Big Guns Challenge

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There are few pleasures in life as satisfying as big biceps and triceps.

If you want to get the most out of your arm workouts, it's important to know which bicep exercises work for building mass, and which tricep exercises will help bring out that coveted "peak."

In this article, we'll go over some bicep and triceps training tips that can help pack on serious size.

With all of the information provided, we'll set you off on a 1-month challenge for you to see how much your arms can actually grow!

Now let's get to the main sauce!

Arm Anatomy

Before we get to the actionable part where we tell you exactly what to do to grow your arms, let's briefly explain the anatomy of your arms, to better understand how to actually stimulate them.

Here's a simple breakdown - The upper arm is made of two primary muscle groups:

1. The biceps
2. The triceps

These are opposite in placement and function, meaning that when one of them contracts, the other relaxes.

The Biceps

This first muscle group is responsible for flexion of the arm at the elbow, as well as rotation of the wrist.

The biceps are engaged during pulling movements, such as pull-ups, rows and bicep curls.

Its name "biceps" is derived from "bi" meaning "two" and "ceps" meaning "head", implying that the bicep is a two-headed muscle.
The long head of the biceps is found on the outside of the arm and it forms the so-desired "bicep peak".

Oppositely, the short head is on the inside of the arm and gives a bulkier, wider look to the arm.

The Triceps

Though the biceps is commonly targeted to grow bigger arms, the truth is that the triceps make up the bigger portion of your upper arm.

By the name, you can tell that the tricep is a 3-headed muscle, that has two heads on the inside of the arm, and one head on the side of the arm. When properly developed, the triceps will give your arm a more swept, aesthetically pleasing look.

Oh, and it will support you in your other pushing movements!

Triceps are engaged during pushing movements, such as bench press, overhead press, triceps press, dips, push-ups, etc.

The 3-Week Big Guns Challenge



Alright, to really target the arms now, we have to pick exercises that engage all the zones of both muscle groups.
Below, you can find a list of exercises for the biceps and the triceps.
Pick two for each muscle group and carry on with reading our guidelines towards week 1!

Biceps Exercises	Triceps Exercises
Straight Barbell Curls	Close Grip Bench Press
Standing Alternating Dumbbell Curls	Overhead Dumbbell Triceps Press
Close Grip Z-Bar Curls	Straight Bar Cable Pressdown
Hammer Curls	Dumbbell Kickback
Preacher Curls	Parallel Bar Dips
Incline Dumbbell Curls	Bench Tricep Dips

Week 1

In week 1 of the challenge, you have two very simple tasks:

1. Pick one biceps exercise and place it in your back day training routine, doing 4 high-effort sets of 8-10 repetitions, taken close to failure
2. Pick one triceps exercise and place it in your chest day training routine, doing 4 high-effort sets of 8-10 repetitions, taken close to failure.

NOTE: If you're training chest and back twice in a week, do this twice with different exercises every time. Track your recovery and if pushing/pulling performance starts lagging, reduce direct arm work volume as needed.

Week 2

During the second portion of this challenge, you will take the same concept and apply one fundamental principle of muscle growth, namely progressive overload.

Progressive overload implies an increase in training load, which can be done by either means:

1. Increasing the working weight
2. Increasing the number of repetitions
3. Increasing the number of sets

And so, in week 2 of the challenge, copy the exact same thing you did in week 1, but do an extra rep and weight here and there.

Focus your effort!

The 3-Week Big Guns Challenge





Week 3

In week 3 of this challenge, it is time to take a rest from the same exercises you've been overloading on for the past two weeks and do something else. Pick one different exercise for the biceps and one for the triceps, add it to your back/chest days respectively just like you did previously.

HOWEVER, instead of focusing on lifting as heavy as possible, lift a challenging weight but maintain a slow, focused pace that places all the tension on the working muscle groups.

This will again be means of progressively overloading, as you are increasing the mechanical tension, but in a way less aggressive manner that does not require redline exertion.

Rinse And Repeat...

The 3-week challenge wasn't really made to shortcut your way to 18-inch guns...
In reality, this challenge is about feeling and doing what you have to do consistently, to grow your guns big. After week 3 is over, take these same principles and exercises and continue doing what you've been doing so far - Progressively training!
Pair this with a slight caloric surplus and you will be well on your way to increasing the size of your arms.

Pro-Tips

If you really want to achieve results going through this challenge, you will need some further knowledge.
Here are some tips for you:

1. When picking biceps exercises, pick ones with different wrist positions - An exercise with supinated wrists (palms facing the front) will target the bicep peak, while a pronated wrist would engage the short head on the inside of the arm.
2. Do the same for triceps - Pick movements where the elbows are at different positions relative to the body
3. Overload on pushing/pulling exercises that target the biceps/triceps indirectly (i.e pull-ups, chest presses, etc.)
4. Flex your arms! Do double biceps, side triceps and other bodybuilding poses - These will bring out the details in your arms!
5. Stay consistent - Arms are long and hard to fill out! Focus your effort and results will be seen over time.

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