

Old School New Body

The F4X Youth-Enhancing
Bodyshaping System For
Men and Women

**Only 90
Minutes
Per
Week!**

**STEVE HOLMAN
BECKY HOLMAN**

WITH JOHN ROWLEY



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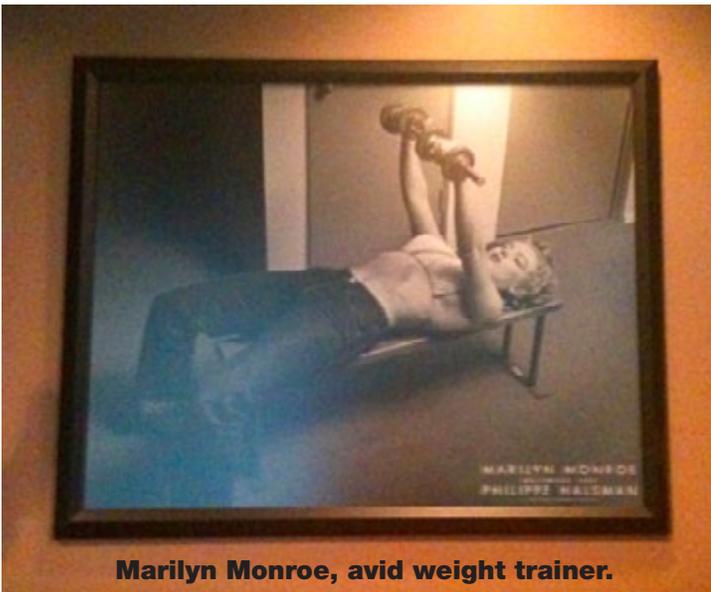
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INTRODUCTION

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When you've been at this working out thing as long as we have, you begin to think you know it all—and that's when you can get into trouble. You should never stop learning. That lesson hit us over the head hard a few years ago when we finally discovered key "secrets" to getting in ultimate shape quickly—but we're getting ahead of ourselves.



Marilyn Monroe, avid weight trainer.

Rewind even further to more than a decade ago. One of the most famous Hollywood trainers of the '60s, '70s and '80s used to come into the *IRON MAN* offices where we work—rumor has it that he even trained Marilyn Monroe (we never confirmed that, but we do know that she lifted weights, as the framed print by Philippe Halsman on Steve's office wall confirms). Anyway, this trainer to the stars had closed his celebrated Hollywood gym, gone into semi-retirement in his 80s and came by every so often to regale us with stories, exercise techniques and his methods—which he said was the only right way to produce results.

His tirades—did we mention he was usually on the edge of berserk?—made some sense, but Steve, being somewhat of a workout authority as *IRON MAN*'s editor in chief, never really took the man's so-called density method too seriously. It just didn't sound intense enough to work.

Everything at that point in serious weight training had evolved to *intensity*—via heavy weights, training to failure on almost every set, etc.

That was due to three things: 1) a few successful training gurus touting its effectiveness, including a top bodybuilding title winner (who had to retire due to serious injuries, by the way) 2) steroids, which make that type of overstress and overtraining work, and 3) ego—only dweebs didn't go superheavy at the gym to show everyone how strong they are.

As fate would have it, the legendary trainer passed away (we really miss his visits), and his wife asked if she could store much of his belongings at the *IM* warehouse. The publisher okayed it, and in came furniture, crates of trophies the trainer had won, pictures that hung in his gym and boxes of dusty, old documents and log books. That last item was most intriguing because here were the exact workouts and methods he had used to get those incredible results he always talked about.

While the training guru was alive we never tried his moderate-weight, high-fatigue method—that's because, as we said, everyone "knew" real results were all about pushing more weight. And we had the chronic aches, pains and injuries to prove it, including bum shoulders,

tweaked knees and backs that would go out for no reason. Funny that the old-school trainer had none of those problems, even in his 80s. That got Steve thinking....

He began pouring over the dusty notes and routines outlining the trainer's transformation methods he used on Hollywood actors and star bodybuilders alike. A light bulb went off. Steve realized that the current science, like triggering fat-burning and muscle-building hormones via muscular fatigue, backed up the trainer's methods. Steve began to experiment in the gym with some of what he found in the dusty notes,



revise the methods somewhat, do more research and fill in the gaps with recent science.

The eventual results were incredible. The pieces fell into place and Steve realized exactly how and why his slightly revised version of the trainer's methods worked so quickly—it hit the muscles completely with cumulative stress to reach the growth threshold, and it produced a hormonal cascade that burned fat like a blowtorch.

With the Focus-4 Exercise protocol, F4X for short, our metabolisms are stoked 24/7 and joint aches and pains are a fading memory—plus, we're keeping lean, hard physiques all year long.

Steve's results were some of the best he'd ever had—staying leaner and getting more muscular with much shorter, less painful workouts. Becky began using it, and she too was shocked at her quick progress. It wasn't a fluke. We had others try it, from 20-year-old college students to 50-year-old grandmothers—and each one reported stunning progress—all with no joint stress—in fact any residual joint pain disappeared. And workouts lasted 30 minutes to an hour, no longer. (The trainer insisted those short workouts were necessary so key hormones stayed at full-throttle and the metabolism would burn white hot.)

With our version, which we call the Focus-4 Exercise protocol, F4X for short, our metabolisms are stoked 24/7 and joint aches and pains are now fading memories—plus, we're keeping lean, hard physiques all year long. We're both over 50—and loving life. Our only regret is that we didn't discover the F4X system sooner, but now we can pass it on to you.

Weight training is a miracle activity, as you'll see, and the F4X body-reshaping system is the ultimate way to get all of its fat-burning, muscle-building, anti-aging benefits in quick, safe, health-charged workouts—but we're still learning and still refining it.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Vince Gironda, that cranky trainer to the stars, because his methods were the spark that may have saved us from giving up on weight training—or creating an orthopedic nightmare later in life with cumulative damage from heavy-weight training.

Everyone should be lifting weights—*the right way*—to soar through life with a lean, healthy, muscular body. F4X is your key to fast, incredible transformation success without joint stress.

F4X

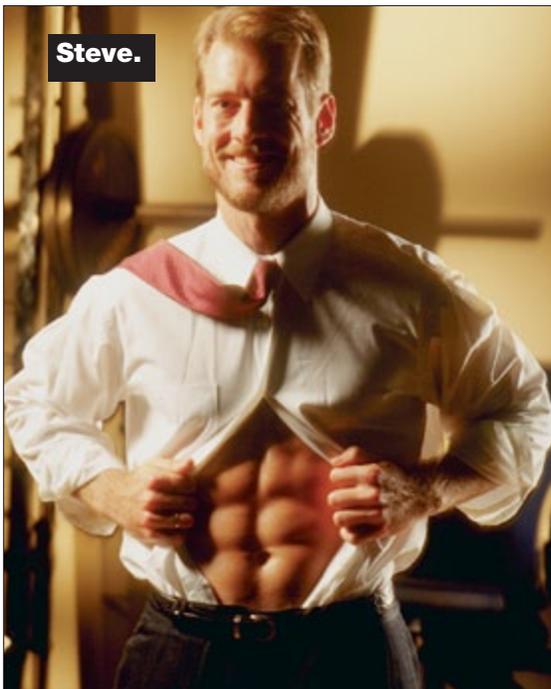
**The Youth-Enhancing
Bodyshaping System For
Men and Women**

PREFACE

Look around. Why are so many people in terrible shape? The problem for most is time. The older we get, the faster time moves—or so it seems. There's just not enough left to improve our bodies and health with exercise. (Don't let that word scare you; it doesn't take as much as you think—most people do it wrong and it takes too long.)

We'll show you that there is time—in fact, you can turn back the

clock—and the time is now! You need to ditch the misinformation and take action—using an efficient, on-target method. And that's what the F4X system is; as you'll see, it doesn't require a lot of time in the gym or complicated diets (you can often eat what you want).



It's about getting stronger, looking good—dare we say impressive—and staying independent throughout your life with a simple plan—some easy-to-apply diet alterations and hitting a few quick F4X workouts each week—at the gym or at home, take your pick. Soon you'll be healthier and feel incredible with a body that will turn heads and raise eyebrows. And your age doesn't matter.

We're over 50 and usually the best-built people in the room at social gatherings. Again, your age doesn't matter. Our goal is to show you the simplest, most efficient, safest way for you to do it too, whether you're in your 20s, 30s, 40s or beyond. It does *not* take a lot of suffering or time—and the rewards are immense, especially in your prime. As we said, when you get that new body, you'll not only look better but feel amazing. Life will become an exciting joyride.

A great example is one of our favorite role models, Jack LaLanne. He

recently passed away at 96, but he was an energetic dynamo till the very end—a truly amazing guy—doing commercials and making appearances. His longevity secret? Eating right and exercising—he was a true physical culturist—oh, and he had a passion for life thanks to his well-conditioned body and mind. It should be obvious that your passion for life will be large and supercharged when you look and feel absolutely fantastic. Jack would attest to that.

A passion for life is a direct link to happiness. And you can double or triple that happiness quotient by being healthy, fit and muscular. Muscular? Yes! Don't let that word throw you, especially if you're female—women need plenty of muscle—for feminine shape and health. (Becky is a prime example; she strives for it.)

So be you male or female, muscle will help you look and feel younger, have fewer health issues and stay independent for the duration. (No one wants to be a burden to their children later in life, so start taking care of yourself now!)

According to Henry Lodge, M.D., in *Younger Next Year*, “In the absence of signals to grow, your body and brain decay, and you ‘age.’ So how do we keep ourselves from decaying? By changing the signals we send to our bodies. The keys to overriding the decay code are daily exercise, emotional commitment, reasonable nutrition and a real engagement with living. *But it starts with exercise.*”



Jack LaLanne, 95, in his home gym. (John Balik photo)

One key growth signal is stimulation to “build muscle,” and, as we said, that applies to women as well. Becky is proof that female trainees should train in the same way as men and strive to build up to burn fat. You'll see her story in Chapter 6.

The key is muscle—no matter what your gender. The more you can build naturally, the healthier you'll be. And you'll look fantastic; no, not like a gigantic bodybuilder—unless you're that one-in-a-million genetic anomaly.

The truth is that more than 99 percent of women simply don't have the hormonal profile or muscle fiber density to build big, bulbous muscles—and most men are limited as well. So don't be afraid you'll “look like Arnold.” Yes, most men will be able to build “big” muscles—and some can take it toward being Arnold-esque, genetics willing and work ethic in

place (Chapter 14 is on advanced training if you're interested); however, a woman's physique will simply get more shapely and sleek—so don't be afraid to push yourself to build a “physique.”

More muscle will give you a body you can be proud of—more self-confidence, extra drive in your daily life and business or school and never embarrassed to strip down at the beach or pool. You'll have a feeling of "I can conquer anything." It will also help you burn more fat, one more reason muscle leads to a leaner, healthier you.



Muscle is live tissue and stokes your metabolism. It has been shown to lower insulin resistance—you'll need less of that sugar-controlling, fat-storing hormone, which is a good thing. Better insulin sensitivity can fortify you against diabetes and other inflammatory illnesses, cancer included. That's because, as Doctor Lodge would say, you're counteracting “decay,” which is what disease is.

Plus, while our F4X workout programs build muscle, they also enhance your cardiovascular system at the same time. And you can make it all happen with *moderate* weights—not bone-crushing, injury producing poundages—while working out a few times a week. Our F4X system builds joints rather than breaking them. Exciting stuff!

This is not one of those inefficient "insane" jump-around-till-you-torque-your-knees-then-flop-down-on-the-ground-and-contort-your-spine routines. F4X is controlled, safe, targeted muscle movements—a unique, almost miraculous system based on science and an efficient, lost training method of a past legendary Hollywood trainer. The benefits are through the roof, including all of the above and more growth hormone to boot. GH is a big part of the miracle results you will achieve workout after workout—and your joints will get stronger, not worn and torn.

GH is renowned as an anti-aging hormone that can boost your ability to build lean muscle and burn ugly bodyfat, amplify the potency of other hormones, like testosterone (it's important for women too); revitalize and heighten your sex drive; bulletproof your tendons and ligaments to prevent injuries, rejuvenate skin elasticity and hair thickness/sheen and fortify your immune system. In other words, you'll look and feel unreal.

Whew! Lots of good stuff to spark your get-up-and-go to let the GH flow. Are you ready? Let's stop the decay and start to grow with F4X.

—Steve and Becky Holman



Steve and Becky Holman have been married for 27 years. Steve started weight training at 15 as a skinny 119-pounder and has been training ever since (more than 35 years). Becky has been working out on and off for more than 20 years, but she lapsed in her 30s while raising her two daughters. In her 40s she became fed up with her overweight appearance and made a radical physical transformation in only a few months. She is now a regular contributor of nutrition-based items to *IRON MAN* magazine, and Steve has been *IM*'s Editor in Chief for more than 25 years. He has written more than 20 books on bodybuilding, weight training and nutrition and has also penned hundreds of articles on building muscle and burning fat. His blog, "Built for Life," is at IronManMagazine.com. Steve has also interviewed many legendary physique stars, including Arnold Schwarzenegger, Cory Everson, Tom Platz and Lee Labrada. His bodybuilding e-books are available at X-Rep.com and X-traordinaryWorkouts.com.



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CHAPTER 1

The F4X System™

Turning Fat Into Muscle



So let's not beat around the bush; just what is the F4X system? It's a method of training based on one that has been lost and collecting dust. The reason it's been "lost" is because of the emphasis on intensity, which most trainees equate to heavy, joint-jolting workouts.



Go to any gym, and you'll see that most people are either using very light weights and resting too long or pounding their bodies with heavy weights, eventually getting injured. Contrary to popular belief, heavy bone-crushing poundages are *not* necessary for fast results. In fact, they can be detrimental. Those current heavy-training trends can overstress your body, jar your joints and actually damage your immune system because of excess stress hormone release (cortisol) and free-radical proliferation.

You do need to expend effort, but it should be cumulative. What does that mean? Here's how it works.

Our F4X system calls for moderate poundages for less joint stress and relies on high muscle fatigue for intensity—which means short rests between sets. That results in growth hormone release. GH triggers a veritable muscle-building, fat-burning (and anti-aging) cascade. That hormone decreases significantly as you get older, but this type of training can provide a real resurgence.

F4X is simple to understand: Say you're doing curls. You pick a weight with which you can get about 15 repetitions, but you only do 10. Simple. Rest 35 seconds, then do 10 more—and so on until you complete the designated number of sets—usually four. You go all out on the last one, until you can't get another in good form.

Sounds easy—and the first couple of sets are—but as you continue, fatigue builds in the target muscles, in this case the biceps. On the last few sets you are struggling, your muscles are aching from lactic acid, and your breathing is rapid (cardio effect). Blood rushes to your biceps for a full muscle pump—enhanced circulation—after only the first few sets.

The number of exercises we prescribe for each muscle group varies, depending on your experience and goals, but you'll get all the fat-to-muscle benefits in about 10 minutes per body part with total workouts lasting 30 to 45 minutes. That will get muscle growth and GH output churning and ugly bodyfat burning—fast!

With F4X you get at the majority of muscle fibers over four sets as fatigue accumulates. You also train both "sides" of those fibers for exceptional muscle-building *and* fat-burning effects—with GH release at full-throttle.

The muscle fibers you want to target have two primary constituents, or "sides": myofibrils and sarcoplasm. The myofibrils are internal strands that grip onto one another to shorten the fiber and produce muscular contraction—like ropes gripping and pulling across one another.

The sarcoplasm is the fluid surrounding the myofibrils, and that "energy" juice contains mostly mitochondria, *where fat is burned* (your internal lean machines), glycogen (from the sugar in carb foods) and ATP (an energy source from creatine). Here's the difference:

1) The myofibril strands respond, grow and multiply as a result of intense heavier-weight sets.

2) The sarcoplasm increases with extended tension times on the muscle—keeping the muscle working for almost a minute—and/or short rests between sets. Muscle fatigue within a fast-twitch-fiber endurance threshold causes the energy constituents in the sarcoplasm to eventually adapt and increase, *so you get a fat-to-muscle effect*.

Growth hormone triggers a veritable muscle-building, fat-burning (and anti-aging) cascade.

In simple terms, you target the myofibrils to emphasize strength and the sarcoplasm to emphasize muscle expansion, although both do contribute to making a muscle bigger and stronger. *Also, both contribute to burning bodyfat so you get leaner.* That means targeting both is important for fastest results.

As we mentioned above, the sarcoplasmic fluid contains the mitochondria *where fat is burned*—obviously very important for getting and staying lean. With shorter rests between sets, and each set lasting 40 seconds, you stress that "side" of the fiber and fortify those intra-cellular fat-burning furnaces. You're revving those lean machines!

The 40 seconds of tension time and shorter rests between sets also produce more muscle burn, which is a key to growth hormone release. We've already discussed the miraculous fat-burning, anti-aging effects of GH; remember that muscle burn will get your GH to churn. (*Can J Appl Physio.* 22:244-255; 1997)

Now as far as the myofibrils are concerned, a weight heavy enough to inflict a bit of trauma on those power-generating strands is key. That trauma is microtears (soreness), and repair of those small tears requires energy. Your body fixes the slight "damage" over a period of days, and while it does that, your metabolism is stoked and you're burning more calories, even at rest. That's right, as you recover from your workouts, your body continues to burn fat 24/7. How great is that?

It's precisely why F4X training can work so extremely well to build you a new muscular body and burn off fat in record time. It's like turning fat into muscle!

We've found four sets per exercise to be optimal for getting at both the myofibrils and the sarcoplasm. What if you do more than four? The more sets you do, the lighter the weight must be to allow the extra sets—and that's more of a sarcoplasmic stimulator, with less effect on the myofibrils.

Remember, you want a *balance* of myofibrillar and sarcoplasmic stimulation. Our F4X system gives you about a 50/50 mix of *both* myofibrillar and sarcoplasmic stimulation, so you get the best fat-to-muscle results....

Total muscle fiber activation, GH release and a mega fat-burning environment that transforms your body fast!

As you recover from your workouts, your body continues to burn fat 24/7. How great is that?

The F4X Method

Set 1: Pick a weight with which you can get 15 repetitions, but only do 10 (this set will not be taxing).

- Rest 30 to 40 seconds.

Set 2: Do 10 more repetitions with the same weight.

- Rest 30 to 40 seconds.

Set 3: Do 10 more repetitions with the same weight.

- Rest 30 to 40 seconds.

Set 4: Do as many repetitions as you can—until you can't do another.

If you get 10 reps on your last set, slightly increase the weight at your next workout—or go for 11 reps on each set, denoted as 4 x 11.

Your tempo for all sets should be **one second to lift and three seconds to lower**. That will make every set last around 40 seconds, perfect for *balanced* stimulation of the muscle fibers and to fortify the fat-burning mitochondria as well as trigger a growth hormone release.

Note: Breathe in on the slower lowering phase—two to three in-and-out breaths is acceptable in the three seconds—then forcefully breathe out on the lifting, the one-second exertion.

CHAPTER 2

The F4X LEAN Workout

Your 20-Minute Bellyfat Blowtorch

If you've never lifted weights before—or it's been a long while since you have, like high school—you need to break in easy. Don't let impatience and over-enthusiasm set you back. Getting too sore is no fun and has caused many people to quit before the magic happens—they never get that incredible buzz of spectacular body-transforming results.



We described the F4X method, but in the beginning you'll be doing a two-set sequence instead of four sets—in order to get your muscles used to the new stress of weight resistance.

You will take a light weight and do 10 repetitions; rest for 45 to 60 seconds—no longer than one minute—then do 10 more repetitions. That's it.

Your repetition speed should be three seconds to lower the weight and one to two seconds to lift it—at least four seconds per rep, 40 seconds per set. That's important, as we've explained, and you need to make a conscious effort to lower slower than you lift. That's because the lowering, or negative, strokes have the most impact on muscle improvement—and so does the time of each set.

According to strength and muscle-building expert Jim Stoppani, Ph.D.: “The best TUT [time under tension, which is the length of a set] for strength is about four to 20 seconds per set and about 40 to 60 seconds per set for muscle growth.”

You want growth with strength as a secondary effect, so you need to make your sets last around 40 seconds. The one-second-up, three-seconds-down tempo for 10 reps will do it.

Still, none of your sets should be tough in the beginning. The 10th rep on the second set should be mildly difficult but not a struggle. If you feel it begin to get too difficult, stop.

With the F4X LEAN Workout you'll work out three days a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, with only four basic exercises per workout. This handful of key moves will train all of your major muscle groups:

- 1)** Squats (dumbbells at sides of thighs)
- 2)** Incline presses or flat-bench presses or pushups (on knees or toes)
- 3)** Bent-over rows (two-arm version or one arm at a time)
- 4)** Dumbbell upright rows

After two weeks at two sets, progress to three sets on each, resting 40 seconds between sets. So at week 3, go to 3x10—and now push hard on the last set—to muscular failure.

After another two weeks, week five, up it again to four sets on each exercise if you can, still with 40-second rests, last set to failure. If four feels like too much, stick with only three for as long as you need to.

You can do all of these exercises in a commercial gym or at home with a selectorized dumbbell set and an adjustable bench (there's another all-dumbbell workout in Chapter 8). And if you don't have a bench, pushups work fine for exercise 2. Even with a full four-set sequence for each exercise, that's only five minutes per move, so you'll be done in less than 30 minutes.

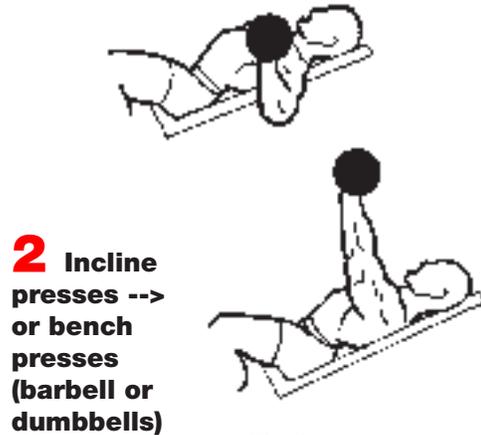
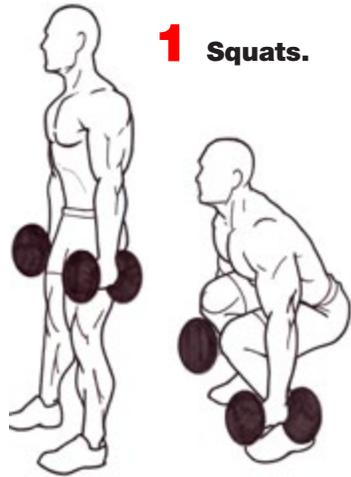
You can stay with this workout for as long as you like. It's the bare minimum we recommend for those who want to build some muscle and get an overall health effect from lifting. Some cardio on your off days or after your weight session is an excellent extra for fat burning, but keep in mind that this workout has built-in cardio—you will breathe rapidly.

The F4X LEAN Workout is also an excellent alternate if you're using one of the more extensive F4X programs in this e-book and you're short on time. It's a perfect go-to abbreviated session that hits just about every muscle. Becky uses it a lot so she doesn't feel guilty about missing a workout.

You'll work out three days a week, with only four basic exercises per workout—less than 30 minutes per session.

F4X LEAN Workout

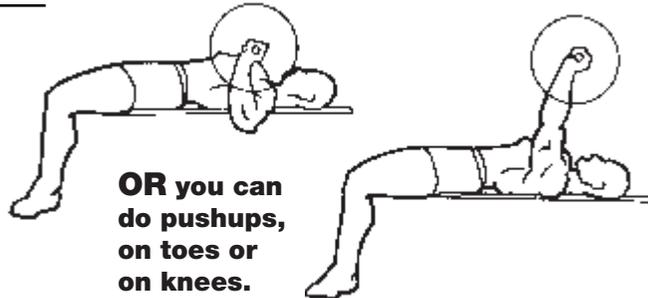
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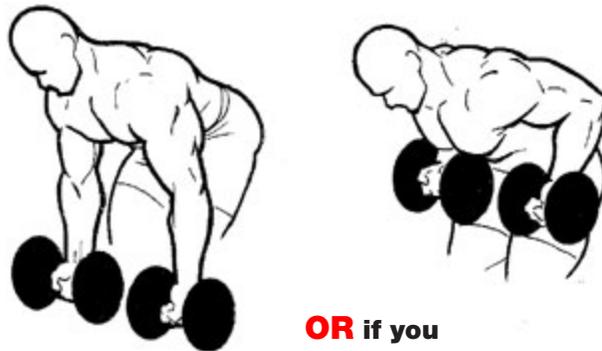
OR



4 Dumbbell upright rows.



3 Bent-over rows, under grip—palms facing forward (use barbell or dumbbells).



OR if you have lower-back issues do one-arm rows...



The F4X Method: Pick a weight with which you can get 15 reps...

Set 1: Do 10 reps; rest 30 to 40 seconds

Set 2: Do 10 reps; rest 30 to 40 seconds

Set 3: Do 10 reps; rest 30 to 40 seconds

Set 4: Do as many reps as you can*

*If you get 10 on set 4, slightly increase the weight at your next workout or go for four sets of 11 reps (4x11).

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