

Best Tricep Workout Routines

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Build Monster Triceps With These 9 Expert Workouts



Amy Schlinger

Spot training can be really helpful when it comes to certain muscle groups, like your triceps for instance. Triceps tend to be one of those spots that no matter how hard you go on [arm day](#), you just don't seem to be gaining mass. But why? In order to have a better understanding, it's important to first know how the tricep is built, how it works, and how to get it big.

Triceps are comprised of three heads or bundles of muscle fibers, explains Simon Lawson, instructor at [The Fitting Room](#) in New York City. They're responsible for extending the arm, forearm and shoulders. "From a sports performance standpoint, the tris play a huge factor in your ability to execute frontal and transverse pressing movements," explains [Adam Rosante](#), celebrity trainer, C9 Champion brand ambassador, and author of [The 30-Second Body](#). (Think benching and overhead pressing). "When you tap out on the bench press, it's usually your triceps that are fatiguing first."

And from an aesthetic standpoint? The triceps are the biggest muscle group in the upper arms, explains Rosante. Translation: Bigger tris means bigger looking guns.

While you may think you're training your triceps at the gym, chances are you're working the hell out of the muscles you can see in the mirror more, like the biceps, chest, and even abs. Sadly, the "back of the body" muscles can be overlooked, which not only looks funky, but it can also cause a lot of imbalance. Imbalance can lead to potential injury, especially when it comes to upper body compound lifts in the case of the triceps, explains Rosante.

If you're convinced you just can't grow those tris, you're incorrect. "With the right programming and exercise selection, just about every guy can build up his triceps from where they are right now," says Rosante. And we're here to help.

Below you'll find nine different tricep exercises, focused specifically on that muscle group. We found the top fitness trainers to create everything from bodyweight, to Tabata, to dumbbell workouts with triceps being the main focus. And we even got a stretching routine for when you're finished. So what are you waiting for? Just tri 'em.

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10-Minute Tricep Workout

Created by Kenny Santucci, coach at [CrossFit Solace](#) in New York City

Equipment: Parallette bars

Directions: 10-minute AMRAP (As Many Rounds as Possible) of the following 3 movements. Each set will begin with a 10 second hold, followed by 3-5 repetitions of the movement depending on skill level and strength level.

1. Handstand Hold to Handstand Push-Ups

Place hands on ground in front of wall and kick legs up into a handstand hold, balancing against the wall. Hold 10 seconds. Then, slowly, bend elbows and lower head to ground. Straight arms to push back up to full extension. Repeat 3-5 reps

Trainer Tip: Place an ab mat on the floor under your head to prevent slamming your head into the ground. To modify, stand in front of a big box (20-24 inch). Place hands on the ground and walk feet on top of box. Straighten legs so they are in a pike, body in a 90-degree angle. Perform push-ups like this.

2. Parallette Bar Plank to Maltese Push-Ups

Come to the floor, place hands on parallette bars and get into plank position, hands directly inline under shoulders, body in straight line from head to toe. Hold for 10 seconds. Come to floor and place hands on ground underneath ribcage backwards, fingers facing toes. Extend legs back and come up to toes, so all weight is on hands and toes. Keeping body in straight line, lower down as far as you can. Push back up. Repeat 3-5 reps.

3. L-Sit Hold to Dips

Sit between parallette bars, feet extended straight out in front of you. Place hands on parallette bars. Keeping legs

extended forward parallel to the floor, push arms up straight and use upper and lower body to raise legs in front of you. Hold for 10 seconds. Lower legs to ground, arms still extended, so body is in a reverse plank like position. Keeping elbows tight to body, bend elbows and lower body as close to ground as you can. Push back up. Repeat 3-5 reps.

Trainer Tip: To scale L-sit, bend your knees in as close to your chest as you need, but keep legs off the ground.

Tricep HIIT Workout

Created by Simon Lawson, instructor at [The Fitting Room](#) in New York City

Equipment: Kettlebell, ski erg, medicine ball, TRX, bench or box

Directions: Try to complete the entire routine in less than 16 minutes.

1. Kettlebell Goblet Squat to Overhead Tricep Extension

Stand with feet shoulder width apart, holding kettlebell at chest. Push knees, chest up, out as you sit back and down into a squat. Stand back up. Raise kettlebell overhead. Keeping elbows close to ears, bend and lower kettlebell behind head. Straighten arms back up overhead. Bring kettlebell back to chest. Repeat

Perform 12 reps

2. Ski Erg

Stand in front of ski erg, facing it. Grab one handle in each hand. This is starting position. Keeping back flat, bend knees slightly, pull elbows down to sides, then extend arms fully behind you. Return hands back up to starting position. Repeat.

Perform 45 seconds

Trainer Tip: Your goal is to hit 175 meters.

3. Plank Ups

Come to the floor into forearm plank, shoulders stacked over elbows, forearms resting on the floor, legs extended out behind you, body in straight line from head to toe. Lift right arm and place hand on the ground, then lift left arm and place hand on the ground, pushing body up to extended plank. Lower right arm then left arm back to forearm plank. That's one rep.

Perform 12 reps, alternating which hand goes first each time.

4. Wall Balls

Stand facing wall, about a foot away, holding medicine ball at chest level. Push knees out, chest up, and you sit back and down into squat. As you stand up, extend arms up and throw ball up to hit high point on wall. Catch it at full extension. Repeat in a fluid motion.

Perform 20 reps.

5. Mountain Climbers

Come into extended plank position, hands directly under shoulders, legs extended behind you, body in straight line from head to toe. Bend elbows slightly. Keeping back and core flat, lift right leg and bend knee up between arms. Return it back down. Lift left leg and bend knee up between arms. Return it back down. Continue alternating as fast

as possible.

Perform for 45 seconds.

6. Jungle Gym/TRX Tricep Extension

Stand in front of TRX, grab handles with either hand, and turn to face away from anchor. Extend arms up, so elbows are inline with ears, hands expended in front of you, palms facing away, and walk away from anchor until there's tension, body on an angle. Lean into handles. Keeping elbows next to ears, bend elbows letting arms drop behind head. Use arms to straighten arms back to full extension. Repeat.

Perform 12 reps

7. Tricep Kick-Backs

Stand with feet shoulder width apart, dumbbell in either hand, bend knees slightly, and keeping back straight, lean chest forward slightly. Pulling shoulder blades together, bend elbows upward, raising dumbbells to sides of chest. Without moving upper arm, fully extend right arm backwards, so dumbbell ends up next to hip. Bend elbow and bring dumbbell back in to side of chest. Repeat with left arm.

Perform 10 reps with each arm.

8. Dips

Stand with a chair, box or bench directly behind you. Bend your knees and lower yourself until you can place one hand on either side of the surface behind you, shoulder width apart, arms fully extended. Extend your feet out in front of you so all the weight rests in your hands and your heels. Keeping your core and glutes tight and inline, using just your arms, bend your elbows and lower entire body down as far as your can. Push back up until arms are at full extension.

Perform 20 reps.

Bodyweight Tricep Workout

Created by Luke Lombardo, Instructor at [Studio Metamorphosis in LA](#) and [Ironman](#)

Directions: Perform the exercises in the order below.

1. Dips

Stand with a chair, box or bench directly behind you. Bend your knees and lower yourself until you can place one hand on either side of the surface behind you, shoulder width apart, arms fully extended. Extend your feet out in front of you so all the weight rests in your hands and your heels. Keeping your core and glutes tight and inline, using just your arms, bend your elbows and lower entire body down as far as your can. Push back up until arms are at full extension.

Perform 3 sets of 10.

Trainer Tip: Keep your elbows in, your back very close to the surface in which you are performing the dips on and keep those shoulders away from your ears! The dips should be slow and controlled, making sure that your shoulders and elbows hit a 90-degree angle before coming up. The further your legs/feet are away from you, the harder the dips will be! To modify, keep your legs and feet closer to your body.

2. Diamond Push-Ups

Come to the floor in plank position, hands form a triangle on the ground in front of you, shoulders stacked over elbows, body in straight line from head to toe. Keeping elbows close to sides, perform a push-up. Repeat.

Perform 1 set of 10.

Trainer Tip: To modify, keep your hands farther apart (the closer your hands are, the more difficult). This can be done on your feet, or on your knees as a modification. For a challenge, put your hands on top of each other.

3. Tricep Push-Ups

Come to the floor in plank position, hands directly inline under shoulders, body in straight line from head to toe. Keeping elbows close to sides, lower body almost to the ground, ending with hands at sides. Push back up. Repeat

Perform 1 set of 10.

Trainer Tip: The closer your elbows are to the sides of your body, the more difficult this pushup will be. To modify, put a little space between your arms. This can be done on your feet or on your knees as a modification.

4. Push-Ups

Come to the floor in plank position, hands directly inline under shoulders, body in straight line from head to toe. Lower body almost to ground. Push back up. Repeat.

Perform 1 set of 10.

Trainer Tip: After the dips, diamond pushups and tricep push-ups, your triceps will definitely be feeling it! Although triceps are a secondary muscle worked in regular push-ups, you will definitely feel them engaged and working.

5. Pull-Ups

Grab onto bar with palms facing away from you. Using upper body strength, pull your chest up to the bar. Lower back down until arms are straight, but don't come off the bar, so you're hanging. Repeat.

Perform as many as you can without a break.

Trainer Tip: Don't cheat! It is important to obtain a full range of motion with each pull-up. That means after each pull-up, lower yourself the entire way down until your arms are straight! To modify, find a friend to hold your legs for an assisted pull-up.

Morning Tricep Workout

Created by Alonzo Wilson, founder of [Tone House](#) in New York City

Equipment: Dumbbells and paper plates.

Directions: Perform the exercises in the order below.

1. Diamond Push-Ups

Come to the floor in plank position, hands form a triangle on the ground in front of you, shoulders stacked over elbows, body in straight line from head to toe. Keeping elbows close to sides, perform a push-up. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets, 1-minute each. Rest 20 seconds between sets.

2. Plank Body Saw Pushups (Using Paper Plates)

Start in a forearm plank position, placing toes of each foot on plates. While on your forearms, slide your body slightly backwards and then slide forwards while simultaneously pushing off the ground, so that you're now in extended plank. Perform a push-up and then slide backwards as you return to your forearms. That's one rep. Repeat.

Perform 4 sets, 1-minute each. Rest 40 seconds between sets.

3. Cross Plank Push-Ups

Start in a forearm plank position, shoulders stacked over elbows, body in straight line from head to toe. Almost cross arms, placing right hand in front of left elbow, left arm behind right elbow. Push up to extended plank, so arms are crossed. Return back to forearms. That's one rep.

Perform 3 sets, 1-minute each. Rest 40 seconds between sets.

4. Tricep Push-Up with Dumbbell Kickback

Come to the floor in plank position, hands directly inline under shoulders holding onto dumbbells, body in straight line from head to toe. Keeping elbows close to sides, lower body almost to the ground, ending with hands at sides. Push back up. Keeping hips square and elbow close to side, take dumbbell in right hand and pulling shoulder blades together, bend elbows upward, raising dumbbell to right side of chest. Without moving upper arm, fully extend right arm backwards, so dumbbell ends up next to hip. Bend elbow and bring dumbbell back in to side of chest. Place back on ground. Repeat entire exercise, but do kickback with other arm.

Perform 3 sets, 1-minute each. Rest 40 seconds between sets.

5. Tricep Busters

Lie on the floor, knees bent, feet flat on the floor in front of you. Take one dumbbell in each hand and extend arms fully overhead, palms facing knees. Bend and slight flare out elbows to lower dumbbells inward towards each other, until top of dumbbells reach chest level. Press back up overhead. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets, 1-minute each. Rest 40 seconds between sets.

6. Plyo Windshield Wiper Push-Ups

Start in a push-up position and pretend body is a clock. Start at 12 o'clock and lower body to the ground. Explode up so you can jump body to 3 o'clock. Lower body to the ground then explode up and jump body back to 12 o'clock. Lower body to the ground, then explode up and jump body to 9 o'clock. Lower body to the ground then explode back up to 12 o'clock. That's one rep. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets, 1-minute each. Rest 40 seconds between sets.

7. Plyo Dimond Push-Ups

Come to the floor in plank position, hands form a triangle on the ground in front of you, shoulders stacked over elbows, body in straight line from head to toe. Keeping elbows close to sides, perform a push-up. On the way up, explode so hands come off the ground. Land with them back in triangle. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets, 1-minute each. Rest 40 seconds between sets.

Tabata Tricep Workout

Created by [Adam Rosante](#), celebrity trainer, C9 Champion brand ambassador, and author of [The 30-Second Body](#)

Equipment: Bench press, dumbbells, cable rope

Directions: Do the 4 moves below in a Tabata protocol, 20 seconds on, 10 seconds rest in-between. Repeat for 8 total rounds. Aim to get as many reps as possible in each 20-second interval.

1. Close Grip Bench Press

Lie on bench, feet flat on the floor. Grip the bar with pointer fingers inside the knurling, so you're holding the smooth part of the bar. Keeping elbows tight to ribs, press bar straight up over your chest. Lower until bar comes to chest. Push back up Repeat.

Trainer Tip: You don't need to bring your hands super close on the barbell. That'll just irritate your shoulders.

2. Dumbbell Skull Crushers

Lie on bench, knees bent, feet flat on the floor in front of you. Take one dumbbell in each hand and extend arms fully overhead, palms facing each other. Keeping upper arms still, bend at elbows and slowly lower dumbbells towards head. Extend back upward. Repeat.

3. Rope Pull Down/Apart

Stand in front of cable, facing anchor. Grab onto both sides of rope overhead with either hand. Keeping elbows tight to body, pull rope down, and continue to pull rope apart, extending arms back behind you. Repeat.

4. Dips

Stand with a chair, box or bench directly behind you. Bend your knees and lower yourself until you can place one hand on either side of the surface behind you, shoulder width apart, arms fully extended. Extend your feet out in front of you so all the weight rests in your hands and your heels. Keeping your core and glutes tight and inline, using just your arms, bend your elbows and lower entire body down as far as your can. Push back up until arms are at full extension. Repeat.

Dumbbell Tricep Workout

Created by Noah Neiman, master trainer at [Barry's Bootcamp](#) in New York City

Equipment: 2 sets of dumbbells, a heavy set and a light set.

Directions: Perform the exercises in the order below.

Warmup

Diamond Push-Ups to Hand Release Push-Ups

Come to the floor in plank position, hands form a triangle on the ground in front of you, shoulders stacked over elbows, body in straight line from head to toe. Keeping elbows close to sides, perform a push-up. When at top of push-up, walk hands out to shoulder width apart. Lower body to the ground and release hands off ground, squeezing back muscles together. Press back up. Repeat.

Perform 2 sets of 12 reps.

Tricep Extension Push-Up

Come into plank position, shoulders stacked directly over hands, body in straight line from head to toe. Keeping body straight, bend elbows and lower until both forearms lie flat on the ground. Push back up to plank position. Repeat.

Perform one set until failure.

Workout

1. Floor Press

Lie on the floor, knees bent, feet flat on the floor in front of you. Take one dumbbell in each hand and hold them at your sides, palms facing each other. Keeping elbows tight to ribs, press dumbbells straight up over your chest. Lower until elbows tap the ground. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets of 8-12 reps.

Trainer Tip: Use a heavier weight as you get stronger and progress.

2. Skull Crushers

Lie on the floor, knees bent, feet flat on the floor in front of you. Take one dumbbell in each hand and extend arms fully overhead, palms facing each other. Keeping upper arm still, bend at elbows and slowly lower dumbbells towards head. Extend back upward. Repeat.

Perform 2 sets of 12 reps, then one last set to failure.

3. Tate Press

Lie on the floor, knees bent, feet flat on the floor in front of you. Take one dumbbell in each hand and extend arms fully overhead, palms facing knees. Bend and slight flare out elbows to lower dumbbells inward towards each other, until top of dumbbells reach chest level. Press back up overhead. Repeat.

Perform 2 sets of 12 reps, then one last set to failure.

4. Overhead Tricep Extension

Stand with feet hip width apart, dumbbell in each hand. Raise dumbbells overhead, palms facing each other. Keeping elbows close to ears, chin lifted, bend elbows and lower dumbbells behind head. Press back up overhead. Repeat.

Perform 2 sets of 12 reps, then one last set to failure.

5. Tricep Kick-Backs (Kneeling on Bench)

Come to right side of the bench. Place left knee on bench, right leg extended back behind you, foot on the ground. Take dumbbell in right hand and pulling shoulder blades together, bend elbows upward, raising dumbbell to right side of chest. Without moving upper arm, fully extend right arm backwards, so dumbbell ends up next to hip. Bend elbow and bring dumbbell back in to side of chest. Repeat.

Perform 2 sets of 12-15 reps, with each arm.

6. Plank with Alternating Kickbacks

Come to plank position, hands on dumbbells, shoulders stacked directly over hands, body in straight line from head to toe. Keeping hips square and elbow close to side, bend right elbow, squeezing shoulder blades together, to raise dumbbell to side of chest. From there, keeping the rest of the body still, perform tricep kickback. Bring the weight back down to plank position. Repeat with other arm.

Perform 2 sets of 14 reps, alternating arms.

7. Finisher

Perform one set of each exercise adding 2 sets of 12 bicep curls in between each move.

Trainer Tip: Adding curls in between triceps training will allow the triceps to rest but will keep blood flowing to the arms. Contrasting between bicep and tricep work is a great way to keep the arms pumped for an extended time.

Kettlebell Tricep Workout

Created by Dasha Libin, creator of [Kettlebell Kickboxing](#) and co-owner of Anderson's Martial Arts in New York City

Equipment: Kettlebells

Directions: Perform the exercises in the order below.

Warmup

Kettlebell Halos

Stand with feet shoulder width apart, holding kettlebell in front of chest, hands on either side. Left arms and circle them around head, making a halo-like shape, ending with kettlebell back in front of chest.

Do 15 reps in each direction.

Workout

1. Kettlebell Skull Crushers

Lie on the floor, knees bent, feet flat on the floor in front of you. Take one kettlebell in each hand, holding handles with palms facing away from you, and press them up overhead. Keeping upper arm still, bend at elbows and slowly lower kettlebells towards head. Extend back upward. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets of 12 reps.

2. Kettlebell Dips

Place kettlebells on the floor behind you, about hip width apart, and sit on floor slightly in front of them, legs extended straight out in front of you. Place hands on kettlebells. Push to extend arms fully, lifting butt and legs off the ground, heels planted, so body is in a reverse plank-like position, weight in arms and heels. Keeping elbows close to body, bend and lower body towards the ground. Push back up. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets of 12 reps.

3. Kettlebell Floor Press

Lie on the floor, knees bent, feet flat on the floor in front of you. Take one kettlebell in each hand at your sides, palms facing away from you holding handles. Keeping elbows tight to ribs, press kettlebells straight up over your chest. Lower until elbows tap the ground. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets of 12 reps.

4. Kettlebell Tricep Push-Ups

Place kettlebell on ground in front of you. Place hands on it and come into plank position, shoulders stacked over hands, legs extended behind you, body in straight line from head to toe. Keeping elbows tight to body, bend elbows

and lower chest to kettlebell. Push up up. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets of 12 reps.

Machine-Based Tricep Workout

Created by Rachel Mariotti, personal trainer at [Equinox](#) in New York City

Equipment: Smith machine, bench, cable, dumbbells

Directions: Perform the exercises in the order below.

1. Dips

Stand with a chair, box or bench directly behind you. Bend your knees and lower yourself until you can place one hand on either side of the surface behind you, shoulder width apart, arms fully extended. Extend your feet out in front of you so all the weight rests in your hands and your heels. Keeping your core and glutes tight and inline, using just your arms, bend your elbows and lower entire body down as far as your can. Push back up until arms are at full extension. Repeat

Perform 3 sets of 8-10 reps.

2. Cable Overhead Tricep Extensions

Stand in front of cable and grab either straight handle bar or rope handles and lock it at the lowest point on the cable machine. With rope or bar in hands, turn away from anchor, bend elbows next to ears, hands behind head. Keeping elbows close to head, extend arms fully upward. Bend elbows and pull bar or rope back down behind head. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets of 8-10 reps.

3. Single Arm Cable Tricep Extensions

Stand in front of cable and grab single handle, palm facing up, and lock it at the highest point on the cable machine. Facing anchor, step back and bend elbow into side of torso, hand near shoulder. This is starting position. Keeping elbow next to torso, straighten arm backwards, pulling hand and cable back. Bend elbow to come back to starting position. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets of 8-10 reps.

4. Incline Push-Up On Smith Machine

Put bar on the Smith machine at an appropriate height, generally in between chest and waist. Place hand next to each other on bar and step back away from bar, until arms are fully extended. Put body on an angle, making a straight line from head to toe, shoulders stacked over hands. Keeping elbows close to body, lower chest to the bar. Push back up. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets of 8-10 reps.

5. Kneeling Cable Tricep Extension

Place a bench perpendicular to the cable machine. Use straight bar handle and lock in highest cable position. Stand behind bench, grab a straight bar, hands facing away from you, and pull down until your kneeling, placing elbows bent on bench, head down. This is starting position. Keeping elbows on bench, extend arms forward as far as you can. Bend elbows back to starting position. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets of 8-10 reps.

6. Skull Crushers

Lie on bench, feet flat on the floor. Take one dumbbell in each hand and extend arms fully overhead, palms facing each other. Keeping upper arm still, bend at elbows and slowly lower dumbbells towards head. Extend back upward. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets of 8-10 reps

7. Smith Machine Close Grip Bench Press

Place bench underneath Smith machine. Bar should be at locked height where arms are almost fully extended. Grip the bar with pointer fingers inside the knurling, so you're holding the smooth part of the bar. Bend elbows and lower bar to chest. Keeping elbows close to body, push bar back up. Repeat.

Perform 3 sets of 8-10 reps.

Best Tricep Stretches

Created by [Kristin McGee](#), celebrity yoga instructor in New York City

Directions: Perform the stretches in the order below.

1. Cow Face Arms

Stand with feet shoulder width apart. Lift one arm overhead bend at the elbow and let the hand fall back between the shoulder blades. Take the opposite arm up behind the back and try and clasp the fingers together. If you can't reach the hands, use a towel or strap.

Hold for 5-8 breaths, then switch sides.

2. Elbow Bend on Bench

Kneel in front of bench. Cross arms, placing right hand on left shoulder, left hand on right shoulder. Place elbows on bench and let upper body fall, pushing weight into arms.

Hold for 5-8 breaths.

3. Overhead Tricep Stretch

Lift right arm up overhead, bend at the elbow and let the hand fall behind head, towards shoulder blades. Take left hand to the right elbow and help pull right arm backwards.

Hold for 5-8 breaths.

4. Forearm Downward Dog

Come to kneel, placing your forearms, hands extended out in front of you. Tuck toes under and lift hips up towards sky, extended legs into downward dog.

Hold for 5-8 breaths.

5. Crossbody Tricep Stretch

Stand with arms shoulder width apart, shoulders relaxed, arms at sides. Reach right arm across your body. Bend left

elbow and reach right arm up until it touches right arm pushing it lightly into chest.

Hold for 5-8 breaths, then switch arms.

6. Hands Clasped behind Back

Stand with feet shoulder width and clasp hands behind back. Slowly bend forward, allowing arms to fall forward.

Hold for 5-8 breaths.

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