

Pull-Ups vs Chin-Ups!

A Comprehensive Comparison for Beginners

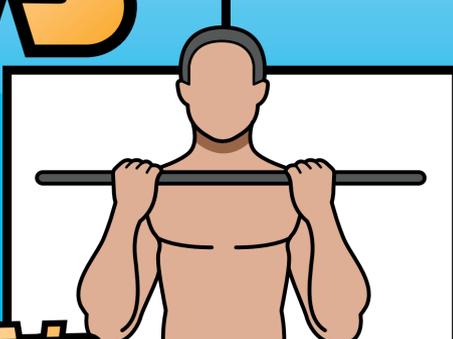
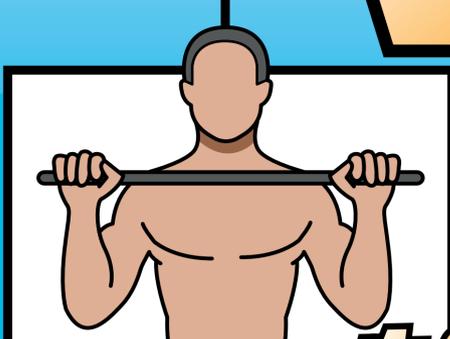
Pull-ups and **chin-ups** are two of the most effective exercises for building upper body strength. Both are compound exercises that engage multiple muscle groups and joints, which is why one must have reasonable upper body strength to perform them effectively.

While they generally offer the same benefits, there are several key differences between the two in terms of technique, difficulty, and target muscles groups.

Here is a quick comparison to help you determine which exercise is right for you:

Key Differences

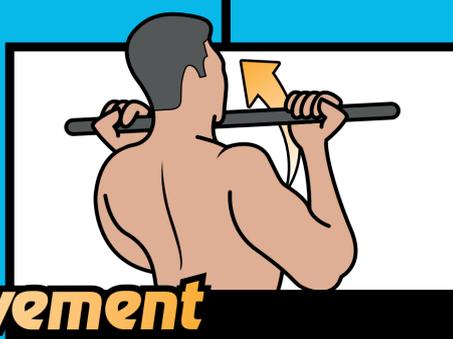
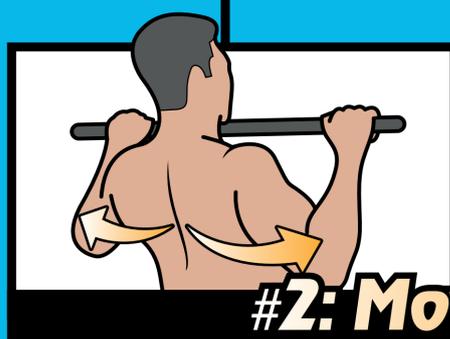
Pull-Ups VS Chin-Ups!



#1: Grip

A pull-up utilizes an overhand grip. Your palms must face away from you.

A chin-up utilizes an underhand grip. Your palms must be facing you.

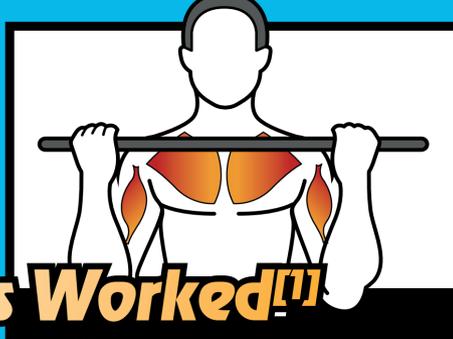


#2: Movement

Pull-ups use shoulder adduction. This means your arms and elbows will move from the sides.

Chin-ups use shoulder extension. This means your arms and elbows will move from the front.

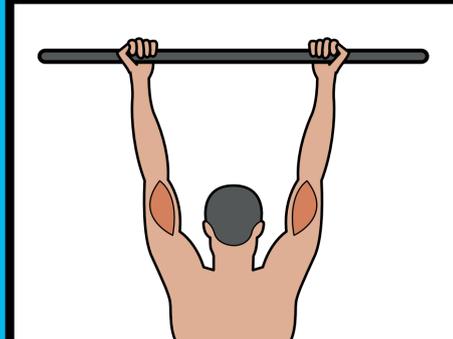
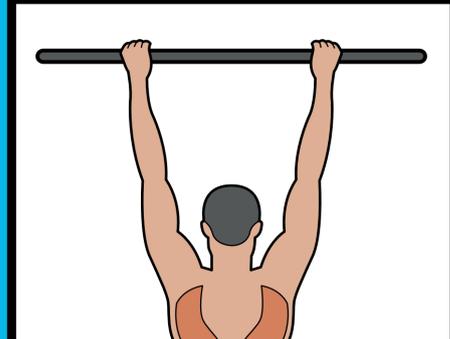
Interestingly, both exercises activate the same muscle groups (biceps brachii, erector spinae, external oblique, infraspinatus, latissimus dorsi, lower trapezius, and pectoralis major). The key difference, however, is with the intensity during the ascension phase.



#3: Muscles Worked^[1]

With pull-ups, the lower trapezius and latissimus dorsi had more contraction.

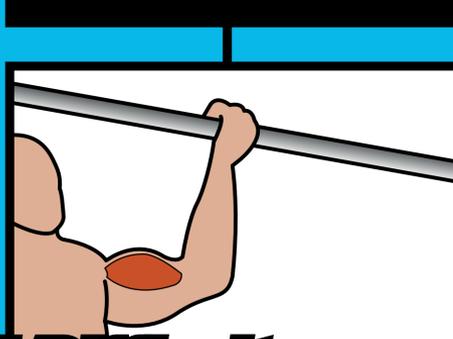
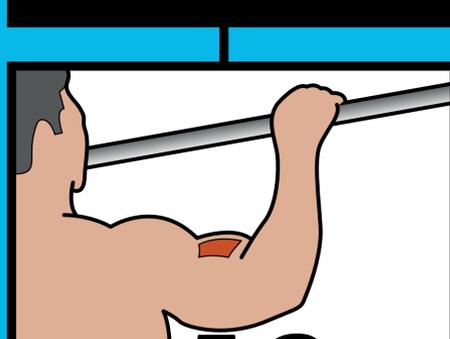
With chin-ups, the muscle groups biceps brachii and pectoralis major had more contraction.



#4: Technique^[2]

A pull-up requires the hands to be at shoulder-width distance, isolating the lats during the ascension.

Chin-ups, on the other hand, utilizes the biceps more.



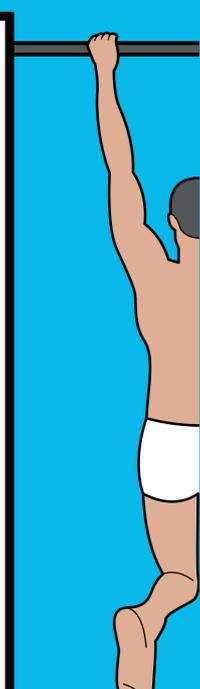
#5: Overall Difficulty

Hard: A pull-up is generally considered harder^[3] because you won't get as much assistance from your biceps as you would in a chin-up.

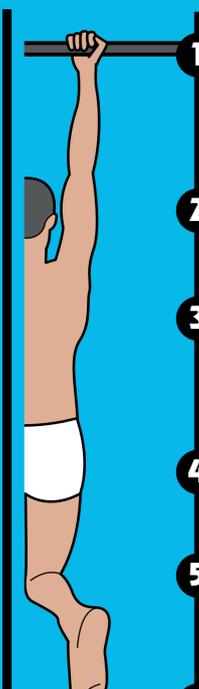
Moderate: Given that chin-ups depend more on your biceps, they're more manageable for beginners with prior upper body strength training.

How to Do Them Properly

1. Hold the bar (overhand) with your hands shoulder-width apart
2. Bend your knees to start hanging with your arms straight
3. Lift your body and pull your elbows closer to your sides
4. Raise your body until your chin is over the bar
5. Slowly lower yourself all the way down while keeping your legs bent
6. Repeat



1. Hold the bar (underhand) with your hands slightly closer than in a pull-up
2. Bend your knees to start hanging with your arms straight
3. Pull your elbows towards your stomach -- keeping your lower arms as parallel as possible
4. Raise your body until your chin is over the bar
5. Slowly lower yourself all the way down while keeping your legs bent
6. Repeat



Additional Tips!



Increase your hang time to build your grip strength and stability



When gripping the bar, make sure to wrap your thumbs all the way around it



Keep your chest up



Don't be shy to use an assisted pull-up machine at first



Inhale as you hang and exhale as you raise yourself to the bar

Interesting Facts

(I don't think this is necessary, but I'm adding it anyway)

Want to know how well you can do pull-ups and chin-ups? Here are some stats to help you gauge your performance:

- According to The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, adult males should be able to perform at least 8 pull-ups. Females, on the other hand, are expected to do at least 1-3.^[4]
- Studies reveal that you should be able to do 7-12 chin-ups if you weigh anywhere between 140 and 179 pounds.^[5]
- The Candidate Fitness Assessment for US military services require men to accomplish at least 12 pull-ups.^[6]

Sources!

^[1] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21068680>
^[2] <http://www.mensfitness.com/training/build-muscle/exercise-face-off-pull-up-vs-chin-up>
^[3] <http://www.livestrong.com/article/406823-are-pull-ups-harder-than-chin-ups/>
^[4] <http://physicalliving.com/how-many-pull-ups-should-i-be-able-to-do/>
^[5] <http://www.menshealth.com/fitness/chinup-champion>
^[6] <http://www.academyadmissions.com/admissions/the-application-process/fitness-assessment/>

