

Ultimate arms pro-training secrets

By Manuela Nemes



Manuela Nemes in training at Body Sculptor Fitness Centre.

If you want fabulous arms, you have to combine proper training techniques and a healthy diet. It is that simple.

People often ask, “How do I tone up and lose the flabby fat under my arms?”

Like any other body part, the triceps (the back of the arm) and biceps (front of the arm) will not respond to spot reducing. In other words, you can’t do triceps or biceps exercises and hope to burn fat there. The only way to lose fat from under your arms is to lose overall body fat. By doing triceps and biceps exercises, you will build strength and firm up those muscles.

Arm training is different from training larger body parts such as legs, back, or chest. If you think about it, your arms are relatively small, compared to the rest of your body. When I first started training, I thought that in order to have great arms I needed to lift as heavy as possible. I have learned that weight is not as important as actually feeling the muscle working. At the same time, you must work out at a resistance level which feels “somewhat hard” on the “Rate of Perceived Exertion Scale”. Using cables, machines and working each arm individually is more beneficial and targets the working muscle more effectively. In order to show

muscle, you have to “create” them first. If you do not challenge your muscle with heavy enough weights, your body will not change. I always get frustrated when women, in their quest for toned arms, lift three-pound dumbbells, hoping to achieve muscular definition. Remember, muscle is a very dense tissue and it takes up less space than fat.

Caution: It is easy to overtrain your arms. When you train the chest you also train the triceps. When you train the back, you also train the biceps. These muscles are assisting the bigger muscles. If you train arms alone, you should schedule them after an off-day or when the following working day is a leg day. Your body grows when you rest, not when you are in the gym.

It should take you no longer than 45 to 50 minutes to train both biceps and triceps. It isn’t necessary to do more than nine sets for each muscle group. You need to train your muscles to fatigue, rather than complete exhaustion. Overtraining only leads to injury and muscle break-down, and hinders your overall development.

I like to train my arms alternating between biceps and triceps exercises (supersetting) to keep the workout intense and to maximise the time. The triceps muscles are responsible

for the overall size and look of your arm. There are three heads of the triceps. It is important to work triceps from all angles to effectively hit all three muscles. The biceps muscle is a two-headed muscle and one of the most variable muscles of the human body, which also needs training from various angles.

Start with lighter weights and then progress to heavier weights, once you learn how to correctly lift with proper form. This goes beyond just doing the movement, but really making sure that it is your biceps and not your shoulders moving the weight through the range of motion.

It is important to gain body awareness and keep the mind-muscle connection alive.

Lastly, don’t forget about your diet and nutrition. You can have good muscle development in your arms, but if they are covered with a layer of fat, you will never see the benefits of your weight training. Watch the processed carbohydrate intake. Stick with a diet rich in protein, vegetables, and healthy fats.

It helps to keep a food log in which you write down everything you eat or drink. If you have a hard time keeping track on your own, as part of a Lifestyle and Weight Management Programme, I

create a food and activity log for you and provide you with a personalised diet analysis and a weight tracker specific to your goals.

Begin changing bad habits by replacing them, one by one, with healthier choices (fruits and veggies will fill you up and give you nutrients and fiber). Keep an eye on your portion sizes. Make small changes every day, instead of changing everything at once.

You can have the body you desire if you become consistent with both your training and diet!

My Weight Training Programme for Women gives great results and teaches you how to train effectively on your own and how to eat healthy. In addition to weight training and cardio, it includes nutrition counselling and bi-weekly assessments.

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Pros share their top sleek-stomach tips



Don’t even think about sucking it in so you’ll fit into those cute, fitted white jeans: There are less-painful and longer-lasting ways to get the amazing middle you crave. We went straight to experts to get their very best advice for quickly shrinking your tummy. Here are the surprising foods, tricks, and moves they swear by. Their genius tips will help you shed inches and pounds, banish the bloat, and feel even more gorgeous. Hello, skinny jeans!

Eat at this magic hour

“You must eat a snack that contains protein between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. Go for a protein bar, a piece of low-fat cheese, or some almonds with an organic apple.

No matter what, do not miss that snack. It’s

important because it boosts metabolism and balances blood sugar. The lower you keep your blood sugar, the lower you keep your insulin, and insulin makes you store fat around your middle. Eating every three to four hours will keep your blood sugar even, but many people tend to go five or six hours between lunch and dinner without eating.”

Have a ball

“My No. 1 tip: Do the ball exchange three times a week. Lay flat on your back with your arms above your head and legs straight out. Start with a stability ball above your head in your hands. Bring the ball up above your chest as you bring your legs up to meet the ball and place it between your ankles. Bring the ball back down to the floor with your legs and straighten your arms back out over your head.

Repeat the ball exchange 10 to 12 times, remembering to keep your lower back pressed into the floor as you do this move.”

—LaReine Chabut, author of *Exercise Balls for Dummies*

Beef up on this belly-zapping hormone

“Eat as close to zero grams of sugar as possible. This will keep insulin levels low and also keep levels of glucagon high. Glucagon, a hormone, is the best friend you could ever have in the struggle for a flat belly! Picture Ms. Pac-Man traveling around your waistline, gobbling up fat to be used as energy. That is glucagon.

The closer to zero grams of sugar you consume, the lower your insulin and the higher your glucagon...it’s as simple as that.”

Chew on this

“Chewing is the No. 1 tip I give to prevent bloating. Chew food until it is like applesauce in your mouth. Digestion begins in the mouth, and without proper chewing, food is not well-digested. Better-digested food means less gas and bloating.”

Put crunches last on your flat-belly list (for real!)

“I recommend the DCBA approach: Diet first, Cardio second, Building muscle third,

and Abs exercises last. Follow it and you can safely lose one to two pounds a week. Spend 60 minutes a day preparing healthier meals. Spend 20 minutes a day three to five times weekly doing cardio. Spend 15 minutes a day three times a week strength training. Finally, spend 5 minutes a day three times a week doing abs exercises.”

Shake on the sea salt

“The culprit making your tummy bloat? It could be the salt in your diet. Use natural sea salt or kosher salt, which is lower in sodium teaspoon for teaspoon than traditional table salts. And stay away from soy sauce: Even low-sodium soy sauce is still high in sodium and will cause practically instant bloating.

Instead, flavor your food with a little fresh tomato salsa or a hint of cayenne pepper, which has an added benefit of boosting metabolism.”

Punch it out and lose 2 inches fast

“Add boxing to your cardio routine. When you throw punches with weights or at a fast pace, you’re working your core in a way that helps to flatten your midsection. You

must engage your core to throw punches, and twisting your torso works all the ab muscles.

Boxing also gives you a cardio workout that burns extra calories. Add 16 minutes of boxing three times a week to your regular cardio routine (30 minutes at high intensity four to five times a week), and you can lose up to 2 inches from your waist in four weeks. Simply throw punches while holding 1- or 2-pound weights for 8 minutes, alternating arms, then repeat without weights at a faster pace for 8 more minutes.”

Try the flat-belly cheat

“Play up a different body part to draw attention from your middle.

If it’s your legs, wear skirts or slim pants. Shoulders—bare them even if just a bit with a boatneck or sweetheart neckline. Cleavage? Make sure your bra does its job. If your bra rides up in the back, the bra has likely stretched out. If it accentuates back flab or if the space between the cups doesn’t lie flat, go up a size.”

Size matters

“Eating portion-controlled meals that include whole-grain foods

and monounsaturated fats (MUFAs) throughout the day is the best way to eat for a flat belly: People who eat whole grains lose more abdominal fat. And making most of the fats you eat MUFAs reduces ab flab, research says.”

The ultimate flat-belly menu

Best breakfast: A slice of whole-wheat bread with natural peanut butter and 1 cup of your favorite berries.

Best lunch: Spinach salad with sliced avocado, grilled firm tofu, and cherry tomatoes, drizzled with a little olive oil and fresh lemon juice.

Best dinner: Grilled salmon, a roasted sweet potato, and sautéed asparagus with olive oil and garlic.

Best snack: A cup of fat-free yogurt with 2 tablespoons sunflower seeds.

Laugh it up!

“The best thing for your abs is laughing. Every time you laugh it strengthens your abs. There are even laughing yoga classes (Go to Laughter Yoga to find a class near you). If you start busting a gust, you are absolutely toning your abs.”