

One-Arm Dumbbell Row

BACK / ONE DUMBBELL AND A FLAT BENCH

A compound pull performed one side at a time. The hand and knee on the non-working side support you on a bench, helping you maintain your torso position while practising the row.

PRIMARY MUSCLES

Latissimus dorsi, rhomboids and middle trapezius

ASSISTING MUSCLES

Rear deltoids; biceps and other elbow flexors

STABILIZING / HOLDING

Core stabilizers and forearm grip muscles

The movement (right arm shown)



1

Build a stable base

Left hand and knee on the bench; right foot on the floor. Let the right arm hang below the shoulder.

2

Drive the elbow back

Keep the elbow near the body and bring the dumbbell toward the waist or lower ribs.

3

Lower slowly

Return without twisting your torso. Set the weight down safely before changing sides.

Check every repetition

Keep all support points steady, the head aligned with the spine and the torso square. Pull the elbow back without twisting. Muscle emphasis changes with elbow path and shoulder-blade motion.

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Setup and technique

Set up (right arm shown)

- 1 Use a stable flat bench. Place the left hand beneath the left shoulder and the left knee beneath the left hip as a starting guide.
- 2 Plant the right foot on the floor. Keep the spine and neck naturally aligned, brace the abdomen and press the left palm into the bench.
- 3 Wrap the right thumb and fingers around the handle, palm facing inward. Keep the wrist in line with the forearm and let the arm hang below the shoulder.

Perform the movement

- Pull** Exhale and draw the right elbow back close to the body, bringing the dumbbell toward the waist or lower ribs.
- Pause** Stop where you can keep the torso square without shrugging or twisting. Keep the supporting hand, knee and foot in place.
- Return** Inhale and extend the arm slowly. Control the weight to the start; do not drop it. Set it down safely before switching sides.

Common errors and useful corrections

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| Twisting or swinging the load | Keep the pelvis and chest facing the floor; lighten the load. |
| Rounding or craning the neck | Brace and keep the head naturally in line with the back. |
| Shrugging or flaring the elbow | Keep the shoulder away from the ear and elbow near the ribs. |
| Bending the wrist or dropping | Keep the grip and wrist steady; control the lowering phase. |

Stop a movement that causes pain and reassess the load or range of motion.

Instruction sources and demonstration video

Muscle groups are a practical coaching classification. The model images are AI-generated instructional stills.

ACE: Exercise guide

<https://www.acefitness.org/resources/everyone/exercise-library/126/single-arm-row/>

PureGym: Muscles and technique

<https://www.puregym.com/exercises/back/rows/single-arm-dumbbell-row/>

ScottHermanFitness: Video demonstration

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYcpY20QaE8>

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