

## **Arm Training... Boring – Boring – Boring**

by  
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As trainee after trainee, especially beginners, devote hours of every workout to arms; I've distanced myself from the boring ritual that consumes the masses who take to the iron. I've never tried to keep it a secret that the least favorite body part for me to train are the arms, biceps and triceps are pure boredom for me. When I first started lifting I was like everyone else. I worked my arms more than any other body part. If I missed a workout it would be anything but bi's and tri's. I dreamed of huge peaked biceps laying on top of a massive upper arm. In time; and by time I'm talking years here not weeks or months, and with honest objectivity I realized my arms, no matter what I did, would never become what I wanted them to become.

Honest evaluation places my arms as being genetically weak compared to the rest of my body parts. I say "genetically" because over the years I've trained them with more passion and intensity than other body parts only to have ended up hitting a brick wall. No matter how I trained them or what course of action I set out to follow, my arms simply would not come up to the standard of other body parts. My forearms and delts would respond but never the bi's and tri's. Arm training for me became boring as rep after rep and set after set provided gains but less than desired gains. I felt I was spinning my wheels. Still, lifting is a life-long passion for me and the fact my arms would never measure up to my desire did not prevent me from continuing working out. Yes, at certain times the lack of response to my arm training became frustrating and yes, I would occasional become discouraged. Persevere and push forward. Being dedicated, patient, and persistent has its rewards and so I did. I might add I've never regretted it.

With time I managed to get my arms up over the 19" mark which may not be totally bad but shape wise my genetic makeup left much to be desired. We all know a well shaped defined 15" arm looks better than a 19" lump of mass. I tried peaking movements and isolation exercises designed for shaping rather than adding but nothing seemed to work. At some point in time I resolved myself to the fact that train as I might there are just some things that I can not change and natural genetics is one of them.

I learned this valuable lesson and I've tried to pass along its value to others. Care has to be given however in that some will contribute genetic limitations as the reason for a less than desired body part development when in reality the foundation of the problem is laziness on their part. Laziness, poor methods, over training, under training, diet, etc., all need to be looked at carefully before one contributes a lack of progress to genetics. Genetic potential or the

lack of it cannot be determined within a short period of time. It takes years of consistent, dedicated, challenging workouts before such an observation can be made. This is perhaps more the case in the leg and calf department than any other body parts. Leg training is extremely hard work and people are more likely to tag lagging legs with their genetic makeup rather than the fact they fail to work the legs as hard and with as much intensity as other body parts.

I've had a few favorite arm routines that I preferred during my years of training but even the favorites became boring to me in fast order. Bodybuilding is so much like life in so many ways. In bodybuilding you get out of it what you put into it. Train with passion, consistency and progressive workouts and you will advance, seeing improvement almost weekly. In life if you devote yourself and work hard, get in early and stay late, you will most likely succeed in your endeavors. In life sometimes no matter how hard you try and how much good you do it won't be enough to get you what you want. In bodybuilding sometimes you can do all the right things and still end up short of your goal. Life and bodybuilding similarly... I think very much so.

I would train my arms and become bored very quickly, sometimes after just a couple of workouts on a new routine. Boredom with any routine will hinder progress and quite often result in no progress at all. Skipped workouts, less than total concentration, longer rest intervals – all lend themselves to negative results.

Here's one way I have overcome boredom with my bi and tri workout. I will perform only two sets of any exercise but I will perform at least three movements and often more depending on the number of times per week I have set up to work arms or what I want to accomplish. This approach keeps me from getting bored and I've found it lends itself to some pretty intense workouts. Since I only perform two sets of an exercise, mentally I seem to put more effort into it then if I were doing five or six sets. Here's an outline of one of my actual routines.

Biceps:

Standing Alternate Dumbbell Curls 2 x 8

Standing Barbell Curls 2 x 8

Incline Dumbbell Curls 2 x 10

Preacher Barbell Curls 2 x 8

Standing Dumbbell Hammer Curls 2 x 8

To make the workout even more interesting I would some times perform two sets of one movement before moving on to the next one. A variation would be for me to perform one set right after another until I completed one series, rest for a couple of minutes and repeat the cycle. Another method would be to superset the first two movements and tri-set the last three movements or visa versa. I would mix it up to keep workouts interesting. The same is done for the triceps.

Triceps:  
Dips 2x12  
Triceps Press Down 2x 10  
Lying EZ Bar Extensions 2 x 10  
Close Grip Bench Press 2 x 12  
Kneeling Rope Pull Extensions 2 x 10

There you have a nice routine that will hit all sides and angles of both the biceps and triceps. Ten total sets for biceps and ten total sets for triceps. This set up can be modified for individual training experience, intensity, age, etc. This week for example, I did the following.

Standing Alternate Dumbbell Curls 2 x 8  
Standing Barbell Curls 2 x 8  
Incline Dumbbell Curls 2 x 10

Followed by;

Dips 2x12  
Triceps Press Down 2x 10  
Lying EZ Bar Extensions 2 x 10

I went heavy on all movements and felt a total of six sets were more than sufficient since I plan on working both bi's and tri's twice this week. The arm workout I just listed and then I'll do bi's again at the end of my back workout and tri's at the end of my chest workout. For those workouts I will use somewhat lighter weights. That will give both the bi's and tri's two good workouts in one week.

The more you mix up a routine the more results I have come to realize. While some can stay on the same routine for months on end and still make progress, I've found variation, frequent variation, the best approach for me. I get pretty bored pretty fast.

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