

## FIRST SET EXERCISE OF THE MONTH

By Jimmy Peña, M.S., CSCS



### THIS MONTH'S EXERCISE

## Behind-the-Back Cable Lateral Raise



### THE START

**STEP 1:** Stand sideways next to a low pulley with a D-handle attached. Grasp the handle with your outside hand and take half a step forward and away to ensure tension in the cable.

**STEP 2:** Make sure the cable is running behind your legs, which will automatically draw your hand behind you a few inches. Your palm should be facing the cable stack.

**STEP 3:** Keep your chest up, abs tight and head neutral, with your eyes focused straight ahead. For balance, your non-working hand can rest on your hip or on the post of the cable machine.

**STEP 4:** Lock a very slight bend in your elbow.

You can incorporate the cable lateral as a way to pre-exhaust your shoulders prior to multijoint, compound moves like the overhead press and Arnold press. You can also save the movement for last in your routine and use it more as a way to flush and pump your delts.

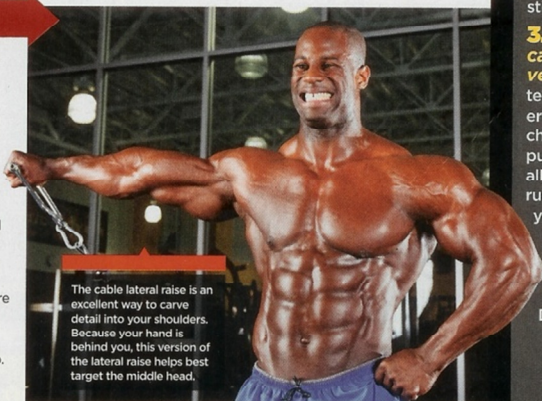
### EXECUTION

**STEP 1:** Flex your working delt to raise the handle up and away from your body.

**STEP 2:** Make sure you hold the locked elbow position to ensure it doesn't open or close to maintain tension on the middle delt.

**STEP 3:** Stop the movement when your hand reaches somewhere between 90 (parallel to floor) and 130 degrees (about 40 degrees above parallel).

**STEP 4:** Pause and squeeze your delt hard for a second before lowering the handle to the start. Because the cable runs behind you, your arm will automatically trail a few inches behind your hip. Stop the downward motion before the plates touch.



The cable lateral raise is an excellent way to carve detail into your shoulders. Because your hand is behind you, this version of the lateral raise helps best target the middle head.

TARGET MUSCLES  
MIDDLE DELT HEAD

## Biggest Training Errors

**1. Extending your elbow.** A common but critical mistake, visible when there's a big bend in your elbow in the bottom position but your arm is completely straight at the top, meaning your triceps has undergone extension.

**2. Stopping at parallel.** Another common mistake is to stop when your arm reaches the horizontal plane; however, your middle delts are actively engaged as high as 130 degrees. Therefore, continue raising the D-handle well overhead for maximum delt stimulation.

**3. Doing only the cable-in-front version.** While this technically isn't an error, by slightly changing the angle of pull, in this instance allowing the cable to run behind your back, you work the middle delt in a slightly different manner, meaning better overall stimulation. Do both moves.

Photos by Rich Baker  
Model: Stephen Frazer

### BEST ALTERNATIVE LYING INCLINE DUMBBELL LATERAL RAISE

Because the cable lateral raise provides such unique tension throughout the range of motion, a close counterpart would be the lying dumbbell lateral raise. If you lie on your side on an incline bench with a dumbbell at your side, just to lift the dumbbell off your hip takes an incredible amount of middle-delt activation. Lower the weight to just a few inches from your hip to keep constant tension on the middle delts. ♦♦

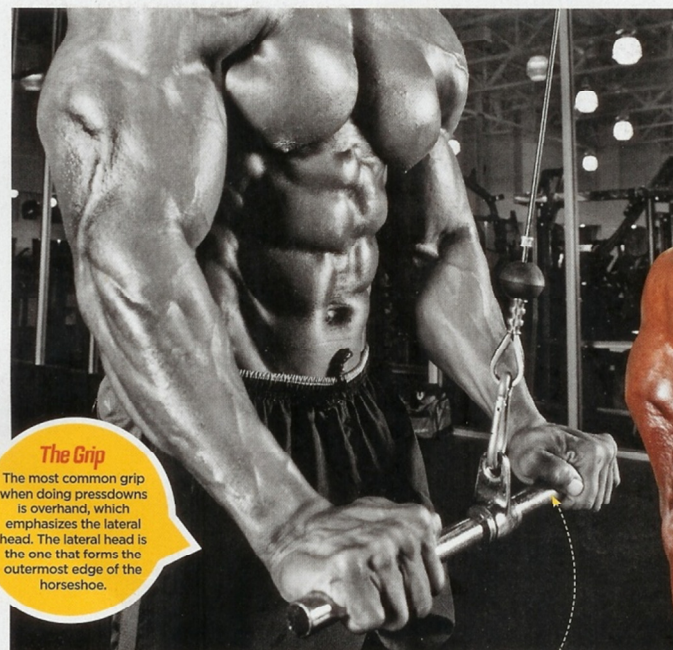
## FIRST SET MAKE ONE CHANGE

By Bill Geiger, MA



## What Happens When You Flip Your Grip?

Pressdowns are a favorite triceps exercise, but what happens when you change from an overhand to an underhand grip?



### The Grip

The most common grip when doing pressdowns is overhand, which emphasizes the lateral head. The lateral head is the one that forms the outermost edge of the horseshoe.

### → STANDARD GRIP: OVERHAND

Also called a pronated grip, the overhand grip is seen when doing the close-grip bench press, bench dip and skullcrusher. This grip places more of the emphasis on the lateral head of the triceps.

## MAKE THIS CHANGE

### USE AN UNDERHAND GRIP

This grip is more challenging, as it demands more out of your forearm extensors but can also put a strain on your thumbs.

### THE BENEFIT

The emphasis shifts to the triceps' small medial head, which is located below the long head just above the elbows.



Photos by Rich Baker  
Model: Stephen Frazer

### GET THE BENEFITS FROM BOTH

The shift of emphasis is slight, but by combining both moves in your triceps workout, each of which targets a different head, you can develop larger tri's that are more balanced and symmetrical. Remember, you can never completely isolate one particular head, but by changing your grip you can shift the emphasis of the move. ♦♦







## QUIZ Leg Day

Think you know the squat? Test your knowledge.

**1** Many guys perform very shallow squats, descending just a few inches and thinking they're getting the full benefit. In doing full-depth squats (thighs at least parallel to the floor), which two muscle groups benefit the most?

- ☐ A) QUADS AND HAMS
- ☐ B) HAMS AND CALVES
- ☐ C) GLUTES AND QUADS
- ☐ D) GLUTES AND HAMS



**2** If you were to follow a pre-exhaust workout for legs, which of the following exercises would be your best choice for the first movement in your routine?

- ☐ A) SMITH-MACHINE SQUAT WITH FEET PLACED WELL OUT IN FRONT
- ☐ B) LEG PRESS WITH FEET SPACE WIDE ON THE FOOT SLED
- ☐ C) LEG EXTENSION
- ☐ D) REVERSE HACK SQUAT

**3** Most people don't think much about foot position when training legs, but pointing your toes inward when doing leg extensions hits what area of the quads the hardest?

- ☐ A) INNER PORTION
- ☐ B) MIDDLE PORTION
- ☐ C) OUTER PORTION
- ☐ D) NO PORTION



## ANSWERS

**1.** Since going deeper entails greater hip extension, the glutes and hamstrings are the ones working hardest, so the answer is D. **While heavy shallow squats may look impressive, your legs don't get the full benefit of deep squats** where you go to a point at which your thighs are at least parallel to the floor. You may need to work on your lower-body flexibility if you're having trouble squatting to at least that point.

**2.** Nearly every sound training program follows a simple axiom: Do your compound (multijoint) moves before isolation (single-joint) exercises. **A pre-exhaust routine, however, is by definition one where you instead do a single-joint movement first.** Of those four exercises, only the leg extension is a single-joint move so that would be the one you'd do first. The correct answer is C.

**3.** The leg extension is a good single-joint exercise that's typically done at the end of your workout. With open-chain movements such as the leg extension, in which your feet aren't planted against an object (unlike the squat, leg press, lunge or even hack squat), you can slightly rotate your feet to shift the focus. Turning your feet inward hits the vastus lateralis (outer quad) to a greater degree. **Turning your entire leg inward will ensure you're still in a strong and stable position, while minimizing torque on the knees.** The correct answer is C. ♦♦