

## **The Exercises**

The reason these exercises were chosen is because every gym usually has the equipment necessary to perform them. If for some reason, you can't perform an exercise because the space or equipment at your training facility is limited, contact me and I'll give you a suitable substitute.

All of these exercises are meant to be performed with free weights, not with a machine. Machines restrict your plane of motion and are much more dangerous to your joints than free weight exercises if performed properly.

**FORM IS ESSENTIAL.** This is the most important rule in all of training. Not only does poor form guarantee injury, it changes the intended purpose of the lift. For example, if you are doing stiff legged deadlifts incorrectly, you will take the stress off the hamstrings (the intended target area of the lift) and put it somewhere else. Considering that the hamstrings are a very common weakness in individuals, shifting the focus away from your weakness will impede your progress rather than improve it.

Take a few minutes to read how to properly perform the lifts you think you're doing correctly and a few more minutes to learn how to do the exercises you're not familiar with and you'll not only get much more benefit out of your workout, you won't get hurt.

### **The Main Lifts**

#### **The Deadlift**

This exercise is the big daddy of all lifts. When you properly perform a deadlift, literally every single muscle in your body is used. Increasing your deadlift will improve every physical aspect of your game. With that said, the description of the deadlift is just a bit more in depth than the description for the rest of the exercises.

To properly perform the deadlift, approach the bar with feet slightly narrower than shoulder width apart. The bar should be over the middle of your foot. Reach down and grip the bar with the hands only slightly wider than the knees. You can use a mixed grip (one hand overhand, the other underhand) if you prefer. Then, drop your hips so that the angle of your back is approximately 45 degrees. If you're in the proper position, the knees should actually be over the bar. Meanwhile, your shoulder blades should be on the opposite side of the bar as your toes. Concentrating on the toes on one side and the shoulder blades on the other will help force the hips into the proper position and help maintain the proper back position throughout the lift. The neck should remain in a neutral position (head not down or up), as should the lumbar spine (do not round the back). When setting up and performing the deadlift, your arms and hands should simply act as hooks that attach the weight to your body. At no time should you bend at the elbow. Bending the elbows during deadlifting is the number 1 cause of torn biceps.

Once into proper position, take a deep breath and hold it in your diaphragm. This helps to stabilize the lumbar spine during the initial part of the lift. Initiate the lift with the legs, hips at the same time. Make sure to keep the bar close to your shins so it travels in as close to a straight line as possible. Your weight should be on your heels for the entire lift. If the bar comes away from your shins, it will force you to go onto your toes, which will in turn force to round your back. Rounding your back means injury. Notice how the legs and hips start and finish the lift simultaneously. Pay attention to how the low back remains neutral throughout the entire lift. Also watch how the bar

follows my shins up until it gets to my knees. If your shins aren't scraped up at the end of a deadlift workout, you're doing it wrong.

Check List:

During the setup

1. Feet slightly narrower than shoulder width apart.
2. Bar over the middle of the foot
3. Hands slightly outside the knees
4. Sink your hips and keep your back flat (flat means flat like a board, yet at an angle, not parallel to the ground)
5. Knees over the bar
6. Shoulder blades behind the bar
7. Neutral head, neutral spine
8. Elbows locked

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yBIEac4UqNM> If you stop the video at 12 seconds, you can see every point on the "setup" checklist.

During the lift:

1. Take a deep breath and push your diaphragm against your abdominal wall
2. Initiate the lift with the legs, hips, and back simultaneously
3. The bar should travel up the shin
4. Drive through your heels
5. Elbows locked
6. Keep your back neutral
7. Legs, hips, low back, should lock out simultaneously.

When performing multiple reps on the deadlift, make sure to reset your body position for each rep. Bouncing them off the floor might help you grind out a few more reps, but you're defeating the purpose. Our goal is to develop more strength by putting more force to the ground. Not taking a half second to reset your form each rep will be detrimental to this end.

Do not increase the weight until you can properly perform this exercise. Injury is inevitable if you do not maintain strict form.

## **The Front Squat**

<http://stronglifts.com/how-to-front-squat-with-proper-technique/>

This article gives great advice on how to perform the front squat. Considering that this is one of the primary exercises in this program, I suggest you familiarize yourself with it.

Check List:

The Stance

1. Feet slightly wider than shoulder width
2. Toes pointed slightly out at about 30 degrees

3. Bar should rest on the clavicle or between the clavicle and throat
4. Chest up, abs tight
5. Elbows up and pointed straight forward

#### The Lift

1. Sit back, don't squat down
2. Drive through the heels
3. Eyes forward, not up
4. Sink all the way down until your calves touch your hamstrings. Ass To Grass.
5. Keep the chest up and abs tight
6. Don't let the knees come together

#### Hang Clean

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYihJObA6pw>

This is very important lift that is the basis for more complex olympic lifts. Mastery of it is essential.

Check List:

#### The Stance

1. Feet shoulder width
2. Hands just outside your legs
3. Elbows locked. Arms should hang straight down.

#### The Lift

1. Initiate the lift by letting the weight slide down the front of the legs
2. Push hips back
3. Bend knees
4. Explode up, shrugging the bar as high as possible with the elbows straight
5. Bend elbows at apex of shrug and catch the bar on your front delts
6. Bend knees on the catch

#### Push Press

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CiU99h9nu8Y>

Check List:

#### The Stance

1. Legs slightly wider than shoulder width, toes pointed slightly out
2. Hands grip the bar slightly wider than shoulder width

3. Bar in front of the head

#### The Lift

1. Initiate the lift by slightly shifting the hips back and bending the knees
2. Explode up, using the knees, hips, shoulders, and elbows in unison. Snap the weight into lockout.
3. Push your head slightly forward for the lockout. The lift should end with the bar slightly behind your ears in the vertical plane.

### **Power Clean**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TlbDQUWs0s&feature=related>

This is an excellent, short video that shows the mechanics of the power clean. The power clean is important because it is an explosive exercise that converts the strength gained from the previous exercises into power. It also develops balance, co-ordination and flexibility.

Check List:

The Stance - Same as deadlift

The Lift - Combine the deadlift and the hang clean

### **Back Squat**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hyjz4jkjSQ&feature=related>

Check List:

The Stance

1. Feet slightly wider than shoulder width, toes pointed out
2. Bar resting on the scapula, just below the rear deltoids
3. Back straight, abs tight
4. Eyes forward, not up
5. Elbows down, not back
6. Pull down on the bar with your hands like you are trying to bend the bar across your back

The Lift

1. Sit back with the hips like you are about to sit on a toilet
2. Keep the torso as upright as possible
3. Descend under control
4. Stop at or slightly below parallel. If you need a gauge, find out where your hip joint dips below the knee joint and run a bungee cord across the squat rack as marker.
5. Explode up, drive through the heels. Do not let your weight get over your toes!
6. Do not let the knees come together

## **Hang Snatch**

[http://www.metacafe.com/watch/625208/ol3\\_hang\\_snatch\\_no\\_dip/](http://www.metacafe.com/watch/625208/ol3_hang_snatch_no_dip/)

Check List:

The Stance

1. Feet shoulder width
2. Arms out as far as comfortably possible. The wider your arms, the less distance the bar has to travel to get above your head.

The Lift

1. Initiate the lift by shifting hips back and sliding the bar down the front of your legs
2. Explode up, shrugging the bar as high as possible
3. Keep elbows straight until the apex of the shrug
4. Let the momentum of bar continue to propel the bar above you head
5. Bend the knees to get under the bar
6. Finish with arms locked and bar slightly behind you head in the vertical plane

## **Split Jerk**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iTowJPFNcKY>

Check List:

The Stance

Same as the beginning stance for Push Press or the ending stance for the Hang Clean

The Lift

1. Initiate the lift by shifting the hips slightly back and bending the knees
2. Jump and shift one foot forward and one foot back. This is meant to get you under the bar with your arms doing minimal work to press the bar.
3. Drive your feet forcefully into the ground while simultaneously locking the bar out overhead. If done properly, both feet will hit the ground in unison, making a loud noise.
4. With the bar in the overhead lockout position, bring the feet together to finish the lift.

## **Accessory Lifts**

### **Glute-Ham Raise (GHR)**

Without a doubt, this is the best exercise to develop your posterior chain. If your gym has and actual GHR bench, use it. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0oqLDZ8JcI&feature=related>

If your gym doesn't have a GHR bench, don't fret. You can still do this incredible exercise.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oa6Ai5ty6oY> With a partner

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rg\\_hxBHPX\\_k&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rg_hxBHPX_k&feature=related) On bosu ball

### **Romanian Deadlift (aka Stiff Legged Deadlift)**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnBREGM7pE0&feature=fvw>

Check List:

With knees slightly bent, shift your hips back and let the bar go down to touch the ground. Don't just bend at the waist. You should feel this one exclusively in your hamstrings

### **Good Morning**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Good-morning> Great description

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4beVLd1ZXhA> Great demonstration

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tvn9tBt7uuw> Another variation for you all to enjoy

### **Dynamic Shrugs**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILoNgOXkDk0>

This exercise is meant to be explosive, not slow and strict like most people do shrugs. It should be done with a lot more weight than you can clean.

Check List:

1. Arms significantly wider than shoulder width
2. Back stays straight
3. Elbows remain locked through the entire lift
4. Try to pull the weight as high and as explosively as possible like you are doing a clean or snatch

A little cheat on this exercise is ok. It will not hurt you if you have to bend your knees and put a little leg into it to squeeze out the last few reps.

### **Hex Bar or Dumbbell Deadlift**

This exercise is a great supplement to deadlifts. For those of you not familiar with it the hex bar, or trap bar, is the one you can stand inside and do shrugs with. If your gym doesn't have a hex/trap bar, simply deadlifting with a heavy dumbbell in each hand will be sufficient.

### **Snatch Grip Deadlift**

<http://www.fitnessspotlight.com/2009/07/23/muscle-building-exerciseif-pick/> article

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4\\_g8P0kkjsQ&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_g8P0kkjsQ&feature=related) vid

### **Bulgarian Split Squat**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZlodHgCipk>

Start with no weight and progress to using dumbbells in your hands.

### **Back Extension**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2a8r-EJfpSY>

Start with no weight. Hold a dumbbell in front of your chest when you can do it.

### **Incline Dumbbell Press**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8P4-6bJ4pxo>

### **Dumbbell Snatch**

This is an explosive movement. Make sure you use a weight heavy enough to make you work, but not so heavy you're not able to be explosive. This is not a press.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hxX2pp-PySU>

### **Farmers Walk**

Set up a course as long as possible. Some gyms won't have much room, so you might have to get creative. If you can set up a course of 20 meters, you're golden. Get the two heaviest dumbbells you can handle. Pick them up and go down and back across the course as fast as you can go. If it's too easy, get heavier dumbbells.

### **Bar Hang**

This is a great exercise for developing grip, wrist, and forearm strength. To do it, simply place a bar over the squat rack and hang from it for as long as you can. By placing a barbell on top of the squat rack, it is free to roll, making it much more effective than hanging from a fixed pullup bar.

### **Wrist-Touch Pushups**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXjpFRQyOHE>

### **Step Ups**

To properly perform these, you'll need to find a box or bench about knee height. When you put your foot on it, your upper leg should be parallel to the ground. Once you have that, stand with the box at your side and put your foot on it. Squeeze your glutes (your ass) to lift you up. Go back down to the ground under control, reset, and repeat. You should not feel this exercise in your quads. It is meant to work your glutes. Notice how my arms are forward, forcing my butt back, causing me to drive the weight through the heel.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUrX9D7bOYQ>

Check List

1. Box should be high enough so your upper leg is parallel to the ground
2. Put your arms forward and your push your butt back
3. Drive through your heel. You should be able to wiggle your toes.
4. Explode up
5. Control down
6. Pause at the bottom to make sure the emphasis stays on your glutes

### **Steppers of Doom**

Get an aerobic stepper or any kind of box or platform that's 8-12" high. Do this for 200 reps as fast as you can. You can thank me later.

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/step-up/MM00722>

### **Plate Front Raise**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6AvgesrT6Cg>

Raise the plate with stiff arm for 8 reps, hold for a count of 5. Your elbows should remain locked straight with no backward lean. Stop the lift when you can look straight forward and see through the hole in the middle of the plate.

### **Compass Lunge**

With a bar on your back, lunge to the different directions like you're standing in the middle of the compass. With the right foot, lunge North, NE, East, SE, and South. Continue going around the compass with the left foot South (for a 2nd rep), SW, West, NW, and North. Two times around equals one rep.

When you lunge east and west your weight should stay over your front (lunging) foot.

### **Core Exercises**

#### **Turkish Get-Ups**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vhJza-2xiI>

#### **Supermans (Roll Outs)**

Start out on your knees. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WVh3XhKZoQ>

Once those become easy, do them standing.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1eZDcNFzxE&feature=channel>

#### **Twisters (Russian Twists)**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCcKlcIgVyg>



Make sure you keep your arms straight. Do not try to rotate the weight with your arms. Pivot your feet and initiate the movement by rotating the hips and trunk.

### **Ball Situp**

You will need a partner and a medicine ball to do this exercise.

1. Lay on the ground in the sit up position with knees bent and the medicine ball in your hands near your chest. Have your partner stand on your toes.
2. Sit up and hand the med ball to your partner.
3. Return to the original position without the ball.
4. Sit up and take the ball from your partner.
5. Return to the original position with the ball.

Steps 2-5 are considered 1 rep