

Cable Triceps Pushdown

Bilateral straight-bar high-cable pressdown with overhand grip

Key positions



1. Start: upper arms steady by the sides



2. Midpoint: extend elbows without body sway



3. Bottom: comfortable controlled extension

Muscles worked

Main muscles

- Triceps brachii (long, lateral and medial heads): the primary elbow extensors.

Supporting muscles

- Abdominal and back muscles help keep the torso and pelvis steady.

- Forearm muscles help hold the bar and steady the wrists. Supporting roles mainly concern posture and grip.

What makes it useful

A single-joint exercise using a high cable to resist elbow extension. Keep upper arms by your sides to focus the action on the triceps. This guide uses a bilateral straight bar with an overhand grip.

Movement & technique

Cable Triceps Pushdown | Keep your elbows still. Press down, then return slowly with control.

Before you start

Follow the machine's instructions and choose a light load. Check the cable, clip and bar, and secure pulley adjustments and selector pin. Adjust only with the stack resting.

1 Set the bar and stance

Secure a straight bar to the high pulley. Face the machine with feet about hip-width and knees soft. Use a closed overhand grip, one hand on each side of the center attachment.

2 Set the upper arms

Brace gently and keep a natural back position. Hold upper arms by your sides with elbows comfortably bent. Keep the bar in front and the cable clear of your face and body; do not pull shoulders or elbows far behind you.

3 Press down smoothly

Exhale and extend elbows to press the bar toward the front of your thighs. Keep wrists aligned and elbows in place. Reach comfortable extension without snapping, shoulder drive or torso momentum.

4 Return under control

Inhale and bend elbows back to the start while keeping upper arms and posture steady. Hands and bar move together. Maintain control of cable tension without dropping or slamming the stack.

Form reminders

- Keep elbows by your sides and upper arms steady in both directions.
- Keep feet and pelvis steady; avoid bouncing knees or rocking the torso.
- Maintain the same closed grip and comfortable wrist alignment.
- Choose a pain-free controllable range and load; no claim to isolate one triceps head.

Finish safely

- Return the load gently and let the stack rest before releasing. Never change pins or clips under suspended load; keep clear of moving parts.
- Stop for elbow, shoulder or wrist pain or dizziness. Reduce load if grip or posture cannot stay controlled.

References

1. ACE - Tricep Pressdown (www.acefitness.org)
2. ACE Certified News - Cable Training (www.acefitness.org)
3. Life Fitness - Cable Motion Safety Manual (www.lifefitness.com.au)
4. ScottHermanFitness - Tricep Pushdown (V-bar motion reference) (www.youtube.com)