep out to failure with no risk of getting crushed under a heavy weight sled. You should be able to push it hard for a set of 10 full range of motion reps, then immediately continue on with another 10-20 mini partial burn reps at the top. These will work your legs like crazy, but also help to spur on some new muscle growth!*

*I cover the topic of partial rep training in more detail and actually have a complete workout program that uses this technique for all body parts in my “Hardcore Muscle Building DVD Program” at: [http://www.LeeHayward.com/dvd](http://www.LeeHayward.com/dvd)*
Calve Exercises

In the greater scheme of things, calve workouts are pretty low on the priority list for most guys. That is until they are a few years into their training and then all of a sudden realize they have this huge weakness of tiny little chicken legs.

It’s better to avoid the problem from the get go and include quality calve training right from the start. And if by chance you are already suffering from a case of **CLS - Chicken Leg Syndrome**, then the tips I have to share with you here can help you pack some meat to those boney lower legs.
Standing Calve Raise

Standing calve raises are my personal favorite calve exercise because they work the calves through a full range of motion and allow for heavy weights to be lifted. Just like with all calve raise variations you should really exaggerate the stretch and the peak contraction with each rep you do.

The calves are a very tough dense muscle that gets worked with a partial rep every time you take a step. So to really spur on muscle growth you need to work them in a way they are not accustomed to, which is fully stretched and peak contracted.
With the standing calve raise variation, do as many perfect form strict reps as you can. But once you fatigue and can no longer perform “perfect reps” you can use a little leg drive from your knees to help you grind out a few reps and totally work the calves to failure.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*I personally like to use the standing calve raise as the main move in my calf workouts. Start off light and work your way up with several progressively heavier warm up sets. Keep your reps around 10-12 per set. And really exaggerate the stretch at the bottom and the peak contraction at the top of each rep.*

*Rather than trying to lift super heavy, keep the weights moderate, and strive to feel the muscles working when you do your calve exercises.*
The seated calve raise machine is a good isolation exercise for the calves. Being in the seated position with your knees bent at a 90 degree angle will place more of the workload on the outer head of the calve, the soleus muscle.

When setting up for seated calve raise make sure that the kneepad is very snug fitting right over the top of the knees. This will place the stress right over the calve muscles. Do not set up with the pad higher up on your quads.
As you do the exercise itself make sure to lower your heels all the way down for a deep stretch, hold this for a brief moment, then lift up all the way on the balls of your feet for a peak contraction. When it comes to building big calves, using a full range of motion is the key to maximizing your development.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

*I personally like to do the seated calve raise after the standing calve raise. Start off with 1 or 2 warm up sets to warm up your ankles, then take the same weight for 3-4 sets. Keep your reps around 10-12 per set. And really exaggerate the stretch at the bottom and the peak contraction at the top of each rep.*

*Rather than trying to lift super heavy, keep the weights moderate, and strive to feel the muscles working when you do your calve exercises.*
1 Leg Calve Raise

If you have an imbalance between the left and right calves, than 1 leg calve raises are a good exercise for developing balance and proportion between both calves.

Hold a dumbbell in one hand at your side. Step onto the ledge of a sturdy platform (at least 6 inches high) let your heels hang off the edge of the step and place all the weight on the balls of your feet. With your free hand hold something study for balance. Keep your chest up, abs tight and your eyes focused forward.
Keep your working leg (dumbbell side) straight as you keep your nonworking leg off the floor. Concentrate on maintaining perfect balance, keeping the dumbbell steady at your side. Slowly lower your heel toward the floor until it can go no farther; hold briefly, feeling a good stretch in the calf. Then press through the ball of your foot to drive your body up as high as possible. Hold the peak contraction for a second before lowering your heel and repeating.

Once you complete all reps for one leg, repeat with the other leg. If you have one leg that’s stronger than the other. Start with your weaker leg first and then make sure to do the exact same number of reps for your stronger leg.

**When To Use This Exercise:**

Save 1 leg calve raises for the last move of your calve workouts. Your calves should already be fully warmed up by the time you get to these so you can just go to your top working weight. Do 3-4 sets of 15-20 reps per leg. Really focus on the stretch at the bottom and the peak contraction at the top of each rep.

After you do a few sets of single leg calve raises you can pump out high rep bodyweight calve raises with both legs. This is a great way to really pump up the calves like crazy and help to spur on new growth. For this last set of bodyweight calve raises shoot for 100 total reps done in a rest pause fashion. The lactic acid burn will be painful, but the results will be worth it.
Conclusion

Well, we just covered several different specialization exercises for each of the major muscle groups of the body. So what you need to do now is evaluate your own physique and select the 1 or 2 body parts that you feel are lagging behind the most. Once you’ve done that go back and implement the body part specialization training tips for those specific muscle groups into your workout routine.

Now if you have any questions about how to implement muscle specialization workouts into your overall schedule, or any bodybuilding and fitness related questions; than I encourage you to join my private Total Fitness Bodybuilding “Inner Circle” Coaching Club at: http://www.TotalFitnessBodybuilding.com

As an “Inner Circle” member I’ll guide you through the entire process of building a lean muscular physique in REAL TIME!

You get on going “side-by-side” coaching from directly from me personally as an exclusive member of the Total Fitness Bodybuilding “Inner Circle” Coaching Club.

To sign up for your risk free trial membership, just head on over to my website at: http://www.TotalFitnessBodybuilding.com
Who The Heck Is This “Lee Hayward” Guy Anyway, And Why Should I Even Listen To Him?

Well, I’d probably be asking the same thing if I were reading this for the first time. So let me start by introducing myself... If you haven’t already figured it out by now, my name is Lee Hayward and you may have seen me before, because I’ve been online for over a decade! (I’m one of the “dinosaurs” of the online bodybuilding scene :-)

In fact my personal website www.LeeHayward.com is currently the #1 Most Visited Bodybuilding Personality Website online (as ranked by Alexa.com).

Since 1999 I’ve personally helped countless numbers of aspiring bodybuilders and muscle building enthusiasts from all over the world pack on rock hard muscle mass, increase their physical strength, and get ripped.
I’ve worked with competitive bodybuilders, fitness & figure competitors, powerlifters, football players, boxers, martial artists, as well as average guys and gals who just want to get in shape and look their best.

In addition to coaching others, I also practice what I preach. I’ve been competing regularly in bodybuilding competitions since 1995. With my most recent competition being the 2010 Atlantic Canadian Bodybuilding Championships.

The reason I’m telling you all this, is NOT to toot my own horn, but to let you know that I’m a REAL person who actually does workout and that I practice what I preach.

**Bodybuilding & Fitness is my passion!** Unlike a lot of the “phoney fitness gurus” and flabby out of shape personal trainers, who may talk a good game, but when you actually see what they look like physically you have to wonder if they even workout?

This is a pet peeve of mine that really pisses me off I can’t stand it when I see someone proclaiming themselves as a “**Muscle Building or Fat Loss Expert**” when they don’t even practice what they preach and look the part.
But I Have To Admit, 
I Was NOT Always In Good Shape...

In fact when I was younger I had a scrawny, weak and puny “skinny-fat” body. You know what I’m talking about... 
The spaghetti noodle thin arms, flat chest, puny chicken legs, all connected in the middle with a soft mushy belly fat roll.

Being scrawny and out of shape like that certainly didn’t help my self-esteem. I got picked on and bullied in school. I was pretty much a loner and the other students just walked all over me. It seemed like they could sense that I was weak and self-conscious and they took advantage of it.

I was so embarrassed with how pathetic my body looked, that I was willing to do anything to change it. I can clearly remember how my muscle-building journey started...

Back in 1990 I decided that enough was enough, I finally had it with being picked on and humiliated from being the “skinny fat guy” and I was going to do something about it!

I asked my parents to get me a home gym for Christmas that year so I could start working out and building muscle. They were very supportive and ended up getting me a York 2001 home gym machine and a York barbell and dumbbell set. This is where I got my humble start in the world of working out and bodybuilding.
At First I Was So Excited About Working Out!

But This Was When My REAL Challenges Began...

When I started out I was so naive that I assumed all I had to do was “workout everyday” and all my physique troubles would be solved. I was expecting to see my body rippling with muscles in the matter of weeks...

But It Never Happened...

I faithfully followed those cheesy little York workout wall charts that came with my home gym machine. Day after day I’d go through the total body workouts. But my body was certainly NOT “rippling with muscles”.

I couldn’t understand what I was doing wrong? I was following the workouts...Where were the muscles?

I was floundering around like this for months. Then I started asking for “workout advice” from gym teachers, coaches, friends, and family members who all thought they were being helpful. But they really didn’t have a clue as to what worked and what didn’t when it came to building muscle.

So I literally wasted years of progress by following old outdated workout programs and listening to out of shape coaches and gym teachers who “used to lift weights back in the day”.

In fact, the picture below shows what I looked like after 3 full years of working out...

**Obviously, Something Was Wrong Here...**

I may have trimmed of some of my pudgy belly, but what I was doing certainly wasn’t helping me gain more muscle mass. I only weighed 135 pounds and **I was literally a bone rack.**

Just look at the picture...

It’s NOT exactly what you’d expect to see from someone who has been lifting weights consistently for 3 full years!

It got to the point where I was working out daily. Sometimes for several hours at a time. Severe overtraining was putting it mildly. Looking back at it now I can see how stupid it was, but at the time I didn’t know any different. And my lack of progress would just frustrate me even more.

Have you ever felt frustrated like this, busting your ass in the gym week after week, and nothing to show for your efforts? If so, we have a lot more in common then you realize, and you can relate to how discouraged and helpless I felt inside. It was because of this that...
I Went On A Personal Mission To Find Out Exactly What I Needed To Do To Build Muscle...

I spent years reading and studying all the material out there on how to workout and build muscle. I became obsessed with learning everything there was to know about exercise and nutrition.

At first I was really excited because there seemed to be a lot of good information available. But the more research I did, the more confused I got :-(

And the real frustrating part was that most of what I learned was **WRONG**...
It simply didn’t work when I tried it!

You see the dirty truth of the matter is that commercial interests have complicated things to the point where it’s hard to know who to trust anymore. Unfortunately, most of the “big wigs” in charge couldn’t care less about helping the average guy pack on muscle & get in shape. All they care about is the almighty **$$ Dollar $$**

A prime example of this is with **Muscle Magazines**. I’ve literally bought hundreds of bodybuilding and fitness magazines over the past 20 years and read most of them cover-to-cover.
I’ve tried dozens and dozens of the so called “champion bodybuilder” workouts that were published, and more often than not I’d end up burnt out, over trained, and more frustrated then ever.

And to make matters worse, **99% of the workouts you see in the magazines (and online) are made up by professional “ghost writers”,** and are NOT even written by the actual bodybuilders themselves!

**Please Don’t Fall Victim To These Dirty Lies ... Like I Did...**

This is going on all the time. In fact a lot of companies will even hire people from 3rd world countries for dirt cheap to slap together half baked workout routines.

“Do 3 sets of this, and 4 sets of that, super-set it with something else... blah, blah, blah...”

The problem with this is that many of these “ghost writers” haven’t even stepped foot inside a gym before. They are just re-cycling crap that’s already out there and passing it off as legit workout programs.
In fact most of the workout programs you see published in magazines and online have NEVER been tested on anyone in the real world. They are just slapped together in order to fill up page space.

And not only are they publishing BS workout programs, but they are doing it to make a propagated profit at YOUR expense!

More often than not these stupid ghost written workout programs quickly go from doing “3 workouts a week” to trying to sell you the latest Hyped Up Magic Muscle Building Supplement Stack.

You see every single magazine out there is owned by, or affiliated with, a supplement company. These magazines are selling full page advertisements for $10,000+ per page!

So when supplement companies are forking over that kind of cash it’s no wonder that over 80% of the magazines content is nothing more than supplement advertisements.

Even most of the articles that get published are nothing more then cleverly disguised supplement ads. And I don’t even want to get started ranting about all the crappy “shady supplements” that they are pushing, and then laughing all the way to the bank... with YOUR MONEY!
If You Can’t Trust The Magazines You Can Trust The “Internet”... Right?

I can remember the very first time I logged into the Internet. I was using an old 486 computer with a slow telephone dial up connection back in 1997. I went to YaHoo.com and searched for the word “bodybuilding”. Granted the Internet was peanuts compared to what it is like today, but non the less I thought I hit the jackpot!

I spent countless hours on all the popular bodybuilding forums and message boards looking for some “real world advice”, only to be bombarded with tons of useless contradictory crap and childish online debates.

And if you ever get a chance to actually see the guys who proclaim to be the “bodybuilding forum experts” it would SHOCK YOU.

They all act big and pretend to know it all, but most of them are just scrawny teenagers who just started working out themselves.

A lot of these kids get a kick out of posting up fake pictures and talking smack, while they pretend to be “Experts” on the Internet forums... All the while keeping hidden behind the safety of their computer monitor and anonymous screen name.
You Have To Be Very Careful From Whom You Take Advice From These Days...

The big turning point for me was when I started attending local bodybuilding and powerlifting contests. At first I would just go as a spectator, but I would stay afterwards just so I could meet and talk to the competitors.

This is without a doubt what helped me the most and where I learned the “secrets” to building muscle, right from the people who were actually doing it in the REAL World!

I became good friends with several of the local bodybuilders and powerlifters and would often train with them in the gym.

This allowed me to see what they did themselves, and I would just pick their brains for tips and tricks on how to pack on lean muscle mass.

This is when things REALLY started to “Click” for me and I was able to make some of my best muscle gains ever!
Since then I’ve made it my mission in life to help people, just like YOU, get in their best shape ever and build a lean muscular physique through smart training and nutrition. I’m sick and tired of seeing honest hard working people being misinformed and wasting their time with ineffective programs. I don’t want you to have to go through the same struggles and frustrations that I went through.

For over a decade now I’ve been reaching out and helping literally thousands of people from all over the world via my website. [http://www.TotalFitnessBodybuilding.com](http://www.TotalFitnessBodybuilding.com)

I encourage you to head on over to my website right now and sign up for your Risk FREE trial membership into the **Total Fitness Bodybuilding “Inner Circle” Coaching Club**.

This way we can keep in touch and I’ll share my very best muscle building and fat burning strategies so that you can finally achieve the ripped muscular physique that you deserve!

all the best,
Lee Hayward
(Your Muscle Building Coach)
[http://www.TotalFitnessBodybuilding.com](http://www.TotalFitnessBodybuilding.com)
Lee Hayward – Muscle Building Coach & Competitive Bodybuilder

http://www.TotalFitnessBodybuilding.com