

MAN:MACHINE

"FINALLY I CAN HAVE
'CALEDONIAN THISTLE'
TATTOOED ON THERE

GUN SHOW TIME

Go from sofa-dweller to bodybuilder in just 30 steps (aches, sweat and tears not included)

In a (completely made up) survey conducted by ShortList, when asked to show their muscles, 99.5 out of 100 people flexed their arms (the 0.5 is a child with extraordinary calves). And apart from sporting a six-pack chiselled by Arnie himself, there's no greater symbol of strength than a set of shirt-stretching, loaded guns.

Acquiring them, on the other hand, is a different kettle of high-protein, oily fish. Becoming an arms dealer is all about hard work. Sorry about that. But, with the help of Britain's foremost tip-toting athletes, trainers and nutritionists, your quest for arm girth is in good, not to mention strong, hands...

JAMES HASKELL, RUGBY PRO

1. Do the Jackman

"There's an exercise called cable crossovers – I call them Wolverines. In the middle of a cable curl, draw it down diagonally and straighten your arms as hard as you can, like Wolverine getting his claws out. Make sure you keep your shoulders back and do everything with your triceps."

2. Wrap it up

"Get wrist or E-wraps and tie them around the top of both biceps, so they're under tension. Do a set of bodyweight press-ups to failure. Rest for 30 seconds and repeat twice more."

3. Forget regular meal times

"You should eat four or five times a day to promote muscle growth. Stick to good carbs such as brown rice and sweet potatoes."

4. Relax

"Rest is key. If you go over the top you'll never give your body time to repair. To grow muscle you have to create micro-tears that are repairing as the muscle's getting bigger. If you're doing the session properly, you should have sore arms the next day."

5. Ditch the dumbbells

"A lot of bodyweight training leads to arm development. Do some down and ups – put your whole body on the floor and bounce up to your feet – you're driving a lot through your arms and shoulders."

DAVID ARNOT, PERSONAL TRAINER

6. Maximise your testosterone

"Men with low vitamin D and zinc levels have lower free testosterone and higher oestrogen. Take multi-vitamins to ensure your biology's not sabotaging you."

7. Go for thickness

"Thick-bar training will target and strengthen forearms, usually an area of weakness holding arm development back."

8. Feel the burn

"Don't stop when your arms start to burn. This is just a build-up of lactic acid [a by-product of muscle contraction], which is being produced faster than you can get rid of it. Lactic acid production stimulates growth hormone, your best friend for development."

9. Eat meat – and fruit

"Increase your calorie intake with meat, low GI carbs, fruit and veg. Don't use junk food for easy calories, it will cause nutrient deficiency and fat deposits inside the body."

SHARMAIN DAVIS, NUTRITIONIST

10. Drip-feed protein

"Reduce muscle breakdown by using protein. Muscle protein is broken down when it isn't being supplied regularly from the diet. Drip-feed protein through the day: use dairy or nuts as snacks, and meat, fish, eggs or tofu in meals."

11. Consume creatine

"Naturally present in small amounts in meat and fish in our diets, a creatine supplement can help increase muscle stores, which

"WE RELEASE GROWTH HORMONES AT NIGHT. MUSCLES GROW WHEN WE ARE ASLEEP – NOT IN THE GYM"

serves to regenerate explosive energy required during weight and power-based exercises."

12. Ease the burn

"Extend your weights session by taking beta-alanine. It can increase muscle carnosine and help to buffer acid build-up, allowing a harder training load."

13. Hibernate daily

"Get 8-10 hours of sleep every night to help increase both size and strength. We release growth hormones at night, which means our muscles grow when we are sleeping, not when in the gym."

DALE ALEXANDER, PERSONAL TRAINER

14. Go big, don't go home

"If you're doing singular exercises for your arms, it's not enough of a challenge to grow. Performing three of four exercises of the same muscle group back-to-back with no rest leads to great results."

15. Train all rep ranges

"Train your arms with varying rep ranges. Doing both low-rep heavy loads and high-rep lighter loads attack both myofibrillar and sarcoplasmic hypertrophy, making them stronger and bigger."



16. Take care of your neighbours

"A muscle working hard recruits the neighbouring muscles and amplifies their strength. Always grip the bar tightly when you lift, to incorporate surrounding muscles into the movement."

17. Lose the extra tyre

"Simply by losing fat you'll develop more defined arms, which will make them look bigger."

GEORGE NORTH, RUGBY PRO

18. Do 21/7s

"I do an exercise called 21s. Slowly curl the barbell from the top of your thighs to just below your chin, before slowly lowering it back to the starting position, for seven reps."

ADRIAN JAMES, FITNESS MODEL

19. Work out slowly

"Take your time when completing reps, especially when lowering the dumbbell. Doing so will keep the muscle under tension for longer, working it to the limit."

20. Get a grip

"To maximise the efficacy of sets, try switching your grip, placing your thumb under the barbell instead of over it. Doing so will cause your triceps and biceps to work harder."

21. Don't neglect your triceps

"While the most visible arm muscle is the bicep, bear in mind that the tricep is actually the larger muscle. They require just as much attention as the biceps, if not more."

ZOE SMITH, TEAM GB WEIGHTLIFTER

22. Train hungry

"Working on an empty stomach will allow blood to flow from digestion to your muscles. This leads to a 'pump' – which is widening of the blood vessels."

23. Go German

"Done by performing 10 sets of 10 reps at the same weight, German volume training is one of the greatest methods to promote muscle gain."

24. Stretch. Massage. Grow

"Lee Priest [pictured below], believed to have the best arms in bodybuilding, regularly massaged his arms after training to stimulate growth and contribute to the micro trauma in the muscle fibres."



TOM EASTHAM, PERSONAL TRAINER

25. Don't go for the 'Popeye' look

"Your body will not allow for disproportionate growth. At some point, your 'arms only' routine will lead to a complete stop, so you must train your lower body too, as the more muscles you use the more growth hormone you'll have."

26. Train like Hercules

"The 'Hercules curl' will enable you to isolate the upper portion of the bicep. Keep the elbows drawn back and focus on the initial part of the movement."

27. Massive fails are good for you

"Aim for failure every time you set foot in the gym. You must never let your body adapt to training."

28. Do branchialis training

"Train the short head of your biceps brachialis [lower portion] by gripping a dumbbell with your thumb resting against the inside plate, focusing on the initial part of the movement."

29. Don't bail out early

"It will take you 4-6 weeks to see any difference in your arms, and this will probably not be growth, it will be definition. Don't be despondent or throw in the towel, as you would've wasted up to six weeks for nothing."

JONATHAN JOSEPH, RUGBY PRO

30. Inclined dumbbell curls

"Sit on an inclined bench with dumbbells and hands by your sides. Do 8-12 reps of regular curls with palms facing up, and supinating curls, where you start with your palms facing your body, and turn them face-up halfway through the movement."



JONATHAN JOSEPH (LEFT)
SWEARS BY INCLINED
DUMBBELL CURLS

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