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The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you may use the material. Your back includes some of the anatomy's largest muscles, used daily to support your spine and body. These muscles also comprise some of the core muscles, particularly the latissimus dorsi muscles, commonly referred to as lats. The latissimus dorsi muscles are located on either side of your back and travel from the back of the shoulder down to the hips. The lat muscles are involved in pulling motions, like pulling open a door or doing a pull-up. Because of that movement, typical latissimus dorsi exercises involve a pulling or rowing motion. The following exercises are designed to help you build strength in your lats. Most of these exercises can be done with a single dumbbell. You can also use resistance bands, a suspension trainer, or a pull-up bar. You can also use a variety of equipment to work your lats in a different way. Go for 2-3 sets of 8-12 reps, resting between sets. Make a complete back workout by including exercises for your upper back and lower back. Use enough weight or resistance that you can complete the desired number of reps. Don't perform back exercises that aggravate your back in any way. If you do not know how to maintain correct form with these exercises, seek guidance from a personal trainer. It is a misconception that there are exercises you can do to target your upper, mid, or lower lats. The latissimus dorsi are a pair of large muscles, one on either side of your middle to lower back. They work as a unit, so any movement you perform that relies on your lats will use the entire muscle. In other words, you cannot isolate your upper, lower, and mid lats. Below you will find descriptions and instructions for the following lat exercises: One-arm row on one leg lat pull with bandsBarbell rowsDumbbell pulloversRenegead rowPull-upsDumbbell rowsOne-arm seated rows with resistance bandsBent-over row with bandsPaw plank with rowsDumbbell rows with bandsAlternating dumbbell rowsStraight arm pullBarbell pulloversCompound row 1 Caiamag/Trevor Adeline / Getty Images Doing a row on one leg adds a balance challenge, so you'll probably use a lighter weight. To start, shift the weight to the right leg and hinge at the hips, taking the torso parallel to the floor as you lift the left leg straight up. Your body should be in a straight line from head to toe. Hold onto a wall for balance if you need to. From this position, pull the elbow up to a row and slowly lower it down. If you feel shaky, take the leg down and rest lightly on the toes, keeping most of the weight in the front leg. Repeat for 12-16 reps on each side. 2 Reverse Breakmedia Ltd / Getty Images The lat pulldown machine replicates the lat muscle and is a great way to build strength in your lats. To start, sit on the machine and grab the bar with both hands. Pull the bar down to your chest and then slowly lower it back up. Repeat for 12-16 reps. 3 Lat Pulldown / The lat pulldown machine is a great way to build strength in your lats. To start, sit on the machine and grab the bar with both hands. Pull the bar down to your chest and then slowly lower it back up. Repeat for 12-16 reps. 4 Lat Pulldown / The lat pulldown machine is a great way to build strength in your lats. To start, sit on the machine and grab the bar with both hands. Pull the bar down to your chest and then slowly lower it back up. Repeat for 12-16 reps. 5 Lat Pulldown / The lat pulldown machine is a great way to build strength in your lats. To start, sit on the machine and grab the bar with both hands. 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example, if your workout begins with bent over rows, do a few warm up sets, increasing the load each time until you are at your working weight. What is the best lat exercise? While variety is important for building your lats over time, beginners can really stick to just a few exercises and see some fantastic results. So, if we are to narrow down the best exercises for latissimus dorsi, they would be: Pull Ups/Chin Ups (Weighted if possible) Underhand Bent Over Rows Lat Pushdowns If a beginner can't do pull ups or chin ups, lat pulldowns with the same grip would be the next best thing. With these three exercises, you will be working your lats through all of the main actions, so you can get full development. In terms of muscle activation, pull ups and chin ups and bent over rows are shown to have the highest results with EMG studies, so while other exercises are good, these are the best. As you become more advanced, you will need to add more variety to your training, but if you are looking for somewhere to start, this is it. How can I train my lats without a pull up bar? If you don't have a pull up bar, you obviously can't do pull ups and chin ups. With that, your next best option is inverted rows and grabbing a set of resistance bands. With resistance bands, you can perform lat pulldowns in the same way you do cable pulldowns. Be that as it may, you will still need some anchor point for your bands. There are door anchors for this. All that said, we highly recommend getting a pull up bar or finding one at a park nearby and doing pull ups. It's the best body weight lat exercise you can do. And if you don't have any access to a pull up bar, you probably can find a beam of some sort to do pull ups on. You can get pull up bars on Amazon for as little as \$30. We also have a great list of the 7 Best Outdoor Pull Up Bars for you to check out. Do push ups work latissimus dorsi? Like bench press, push ups will work your lats, particularly the middle lats, as the movement requires horizontal abduction. However, push ups are not going to be enough for the best possible lat development, so we highly recommend adding the above lat specific exercises into your home workouts. Are deadlifts a good lat exercise? Deadlifts are a must and they will do a great job of strengthening your lats as well, especially if you do wide grip variations of the deadlift. We didn't include the deadlift simply because it is more of a total body exercise rather than a lat exercise. Nevertheless, include it in your routine. With the lat exercises above, you will see serious improvements in your deadlifts over time as the lats play an important role in deadlifting. What causes tight latissimus dorsi? Your lats can become tight from overuse or if they become overactive. They can also be tight from certain injuries or simply a lack of stretching and using a full range of motion. Remember, the concentric phase of lifting (squeezing of the muscle) is important, but the eccentric phase (stretching of the muscle) is just as important. By using a full range both on the concentric and eccentric phase, you really shouldn't have an issue with your lats becoming tight as you will be dynamically stretching them as you workout. That said, your lats can still become tight for one reason or another, and if they do, you should know how to stretch them. How do you stretch your latissimus dorsi? There are many different effective lat stretches. Some of my favorites include the hanging bar lat stretch, the bench kneeling lat stretch, and the bent over lat stretch. Foam rolling is also important. Check out our article on the 10 Best Lat Stretches For Before & After Workouts for detailed information on how to perform each of these, along with many others. Exercises For Latissimus Dorsi: Final Takeaways Now that you are armed with everything you need to know about developing your latissimus dorsi, it's time to go out there and put your lats and these exercises to the test! A few final pointers: Aim to work your lats twice weekly for muscle hypertrophy, allowing them to rest in between sessions, which is key for muscle recovery. It's also essential that you eat to build muscle, meaning you need to be in a small calorie surplus of 300 to 500 calories. Follow my workout advice and use these exercises for the latissimus dorsi muscle, and massive wings are yours for the taking. Looking for an effective workout featuring many of these exercises? Check out our Best Lat Workouts For A Bigger, Stronger Back! Prepare to maximize your gains with our exclusive 12-week hypertrophy training program. Choose between a 4 or 5 day training split and gain 2-12 pounds of muscle over 90 days...