

Personal Training by Robert J. Bovee

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STANDING BICEP CURL (STRAIGHT BAR)

A. Emphasis. The primary muscles stressed in this movement are the muscles in the front of your upper arm (bicep brachii, brachialis, and brachio radialis). The secondary muscles stressed are the muscles in your forearm and the front of your shoulder.

B. Starting Position. Grab a straight bar with the assigned grip (wrists straight), extending your arms down in front of your body with your elbows at your side. Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. You must keep your back straight and your knees slightly bent.

C. Movement. Bending at the elbow only, raise the bar up as far as you can without moving your elbows (approximately **45** degrees). Contract your biceps hard. Take **2 to 3** seconds to lower the bar down to the extended position.

D. Training Tips.

- 1) Keep your elbows in at your side as you raise the bar. If you allow your elbows to move up as you raise the bar, you will be using your shoulders to move the bar. If you see that your forearm is straight up and down in the top position, your elbow is too far forward.
- 2) If you have a tendency to lean back it will help if you lean back against a wall as you perform this movement (keeping your back flat against the wall).

E. Options.

- 1) There are three grips that can be used when curling a straight bar.
 - a. **Medium Grip** - Place your hands shoulder width apart. This grip concentrates on (2) heads of the bicep.
 - b. **Close Grip** - Place your hands just inside shoulder width. This grip concentrates on the outside of the bicep.
 - c. **Wide Grip** - Place your hands just outside shoulder width. This grip concentrates on the peak of **the bicep** (biceps brachii).
- 2) An EZ curl bar can be used to isolate the brachialis and take pressure off a problematic wrist for rehabilitation.

F. Warning Tips.

- 1) **Do not** rock back and forth as you raise and lower the weight. Failure to do so can result in serious injury to your lower back.
- 2) **Do not** lower the bar any faster than **2 to 3** seconds. You must be in control at all times during this movement. The faster you perform this movement, the less control you will have, which in turn will increase your risk of injury.