



Lifting Technique Variations

Minor technique variations can significantly alter the effect of an exercise. However, in the fitness industry many myths and misconceptions exist as to the benefits of each variation. The techniques mentioned below are justified on the basis of the *length-tension relationship* which indicates that *muscles placed on greater stretch are able to contract more forcefully* and therefore *obtain optimum benefit*. Knowledge of these technique variations is of particular importance when resistance training for *maximum benefit...*

To increase the emphasis placed on a particular muscle one must:

- 1. Increase the range of motion at the joint(s) over which that muscle acts, and;**
- 2. Decrease the range of motion at joints over which all other muscles act.**

For two joint muscles one must also change the position of the joints (if possible) so as to maximise the stretch on appropriate muscles prior to the start of the movement. For example, the biceps brachii receive greater benefit from exercises like the incline dumbbell curl, as the shoulder joint is hyper-extended.

OTHER EXAMPLES

Squat (quadriceps):

- **Front squat, heels raised on block**

Seated row (Lats dorsi, teres major):

- Use a neutral grip
- Pull handle into lower abdominals
- Lean forward at the start of the movement

Squat (gluteus maximus):

- Low bar squat, heels flat on the ground.

Seated row (posterior deltoid):

- Use 25-35cm wide grip
- Pull handle high into the chest.

Leg press (quadriceps):

- Feet low on foot plate, seat declined.

Lat-pulldown (Lats dorsi, teres major):

- Shoulder width, neutral grip.

Leg press (gluteus maximus):

- **Feet high on the foot plate, seat inclined.**

Lat-pulldown (Rhomboids):

- Pull handle down behind the neck.

Bench press (Triceps):

- Narrow grip.

Bicep curl (Biceps brachii):

- Use an incline DB curl. Supinate radioulnar joints.

Tricep extension (Long head of triceps):

- **Kneeling cable extension 'French' press**