

[IMAGE]

A Total-Body Workout in 5 Easy Steps

Part 4: The Back & Shoulders

By Chelsea Cooper

Chelsea Cooper, certified personal trainer and fitness expert, continues her five-part series covering each of the major muscle zones. This month, learn the best exercises to shape and tone your back and shoulders.

Chelsea Cooper at Club No Mercy in Huntington Beach, California. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register

Mark All photographs taken at Club No Mercy Intensity Performance Training Studio

(www.clubnomercy.com) in Huntington Beach, Calif. Your back and shoulders are some of the most important body parts. Your back is especially significant because back strength plays a key role in determining your posture. Poor posture also is linked to poor spine stabilization, which can lead to back pain and a host of other problems. The back muscles consist of the rhomboids, latissimus dorsi and lower trapezius. The back is the most difficult area to work properly and effectively, so take your time and focus on proper technique.

BACK

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates a dumbbell row. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Do not allow your back to arch. **DUMBBELL ROW**

Getting Started

- 1** Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, toes pointing forward and knees slightly bent over your second and third toes.
- 2** Bend at the waist until your chest is at a 45 degree angle to the ground. Do not allow your back to arch.
- 3** Allow your arms to extend and hang in front of your body with a dumbbell in each hand.

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates a dumbbell row. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Draw in your abs and tighten your glutes. **Movement**

4 Draw in your abs and tighten your glutes.

5 Row the dumbbells by squeezing and depressing your shoulder blades.

6 Flex your elbows while bringing your thumbs toward your armpits. Do not allow your back to arch.

7 Slowly return the dumbbells to their original position by extending at the elbow.

WORKOUT BASICS

Repetitions And Sets: Same for both men and women; varies depending on individual goals (toning muscle vs. building muscle vs. building strength).

Intensity: This is the percentage of your one-rep maximum (the maximum amount of weight you can lift at one time). For example, if your goal is to build muscle, you would perform repetitions using 70 percent to 75 percent of your one-rep maximum (see below). That means that if you can bench press 100 pounds one time, you would perform each repetition using a maximum of 75 pounds of weight.

Toning Muscle (Strength/Endurance)

Sets: 2-3 /// Reps: 15-25 /// Intensity: 50% - 70%

Building Muscle (Hypertrophy)

Sets: 3 /// Reps: 9-12 /// Intensity: 70% - 75%

Strength Adaptation

Sets: 3-4 /// Reps: 6-8 /// Intensity: 75% - 85%

BALL DUMBBELL ROW

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates a ball dumbbell row. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Point feet down and keep slight bend in legs. **Getting Started**

1 Begin in a lying position on a stability ball, with the ball under your abdomen.

2 Point your feet down, keeping your legs straight with a slight bend.

3 Hold a dumbbell in each hand and extend your arms out in front of your body.

Movement

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates a ball dumbbell row. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Lift chest off the ball. **4** Draw in your abs and tighten your glutes.

5 Lift your chest off the ball.

6 Row the dumbbells by squeezing your shoulder blades. Do not allow your shoulders to tense up.

7 Flex your elbows, bringing your thumbs toward your armpits.

8 Hold the position.

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates a kneeling cable pulldown. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Make sure there is no arch in your back. **9** Return the dumbbells slowly to the ground by extending your elbows and allowing your shoulders to relax.

KNEELING CABLE PULLDOWN

Getting Started

1 Kneel underneath the cables (optional) with a cushion under your knees.

2 Grasp both handles.

3 Make sure there is no arch in your back.

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates a kneeling cable pulldown. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Hold position at end range. **4** Squeeze your shoulder blades.

Movement

5 Draw in your abs and squeeze your glutes.

6 Pull the handles toward your body by flexing your elbows. Do not arch your back or allow your head to jut forward.

7 Hold the position at end range.

8 Slowly return the weights to their original position by extending your elbows.

RUBBER-BAND ROW

Getting Started

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates a rubber-band row. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Extend arms at chest level. **1** Hook a rubber band around a sturdy apparatus.

2 Stand facing the apparatus, with your feet shoulder-width apart and pointing straight ahead, and your knees over your second and third toes.

3 Hold the rubber bands with your arms extended at chest level.

Movement

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates a rubber-band row. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Do not allow head to jut forward. **4** Draw in your abs and squeeze your glutes.

5 With your knees slightly flexed, row the cable by flexing your elbows.

6 Bring your thumbs toward your armpits, keeping your shoulder blades together and your shoulders relaxed.

7 Do not allow your head to jut forward.

8 Hold the position.

9 Slowly return your arms to the original position by extending your elbows.

SHOULDERS

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates stability dumbbell shoulder press. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark

Hold dumbbells at shoulder level. **STABILITY DUMBBELL SHOULDER PRESS**

Getting Started

- 1 Sit on a stability ball.
- 2 Keep your feet pointed straight ahead.
- 3 Hold the dumbbells at shoulder level with your palms away.

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates stability dumbbell shoulder press. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark

Draw in abs and squeeze glutes. **Movement**

- 4 Draw in your abs and squeeze your glutes.
- 5 Press the dumbbells overhead until both arms are fully extended, with your palms facing away.
- 6 Your arms should be slightly in front of your ears.
- 7 Hold the position.
- 8 Slowly return the dumbbells back to your chest and repeat.

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates a rubber-band side raise. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Make sure rubber band is even. **RUBBER-BAND SIDE RAISE**

Getting Started

- 1 Stand on both feet.
- 2 Put a rubber band underneath your feet, and make sure the rubber band is even.
- 3 Hold a handle in each hand, and keep your arms to the side of your body.

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates a rubber-band side raise. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Raise arms to shoulder level. **Movement**

4 Draw in your abs and squeeze your glutes.

5 Raise both arms to the side of your body up to shoulder level.

6 Keep your chest up and your shoulder blades together. Do not allow your back to arch.

7 Hold the position.

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates a dumbbell front raise. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Keep arms in front of body, with thumbs facing each other. **8** Return your arms slowly back to the side of your body.

DUMBBELL FRONT RAISE

Getting Started

1 Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and pointing straight ahead, knees over your second and third toes.

Chelsea Cooper demonstrates a dumbbell front raise. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Draw in abs and squeeze glutes. **2** Hold a dumbbell in each hand and keep your arms to the front of your body, thumbs facing each other.

Movement

3 Draw in your abs and squeeze your glutes.

4 Keeping your arms straight, raise your arms in front of your body to shoulder level.

5 Hold the position, then slowly lower your arms back to the front of your body.

Next month, we'll complete this series by focusing on the abdominal muscles. Until then, stay focused and have fun!

Chelsea Cooper, MPA, CPT, is certified by the National Academy of Sports Medicine as a personal trainer, performance enhancement specialist, and rehab and exercise specialist. To learn more, visit www.trainwithchelsea.com.

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