

MUSCLE NAMES

Selected major muscle names pronounced and translated

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Muscle name	Pronunciation	Translation of name
Abductor digiti minimi	ab-DUK-ter DIJ-ih-tye MIN-ih-mye	Small finger bringer-in [muscle]
Abductor hallucis	ab-DUK-ter HAL-ooos-is (or HAL-uh-kiss)	Big-toe bringer-in [muscle]
Abductor pollicis brevis	ab-DUK-ter POL-ih-sis(or POL-ih-kiss) BREV-is	Short bringer-in muscle of thumb
Adductor brevis	ad-DUK-ter BREV-is	Short bringer-in [muscle]
Adductor longus	ad-DUK-ter LONG-us	Long bringer-in [muscle]
Adductor magnus	ad-DUK-ter MAG-nus	Great bringer-in [muscle]
Adductor pollicis	ad-DUK-ter POL-ih-sis (or POL-ih-kiss)	Bringer-in muscle of thumb
Biceps brachii	BYE-seps BRAY-kee-eye	Two-headed arm [muscle]
Biceps femoris	BYE-seps FEM-uh-ris	Two-headed thigh [muscle]
Brachialis	BRAY-kee-al-is	Arm [muscle]
Brachioradialis	BRAY-kee-oh-ray-dee-AL-is	Arm and radius [muscle]
Buccinator	BUK-sih-NAY-tor	Trumpeter
Bulbospongiosus	bul-boh-spun-jee-OH-ses	Spongy bulb (base of penis)
Coracobrachialis	KOR-uh-ko-BRAY-kee-al-is	Coracoid process – arm [muscle]
Corrugator supercilii	KOR-uh-gay-tor soo-per-SIL-ee-eye	Wrinkler above eyelashes
Deltoid	DEL-toyd	Triangle-like
Diaphragm	DYE-ah-fram	Across-enclosure
Erector spinae	eh-REK-tor SPINE-ee	Spine straightener
Extensor carpi radialis brevis	ek-STEN-ser KAR-pye ray-dee-AL-is BREV-is	Short wrist stretcher at radius
Extensor carpi radialis longus	ek-STEN-ser KAR-pye ray-dee-AL-is LONG-us	Long wrist stretcher at radius
Extensor carpi ulnaris	ek-STEN-ser KAR-pye ul-NAIR-is	Wrist stretcher at ulna
Extensor digitorum	ek-STEN-ser dij-i-TOH-rum	Finger stretcher
Extensor digitorum longus	ek-STEN-ser dij-i-TOH-rum LONG-gus	Toe stretcher
External intercostal	eks-TER-nal in-ter-KOS-tal	Outer [muscle] between ribs
External oblique	eks-TER-nal oh-BLEEK	Outer slanted [muscle]

Flexor carpi radialis	FLEK-ser KAR-pye ray-dee-AL-is	Wrist bender at radius
Flexor carpi ulnaris	FLEK-ser KAR-pye ul-NAIR-is	Wrist bender at ulna
Flexor digiti minimi brevis	FLEK-ser DIJ-ih-tye MIN-ih-mye BREV-is	Small, short finger bender
Flexor digitorum brevis	FLEK-ser dij-i-TOH-rum BREV-is	Short toe bender
Flexor digitorum profundus	FLEK-ser dij-i-TOH-rum pro-FUN-dis	Deep finger bender
Flexor digitorum superficialis	FLEK-ser dij-i-TOH-rum soo-per-fish-ee-AL-is	Superficial finger bender
Flexor hallucis brevis	FLEK-ser HAL-oos-is (or HAL-uh-kiss) BREV-is	Short big-toe bender
Flexor pollicis brevis	FLEK-ser POL-ih-sis (or POL-ih-kiss) BREV-is	Short thumb bender
Gastrocnemius	GAS-trok-NEE-mee-us	Belly of leg
Gluteus maximus	GLOO-tee-us MAK-sim-us	Large butt [muscle]
Gluteus medius	GLOO-tee-us MEE-dee-us	Medium butt [muscle]
Gluteus minimus	GLOO-tee-us MIN-ih-mus	Small butt [muscle]
Gracilis	GRASS-ih-lis	Slender [muscle]
Iliacus	ih-LYE-ah-kus	Ilium of pelvic bone [muscle]
Iliocostalis	ILL-ee-oh-KOS-tal-is	[Pelvic] ilium to rib [muscle]
Iliopsoas	ILL-ee-oh-SOH-is	Iliacus and psoas [muscles]
Infraspinatus	IN-frah-spy-nah-tus	Below the spine
Internal intercostal	in-TER-nal in-ter-KOS-tal	Inner [muscle] between the ribs
Internal oblique	in-TER-nal oh-BLEEK	Inner slanted [muscle]
Interosseous	in-ter-OSS-ee-us	Between bones
Interspinales	in-ter-spy-NAH-leez	Between spines
Ischiocavernosus	is-kee-oh-KAV-er-no-sus	[Pelvic] ischium to the crus (cross) of the penis's cavernosum
Latissimus dorsi	lat-ISS-im-is DOR-sye	Very wide back [muscle]
Levator ani	leh-VAY-tor A-nye	Anus lifter
Levator scapulae	leh-VAY-tor SCAP-yoo-lee	Scapula lifter
Longissimus	lon-JIS-i-mus	Very long (longest)
Longissimus capitis	lon-JIS-i-mus KAP-i-tis	Longest head [muscle]
Lumbrical	LUM-bri-kal	Wormlike
Masseter	mah-SEE-ter	Chewer

Multifidus	mul-TIF-i-dus	Split into many parts
Occipitofrontalis	ok-sip-i-toh-fron-TAL-is	Back and front of head
Opponens digiti minimi	oh-POH-nenz DIJ-ih-tye MIN-ih-mye	Small finger opposer
Opponens pollicis	oh-POH-nenz POL-i-sis (or POL-i-kiss)	Thumb opposer
Orbicularis oculi	or-bik-yoo-LAIR-is OK-yoo-lye	Little circle [around] eye
Orbicularis oris	or-bik-yoo-LAR-is OR-is	Little circle [around] mouth
Palmaris longus	PAL-mar-is LONG-us	Long palm [muscle]
Pectoralis major	pek-toh-RAL-is MA-jer	Greater chest [muscle]
Pectoralis minor	pek-toh-RAL-is MYE-ner	Lesser chest [muscle]
Perineal	pair-in-EE-al	[Muscle] around the excretion [openings]
Peroneus brevis (fibularis brevis)	per-oh-NEE-us BREV-is (fib-yoo-LAIR-is BREV-is)	Short boot [muscle]
Peroneus longus (fibularis longus)	per-oh-NEE-us LONG-us (fib-yoo-LAIR-is LONG-us)	Long boot [muscle]
Peroneus tertius (fibularis tertius)	per-oh-NEE-us TER-shee-us (fib-yoo-LAIR-is TER-shee-us)	Third boot [muscle]
Pronator quadratus	PRO-nay-ter kwah-DRAT-is	Four-sided pronator
Pronator teres	PRO-nay-ter TAIR-eez	Rounded pronator
Psoas major	SO-is MAY-jer	Greater lumbar [muscle]
Psoas minor	SO-is MYE-ner	Lesser lumbar [muscle]
Pterygoid	TER-i-goid	Winglike
Quadratus lumborum	kwah-DRAT-is lum-BOR-um	Four-sided lumbar [muscle]
Quadriceps femoris	KWAH-drih-seps FEM-uh-ris (or fem-OR-is)	Four-headed thigh [muscle]
Rectus abdominis	REK-tus ab-DOM-i-nis	Straight belly [muscle]
Rectus femoris	REK-tus FEM-uh-ris (or fem-OR-is)	Straight thigh [muscle]
Rhomboid major	ROM-boyd MA-jer	Greater rhombus (equilateral parallelogram)
Rhomboid minor	ROM-boyd MYE-ner	Lesser rhombus (equilateral parallelogram)
Rotatores	roh-tah-TOR-eez	Turner [muscles]
Sartorius	sar-TOR-ee-us	Tailor [muscle]
Semimembranosus	sem-ee-mem-brah-NO-sis	Half membrane [muscle]
Semispinalis	sem-ee-spy-NAY-lis	Half spine [muscle]
Semispinalis capitis	sem-ee-spy-NAY-lis KAP-i-tis	Half spine [muscle] of the head
Semitendinosus	sem-ee-ten-din-OH-sis	Half tendon [muscle]

Serratus anterior	ser-RAY-tus an-TEER-ee-or	Front saw-tooth [muscle]
Soleus	SOH-lee-us	Sole (of foot) [muscle]
Sphincter ani externus	SFINGK-ter A-nye eks-TER-nus	Outer anus tightener
Spinalis	spy-NAY-lis	Spine [muscle]
Splenius	SPLEH-nee-us	Patch
Splenius capitis	SPLEH-nee-us KAP-i-tis	Head patch
Sternocleidomastoid	STERN-oh-KLYE-doh-MAS-toyd	Sternum-clavicle-mastoid process
Subscapularis	sub-SKAP-yoo-lar-is	Under the scapula [muscle]
Supinator	SOO-pin-ayt-er	Supinator [muscle]
Supraspinatus	SOO-prah-spy-nah-tus	Above spine [muscle]
Temporalis	tem-poh-RAL-is	Temple (of head) [muscle]
Tensor fasciae latae	TEN-sor FASH-ee (or FASH-ee-ay) LAT-tee	Puller of side bundle
Teres major	TER-eez MA-jer	Greater rounded [muscle]
Teres minor	TER-eez MYE-ner	Lesser rounded [muscle]
Tibialis anterior	tib-ee-AL-is an-TEER-ee-or	Front shinbone [muscle]
Transversospinalis	tranz-VERS-o-spy-NAY-lis	Transverse [vertebral] spine [muscle]
Transversus abdominis	tranz-VERS-us ab-DAH-min-us	Belly-crossing [muscle]
Trapezius	trah-PEE-zee-us	Table-shaped [muscle]
Triceps brachii	TRY-seps BRAY-kee-eye	Three-headed arm [muscle]
Urethral sphincter	yoo-REE-thral SFINGK-ter	Urethra tightener
Vastus intermedius	VAS-tus in-ter- MEE-dee-us	Vast (enormous) in-between [muscle]
Vastus lateralis	VAS-tus lat-er-AL-is	Vast (enormous) on-the-side [muscle]
Vastus medialis	VAS-tus mee-dee-AL-is	Vast (enormous) toward-the-middle [muscle]
Zygomaticus major	zye-goh-MAT-ik-us MA-jer	Greater [muscle] of zygomatic [bone]

NOTES:

1. Muscle names are arranged alphabetically, not by location, structure, or function.
2. In Latin, modifiers *follow* the terms they describe. Thus, *flexor digitorum* can be translated in exact parallel as “bender of finger” but is best rendered as “finger bender.”
3. Literal translations of muscle names may be helpful in locating them or remembering their shape or function. However, they are not necessarily accurate or complete descriptions of the muscle.
4. Some alternate pronunciations are given here but many other pronunciations are possible.