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MAXING OUT

» FOR THOSE NEW to the iron game, the temptation to get under a heavy load and push with all your might can be overwhelming, especially with everyone asking, "So, what do you bench?" But as a novice lifter you aren't ready for that kind of challenge and can quickly find yourself sidelined with an injury. Get at least six months of consistent bench-pressing under your belt before having a go at your one-rep max. In the meantime, try the YMCA Bench-Press Test. Load a barbell with 80 pounds of total weight and go to failure, using a pace of about one second down and one second up. Then plug your total reps into the following equation: $3.16 \times \text{reps} + 39.9 = \text{one-rep-max bench press}$

For example, if you can get 30 reps with 80 pounds, your one-rep max is about 135 pounds. You might not want to tell anybody, but at least you'll have a point of reference.

GEAR OF THE MONTH

ABLE PLANET TRUE FIDELITY HEADPHONES

» A study by the Weider Research Group presented at the 2008 Annual Meeting of the National Strength & Conditioning Association found that when trained lifters listened to their preferred music, they were stronger on every set of every exercise. Earbuds have their place, but for total immersion try Able Planet's True Fidelity active noise-canceling headphones. They're so effective at piping music in and keeping the din of the gym out that you may wear them everywhere. Available in black or white with a 1/4-inch stereo and airplane adapters, and a hard-shell protective case. \$130; ableplanet.com



> 150

THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF MINUTES PER WEEK OF MODERATE-INTENSITY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY RECOMMENDED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES IN ITS 2008 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS



THE PETERSON PRINCIPLE

GUNNAR PETERSON, CSCS, CPT, is a Beverly Hills-based personal trainer with more than 20 years of fitness experience. His clients include elite athletes, celebrities and guys like you.

What do you think is the most interesting training innovation in the last 10 years?

» First, let's make sure we agree on what *innovative* is: For the sake of this question, let's say it's something new and different that's applicable to a wide range of the population. With that in mind, I'd go with vibration training, specifically the Power Plate. It has a variety of applications for a very broad demographic. It can help with rehab, prehab and dynamic stability work. More and more professional athletes are turning to this technology to fine-tune their games. The only things I've ever seen that shake that much were my first car and something in a nightstand drawer. Positive benefits can be derived from all three, but the Power Plate is way more innovative.

M&F FINE-TUNE BICEPS



If you thought standard curls were the only way to build your bi's, check out this routine

STRONG-ARM TACTICS

KEEP YOUR BICEPS GUESSING — AND GROWING — WITH THIS INNOVATIVE MULTIANGLE ARM ROUTINE

BY JOE WUEBBEN

WORKOUT BY GUNNAR PETERSON, CSCS

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL DARTER

According to bodybuilding lore, the late Vince Gironda — the “Iron Guru” and owner of legendary Vince’s Gym — would throw you out of his weight room if he saw you starting a workout with curls. But you can see where he was coming from: Generally speaking, a proper training session should start off by targeting big muscle groups using compound exercises.

“I understand Vince’s passion for training bigger muscles first. I think the biceps are often overtrained and trained improperly,” says Gunnar Peterson, CSCS, who, like Gironda, has earned the distinction of being one of Hollywood’s most sought-after personal trainers. “That said, we don’t want to squash the energy and passion that goes into training bi’s.”

Peterson points out two major culprits of ill-conceived biceps routines: doing too many concentration curls and not having enough variety. “I think concentration curls look cool in prison movies,” he states. “But I don’t think you need to crank them out every workout.”

He’s adamant about constantly varying the angle of the curl in your workouts: upper arms behind the torso (as in a dumbbell incline curl), arms in line with the torso (a standard barbell or dumbbell curl) and arms in front of the torso

(a preacher or bent-over curl).

“The fact that this muscle has ‘bi’ in its name means it’s more complicated than if it were called the ‘uniceps brachii,’ so it has to be treated as such,” Peterson explains. “You have to hit both heads by changing the angles and using different grips: hammer, narrow, wide and reverse. You must challenge the biceps, not just at its strongest point but also at its weakest point.”

Strong and weak points vary from person to person, but most are strongest on curls where the upper arms are behind the torso and weakest when the arms are in front. Find your weak points and attack them. “But when you do, you’ve got to be man enough to acknowledge them so you can work to eliminate them,” Peterson explains. “If you suck at a particular exercise from a certain angle, that’s all the more reason to do it!”

Another cause of ineffective biceps training is weight selection. “I’d say it’s split evenly between those who go too heavy and those who don’t go heavy enough,” Peterson says. “If you use strict form and reach failure at 5–7 reps, that’s fine. But if you load up the bar because you want to impress the lady next to you and you get five or six reps with deplorable form, never venturing into the 10–20-rep range, you’re doing yourself a disservice.

“You’ve got to know what you’re doing,” he adds. “Chasing the pump is fine, but you need a path down which to chase it.”

THE WORKOUT

→ Pick 2–3 exercises and perform 6–15 sets per workout. “If you’re a rep-counter, shoot for a minimum of 50 reps per workout and a maximum of 225,” Peterson says. “Be creative with your combinations, mixing low- and high-rep sets.”

→ If your biceps are lagging, perform this workout twice a week with either a pull workout (back and biceps), your triceps routine or even on leg day.

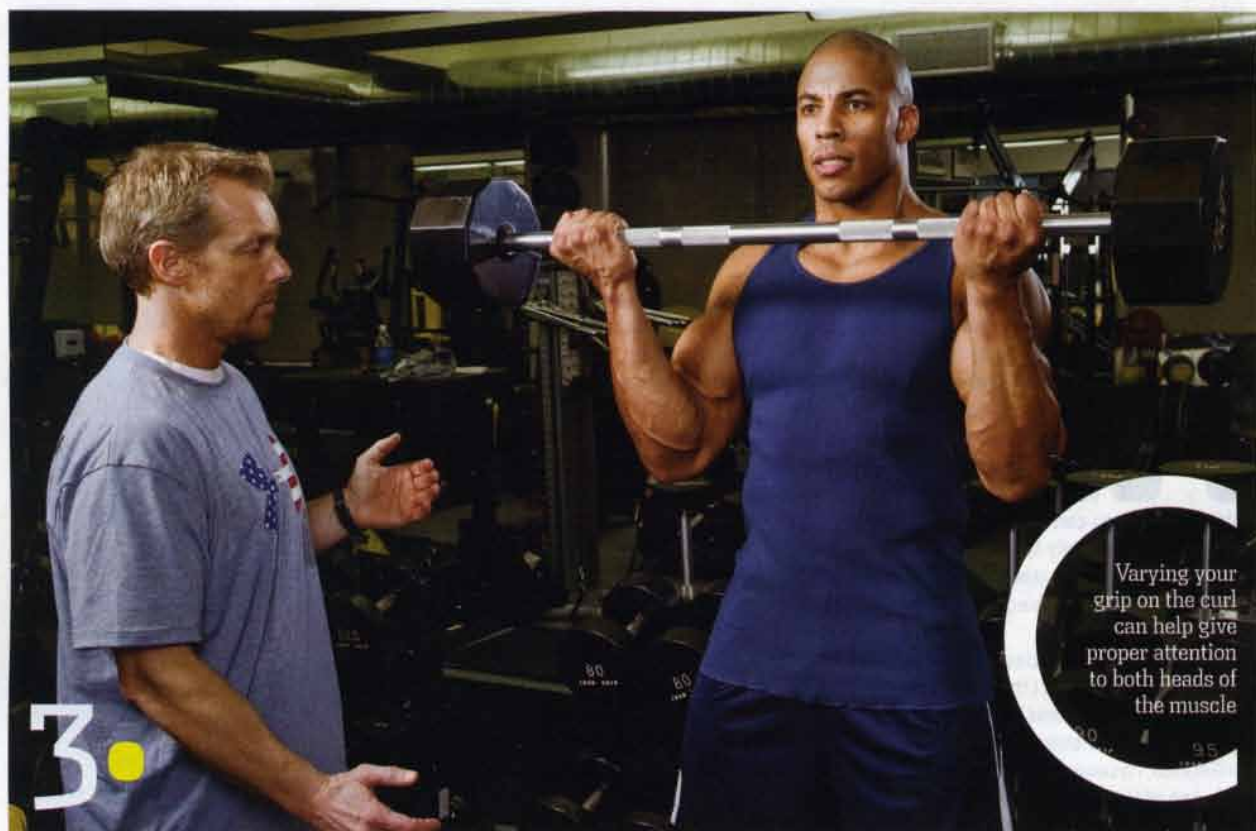
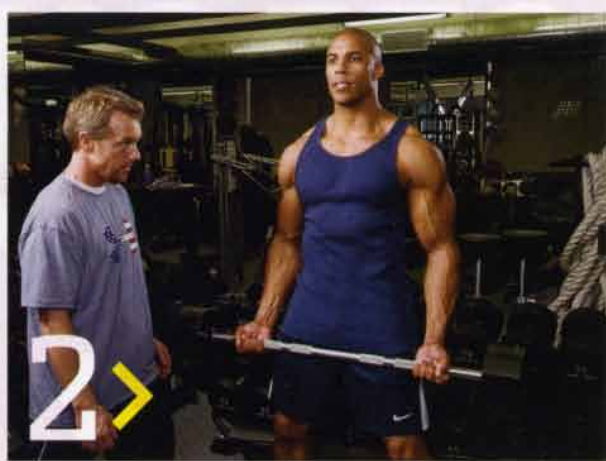
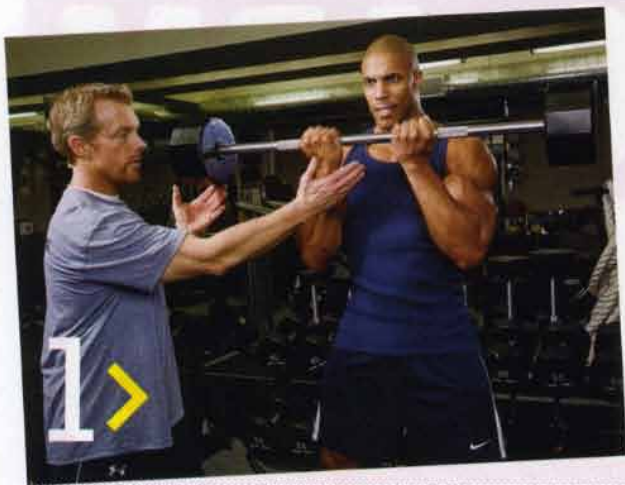
Narrow-to-Wide Barbell Curl

Zottman Curl
(aquatic-ape style)

One-Arm Cable Preacher Curl

Kettlebell Squat/Hammer Curl

Dumbbell Incline Curl
(lying to sitting)



Varying your grip on the curl can help give proper attention to both heads of the muscle

Narrow-to-Wide Barbell Curl

> OLD STANDBY BARBELL CURL

START: Stand erect holding a barbell in front of your thighs with your hands 10–12 inches apart, palms facing forward.

EXECUTION: Keeping your elbows tight to your sides, contract your biceps and curl the weight toward your shoulders, then lower under control. When your technique begins to suffer, move your hands about 6 inches wider on the bar and rep to failure.

GUNNAR'S TIP: "Think about pulling with the pinky- and ring-finger parts of your palms. Don't let your hands roll over so the webbing between your thumbs and forefingers carries the majority of the load. This way you keep tension on the biceps. When you widen your grip, you can shift the weight more to the webbing."

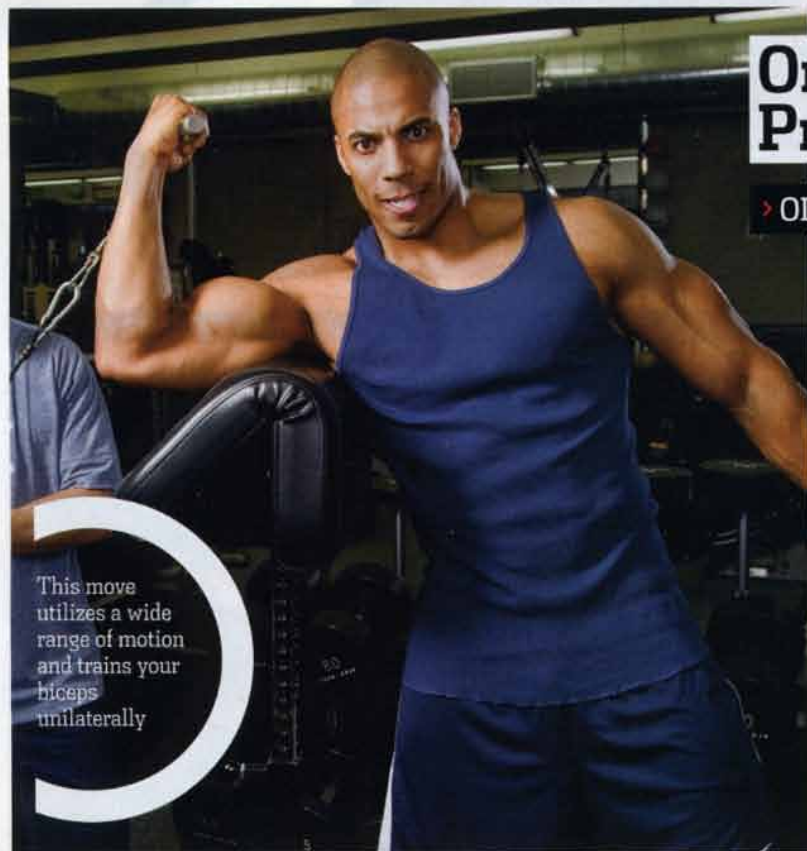
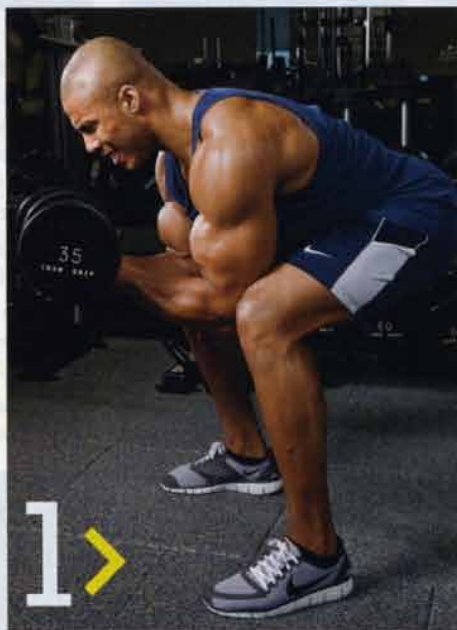
Zottman Curl (AQUATIC-APE STYLE)

> OLD STANDBY ZOTTMAN CURL

START: Stand erect holding a pair of dumbbells at your sides with your palms forward. Bend at the hips so your torso and legs form a 45-degree angle. Your arms should hang toward the floor.

EXECUTION: Maintaining this position, curl the dumbbells toward your shoulders. Pronate your wrists (turn your palms down) and lower the weights. (Going from supinated to pronated constitutes a Zottman curl.) At the bottom of the rep, supinate your wrists to initiate the next rep and repeat. When you reach your desired number of reps, change your body angle to 90 degrees and rep out with Zottman curls again. Then stand upright and perform reps to failure. That's one set.

GUNNAR'S TIP: "The aquatic-ape evolution of man chart — where at the beginning man is bent over and by the end he's standing upright — is where the name comes from. Keep your knees slightly bent and stand up by extending your hips. Keep your back flat throughout."



This move utilizes a wide range of motion and trains your biceps unilaterally

One-Arm Cable Preacher Curl

> OLD STANDBY PREACHER CURL

START: Position a preacher-curl bench in front of a low-pulley cable station and attach a D-handle. Grasp the handle with your right hand, sit on the bench and place your triceps on the pad. (You could also use a standing preacher curl bench.) Turn your torso to the left so your chest opens perpendicular to the weight stack. Your working elbow should extend behind your torso and you should feel a stretch in your chest.

EXECUTION: Keeping your triceps flush with the pad, curl the handle toward your shoulder and squeeze for a count at the top. Lower to the start position. Repeat for reps, then switch sides.

GUNNAR'S TIP: "Think about pulling your pinky behind your ear instead of into your body. This isn't a heavy move. You'll need to go lighter than you think."

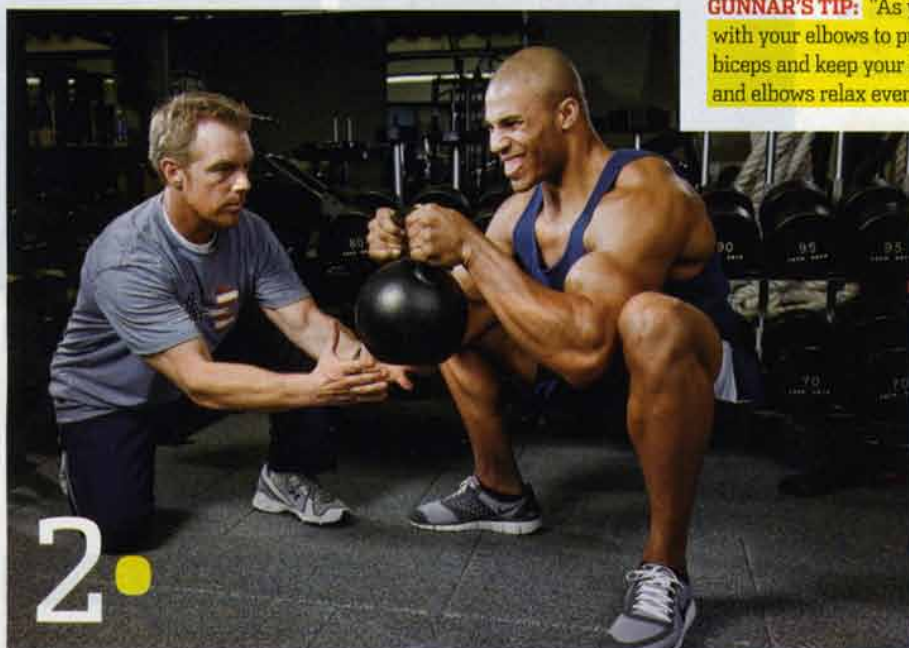
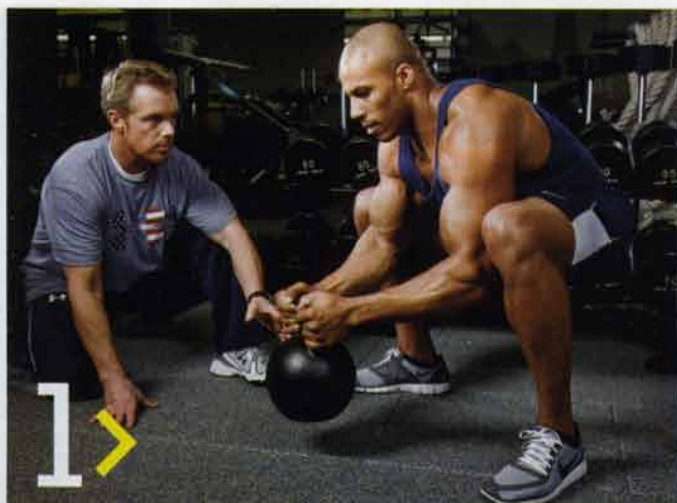
Kettlebell Squat/ Hammer Curl

> OLD STANDBY **HAMMER CURL**

START: Hold a relatively heavy kettlebell by the sides of the handle with both hands. Stand erect with your feet shoulder-width apart and toes pointing out slightly, then descend into a deep squat, keeping your arms between your legs with your elbows bent and against your knees. Keep your chest up and back flat throughout.

EXECUTION: Keeping your body stationary (except your hands and forearms), curl the kettlebell to just below your chin, then slowly lower it to the start.

GUNNAR'S TIP: "As you curl, push your knees out with your elbows to put isometric pressure on the biceps and keep your hips open. Don't let your knees and elbows relax even as you fatigue."



The thick handle on the kettlebell makes many exercises more difficult than with a dumbbell

Dumbbell Incline Curl (LYING TO SITTING)

> OLD STANDBY **DUMBBELL INCLINE CURL**

START: Holding a pair of dumbbells, lie faceup on an incline bench set to a 45-degree angle. Let your arms hang toward the floor.

EXECUTION: Keeping your upper arms perpendicular to the floor, curl the weights toward your shoulders, squeeze for a count at the top, then lower to the start position. Rep out to failure, then sit upright (which will make the exercise slightly easier) and go to failure again.

GUNNAR'S TIP: "When you sit up at the end, make sure you continue to use the full range of motion and keep your elbows pointed toward the floor." **M&F**

