

Chest Press Machine

Form: DO NOT LET MOMENTUM DRIVE THE MOTION. KEY 1: Don't stress your shoulder joints by flexing your elbows too far back when grasping the handles. The handgrips should always be in front of your body line. KEY 2: Remain seated, do not let your shoulders or head come off pad, and keep natural curve to your back. Handles should be at nipple line. Feet should be on ground. Grasp the handles with a full grip, your thumb circled around the handle. Maintain a neutral wrist position with your wrists in line with your forearms. Hands should be just wider than shoulder-width apart (your hands are directly above your elbows). Do not hold breath. Push outward until your arms are fully extended (don't lock the elbows). Keep your head steady against the back support during this movement and your neck still. Pause briefly at extension. Bend your elbows and return to the starting position, breathing throughout the motion, and keeping elbows aligned with wrist. As with other exercises use a count "one-two" when pushing, pause, and then count "one-two" as you release. Never rush. IF JUST STARTING OUT, try three sets of 10 reps. Start with less if you have to, always listening to your body to avoid injury. Try different weights until you are able to push and release slowly for about 10 repetitions. The last repetition should always feel a bit difficult.

Do it Right!
Exercises you Should Do



This exercise as well as other strength machines as mentioned in other "Do It Right" articles have been touted as nonfunctional and dangerous. I say the opposite. If done correctly it is safe and highly effective as well as being fast to set up and perform. A study also suggest it is important because strength in pectoral muscles decreases with age, potentially increasing your injury risk while decreasing your mobility and quality of life. This is an easy to understand exercise for a novice person. Doing a machine-assisted chest press helps prevent many errors of form that may happen when using free weights because you can adjust the seat and handles so they are in the correct position for your body. I also like using a machine sometimes and form some clients because you are often able to press heavier weights with more control compared to free weights. Research does suggest greater muscular activation with barbell versus machine with the chest press exercise ([Study](#)), which was to the frontal deltoid. This is in line with the thought that the barbell bench press necessitates the recruitment of more stabilizer muscles. Another study comparing machine versus free weights found subjects experienced similar muscle damage recovery after Smith machine, barbell, and dumbbell chest press exercise. However, muscle soreness of the elbow extensors takes a longer time to recover after using a barbell chest press exercise ([Study](#)). Looking at these two studies there is not a large superiority of free weights over machine when it comes to building muscle. If using Smith Machine the same form rules apply most importantly, **don't stress your shoulder joints by extending your elbows too far back. Some suggest no greater than a 90 degree angle at the elbows at bottom position to protect the shoulders. Your hands should always be in front of your body line, in other words do not bounce bar off chest. According to a different report in the European Journal Of Sports Science, when researchers asked subjects to perform sets of six reps at 65% of their one-repetition maximum they found that muscle stimulation was greater when the bench was flat than when it was placed at a 15°, 30° or 45° angle. So make the flat bench the cornerstone of your chest-building strategy and include incline variations to hit your upper chest and front shoulders when doing chest presses with a Smith Machine or free weights. .**