

Triathlete Jon Leifer

HOW YOU CAN HAVE

STRONG CALVES

By Shane Doll, CPT

Photo by John Di Giovanni

This month's spotlight is on exercises to develop strong, and powerful, calves. Make no mistakes about it. If you want to develop a good pair of calves, you'll have to load them with heavy resistance, and do it often. Hitting your calves once a week, with a set or two at the end of your workout won't do much. Look to regularly incorporate a few of the exercises below into your workouts, and you'll see great results.

1. Standing Calf Raise Place shoulders under padded lever and put your feet on the step with the arches and heels extending. Grasp the sides of the padded lever for support. Push upwards off the balls of your feet until you're fully extended. Return to the starting position, without letting the weight stack touch, and repeat.

2. DB Single Leg Calf Raise: Grab a dumbbell in one hand and place one foot (same side) on a step. Place the other foot on the back of the calf you're working, while you flex and extend your ankle. Look to go as deep as you can on the down phase, and fully flex on the upwards movement.

3. Leg Press Machine Calf Raise: Load weight on the sides of a seated leg press machine. Get into position like you were going to do a leg press. Bring your feet in on the platform until they're just inside hip width. Place just the balls of your feet on the platform leaving the arches and heels off. Keep the safety bar in position, while you push the weight upwards, flexing your ankles. Return and repeat.

4. Seated Calf Raise: Place knees under pads and grasp handles. Put the balls of your feet on the step with your arches and heels off. Slowly lower the weight until your ankle is fully extended, then push upwards in a slow, controlled motion. Do not bounce the weight move faster. Look to work the entire range of motion, really contracting the calf muscles at the top.

5. Barbell Calf Raise: Load weight onto the bar of a smith machine, or free weight rack, and get in position like you were going to squat. Bring your feet so they're just inside shoulder width. Raise the weight off the safety supports and stand with your knees slightly bent. Push the weight upwards by flexing your ankles, driving off the floor. Contract at the top, lower and repeat.

Shane Doll, CPT, CSCS is the owner of Shaping Concepts Fitness Training Studios. To see informative videos and articles on fitness training, fat loss, and nutrition go to www.shapingconcepts.com

