

# Amazing ARMS

**You've obsessed about back-of-the-arm jiggle long enough. Use tri-sets to firm up your triceps fast.**

BY PEGGY HALL | PHOTOGRAPHY PAUL BUCETA

If your arms continue waving long after you do, don't despair. Dieting can help to some extent and cardio will melt the fat, but resistance training is the real key to trimming, tightening and toning those triceps in order to give you the sleek, sculpted arms you're after. Follow this unique 5-10-20 training plan, and then bring on the tank tops!

Your plan of attack is centered around an advanced variation of tri-sets, a training technique whereby you perform three exercises for the same muscle group, one right after the other, resting just enough to set up for the next exercise. "Tri-sets bring a higher intensity to your workout," explains Rocky Snyder, a certified strength and conditioning specialist who runs Devotion2Motion in Santa Cruz, California. "With intensity comes physiological change," he says. The special thing about this tri-set workout is the manipulation of the rep count. Instead of churning out your typical three sets of 15 reps, you'll do the first set for five reps to boost muscle strength and density, the second set for 10 reps to build and shape the muscle and the third set for 20 reps to enhance muscle endurance and increase fat burning. The first set should be a basic compound exercise

using body weight, dumbbells or machines. The second set is another basic move from a different angle and the third set is a single-joint isolation exercise. The recommended moves will hit all three heads of the triceps – the long head, which sits on the bottom of the upper arm, and the medial and lateral heads, which create the horseshoe shape on the side of the arm.

## Tackling the Tri-Set

Select enough resistance to fatigue your muscles for the recommended number of reps. Perform one set of each exercise in the order listed, moving quickly between exercises. After you've performed all three moves, rest for two minutes, then repeat one or two more times. Due to the intense nature of the 5-10-20 approach, that's all you need! Then let your triceps recover – and grow – for about five days before doing this workout again. ☉



For greater intensity, lift one leg or place a weight plate on your thighs.



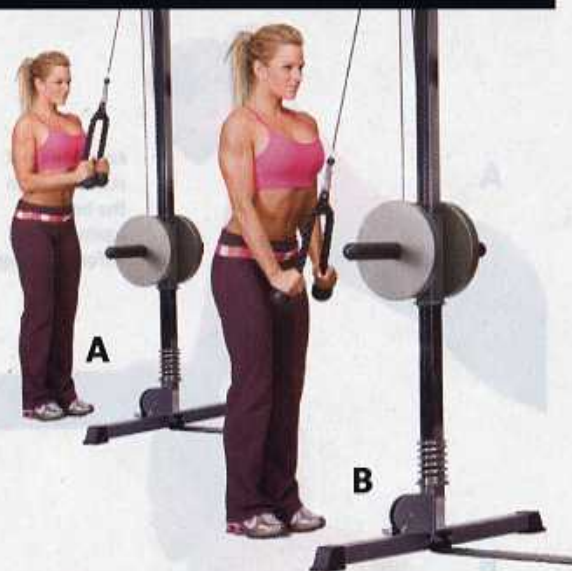
### STRAIGHT-LEGGED BENCH DIP ▲

**TARGET MUSCLES:** triceps brachii, medial and lateral heads

**SYNERGIST MUSCLES:** anterior deltoids, pectoralis major

**SET UP:** Sit on the edge of a flat bench with your fingers pointing forward. Extend your legs and place your heels on the floor. Lift yourself off the bench and distribute your weight between your hands and heels.

**ACTION:** Lower yourself by bending your elbows, taking care to keep them pointed straight behind you instead of out to the sides. Lower yourself toward the floor, keep your back close to the bench, and then press back up.



### ROPE PRESSDOWN ▲

**TARGET MUSCLES:** triceps brachii, lateral head

**SYNERGIST MUSCLES:** none

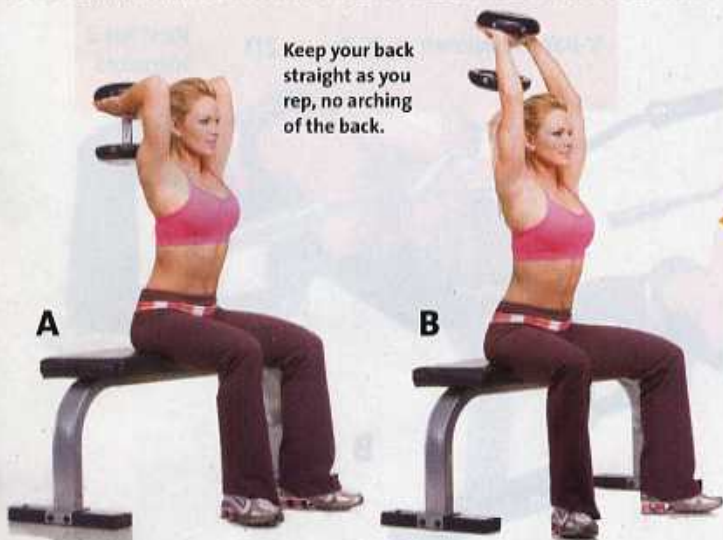
**SET UP:** Stand facing a cable machine and hold the ends of a rope attachment with your palms facing each other. Keep your knees soft and your torso leaning slightly forward.

**ACTION:** Start with your elbows bent and close to your body. Straighten your arms, separating the rope at the end of the movement.

## Weeks 1-3

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Straight-legged bench dip	2-3	5	None
Overhead extension	2-3	10	None
Rope pressdown	2-3	20	Rest for 2 minutes

Keep your back straight as you rep, no arching of the back.



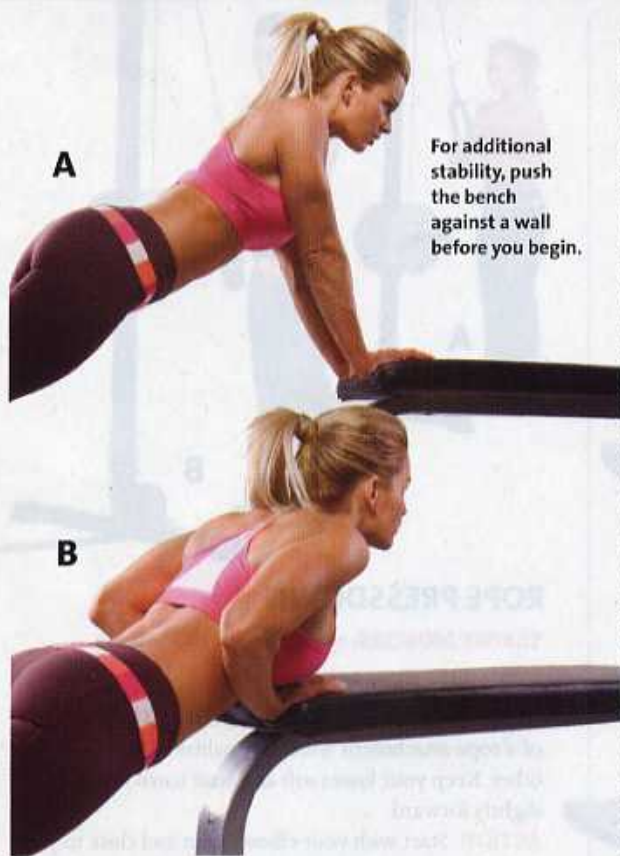
### OVERHEAD DUMBBELL EXTENSION ▲

**TARGET MUSCLES:** triceps brachii, especially the long head

**SYNERGIST MUSCLES:** anterior deltoids

**SET UP:** Sit on a bench and hold one dumbbell overhead with both hands.

**ACTION:** Keeping your arms close to your head, bend your elbows to lower the weight, and then extend them to complete the move. Keep your back straight and your abs engaged.



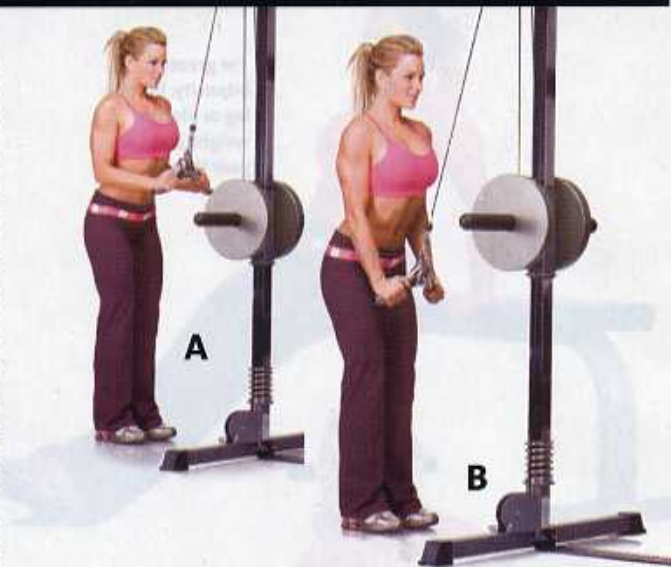
For additional stability, push the bench against a wall before you begin.

### CLOSE-GRIP PUSH-UP ON BENCH ▲

**TARGET MUSCLES:** triceps brachii, pectoralis major  
**SYNERGIST MUSCLES:** anterior deltoids, rectus abdominis  
**SET UP:** Place your hands close together on the edge of a bench. Your index fingers and thumbs should be touching to create a diamond shape. Extend your legs behind you.  
**ACTION:** Keeping your abs engaged and your back straight, lower your chest toward your hands, then straighten your arms to return to the starting position.

### LYING TRICEPS EXTENSION WITH EZ BAR ▶

**TARGET MUSCLES:** triceps brachii  
**SYNERGIST MUSCLES:** anterior deltoids, pectoralis major  
**SET UP:** Grab an EZ bar with an overhand grip and lie back on a flat bench. Keep your feet on the floor or on the end of the bench. Extend your arms directly above your shoulders and avoid moving your shoulders.  
**ACTION:** Without letting your elbows flare, bend them to lower the bar toward your forehead. Press the weight back up to the starting position.



### V-BAR PRESSDOWN ▲

**TARGET MUSCLES:** triceps brachii, lateral head  
**SYNERGIST MUSCLES:** none  
**SET UP:** Stand facing a cable machine and grip the V-bar. Keep your knees soft and your torso leaning slightly forward.  
**ACTION:** Bend your elbows, keeping them close to your body. Straighten your arms without locking them and press the bar down. Keep your upper arms stable throughout the movement.

## Weeks 4-6

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Close-grip push-up on bench	2-3	5	None
Lying tricep extension with EZ bar	2-3	10	None
V-bar pressdown	2-3	20	Rest for 2 minutes



Keep your upper arm immobile—the only movement should be below the elbow.

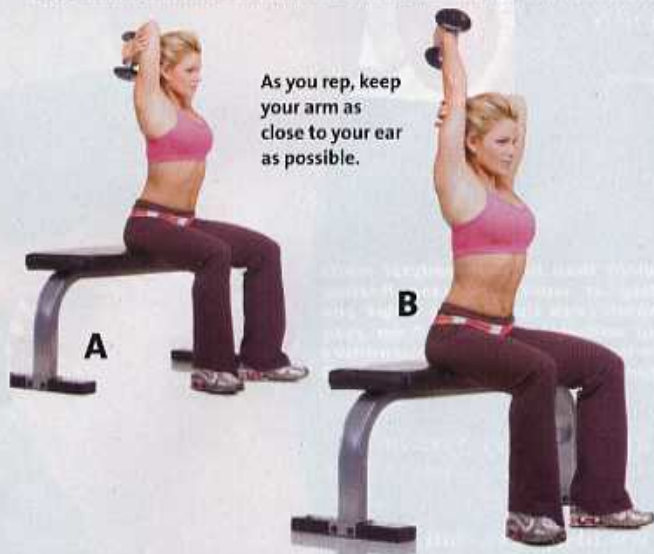
### KICKBACK ▲

**TARGET MUSCLES:** triceps brachii, medial and lateral heads

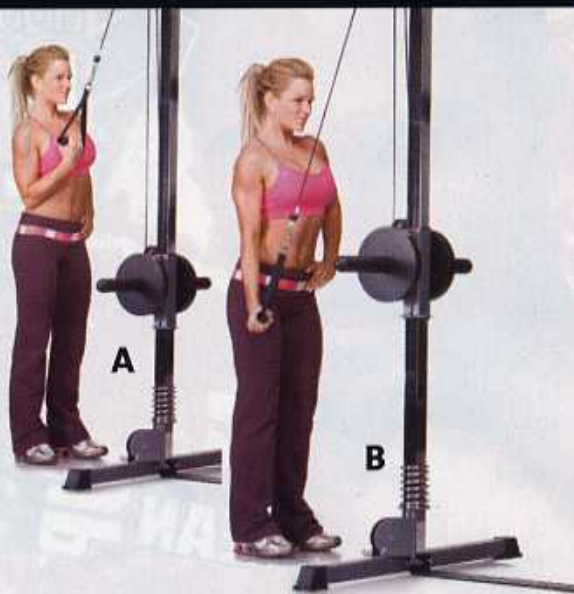
**SYNERGIST MUSCLES:** anterior and posterior deltoids

**SET UP:** Hold a dumbbell in one hand and place your opposite hand and knee on a bench for support. Bend the elbow of the working arm and keep the weight close to your ribcage.

**ACTION:** Keeping your elbow close to your body, press the weight behind you, straightening your arm without locking it, until it's parallel to the floor. Keep your upper arm absolutely still to keep the work in your triceps.



As you rep, keep your arm as close to your ear as possible.



### ONE-ARM REVERSE PRESSDOWN ▲

**TARGET MUSCLES:** triceps brachii, lateral head

**SYNERGIST MUSCLES:** wrist extensors

**SET UP:** Stand facing a pulley machine and grasp the handle with an underhand grip. Keep your knees soft and your torso leaning slightly forward.

**ACTION:** Keep your elbow snug against your waistline and straighten your arm. Bend your elbow to complete the movement.

## Weeks 7-9

Exercise	Sets	Reps	Rest
Kickback	2-3	12-15	Minimal
One-arm reverse pressdown	2-3	12-15	Minimal
One-arm overhead dumbbell extension	2-3	12-15	Minimal

### ONE-ARM OVERHEAD DUMBBELL EXTENSION

**TARGET MUSCLES:** triceps brachii, long head

**SYNERGIST MUSCLES:** anterior deltoid, rectus abdominis

**SET UP:** Take a dumbbell in one hand and sit on the edge of a flat bench. Extend your arm overhead and engage your abs.

**ACTION:** Keeping your arm close to the side of your head (you can hold it in place with your other hand), bend your elbow to lower the weight. Extend your elbow to complete the movement. Ⓞ