

# Strengthen your whole body with one arm exercise!

While there is no magic bullet for gaining strength, variety is key. To that end, although classic bicep curls often take center stage for building arm strength, another arm exercise deserves attention in your workouts: the hammer curl. This powerful movement not only builds impressive arm muscles but also enhances overall body strength, function, stability and resiliency.

Hammer curls are a variation of regular bicep curls. Like their traditional counterpart, one of the primary muscles targeted by hammer curls include the biceps brachii, the muscle best known as “the bicep.” However, hammer curls also emphasize two other arm muscles: the brachialis, a muscle beneath the biceps brachii that helps support the elbow joint, and the brachioradialis, a forearm muscle that enhances grip strength. Performing hammer curls correctly involves significant core engagement, which improves balance and overall strength.

Aptly named, hammer curls mimic the action of holding and using a hammer. Unlike regular bicep curls, which use a palms-up grip, hammer curls are performed with a neutral grip with palms facing each other. This simple adjustment shifts the muscle focus for more comprehensive strength development. This variation also decreases wrist and elbow strain, reducing the risk of overuse injuries and making it a safer option for those with joint concerns. Here’s a detailed list of benefits:

- Because the neutral hand position needed to perform hammer curls boosts forearm and grip strength, it also boosts your ability to hold and lift heavier weights to make greater total-body strength gains in other exercises, as well as enhanced performance in other fitness and sport activities.
- Hammer curls build arm and hand muscles needed for daily activities that require lifting, holding, and carrying, such as caring for children and performing household tasks and yard work.
- Enhanced grip strength also helps with opening jars, using tools and completing basic household tasks, making hammer curls particularly beneficial for older adults trying to maintain functional independence.
- The controlled motion and neutral grip of hammer curls help strengthen the muscles and tendons around the elbow and wrist joints, reducing the risk of common injuries associated with weaker muscles and improper lifting techniques.
- With less wrist rotation than traditional curls, hammer curls minimize the risk of injury, especially for those people with previous wrist or elbow issues.



*This healthy living information is provided by  
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