

3 Best Traps Building Exercises

Can you afford not to do these time tested traps builders?

The traps are a favorite muscle of many lifters. They give you an aggressive look and many of the shrug variations used to train them allow for heavy weight to be used. However, they are also a vital muscle for shoulder health and stabilization. However, many lifters train the trapezius incorrectly by doing only heavy shrugs with a short range of motion.

The traps are actually made of three distinct areas: upper, middle, and lower. The upper fibers are responsible for moving the shoulders up towards the ears, as with a traditional shrug exercise. The middle fibers help to retract the shoulder blades during rowing movements. The lower fibers are responsible for pulling the shoulder blades downward, like in a pullup.

As you can see, to train the whole trapezius muscle will require a multitude of exercises, as simply doing shrugs will not suffice. So let's look at sample workout designed to hit all of the fibers of the traps.

Power Barbell Shrugs

This is a variation of an exercise done by Olympic lifters. However, it seems to be a favorite of just about everyone who wants to use as much weight as possible on their shrugs. Perform this exercise just as you would a traditional shrug, except that at the beginning you will bend slightly at the hips and explosively thrust the hips forward to get the bar moving. This creates momentum that will allow you to carry heavy weight through to the top of your shrug.

This exercise will target the upper traps. Most bodybuilding exercises are typically done more slowly, so this explosive movement will complement your other training and really help to shock your traps into new growth.

Start out with 4 sets of 4-6 reps.

Band Face Pulls

Band exercises aren't just for housewives! That said, you are going to need to make sure you find a band that is strong enough to provide you challenging resistance. To do this exercise wrap the band around a stable post at eye level. Face towards the post and grab an end of the band in each hand. Step back away from the post so that when your arms are extended there is tension in the band. From this position you are going to do a rowing motion, bringing your hands towards your face. Concentrate on squeezing the shoulder blades together and downwards as you do this.

This exercise is great for the middle traps and can result in a phenomenal pump if done for higher repetitions.

Do 3 sets of 15-20 reps.

Incline Plate Raises

This is a rarely used exercise that is great for the low traps. To do this exercise lay prone on a 30-degree inclined bench. Hold a plate in your hands at the 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock positions. A 10 or 25 pound plate (5 or 10 kilos) will be adequate for most lifters. With your elbows straight begin to raise the plate up, just as you would with a standing front raise.

The first half of the movement is easy due to your position on the bench. However, it is necessary to avoid using momentum to complete the more difficult second half of the movement. You should also use a slow eccentric tempo, especially in the top half.

Do 3 sets of 10-12 reps.

So that's how you do smart trapezius training. Replace the typical meathead workouts of barbell shrugs, dumbbell shrugs, and machine shrugs with this more balanced program and you will be rewarded with better development and injury free shoulders.

Learn more with videos and guides on how to do [barbell shrug](#) and more of the [best exercises to build upper body strength](#)

Author: Tony Schwartz

Article downloaded from page [eioba.com](#)