

ALL BANDS

**The Real Guide to Resistance Bands,
Tubes, Loops, and Ribbon Bands**



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Chapter 1: The Band Weight Myth



The number on the package is a starting point, not a promise.

A twenty-pound resistance band sounds simple until you actually test it. The package gives you a number. The number gives you confidence. You think you know what you are training with. But a band is not a dumbbell, and it does not give you the same truth a dumbbell gives you the moment you pick it up.

A dumbbell is brutally honest. If the handle says twenty pounds, your hand is holding twenty pounds before the opening inch of movement. The weight is already there. Gravity is already working. Whether you curl it, press it, carry it, or hold it still, the object has a fixed load. You can argue about leverage, joint angle, and muscle recruitment, but the weight itself is not waiting to become twenty pounds later in the rep.

A band is different. It has to be stretched before it produces meaningful resistance. That is the first practical lesson of this book, and it changes how bands, tubes, loops, and ribbon bands should be used. The number printed on the package is a guide, not a promise that the muscle receives that exact load through the whole movement.

That is where many band workouts go wrong. People buy a set of bands, grab the one that says ten, twenty, thirty, or fifty pounds, and assume the exercise is now loaded by that amount. Then they stand too close to the anchor, begin with slack, rush the movement, and let the band snap back. On paper, they trained with resistance. In the body, they may have trained only the last third of the repetition.

This does not make bands weak. It makes them misunderstood. Used correctly, they can be powerful, portable, joint-friendly, and brutally effective. Used carelessly, they become movement without enough load. The arms and legs may be moving, but the muscle may not be challenged from the beginning of the rep.

That idea connects directly to my older work with band training. In a single-band workout, the beauty is simplicity. One band can train the legs, back, chest, shoulders, arms, and core. In powerlifting with bands, the beauty is strategic resistance. Bands can overload the top of a lift, teach speed, help lockout strength, and create a different stimulus than straight weight. Both ideas are true. But both need a deeper rule underneath them.

That rule is this: the band has to be working before you start counting reps.

If the band is loose at the beginning, the first part of the movement is a dead zone. The body moves, but the resistance has not arrived yet. That dead zone is easy to miss because the exercise still looks like exercise. The hands are moving. The elbows are bending. The shoulders are pressing. The legs are squatting. But the tool has not been set correctly, so the muscle is not receiving the resistance you think it is receiving.

That is why this book is called ALL BANDS. The goal is to explain the tools clearly so people can use them better. Bands are not magic. Tubes are not cables. Ribbon bands are not dumbbells. Power loops are not barbells. Each tool has its own behavior, and that behavior matters.

The biggest mistake is treating all elastic tools as if they are the same. They are not. A flat therapy band is often a long ribbon used for light rehab-style work, mobility, and delicate joint control. A mini loop is short and works well around the knees, shins, or ankles for hip activation and lateral movement. A fabric band is wider and more comfortable for heavier lower-body work. A tube with handles is useful for home cable-style movements like rows, presses, curls, and rotations. A power loop is a heavier continuous band used for strength, assisted pull-ups, and powerlifting patterns. Figure-8 bands and floss bands have their own specialized roles.

Even with those differences, one principle carries through every tool: elastic resistance is created by stretch. Too little stretch leaves the exercise underloaded. Too much can make the movement awkward, unsafe, or poorly controlled. Good band training lives between those two mistakes.

This is where the label can fool people. A band rating is usually based on a certain stretch distance. It may be tested at a manufacturer's chosen length, under conditions the buyer never sees. Another brand may use a different testing method. A user at home may stretch the band less than the test did. A taller user may stretch it more. A person using a door anchor may create a different line of pull than a person standing on the band. Two people can hold the same band and get two very different workouts.

That is not a small detail. It is the heart of the method.

When a person says, "This band is too light," the first question should not be, "Do you own a heavier band?" The first question should be, "How did you set it?" Did the band begin with tension? Was the anchor far enough away? Was the band shortened, doubled, or stepped on correctly? Did the exercise start in the right position? Was the negative controlled? If those answers are weak, a heavier band may only hide the problem.

In my powerlifting years, tension was never just a word. Tension was the lift. The bar, the grip, the feet, the back, the breath, the groove, the sticking point, and the lockout all mattered. Bands demand that same respect. They may look simple, but they punish lazy setup. A band hanging loose before a row is like walking up to a loaded bar with no brace and no plan. The tool may be capable of work, but the body has not been placed in position to receive it.

The same is true for general fitness. A teenager using one band at home, an adult trying to rebuild strength, a senior trying to stay mobile, and a lifter using bands for accessory work all need the same

basic truth. Do not chase the number. Chase the tension. The number on the band may help you choose a starting point, but the feeling at the start of the exercise tells you whether the rep is real.

A real rep begins before movement. You set the anchor. You step back. You adjust the grip. You find the start position. You feel the band become alive. Then you move. The positive phase is controlled and deliberate. The negative phase is controlled on the way back. The band does not snap. The body does not collapse. The opening inch matters as much as the last inch.

That is the standard for this book. ALL BANDS is not only about what exercises to do. It is about how to make the exercises count. I am not interested in giving readers another list of curls, rows, squats, and presses unless they understand how to set the resistance before doing them. A poor setup can ruin a good exercise. A good setup can turn a simple movement into serious training.

The next chapter shows why. I tested bands with a hanging scale because I wanted to see what the body was actually fighting. The numbers were not what the label suggested. The lesson was clear: the rating is only part of the story. The rest is stretch, tension, and setup.

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