

The Best Exercises You've Never Heard Of...The Most Unique "Mad Scientist" Exercises I've Found For Blasting EVERY Bodypart!

By Nick Nilsson

Author of...

[The Best Exercises You've Never Heard Of](#)
[The Best Abdominal Exercises You've Never Heard Of](#)
[The Best Chest Exercises You've Never Heard Of](#)
[The Best Arm Exercises You've Never Heard Of](#)

Let's face it...training with the same exercises over and over again not only gets boring, it can very easily lead to plateaus and stagnation in your training. You need to give your body new exercises to shake things up both mentally AND physically.

And that's where I come in...

They call me the "Mad Scientist" in the fitness industry...and for good reason. I am CONSTANTLY experimenting with and innovating exercises and training techniques to help people blast through plateaus and make every single set and rep you do in the gym more effective.

People quit training because they're not seeing results or because they get bored...

And I will NOT let that happen to YOU!

Exercise #1 - Dumbbell Crawling for Rock-Solid Abdominals

I have to say, this is one of THE strangest abdominal exercises you'll ever see...but also one of THE most effective!

You're not going to be doing any crunching or twisting or squeezing. There are no machines involved...no need to even focus on contracting the core muscles.

Because once you start doing this exercise, your body will have NO CHOICE but to fire the abs HARD in order to do it!

For this exercise, all you need is a pair of dumbbells and a floor. That's it! The dumbbells should be a moderate weight - something you'd use for sets of 5 reps on dumbbell curls, perhaps. In the demo, I'm using 65 lb dumbbells and those were a good weight for me. As you learn and use the exercise, you'll be able to gauge the weight and go up or down accordingly.

This exercise is going to teach you what core strength and stability are REALLY all about! First, I'm going to explain how to do it, then I'll give you the full rundown on why it's so good.

How To Do It:

You'll need some open floor space for this exercise - preferably where you have about 10 to 15 feet of unobstructed space to move. Set the dumbbells on the floor then get down in what looks like the top of a close-grip push-up position. Your hands will be on the handles of the dumbbells and you'll be up on your toes (not kneeling). Try to visualize the "start" position that sprinters are in when they're about to take off out of the blocks - THIS is what the position looks like.

Now you're going to CRAWL forward in that position...move the LEFT dumbbell forward a few inches and step your RIGHT foot forward a few inches.

It's definitely easier to "get" this one when you see it done on video (which, of course, I'll be posting below).

Basically, you're going to be crawling on the floor with your hands weighted by the dumbbells. Crawl forward about 10 feet like this then

stop and crawl BACKWARDS.

Sound easy? Think again...



Here's the start position - you've got the dumbbells on the floor and you're in what looks almost like a sprinters "start" position.

Now you move one dumbbell forward and step your opposite foot forward. The first time you do it, it'll take a little getting used to.



Now step the other dumbbell forward and the other foot forward.

Keep going.



When you go forward about 10 feet or so, stop then start moving yourself backward. This is actually a lot tougher than going forward! Go forward and backward until you can't hold yourself up or can't move the dumbbells anymore.

Why This Exercise Is So Effective:

Dumbbell crawling is a VERY effective core exercise because of the uneven tension you get through your core with every step forward you take.

Think of it this way...when you're lifting up your left hand (with the dumbbell) and the right foot, what is supporting your body? The support is coming from your OTHER hand and foot. Your core is, in an instant, going from 4-point support to 2-point support and all the tension is going diagonally through your core. It doesn't seem like much when you're crawling without weight, but add a dumbbell to the mix? You'll be singing a different tune...

In addition, while crawling, you're also supporting your bodyweight in a pike position, working the entire abdominal area isometrically (which means without movement - just acting to stabilize and brace your body position). It's a two-pronged attack on your core that will pay off BIG.

One of the great things about this exercise is that **the strength you develop is EXTREMELY functional**. Forget standing on a BOSU ball on one leg and catching a beanbag...THIS exercise will build functional power through the core.

The diagonal tension of crawling exactly mimics the natural diagonal tension that goes through the core when walking, running and jumping. Think of it as "force transfer" strength, meaning you'll be better able to transfer force through your core when moving (i.e. running, jumping, etc.).

Increasing strength in this very targeted way will have an IMMEDIATE and powerful carryover to sports performance.

And when you start moving BACKWARDS...you'll be in for a shock! It's actually quite a bit tougher moving backwards. The coordination can be a bit tricky but with practice, you should do fine.

When you're doing this exercise, start with a light to moderate weight but don't be afraid to increase the weight here. You may not feel it so much in the abs until you move up in weight. THAT is where the real benefits of the exercise will be felt.

Feeling strong and want to take it to the NEXT level? Try it with ANKLE WEIGHTS on, too! :)

[Click here to watch the video of this exercise on YouTube](#)

Want MORE ab exercises just like this? Check out "The Best Abdominal Exercises You've Never Heard Of" ([click here for more information](#))



Exercise #2 - Low Pulley Push-Ups For Chest

Push-ups are obviously a classic exercise - when you think bodyweight training, it's usually one of the first exercises you think of.

But, of course, I've got a new twist on the regular push-up that will just TRASH your pecs...much better than regular push-ups even though the exercise is pretty much exactly the same!

So here's the deal...you'll be using the cable-crossover setup (you can also hitch a couple of training bands to objects about 10 feet apart - that works great, too).

You're going to be doing push-ups with the two pulleys pulling your arms apart - this outwards tension puts extra tension on the pecs because even though your hands are planted on the ground, your pecs have to fire to keep the cables from pulling your hands out from under you!

This means you're pushing up AND you're fighting outwards pull. Double trouble...

So set about 20 to 40 lbs or so on the cross-over stacks and attach the single handles. You can add more if you need it once you figure out how this works.



Go grab the left handle.



Then go grab the right handle.



Now get into push-up position - you'll be on your fists when doing these push-ups because of how you have to grip the handles. Your hands will also be in a neutral (palms-facing in) position as you do the exercise.



Drop down into the position as you normally would then push back up. The exercise is EXACTLY the same - the difference is in the outwards-pulling tension.

This picture below shows another variation where instead of grabbing the handles, you can also attach ankle harnesses to the pulleys and loop those around your wrists.

This allows you to do push-ups in a flat-palm position (like normal).



As I mentioned, you can use bands as well - just tie them on to the left and right and grip the ends in your fists, just like the cable handles. Works exactly the same way and it will fire up your pecs like crazy!

It's a great way to increase the muscle-building power of the push-up.

[Click here to watch the video of this exercise on YouTube](#)

Want MORE chest exercises just like this? Check out "The Best Chest Exercises You've Never Heard Of" ([click here for more information](#))



Exercise #3 - Plank One Arm Dumbbell Rows for Back

This is a great exercise for not only working the back but developing core strength and stability as well.

You're basically combining a one arm dumbbell row with what looks like a one arm plank exercise (the ab one where you rest on your elbows and toes while keep your body straight).

Anyway, with this one, you're going to need a bench or other solid object (something that will NOT move) - I used a bench and just braced it against a wall so there was no possibility of sliding.

Now get a moderate weight dumbbell - something you could do the normal one arm dumbbell row with for at least 12 to 15 reps. Set the dumbbell on the floor to start.

Set your hand on the end of the bench then walk your feet back until you're almost horizontal. You want to keep some bend in your hips to help form a natural arch and help with bracing your body.

Here's the start position - two feet down and fairly close together. I keep them close together to increase the rotational torque on the abs, which creates a greater tension in the rotational muscles of the core (transverse abdominus and obliques). With the feet wider, there won't be as much rotational torque.



Now just row up!



Do a few reps on one side then switch hands.



Once you get comfortable with that one, you can get more advanced and just be on one foot.

The foot that is down should be the same side the weight is on, e.g. if you're rowing with your right hand, be on your right foot - otherwise you'll fall over.



The switch to the other side.





I found this to be an excellent overall upper body exercise. In addition to working the back and core, you're also hitting the chest (while supporting the body) and the triceps and shoulder of the braced arm. There is even a little leg tension involved.

It's a good one!

[Click here to watch the video of this exercise on YouTube](#)

Want more back exercises just like this? Check out "The Best Exercises You've Never Heard Of" ([click here for more information](#))



Exercise #4 - One Arm Gripping Dumbbell Squats

This is a great way to get a HUGE range of motion on a squat exercise while keeping your torso in a very upright and neutral position.

Most squat exercises have you freestanding, which means you have to compensate for the position of the weight by basically being less vertical, which puts tension onto the back.

That's not necessarily a bad thing, but it can be an obstacle for some people, especially if you want to get FULL range of motion.

This version is a one dumbbell squat using the OTHER hand to grip on a bar. You can use this grip to spot yourself but primarily to brace your body, which will allow you to keep your torso more upright while doing DEEP squats.

It's a nice exercise that will let you hit your quads and glutes HARD.

I'm using a 125 lb dumbbell and I've got the bar set on the rails of a power rack about 4 feet off the ground. You can see how even at the bottom of the movement, my torso is vertical and I'm sitting back. THAT is what this exercise does for you.



Now just stand up.





Torso stays vertical the whole time.

I like to do half the reps on one side then immediately switch to the other for balanced effects on the core and legs.

On each rep, don't take tension off the legs but touch one end of the dumbbell down on the ground to make sure you're getting full range of motion. Just keep that tension on!





Being able to sit back like this is also going to help you keep your knees from going beyond your toes (if you're worried about stuff like that - me, I'm not worried because the knee is designed to movements like that).

And unless you have knee issues, deep squats are NOT bad for your knees, as many people worry about. Smith machine squats and leg extensions are MUCH worse for your knees.

This is a nice variation to try - it also allows you to really push the reps until your legs are trashed as you can just set the dumbbell down when you're done and you can use your arm to spot yourself.

[Click here to watch the video of this exercise on YouTube](#)

Get more leg exercises like this in "The Best Exercises You've Never Heard Of" ([click here for more information](#))



Exercise #5 - One Dumbbell Over-And-Back Shoulder Press

Yet another in a long list of exercises where I'm trying to figure out a name for it that's descriptive yet not totally stupid...

This exercise is a version of the dumbbell shoulder press that will just LIGHT UP your side delts.

First, you'll need just one moderate-weight dumbbell. Use a weight that you'd normally be able get about 12 to 15 reps with. How you do this exercise is going to make it seem a LOT heavier.

Set the dumbbell on the floor. Bend down and grab it with BOTH hands - staggered, overlapping grip or you can have your hands sandwiched right on top of each other - you'll know what feels best for you after trying the exercise.

Pick up the dumbbell and get it set up at your shoulder like you're about to do a one-arm shoulder press (palm facing in towards your head). Your other hand will still be gripping on the dumbbell.



Now press the dumbbell directly to the overhead position. Now you're supporting it equally with BOTH hands.



Now lower the dumbbell down to the OTHER shoulder.



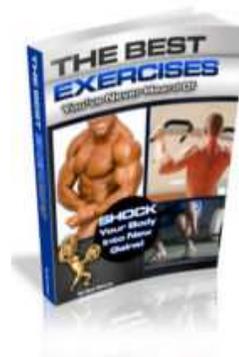
You're basically going to go back and forth over your head with the dumbbell pressing it from one side to the other. The non-working arm actually still DOES get some work while you're pressing - you'll use it to guide the dumbbell and help the movement by pulling up as you're pressing with the "work" arm.

This really hits the sides delts hard first from the neutral position of the hands (it'll resemble a W press). Plus, that non-working arm (that actually IS working) pulling up on the dumbbell keeps the tension on the area nicely. Finally, you're getting an absolutely FULL range of motion on the shoulder because you're going completely over your head and over to the other side each time.

This one is a great alternative to normal shoulder pressing.

[Click here to watch the video of this exercise on YouTube](#)

Get more great shoulder exercises like this in "The Best Exercises You've Never Heard Of" ([click here for more information](#))



Exercise #6 - One-Legged Glute Deadlifts...Work Your Butt Without Building Your Thighs!

Got a great glute-building exercise for you here, especially if you have trouble finding exercises for the glutes because of knee issues.

This is also a GREAT one for taking the thighs out of the picture so you can focus all the power right on the glutes, where you want it!

This one looks suspiciously like a Bulgarian Split Squat but without the squatting...I'll explain...

The Bulgarian Split Squat exercise is where you set your back leg up on a bench then come down in the lunge position (aka split squat). I call this one the Bench/Ball Lunge in the book (it's in the Advanced Exercises section).

With THIS exercise, however, you're going to be doing a one-legged stiff-legged deadlift with your back leg up on the bench.

I was actually quite amazed at how strongly this one targeted the glutes...the best part is, it hits the glutes without involving knee flexion to any substantial degree.

What **THIS** means is that you can build bigger glutes (and/or maintain glute size) when you have knee problems or injuries that prevent you from squatting or lunging.

Now there's no excuse...unless you have back problems, too, then you're totally @&#\$ed, of course (just kidding :)

So here's what the exercise looks like...you'll need two dumbbells and a bench for this one. Set the dumbbells in front of the bench (I'm using a couple of 85 lb dumbbells - you'll definitely want to start lighter than this when you try these the first time).



Now set your ENTIRE SHIN on the top of the bench. You'll need this for some degree of stability. We're not trying to make this exercise unstable, per se. What we're trying to do is get your body in the right position to force the glutes to activate.

You may need to slide the dumbbells forward a bit. Set your front foot in between the two dumbbells, get into position on the bench (like you were going to do that split squat movement). Both knees should be bent but held in that same position throughout the exercise.

Bend forward and grab the dumbbells. Keep your core tight.



Now pick the dumbbells up off the floor. The pressure should be on the heel of your front foot and your glute should be feeling it. Your glute will not only be providing the hip extension that gets you to the upright position, it's also contracting isometrically to maintain that bent-knee split position - double whammy!



Come all the way up until your torso is vertical then lower the dumbbells slowly back down and set them on the ground. Repeat the movement, lifting the dumbbells off the ground - setting them down allows you to reset your body position and keep your lower back well stabilized.



Do your reps on one leg then switch legs. I prefer lower reps with this exercise since the glutes are powerful muscles and need to be hit hard.



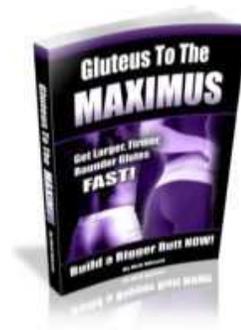
Remember, you're setting the dumbbells completely on the floor in between reps. Breathe out on the way up and keep your core tight. Try to keep an arch in your lower back throughout the movement as well.

Do a few sets of this then let me how hard it was to sit down for the next few days after trying this one!

Check out the video for it...

[Click here to watch the video of this exercise on YouTube](#)

Get more killer glute training like this in "Gluteus to the Maximus - Build a Bigger Butt NOW!" ([click here for more information](#))



Exercise #7 - Nilsson Curls - The Best Bicep Exercise EVER...

If you want to TRULY maximize your bicep mass, you're going to LOVE this exercise. It's one of my very favorite for building bi's.

The reason I named it after myself is that it basically summarizes what I'm all about - doing everything completely "backwards" and getting MUCH better results!

That, plus I thought it would cool to have at least ONE exercise name after myself when this one really catches on :)

The Nilsson Curl looks *almost* exactly like a chin-up.

In fact, another name I've called this exercise is the "Forearm-Braced Chin-Up". Because what you'll be doing IS a chin-up...but you'll be doing that chin-up with your forearms braced against another bar so that the VAST majority of the tension goes to your biceps instead of your back.

Just so you know up front, you'll need to be able to do probably 6 to 10 or so regular chins before you can really use this exercise. **If you can't yet do that many chins, don't worry!** I'm also including a "standing" version below that allows you to set your feet on the ground and spot yourself throughout the movement.

I mean think about it - imagine the kind of growth response you'll get from an exercise that puts the full tension of almost your entire bodyweight directly onto your biceps...

That's the beauty of this exercise - it's a bodyweight exercise, which means increased muscle fiber activation AND you use your entire bodyweight to do it.

How To Do It:

To do this exercise, you'll need a rack or a chin-up bar that allows you to set another close underneath it. Alternatively, you can also use the metal ladder of playground apparatus (that works quite well, too).

Set the racking pins (where you would normally rack the bar on a squat, for instance) to the highest point you can on the rack.

Now move the safety rails to a point that is about 8 to 12 inches below that (you can play with this height when you try the exercise to get the best dimensions for you).

Set a bar on the top racking pins and set another bar on the safety rails, pushed up against the uprights. It's going to look like two rungs of a ladder.

In my own setup, I load the top bar with weight plates to keep it from moving. You may find you need to do this with yours, too.

Quick note on setup...if you have a power rack that has pins that you can slide in and out of the frame (I don't - mine are integrated right into the rack) you can also more easily get this set up by setting one safety rail in the top set of holes then the other safety rail in a set of holes below (making your own ladder, essentially). That's the easiest way to set this up and how I used to do it when I had access to a rack that I could do it with.

Now get in the rack and take a close, underhand grip on the top bar. Your forearms should be braced up against the bottom bar, just above your elbows. Your arms should be straight when you're at the bottom.



Now start doing a chin-up. As you pull yourself up, your forearms will press against the bottom bar. **THIS** is what changes it into a biceps-oriented movement.



Pull yourself all the way up until your nose is at the top bar then lower slowly.



That's the exercise! And it's a TOUGH one...I don't care how strong your biceps are. It's going to challenge and you will LOVE the way it feels.

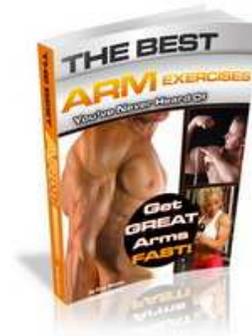
When I used to train at a commercial gym, I showed this one to a guy who was built like a gymnast...HUGE biceps, not very big legs. He did 5 reps, his arms swelled up like balloons and he couldn't wipe the grin off his face.

So as you get stronger with it, you can also add weight by holding a dumbbell between your feet or wearing a dip belt. But that's VERY advanced. This exercise is just BRUTAL even with just your bodyweight.

Do it **FIRST** in your bicep routine (trust me). You won't need to do a whole lot of anything else for bi's when you do 3 or 4 sets of this one...

[Click here to watch the video of this exercise on YouTube](#)

Get **MORE** great biceps exercises like this in "The Best Arm Exercises You've Never Heard Of" ([click here for more information](#))



Standing Nilsson Curls - A Useful Adaptation

This version is excellent for when you're either not strong enough to do the "free hanging" version above where you're using your entire bodyweight for resistance or if you're just too fatigued from previous training to do enough reps to really get much out of it.

It's basically the exact same exercise only instead of setting the two bars up high, you set them a bit lower so you can keep your feet on the ground and spot yourself by standing up when you need help!

When it comes to hitting the biceps (even with your feet down), the difference between this exercise and a regular chin-up is just **AMAZING**. **You'll feel almost ALL the tension go right into the biceps.**

So here's what the standing version looks like. You can do this in rack, using the set up I have here or you can use the safety rails in the rack, same as I mentioned above - just set the two rails into one side so they look like ladder rungs - it'll give you the same effect.

With this version, I have a bar setting in the racking pins and a bar sitting on top of the rails. I have the weight on the top bar to help keep it from moving. You want about a foot spacing in between the two bars.

You'll be gripping the top bar and bracing your forearms on the bottom bar.

So stand in front of the bar and get a grip - a little inside shoulder width - underhand grip.



Set your feet a little forward then squat down.



Now pull yourself up, as though you were doing a chin-up. Use your legs **only** as much as you need to for help. The majority should be bicep pull.



Pull all the way to the top and squeeze your biceps **HARD**.



Lower and repeat. Remember, use help from your legs only as much as you need to.

You can also use this setup to do negative reps, standing up on the positive and taking your feet off the ground to use your full bodyweight on the negative.

Your biceps will be on fire after a few sets of this one - a bodyweight bicep exercise!

[Click here to watch the video of this exercise on YouTube](#)

Get MORE great biceps exercises like this in "The Best Arm Exercises You've Never Heard Of" ([click here for more information](#))



Exercise #8 - On Barbell Tricep Extension-Presses

Okay, you got me...I had no idea what to call this one. That's a common problem with me because I come up with some pretty wild combinations of other exercises - sometimes the naming is harder than the exercise itself!

Not this one, though. It's a combination of close grip push-up, a tricep extension and almost a horizontal pike handstand push-up/Arnold press. **Try and mash THAT into a coherent name.**

Anyway, for this one you'll need a barbell and a bench (or chair or whatever) and something to brace the barbell on. I'm using a rack to push the bar up against and that was the easiest but it can be anything solid. A wall won't really work because your body has to go forward over the bar a little ways.

NOTE: if you're not strong enough to do this exercise on the bench, you can also do it with your feet on the floor. The execution of the exercise will be exactly the same...the difference is with your feet on the floor, it'll take away a lot of your bodyweight resistance.

So set a couple of plates on the bar to get it up off the ground a bit then push it up against the solid object. Set a bench a few feet back from the bar (it can be parallel or lengthwise - doesn't really matter as long as it won't slide out from under you).

Set your hands on the bar about shoulder-width apart then set your feet on the bench.



Get yourself into a pike position with your arms fully straight and locked out - this is the start position. This pike position is what makes it different than a standard close-grip push-up - you'll see why in a second.



Now lower yourself down and forward, bending your arms and straightening out your body as you do so.



Bring your body all the way down until your stomach is touching the bar. This is the bottom position.



Now here comes the critical part - you're **NOT** just going to do a close-grip push-up here.

You're going to push yourself UP and BACK into the pike position where you started...



When you're at the top, be sure to **push yourself all the way up and fully lock out your arms**. Push your butt as high in the air as you can. This kicks in the long head of the triceps, bringing in the shoulder extension function of the triceps.



It's hard to really get an idea for how this goes in the still pics here but when you see it done in the video, you'll see exactly why it's so effective for the triceps.

You're not only doing a close-grip press but also using your triceps to push your body back up to the pike position. It's a great multiple-angle, bodyweight hit to the tri's.

And let me tell you, even if you're strong, this'll have your triceps toasted in just a few sets.

Now have a look at the video to really see it in action...

[Click here to watch the video of this exercise on YouTube](#)

Get **MORE** great triceps exercises like this in "The Best Arm Exercises You've Never Heard Of" ([click here for more information](#))



Exercise #9 - Staggered Stance Stiff-Legged Deadlifts for Hamstrings

For developing hamstrings, there's not much better than a good Stiff Legged Deadlift. THIS is a great variation of it.

Basically, you're going to get the advantages of a regular stiff-legged deadlift (the ability to use a good amount of weight) AND the advantages of a one-legged stiff-legged deadlift (focus on one leg at a time).

I like this exercise for athletes - especially those who have to lunge forward then pull back, e.g. tennis, for example. Though honestly, any athlete who places high force requirements on the hamstrings is going to benefit from this one. The uneven pull on the body is really beneficial.

So load up the bar with about 1/2 of what you'd normally do for barbell SLDL's (to start with).

You can start one of two ways with this exercise. You can go directly to the staggered position right out of the bottom - basically, all you do is set one foot a bit back from the other. In the demo, I have my right foot toes in line with the heel of my left foot.

You don't want much separation here.



Here's the bottom position.



Basically, it's the exact same exercise as the regular SLDL only you have your legs a little staggered.

The balance is a bit different, too. Your front leg is going to have the primary tension on it.

I like to do one or two reps then switch to the other leg forward.



This is a great alternative to normal Stiff-Legged Deadlifts. It provides a nice challenge to the hams and, when you talk about "functional" exercises, it doesn't get much more functional than this.

[Click here to watch the video of this exercise on YouTube](#)

Get more hamstring exercises like this in "The Best Exercises You've Never Heard Of" ([click here for more information](#))



Exercise #10 - Barbell Down Back Donkey Calf Raises

The Donkey Calf Raise is simply one of THE best exercises for developing the calves. The reason is the great stretch you can put on the calves at the bottom of every single rep.

Because the calf muscles (gastrocnemius, to be specific) cross the knee joint, putting a stretch on the hamstrings also puts a greater stretch on the calves. So bending over at the waist puts a greater stretch on your calves.

But here's the problem...when you don't have a donkey calf raise machine OR a partner to sit on your back (like they're riding a donkey, hence the name), how do you perform this exercise? Donkey machines are not common in all gyms and if you're training at home, I have a feeling a donkey calf machine wasn't on your priority list of purchases (hopefully, a power rack was!).

One of the solutions I've come up with is using a dip belt to add resistance.

But it's not a perfect solution either. The weight doesn't sit in the best spot to get the most out of the exercise (it's more lower back than sitting on the hips, where you'd get the best effect). And, the stronger your calves are, the more plates you have to use. The more plates you have to use, the more awkward the exercise becomes and the wider you have to set your feet apart. It's not so bad when you're working with 2 or 3 plates. But I've gone as high as 6 plates and it gets VERY hard to perform the exercise effectively.

So here's my BETTER solution....

First, you will definitely need a power rack for this one. The setup depends on it. Basically, you're going to be in a bent-over position with the barbell running lengthwise down your back. It's tough to explain - pictures and video will do a better job of it so here's what it looks like.

For illustration purposes, look at how the rack, barbell and rails are set up. The left hand rail is about 3 feet or so off the ground. The right hand rail is a little less than that. This puts the barbell at a downward angle so you get full range of motion.



I have a foam barbell pad on the bar where my back is going to go (you can use a rolled-up towel for padding here, too).

What I'm doing here is gripping onto the barbell with both hands right near where the high end is resting on the rail. That is going to be the pivot point of the exercise.

Squat down to get your back underneath the lower end of the bar. You'll need to experiment with different heights of rails to get the best setup for you.

So then, get yourself underneath the bar and get the bar centered down your back. Here's a what a direct view of the position looks like. Note my hands are up by the pivot point and the padded end of the bar is across my lower back.



This may sound like a painful experience, but actually isn't. The barbell is pretty comfortable going lengthwise down the back, even with fairly heavy weight.

When you're doing the donkey calf raise, you want your legs to be pretty much straight and locked.

You're going to need a calf block to do the calf raise on as well. That's pretty much it. Play around with the height until you feel comfortable with where you're at.

The thing to note is when you're getting into position for the exercise, you **SHOULD** have to squat a little. You want to ensure you get a full stretch on the calves without the bar hitting the rail at the bottom of every rep. But playing around with bar height will give you the best feeling for where to set the rails.

Here's what it looks like. Both ends of the barbell are loaded and I've got a barbell pad down near the hips for padding. A rolled-up towel will work as well.

Get your feet set on the calf block then get yourself underneath the bar. Grab the bar up near the other end, right by the rail. That's the pivot point.



Now it's just a matter of coming up into a calf raise! At the bottom be **VERY** sure to get a deep stretch. Come up fully into the calf raise at the top.



This exercise setup is every bit as good as any donkey calf raise machine I've ever used...better, in fact, because your body isn't locked into the movement. Because the end of the barbell moves freely, you're not locked into the exercise and your body can find it's own groove.

Here's another view.



Next time you're hitting calves in the gym, take a crack at this one. And never mind the strange looks you get from everybody else in the gym. You'll see THEM doing this exercise the next time you come to the gym... :)

[Click here to watch the video of this exercise on YouTube](#)

Get more calf exercises like this in "The Best Exercises You've Never Heard Of" ([click here for more information](#))



Nick Nilsson - Bio

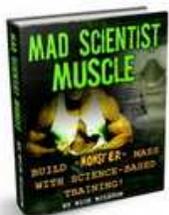
Nick is well-known for his unique "outside the box" approach to training. Making use of his degree in Physical Education (covering advanced biomechanics, kinesiology, physiology, and anatomy), Nick delivers constant innovation, extraordinary new exercises, and mind-blowing training techniques to his readers on a regular basis.

As a certified personal trainer and owner of several training and fitness websites, Nick has helped thousands of people achieve the results they want, especially when nothing else seems to do the trick. Flying in the face of "conventional wisdom" is one of the things he does best!

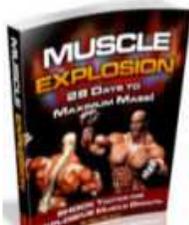
Nick's articles have been published in such popular magazines and websites as Men's Fitness, Muscle & Fitness, Muscle & Fitness Hers, Reps!, Bodybuilding.com, Maxim, Real Solutions, and many more.

His books include:

- Metabolic Surge - Rapid Fat Loss
- Muscle Explosion - 28 Days To Maximum Mass!
- Mad Scientist Muscle
- The Best Exercises You've Never Heard Of (series of 4 books)
- Gluteus to the Maximus - Build a Bigger Butt NOW!
- Hybrid Training
- Specialization Training



[Mad Scientist Muscle](#)



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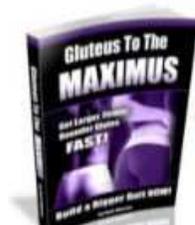
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