

The Complete Guide to a Rock Solid Grip

LESS THAN 10 MINUTES A DAY

How a strong grip helps you
to **climb higher, lift more
weight - even for carrying
groceries**



 **FITNESS
MASTER**

CONTENT

Chapter One: Why Develop Your Grip?	3
Chapter Two: Why Use a Hand Gripper?	10
Chapter Three: Grip Anatomy	13
Chapter Four: Grip Exercises	16
Chapter Five: Grip Workouts	22
Chapter Six: Final Word	36



CHAPTER 1

WHY DEVELOP YOUR GRIP?

THE IMPORTANCE OF GRIP FOR EXERCISE

The strength of your grip is the thing that allows you to hold on. If you are a weight trainer, the grip on the bar is what determines whether your set will continue or fall short. You will not get a good workout if you have a weak grip.

If your grip is weak when you are working kettlebells, dumbbells or barbells, you will drop the weight before the working muscle group has been fully exhausted. You'll never be able to train to your full capacity.

Outside of the gym setting, your grip strength is the link between holding and letting go. We've all seen the movies where the hero is dangling off the edge of a building as their grip slowly gives out on them, finger by finger. Usually they're rescued just in the nick of time.

In real life, you're more likely to be carrying a heavy suitcase or climbing a rope. Your success in carrying out your task will have a lot to do with how strong your grip is.

Improving your grip strength means getting to grips with grip strengtheners. Hand grippers were popular back in the 1970's when the home fitness craze swept across America. You may recall playing around with one of those gimmicky plastic spring type hand grippers when you were a kid. They were cheap and poorly constructed back then and, more often than not, ended up in the kid's toy box.

A generation later the hand gripper is all grown up. It has stood the test of time because it is an effective means of developing grip strength. But the new, sleek models are nothing like what you may remember from your childhood.

The market now features a range of new, technology enhanced grippers. There are still the cheap, poorly constructed ones around, but many of them have been enhanced and developed so that they are able to give a more effective workout experience.

Hand grippers will usually have a spring resistance. Your goal is simply to close your hand to compress the spring. Grippers come in a range of resistance levels from a very light 30 pounds all the way up to a super heavy 360 pounds.

When grippers first came onto the market, they were intended to be worked with extremely high repetitions (in the 50-100 rep range). Studies have since revealed that this is not the ideal way to work the forearms. You should work with a gripper that is a challenge for you to close.

A good resistance level for you will allow you to do no more than 12-15 reps at a time. You should hold each repetition squeeze for several seconds. Because the forearms are so resilient you can repeat your gripper workout a couple of times each day.

WHY IS GRIP STRENGTH IMPORTANT FOR YOUR WORKOUT?

If you can't maintain your grip on the barbell or dumbbell when you're working out, you will not be able to continue pumping out the reps. Failing grip is often the reason that people stop short on their sets. The result is that the target muscle group does not get sufficiently worked.

The power of your grip is very important to be able to perform in many sports. Whether you're playing tennis, basketball or squash, the quality of your grip is a key performance indicator.

WON'T MY GENERAL WORKOUT DEVELOP GRIP STRENGTH?

A lot of people who train with weights think that they will be able to develop an awesome set of forearms as a spill over effect from their training of other parts of the body. Although this would be nice, it's not the case.

To really develop your grip strength, you need to train for it separately. Doing squats and lunges won't develop your calves. In the same way, hitting the biceps and triceps will not build up your forearms. They need specialized attention.

One mistake that a lot of trainers make is to rely too much on such lifting aids as hooks and straps. These devices take the pressure off the wrist and forearm when doing heavy weight work.

But when you start using them, you take your grip out of the equation. It never develops. That means that you will always be reliant on these artificial aids – that's not a good thing!

One way that you can maximize the effect on your grip of your dumbbell and barbell training is to grip the bar as tightly as you can. Whether your bench pressing or dead-lifting, squeeze the bar as tightly as possible to work the forearms. You also be helping to stave off injury to the wrist.

BE IN IT FOR THE LONG TERM

You are using your wrists and forearms constantly throughout the day. That makes them very hardy. In order to make them respond you have got to hit them hard and often. And you have to be patient. Success requires consistent, long term training in which you make progressive advancement from week to week.

WHAT EXERCISES CAN I DO IN THE GYM TO STRENGTHEN MY GRIP?

PLATE PINCHES

Grab a plate off the weight stack, pinching it between your fingers. Tuck your elbow in at your side and hold the plate out in front of you. You will immediately feel this in your wrists and forearms. Specifically, it will work the flexors and the extensors. Hold the weight as long as you can on one side, then repeat on the other side.

FARMER'S WALK

Grab two dumbbells, holding them at your sides with feet shoulder-width apart. Make sure that you are holding the heaviest weights that you possibly can. Walk up and down the length of your training area, squeezing the weight as tightly as possible. Keep going until your grip fails.

WRIST ROLLS

A wrist roller is a fantastic piece of equipment to help you build your forearms and grip strength. You can make one simply by grabbing a wooden dowel with a three-quarter inch diameter and cutting it to shoulder width length.

Drill a hole in the center just wide enough to thread a piece of rope through. Burn the end of any frayed rope to stop it from cutting.

Thread the rope through the hole in the dowel and tie a knot at the top of the rope. Tie the other end of the rope to weight plates or any other weighted resistance.

You now have a very effective tool for working your grip, wrists and forearms. Simply roll the rope up and down until your forearms can no longer handle it.

HEX HOLDS

Grab a hexagonal dumbbell with one hand from the top so that your fingers are gripping the hexagonal angles. Lift it up to shoulder height and hold for as long as possible. Repeat with the other hand. Keep your elbows tucked in at your side to keep the focus on the forearms and away from the shoulders.

DEAD HANGS

Extend yourself from a pull-up bar with your hands at shoulder width. Hang at full extension for as long as you possibly can. This move will develop grip strength and endurance at the same time.



CHAPTER 2

WHY USE A HAND GRIPPER?

THE IMPORTANCE OF GRIP FOR EXERCISE

When you're serious about your training, the strength of your grip is vital to getting a good workout. Your grip, dictated by the strength in your forearms and wrists, is the lever that connects the weight to your body.

When you're working with heavy dumbbells, barbells, and kettlebells in moves such as the deadlift or shrugs, you need a powerful grip to ensure that you don't drop the weight before your working muscle is exhausted and can't perform another rep.

Here are four reasons why you need include grip training into your routine:

1. They will develop hugely impressive forearms. The forearm flexors and extensors control the opening and closing of your fingers, which is the very action that a grip developer works on.
2. They will dramatically increase your hand endurance. This will allow you to apply force for a longer period of time and be able to carry heavy objects for longer periods of time.
3. You will have far greater hand strength. This will allow you to hold a barbell longer when doing exercises like the deadlift and to keep going longer on moves like chin ups.
4. You will improve your dexterity. This means that your individual fingers will each be stronger. If you do things like typing or playing a musical instrument, you will know how important that is.

Here are five ways to get the most benefit from your new hand gripper:

- 1. Holding the Gripper:** In order to achieve the ideal leverage, and to be able to close the gripper fully, you should hold the gripper high on the handle. Your little finger should grip the handle so that an inch or so of the handle protrudes from the hand.

- 2. Frequency of Use:** The forearms are very resilient. That means that you need to work them regularly. In fact, training your grip two times a day, morning and night, is a good idea. Do a minimum of 15 contractions with a 5 second hold on each rep.
- 3. Negative Reps:** Hold the gripper that you cannot close by yourself. Use your other hand to help you to close the gripper. Then release the supporting hand and try to keep the gripper closed for as long as you possibly can.
- 4. Proper Technique:** To develop the strength of your grip, you need to isolate the wrist and forearm. That means that you must be strict in your exercise performance. Don't twist your body or use momentum to get that gripper closed. Make sure that it's all grip strength that does the work.
- 5. Keep your Gripper Handy:** During your down-time grab the gripper and pound out a few reps. Whether you're watching TV, reading a book or talking on your phone, grip multi-tasking will get you to your goal faster.



CHAPTER 3

GRIP ANATOMY

In order to develop the key forearm characteristics of grip and solidity you must work for balanced strength around the associated forearm joints.

There are six forearm motions that you need to be aware of. They are grouped in pairs:

- wrist flexion and extension
- wrist abduction and adduction
- forearm supination and pronation

In addition to these we should also consider finger flexion and extension.

Each of the above motions is the result of individual forearm muscles working together in groups. Muscle groups work against one another in pairs in order to stability. This is similar to the way guy wires on opposite sides of a tent pole support each other.

There is, however, one odd muscles group that does not work in partnership with another muscle. This is the brachioradialis. It has no muscle group working against it in the forearm.

The brachioradialis works with two upper arm muscles, the biceps and the brachialis to bend the elbow. Their opposing muscle group, the triceps, is located in the upper arm.

Any comprehensive forearm program should aim to achieve development all of the major forearm muscles. Achieving balanced development requires devoting equal effort to the opposing muscle groups.

Only with such a balanced approach will you achieve functional strength - and massive forearms as well. As an additional benefit, balanced forearm development will greatly reduce the risk of injuring your wrists during athletic pursuits.

Of the six forearm movements, four of them - wrist flexion extension, wrist adduction / abduction - result mainly from four muscles working together in different groups.

The remaining two movements - forearm supination / pronation - results primarily from three other forearm muscles working in groups.

- Flexion at the elbow is governed by the brachioradialis.
- Flexion of the fingers is governed by the flexor digitorum (finger flexors)
- Extension of the fingers is governed by the extensor digitorum (finger extensors)



CHAPTER 4

GRIP EXERCISES

WARM UP EXERCISES



Wrist Rotate Exercise

- With elbow held close in to side of body, slowly rotate palm upwards and then downwards until stretch is felt at each extreme.
- Hold each for slow count of 10.
- Repeat 3 – 5 times.



Forearm Exercise

- Sitting with elbows out and palms together, slowly rotate palms down until stretch is felt.
- Hold for slow count of 10.
- Repeat 3 – 5 times.

THE EXERCISES

NEGATIVES



Negatives are performed with a gripper that you are unable to close with one hand. Hold the gripper in the palm of your hand, making sure that it is held high. Use your free hand to set the gripper in the proper position.

Use your free hand to provide just enough assistance that you are able to squeeze the gripper fully closed. Now remove the supporting hand and hold the gripper closed for as long as you can. Perform 3 set of 5 reps on Negatives.

SQUEEZE AND HOLD



Grab a hold of your hand gripper, making sure that it is properly positioned in your palm. Squeeze the gripper tight. Now try to hold it tight for as long as you can.

Set a goal for 30 seconds, every session try to improve your time by 5-10 seconds.

PYRAMID SETS

Perform your first set by doing 25 repetitions on your hand gripper. You should work at a 1-3-1 cadence. This means that it should take you one second to close the gripper, to one second to hold it tighter and one second to open it. Keep your reps flowing with a pause until you hit 25.

Now rest for 30 seconds.

On the second set, you should perform 20 reps, following the same 1-3-1 cadence.

For set three, go with 15 reps, then 10 on set four. Your fifth and final set should be for 8 reps, with a final squeeze and hold on the last rep. Try to get as long as you possibly can on this hold.

Note:

Pyramid training is an effective way to increase the intensity of your training while using fairly high reps. High rep training used to be very popular with grip trainers a few decades ago. Recent research, however, seems to indicate that heavier training with a more challenging gripper is more beneficial than using a lighter weight for high reps.

STANDARD SETS

Perform normal repetitions with a 1-3-1 cadence. You should do between 8-12 reps on each set. Rest between sets is 30 seconds. You should complete 3 sets of 12 repetitions of this exercise.



CHAPTER 5

GRIP WORKOUTS

In this section we will provide you with a combination of gripper and resistance workouts to allow you to fully develop your grip, along with your wrists and forearms.

The resistance exercises can all be done at home with equipment that you have lying around the house.

We will also provide weight training alternatives for those who have access to barbells and dumbbells.

The gripper exercises should be done every day (Monday through Friday) towards the end of the day.

HAND GRIPPER WORKOUT

WARM UP

Warming up before your hand gripper workout is just as important as warming up for your training. You wouldn't jump into a set of squats before warming up and neither should you begin working out with your gripper before thoroughly preparing your forearms and wrists.

Begin your warm up by squeezing a tennis ball. Start with a light squeeze for 30 seconds and then do 3 sets of 30 seconds where you squeeze more vigorously.

You should also do some stretching for the wrists and forearms. Here are some stretches you can use . . .

FINGER EXERCISE



- Make a fist; ensuring thumb is straight, not tucked under fingers.
- Slide fingertips up palm, tips of fingers moving towards base of fingers, until stretch is felt.
- Hold for slow count of 10.
- Repeat 3 – 5 times.

WRIST STRETCH EXERCISE



- With hand open and facing down, move wrist from side to side, until stretch is felt at each extreme.
- Hold each for slow count of 10.
- Repeat 3 – 5 times.

THE WORKOUT

Monday

- Standard Sets: 3 x 12
- Negatives: 3 x 5
- Pyramid sets: 5 sets
- 23 / 20 / 15 / 10 / 8 (maximum final hold on last set)

Tuesday

- Squeeze and Hold
- 5 sets spaced 60 seconds apart - hold for as long as you can on each set.

Wednesday

- Standard Sets: 3 x 12
- Negatives: 3 x 5
- Pyramid sets: 5 sets
- 23 / 20 / 15 / 10 / 8 (maximum final hold on last set)

Thursday

- Squeeze and Hold
- 5 sets spaced 60 seconds apart - hold for as long as you can on each set.

Friday

- Standard Sets: 3 x 12
- Negatives: 3 x 5
- Pyramid sets: 5 sets
- 23 / 20 / 15 / 10 / 8 (maximum final hold on last set)

HOME WORKOUT

Perform the home workout on Tuesday and Thursday as a supplement to your gripper program.

● FOREARM 10 SEC ISOMETRIC HOLD



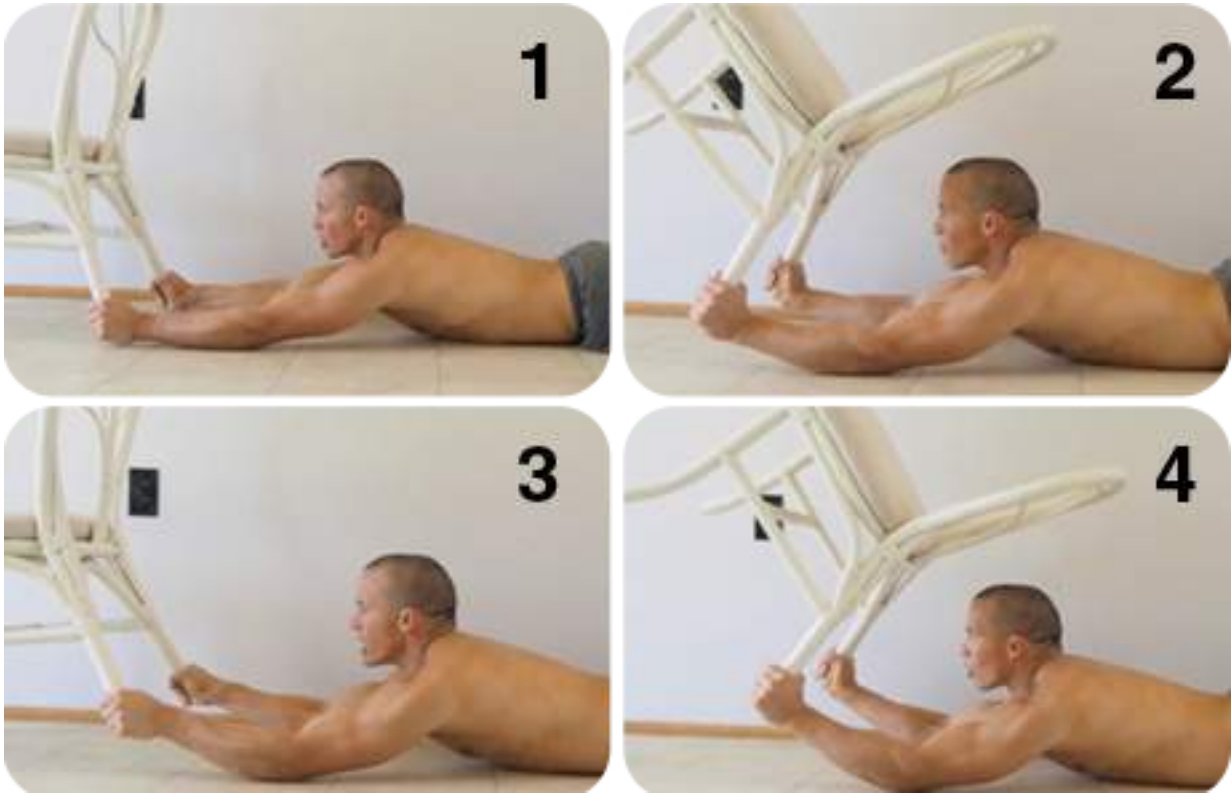
Muscles Involved :

- Primary : Forearm extensors
- Secondary: Grip strength

Execution :

1. Lie face down on the floor facing a chair with your arms fully extended. Grab the bottom of a chair leg with each hand.
2. Keeping your elbows on the ground, use forearm strength to lift the chair off the ground. Keep the rest of your body prone, so that the forearms are doing all of the work.
3. Hold this position for 10 seconds.

● FOREARM CHAIR LIFT



Muscles Involved :

- Primary : Forearm extensors
- Secondary: Grip strength

Execution :

1. Lie face down on the floor facing a chair with your arms fully extended. Grab the bottom of a chair leg with each hand.
2. Keeping your elbows on the ground, use forearm strength to lift the chair off the ground. Keep the rest of your body prone, so that the forearms are doing all of the work.
3. In the top position flex your wrists away from you to tilt the chair away. Feel your forearms working as you hold for three seconds.

4. Now flex your wrists back toward you to tilt the chair back. Hold that position for three seconds. Be sure to keep your forearms down throughout the movement.

● THE CLAW



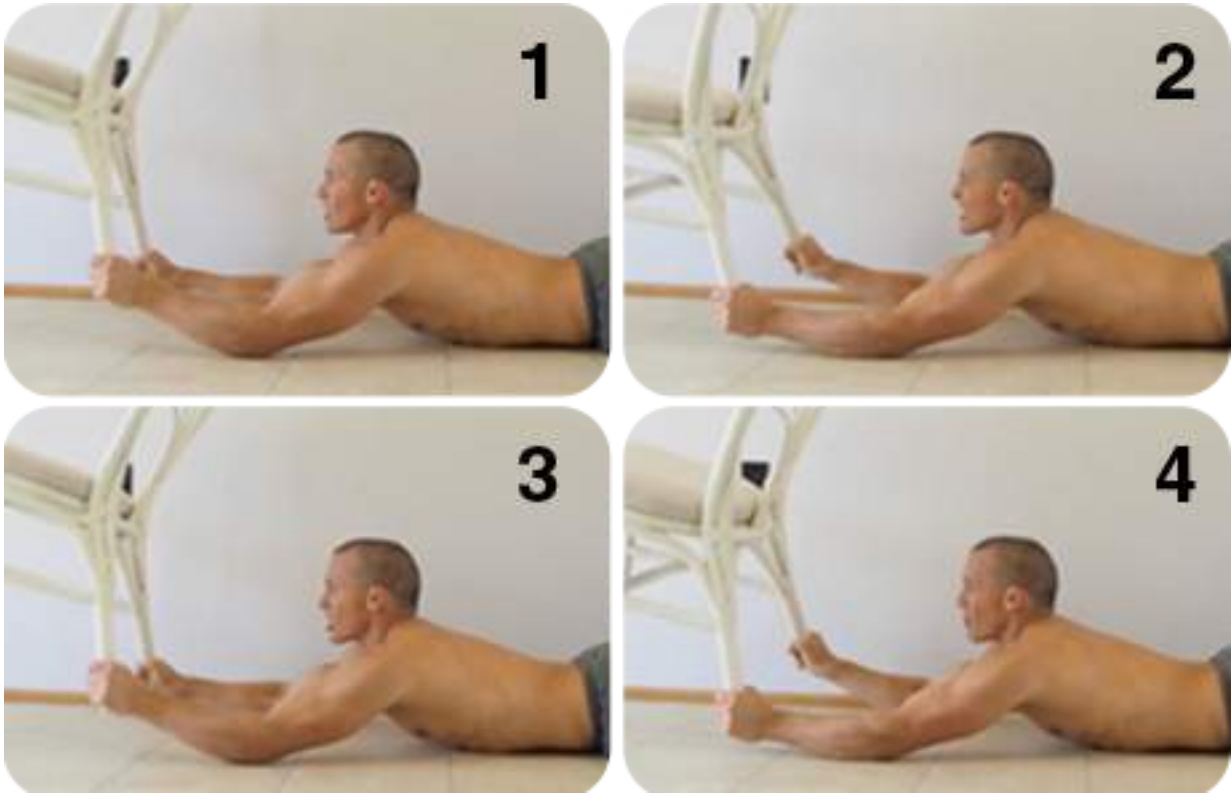
Muscles Involved :

- Primary : Forearm extensors
- Secondary: Grip strength

Execution :

1. Stand with you arms bent at your sides so that your forearms are parallel to the floor.
2. Extend you fingers bending at the joints. Focus on feeling the muscles in your forearms.
3. Close your fists tightly, squeezing the forearms tight as you do. Tense the whole of your upper body and channel all of your power to your hands.

● FOREARM TWIST



Muscles Involved :

- Primary : Forearm extensors
- Secondary: Grip strength

Execution :

1. Lie face down on the floor facing a chair with your arms fully extended. Grab the bottom of a chair leg with each hand.
2. Keeping your elbows on the ground, use forearm strength to lift the chair off the ground. Keep the rest of your body prone, so that the forearms are doing all of the work.
3. In the top position twist your wrists away from you to tilt the chair away. Immediately twist your wrists back toward you to tilt the chair back. Continue this twisting motion for 30

seconds. Be sure to keep your elbows on the floor throughout.

WEIGHT RESISTANCE WORKOUT

WARM UP

You'll need two dumbbell bars for this warm up exercise. Hold the dumbbells in the center, one in each hand. Extend your arms out to the sides, so that the bars are about 18 inches from your torso. Grip the bars as tight as possible and twist them back and forth at a rate of about one back / forth twist per second.

Continue for 60 seconds.

THE EXERCISE

- **WRIST CURLS**



Grab a barbell, thumbs up, with your hands about six inches apart. Straddle an exercise bench and let about half of your forearms extend over the end. Brace your arms against the inside of your knees. Let your wrists bend back and slightly open your fingers. Allow your elbows to come off the bench at the bottom of the stretch. Now curl the weight up as far as you can go.

You will make this exercise much more effective by gripping the bar as tightly possible throughout the motion.

● REVERSE WRIST CURLS



Take a slightly wider than shoulder width grip on a barbell, palms down. Place your forearms on your knees as you sit on an exercise bench. Your wrists should be just beyond your knees. Your forearms should be at a slight diagonal, so that your elbows are just outside of your thighs.

In the starting position, your elbows should be up off your legs with your wrists bent down. Now simultaneously bring your wrists

up and rotate your elbows in. Your forearms should end up parallel to each other with your elbows down against your thighs.

Again, it is very important that you maintain a very tight grip on the bar as you perform this exercise.

● BEHIND-THE-BACK WRIST CURLS



Place a barbell on a bench about 2-3 inches from the end of the bench. Straddle the bench with your palms facing back. Bend forward and down and pick up the bar with hands shoulder width apart.

Partially straighten up so that your forearms are against the outside of your thighs and the bar is hanging in space behind you. Narrow your grip slightly by sliding your hands toward one another.

Grip the bar tightly and curl it up as high as you can. Hold the top position for a second and then slowly lower to the start position.

● REVERSE CURLS



Stand with your knees slightly bent, holding a barbell with your palms down. Your hands should be shoulder width apart. Without using momentum, lift the weight until it touches your upper chest. Focus on isolating and working the forearms. Your elbows should come slightly forward as you lift. They do not, however, move out to the side. Slowly lower the bar and repeat.

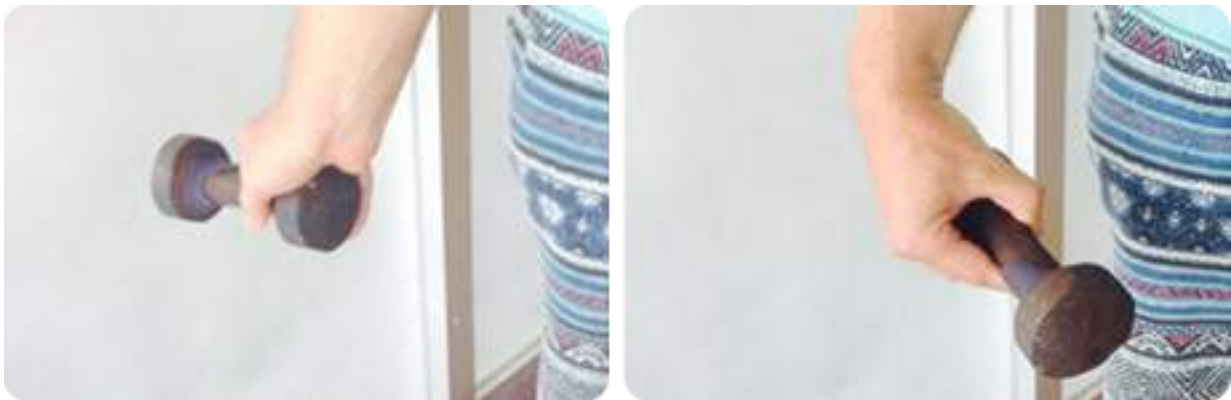
The next three exercises make use of the single ended dumbbell (SED). To make an SED simply take the weights off one end of an adjustable dumbbell.

● SED WRIST ABDUCTION



- Stand erect, holding the dumbbell as close to the unweighted end as possible. The weight should be in front of you. Keeping your grip tight, lower the bar until it is pointing downwards. Your elbow, thumb and the weights on the dumbbell should fall on a straight line. Bending only at the wrist, curl the bar up as high as it will go.
- Lower.
- Repeat for the desired number of sets and reps.

● SED WRIST ADDUCTION



- Stand erect, holding the dumbbell as close to the unweighted end as possible. The weight should be behind you. Keeping your grip tight, lower the bar to the point where it is pointing downward. Your elbow, thumb and the weight of the dumbbell should fall on a straight line. Bending only at the wrist, curl the bar up as far as it would go.
- Lower
- Repeat for the desired number of sets and reps.

● SED WRIST TWISTS



- Sit on a bench, holding the dumbbell as close to the unweighted end as possible. The weight should be in front of you. Keeping your grip tight, lower the bar until it is pointing downwards.
- Brace your forearm on the bench (not your knee - it is too unstable). Keep your wrist locked so the bar forms a 90-degree angle to your arm.
- Rotate your forearm, lowering the weight to the side as far as it would go, first to the inside and then to the outside.
- Repeat.
- You should feel an intense stretch along the edge of the bone on the thumb side of your forearm. Be careful to control the weight throughout the motion. Letting it flop from one side to the other can result in strained wrist tendons.

● FINGER EXTENSIONS



- Cup your left hand over the back of your right hand, with both hands pointing towards you. You should have contact along the whole length of your fingers. Providing moderate resistance with the palm of your left hand, completely straighten the fingers of your right hand.
- Repeat for the desired number of reps. Switch hands and follow the same procedure.

THE WORKOUT

Exercise	Reps / Goal
Dumbbell Bar Warm Up	1 minute
Wrist Curls	8 reps
Reverse Wrist Curls	8 reps
Behind-the-Back Wrist Curls	8 reps
SED Wrist Abductions	8 reps
SED Wrist Adductions	8 reps
Finger Extensions	15 reps each hand

Note :

Complete 3 circuits of this circuit. Move through the circuit with as little rest as possible. Rest for two minutes between each circuit.



CHAPTER 6

FINAL WORD

CONGRATULATIONS!

You are now fully equipped to to build a powerful grip and thickly muscled forearms. Your hand gripper investment, along with the auxiliary exercises presented in this book, will allow you to develop the vice-like power that is the mark of real strength.

We encourage you to continue working out with your hand grippers in order to maintain and build upon the progress that you have already made. Before long you will find your gripper too easy. That is proof positive of your growing strength. That will be the time to invest in a more intense gripper.