

# 8

## Shapely Shoulders

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The shoulders are one of the most aesthetically pleasing muscle groups; when properly developed, they can literally redefine your physique. The importance of nicely rounded shoulders is clearly evident in the women's clothing industry. Most of today's leading fashion designers incorporate shoulder pads into their garments to accentuate the shoulder-to-waist differential. This creates the classic hourglass figure coveted by women throughout the ages.

Poorly developed shoulders cannot be concealed when you wear a strapless dress or bikini. The shoulders are prominent in a variety of fashions and affect the way clothing hangs on your body. Fortunately, through targeted bodysculpting, you can acquire a natural V taper that accentuates a shapely, curvaceous physique without artificial padding. After sculpting these muscles to perfection, it won't matter what outfit you wear—you'll look great in them all!

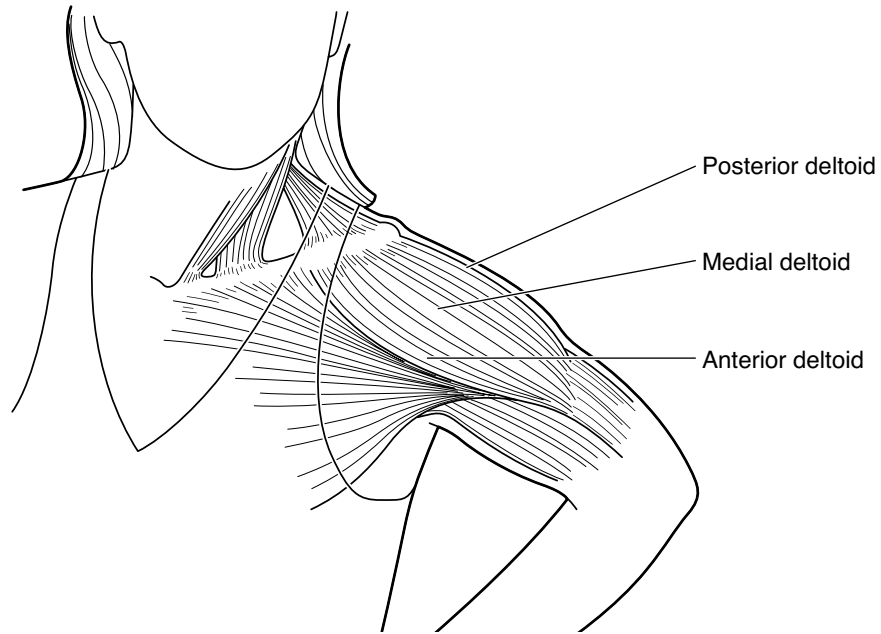
### Bodysculpting Routine

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The deltoids have three distinct heads—anterior (front), medial (middle), and posterior (rear)—whose fibers run in different directions. To develop the shoulders optimally, your routine should include at least one exercise for each head of the deltoid. Hence, exercises for the shoulders are classified by the deltoid head that they primarily stress.

- **Group 1**—overhead presses, front raises, and similar variations. These exercises target the anterior deltoid. Contrary to popular belief, overhead presses are mainly a front deltoid move. While all three deltoid heads (as well as many supporting muscles of the shoulder) are involved during performance, the anterior portion is in a position to directly oppose gravity and therefore acts as the prime mover. Front raises, on the other hand, are isolation movements that specifically target the anterior deltoid with only minimal stress to the other heads.

- **Group 2**—lateral raises, upright rows, and similar variations. These exercises emphasize the medial portion of the deltoid, which creates the coveted “cap” on your shoulders (eliminating the need for shoulder pads). This increases your shoulder-to-waist differential, which creates the illusion of a smaller waist. Lateral raises are isolation movements that allow you to train the middle deltoid to the relative exclusion of the other shoulder muscles; lateral raises are arguably the



■ Muscles of the shoulders.

most important overall exercise for the deltoids. Upright rows, besides stressing the middle deltoid, activate supporting muscles of the upper back and shoulders. They are a good choice for adding variety to your routine.

- **Group 3**—bent lateral raises and similar variations. These movements target the posterior head of the deltoid, perhaps the most difficult shoulder muscle to develop. The rear deltoids receive little secondary stress from other exercises and therefore need direct stimulation through isolation movements. Ignoring these muscles not only throws off your symmetry but also can cause a structural imbalance among the deltoid heads, which can lead to shoulder joint injury.

## Bodysculpting Tips

1. The front deltoid receives a great deal of stress in most chest movements and therefore can overshadow the other muscles of your shoulders. Consequently, use isolation movements for the front deltoid (such as the front raise) sparingly to avoid overdeveloping this muscle at the expense of the middle and rear heads.

2. The Arnold press is a little-used exercise that can add variety to your workout and improve the deltoids' overall shape. It helps to stimulate additional muscle fibers due to horizontal shoulder joint abduction neglected by other pressing movements. Used judiciously, it provides an effective complement to standard shoulder presses.

3. The shoulders' width is dictated mainly by the medial head of the deltoid. If you have a naturally blocky waist, you should really concentrate on shaping this area to its fullest extent. This has the effect of making your waist look smaller, thereby producing a more curvaceous appearance. Alternatively, if you are naturally broad shouldered or wasp-waisted, shoulder width isn't an issue, and it's best to focus on maintaining balance.

4. Shoulder injuries are common due to poor warm-up and training technique. Because the shoulder joint is highly mobile (it is the only joint that can move freely in any direction), it is more fragile and unstable than other joints. Given the high potential for damage to this area, extra care should be taken to warm up the region. Needless to say, training with proper form is an absolute must.

5. Avoid the behind-the-neck shoulder press, as it has been shown to be potentially injurious to the shoulder joint. As noted above, because the shoulder joint is so mobile—with freedom in all planes of movement—it also is highly unstable (increased joint flexibility necessarily results in decreased stability). During the behind-the-neck press, the shoulder joint is simultaneously abducted and externally rotated, causing impingement of the rotator cuff. Under the weight of a load, excessive forces in this position can strain the associated muscles and tendons, possibly producing a tear of these soft tissue structures. This is particularly likely at the beginning phase of the move, when the forces are at their most extreme. Moreover, repeated use of the behind-the-neck press can cause stretching of the shoulder joint ligaments, increasing the chance of permanent elongation and laxity. Over time, the ligaments can become so loose that surgery is required to reinstate stability, setting back your training efforts for months. Given that there are ample alternatives for compound shoulder movements, the exercise has no place in your bodysculpting routine.

**TABLE 8.1 EXERCISES FOR THE SHOULDERS**

GROUP	EXERCISES
Group 1	Front dumbbell raise Arnold press Dumbbell shoulder press Machine shoulder press Military press
Group 2	Dumbbell lateral raise Cable lateral raise Cable upright row Machine lateral raise Dumbbell upright row
Group 3	Bent lateral raise Cable bent lateral raise Machine rear lateral raise Bench rear lateral raise

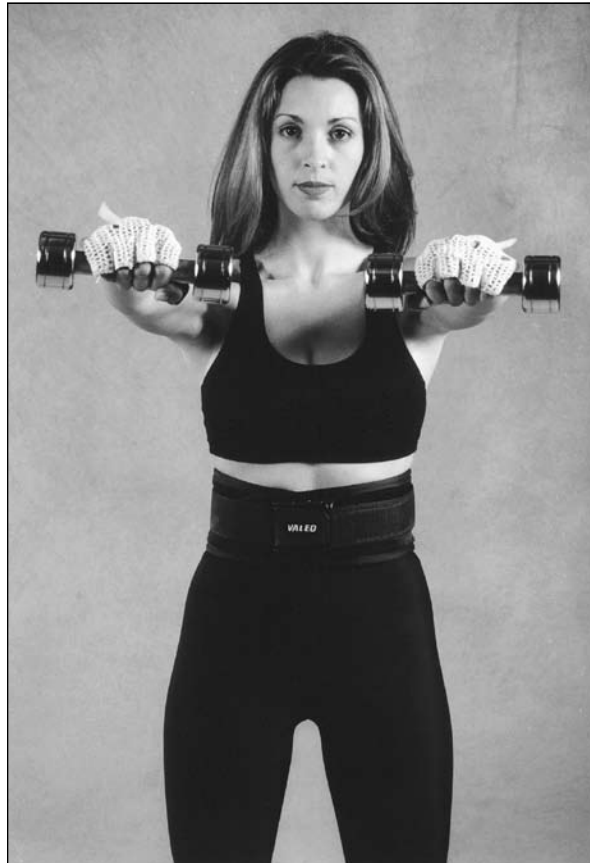
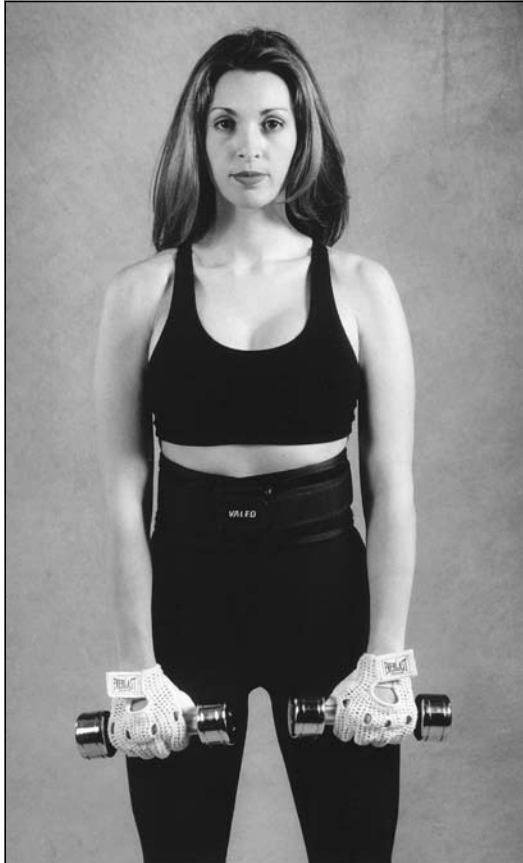
**TABLE 8.2 SAMPLE TARGETED WORKOUTS FOR THE SHOULDERS**

WORKOUT	IN THE GYM		AT HOME	
	Exercise	Sets	Exercise	Sets
<b>1</b>	Arnold press (p. 79)	3	Dumbbell shoulder press (p. 80)	3
	Front dumbbell raise (p. 78) supersetted with machine rear lateral raise (p. 90)	2	Dumbbell upright row (p. 87)	3
	Bench rear lateral raise (p. 91)	3	Bent lateral raise (p. 88)	3
<b>2</b>	Dumbbell shoulder press (p. 80) supersetted with dumbbell lateral raise (p. 83)	3	Arnold press (p. 79) supersetted with dumbbell lateral raise (p. 83)	3
	Machine rear lateral raise (p. 90)	3	Bench rear lateral raise (p. 91)	3
<b>3</b>	Military press (p. 82) supersetted with machine lateral raise (p. 86)	3		
	Bent lateral raise (p. 88)	2		
<b>4</b>	Machine shoulder press (p. 81)	3		
	Cable lateral raise (p. 84)	2		
	Cable bent lateral raise (p. 89)	3		

## SHOULDER EXERCISES

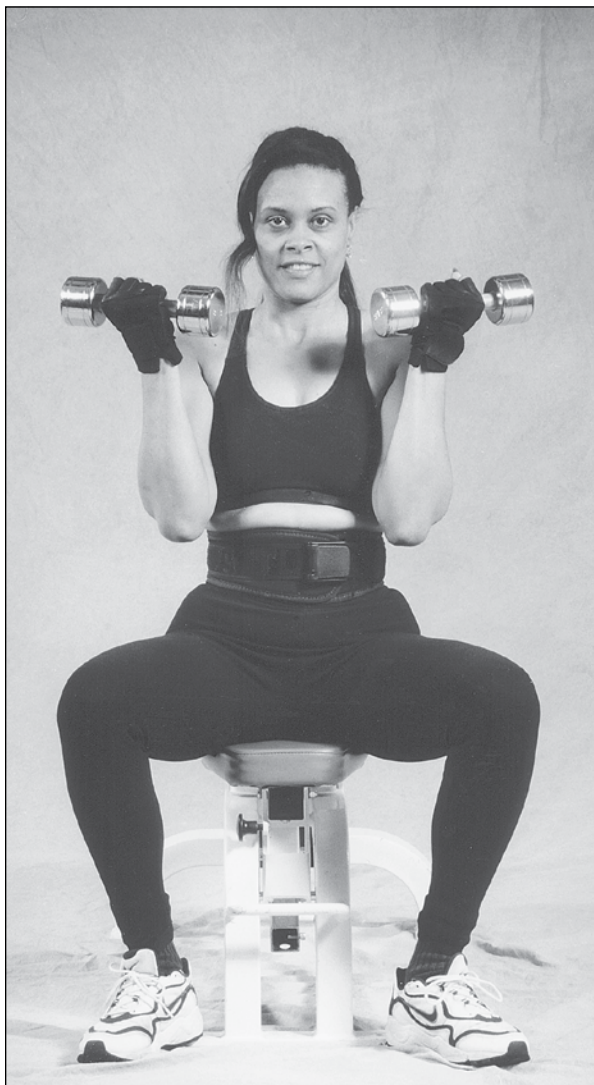
### FRONT DUMBBELL RAISE

This move is most useful if your front deltoids are underdeveloped with respect to the medial and posterior heads; if not, use it sparingly. Begin by grasping two dumbbells and allow them to hang by your hips. With a slight bend in your elbows, slowly raise the dumbbells directly in front of your body to shoulder level. Contract your deltoids, and then slowly return the weights along the same path to the start position.



## ARNOLD PRESS

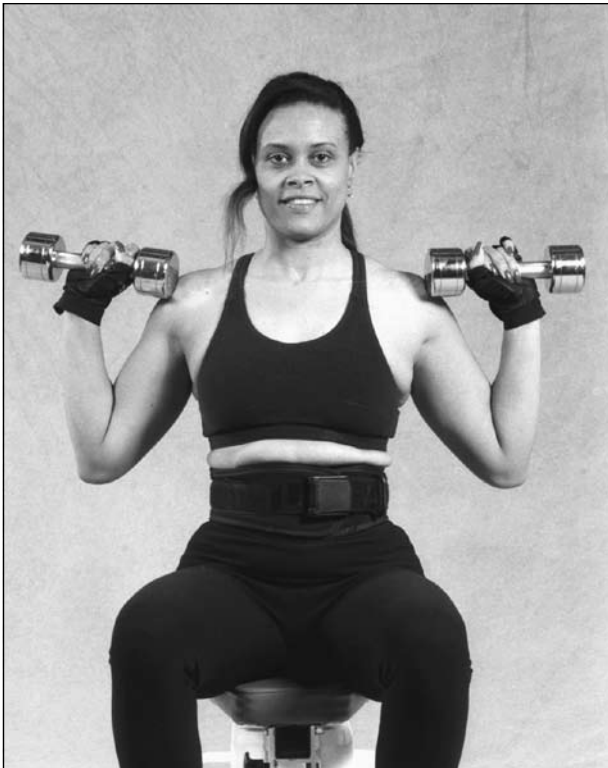
This move was named after Arnold Schwarzenegger, who considered it his favorite shoulder exercise—enough said! Begin by sitting at the edge of a flat bench. Grasp two dumbbells and bring the weights to shoulder level with your palms facing toward your body. Press the dumbbells directly upward, simultaneously rotating your hands so that your palms face forward during the last portion of the movement. Touch the weights together over your head, and then slowly return them along the same path, rotating your hands back to the start position.



## SHOULDER EXERCISES

### DUMBBELL SHOULDER PRESS

This is the gold standard of compound shoulder exercises. Begin by sitting at the edge of a flat bench. Grasp two dumbbells and bring the weights to shoulder level with your palms facing away from your body. Slowly press the dumbbells directly upward and in, allowing them to touch together directly over your head. Contract your deltoids and then slowly return the dumbbells along the same arc back to the start position.



### MACHINE SHOULDER PRESS

Begin by sitting in a shoulder press machine. Grasp the machine handles with your palms facing away from your body. Slowly press the handles directly upward and over your head, contracting your deltoids at the top of the move. Then slowly return the handles back to the start position.

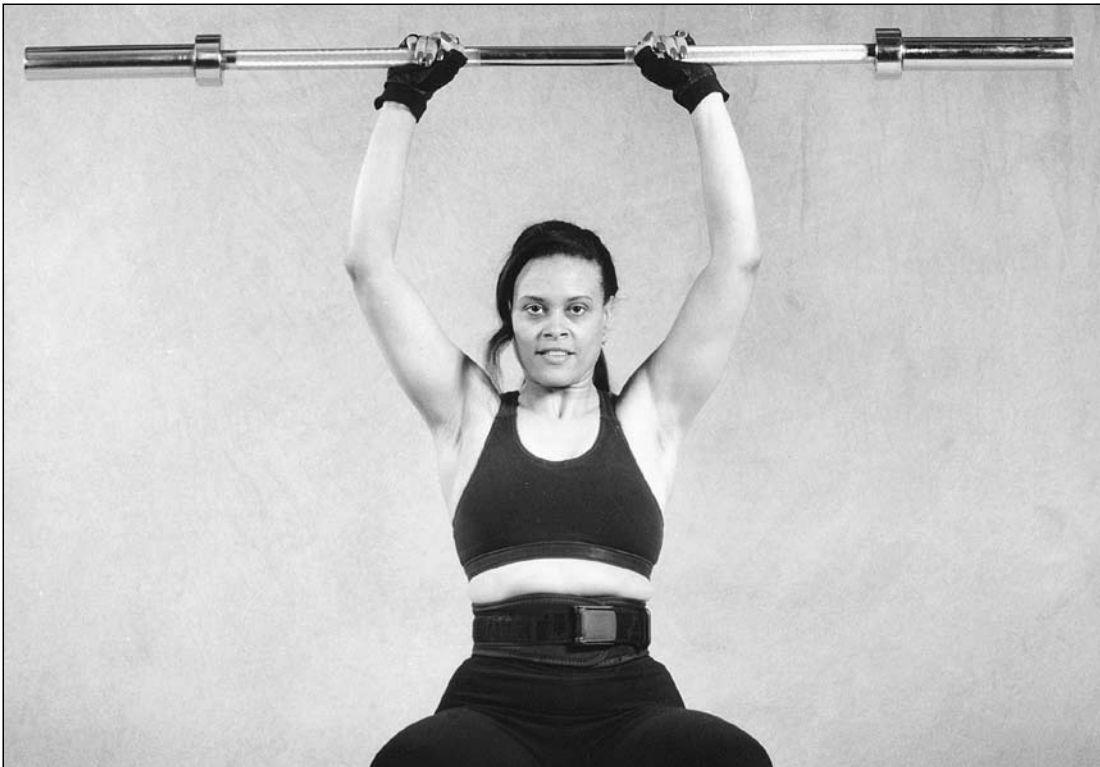




## SHOULDER EXERCISES

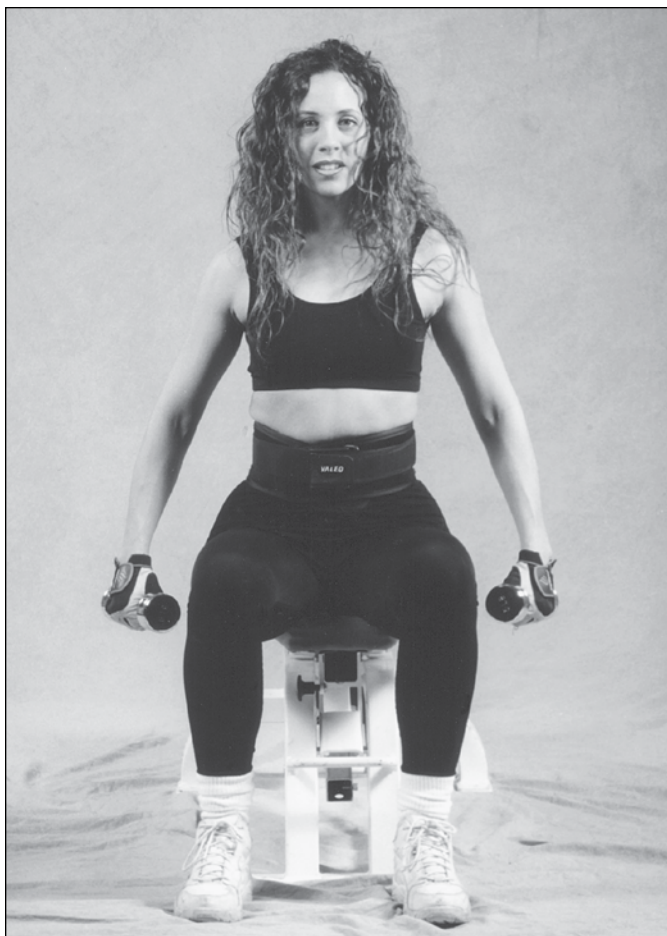
### MILITARY PRESS

Begin by sitting at the edge of a flat bench. Grasp a barbell and bring it to the level of your upper chest with your palms facing away from your body. Slowly press the barbell directly upward and over your head, contracting your deltoids at the top of the move. Then, slowly return the bar along the same arc back to the start position.



## DUMBBELL LATERAL RAISE

This is the prototypical move for targeting the medial deltoids. Begin by grasping two dumbbells and allow them to hang by your hips. With your elbows slightly bent, raise the dumbbells up and out to the sides until they reach shoulder level. At the top of the movement, the rear of the dumbbells should be slightly higher than the front. Contract your deltoids and then slowly return the weights along the same path back to the start position.



## SHOULDER EXERCISES

### CABLE LATERAL RAISE

Begin by grasping a loop handle attached to a low pulley apparatus with your left hand, and stand so that your right side is facing the pulley. With a slight bend at your elbow, raise the handle across your body, up and out to the side until it reaches the level of your shoulder. Contract your deltoids at the top of the movement, and then slowly return the handle back to the start position. After completing the desired number of reps, repeat the process on your right side. The movement can also be done with both arms at the same time. To perform the exercise at home, attach a strength band to a stationary object and perform the move as described.



### At Home

