

Mahler's

Aggressive Strength



**The Aggressive Strength Solution For Incredible
Kettlebell Training**

By Mike Mahler

Disclaimer

The exercises and advice contained within this manual may be too difficult or dangerous for some people, and the reader(s) should consult a physician before engaging in them.

The author and publisher of this book are not responsible in any manner whatsoever for any injury which may occur through reading and following the instructions herein.

The Aggressive Strength Solution For Incredible Kettlebell Training

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Unleash The Power Of Heavy Kettlebell Training

Many people believe light to moderate kettlebell training is ideal, 53lb kettlebells for men and 26lb kettlebells for women. This line of thinking is a great way to miss out on the benefits of heavy kettlebell training.

For example, 53lb kettlebells are not challenging to me at all and if I based my training on 53lb kettlebells, I would not have the strength, size, endurance, and explosive power that I currently have. Moreover, my clients would not make the improvements that they have made if they stuck to light bells.

Even if your goals are cardio and muscular endurance, why not work up to heavier kettlebells for reps? Do you really think that knocking off ten double swings with two 88lb kettlebells will not be beneficial? Do you think that ten Clean and Presses with the 70s will not benefit you as an athlete? Of course both will. An athlete would clearly do better with do twelve Clean and Presses with two 70s than thirty Clean and Presses with two 53s.

If you can do thirty reps with a weight, it is too easy to have any dramatic benefit for athletic activities and strength (unless your sport is GS, a kettlebell sport), especially, for combat athletes. The heavier the kettlebells you can handle for muscular endurance, the more benefit you will have for your sport. Using Olympic lifting as a back drop, an athlete who can Power Clean 315lbs five times is going to have much more explosive power than an athlete who can Power Clean 135lbs fifteen times. Moreover, the athlete who can Power Clean 315lbs will be able to do far more than fifteen reps with 135lbs.

Heavy training improves light training, but not the other way around. So why even bother with light training? With the exception of working on form and back-off weeks, I would say do not bother. Personally, 70lb bells are the lightest ones I own and I only use them for GTG (Pavel's Greasing the Groove in which you practice an exercise daily for neurological facilitation) for presses and sometimes high-rep Front Squats.

Recently someone asked me how many reps I can do for the ten-minute Snatch test with a 53lb kettlebell. I have no idea as I have never done the test. With all due respect to the test and the great people who have participated in the test (lots of impressive numbers by people who have

taken the test), I'd rather have an athlete knock off twenty Snatches left and right with an 88lb kettlebell and eventually the 105lb bell. Sounds like too much? I can do 17 Snatches left and right with a 105lb kettlebell and I am far from a gifted athlete.

A few months ago I knocked off 50 reps per arm on One-arm Snatches with a 53lb bell. I am not breaking any records, and there are a few things you should know. I never train with light kettlebells; I rarely work on high reps (over ten reps per set), and the 50 reps left and right was easy for me. The power and endurance that I built with heavy kettlebells carried over very well to light weights for high reps. However, take a man or woman who can do 50 snatches with a 53lb kettlebell who has never trained with a heavier kettlebell and I promise you that he or she will not be able to do more than a few reps with a 105lb kettlebell. More than likely, he or she will not even be able to do one rep. If you are an athlete, light training it is not ideal for the majority of your workouts.

Once you have the technique down, ramp up the intensity. Heavy kettlebell training will do far more for explosive power and when done in high reps will develop muscular endurance that will transfer to your sport.

Now I am not blowing my own horn here or trying to convey what a great athlete I am. Again I am not a great athlete and certainly not a genetic freak. My anabolic hormone levels are good, but certainly not exceptional. Thus, I do not have tremendous recovery abilities either. I did not even start lifting weights until I was 18 and got pinned with 100lbs on the bench press when I first got started. I never played sports in high school or college. Thus, if I can work up to the numbers above, it should be no problem for gifted athletes. I am just an average guy who learned how to train smart, recruit the CNS, and use my own leverage points to handle heavier bells -- more about leverage points later.

My point to drive home is that heavy kettlebell training is not just beneficial for size and strength, but for muscular endurance as well. The muscular endurance you build with heavy kettlebells is much more beneficial than light kettlebells for athletes. In addition, heavy kettlebell training engages the CNS more efficiently, teaches you how to master your own leverage points, and if used correctly, probably has a great benefit to optimizing anabolic hormones. Of course this is far more complicated than just training.

Let me make it clear by stating that I do not think heavy weight low-rep training takes the place of muscular endurance. That is not what this article is about. Of course you need to work with high reps and lots of volume or frequency to ramp up endurance, but you should not be afraid of heavy kettlebell training. If muscular endurance is your thing, have a goal of working up to some high reps with some heavy kettlebells on the Double Clean and Press, Double Swing, Double Front Squat (or Double Clean and Front Squat), Double Clean and Jerk (or Clean and Push Press), Double Snatches, One-arm Swings, and One-arm Snatches.

Heavy kettlebells are bells you can only do a few reps with, say 2-4. Start with low reps to get used to the heavier kettlebells. For example, if you can Clean and Press two 53lb bells ten times, do a few sets of two reps when you start working with the 70lb bells. Make each rep perfect. Once that gets easy, start building the reps. When you can do ten Clean and Presses with the 70s, get a pair of 88s and do the same thing.

One important thing to keep in mind is that training form needs to be modified as the bells get heavier. Let's use the Clean and Press as an example. With light kettlebells, you can keep the body fairly loose and still maintain proper technique. You can easily keep your body upright as leverage is not a necessity. However, once you start doing Clean and Presses with heavy kettlebells, you are playing in a whole new ball game. You have to tighten up and apply more tension to have a solid foundation. You will have to let your back "sit back" and push your hips as far forward as possible for optimal leverage. Your breathing will change. Now you have to hold your breath or apply "power breathing" to keep the tension high to get the bells moving.

Another example is the One-arm Snatch: When I do Snatches with a 105lb bell my form is much different than my form with a 70lb kettlebell. I drive through with much more power and pop the pelvis through and let my back sit back for more explosive power and leverage similar to what Olympic lifters do. As the bell goes overhead, I bend my knees slightly to get under the weight and catch it. When I return the bell to the starting position, I keep it close to my body for maximum control. I also do not swing the bell back as far between my feet as that also throws off the leverage. It is almost a completely different exercise all together than a One-arm Snatch with a lighter bell.

One final example is the One-arm Military Press with a 105lb kettlebell. At my bodyweight of 193, I can One-arm Military Press a 70lb kettlebell easily without having to shift my weight at all for optimal leverage. When I press an 88lb bell, I shift my weight a little bit. However, when I press a 105lb kettlebell, I need every leverage point that I can take advantage of. I kick my hip out under the bell; I take the bell behind my back so I can engage the lat more and acquire more leverage and stability. Then I shift my weight in the opposite direction similar to a side press to keep the bell moving, and once I have the bell moving, I shift my weight under the bell to finish the move.

I saw Steve Cotter, founder of Full Kontakt Kettlebells, One-arm Military Press a 105lb kettlebell recently and it almost looked like a Kettlebell Windmill. Steve started the press from under the chin and quickly got the bell behind his back to reach the optimal leverage point. Some of you may feel that this is cheating. To retort I say you either weigh a lot more than Steve and do not need leverage to press a 105lb kettlebell, or you are not even close to pressing a 105lb. Do you really feel that mastering leverage with a heavy kettlebell is not beneficial to athletes? Isn't that what athletes do all of the time? Judo and wrestling have a lot of techniques in which the ideal leverage is used to take the opponent down efficiently. In football you do not just ram into your opponent haphazardly, you go for a particular spot to do the most damage.

One of the strong benefits of heavy kettlebell training is that you ultimately have to master all of your leverage points to get the job done. Right now, I am working on the Double Clean and Press with two 105lb kettlebells. The only way that it is going to happen is if I apply my ideal leverage points. These are points I have not found yet as I have not needed to apply them with 88lb kettlebells and below. Regardless, I will find these points and I will press the 105lb kettlebells. It is only a matter of time and the learning process in and of itself is a lot of fun. I really enjoy the challenge. When I work up to a Clean and Press with the 105lb kettlebells for reps, you better believe that it will improve my numbers with the 88s and 70s. No doubt about it.

I will leave you with this. Even if you do not want to train with heavy kettlebells, if you want to improve your numbers with the bells you are currently using, get some heavier kettlebells. The 88lb kettlebells always felt heavy to me until I started training with 105lb kettlebells. Now they feel light and the 70s feel so light that when I went to do a Double Clean and

Press yesterday, I almost ended up doing a Double Snatch by accident! As Brett Jones, founder of Breaking Strength, once told me, if all you lift is an 88lb kettlebell, it will always feel heavy.

Unleash the power of heavy kettlebell training today.

Special thanks to Laree Draper for editing this article. Visit the Draper site at www.davedraper.com

How To Structure A Kettlebell Workout For Size and Strength

I get tons of emails from kettlebell trainees on how to structure kettlebell workouts for getting bigger and stronger. Many trainees make the mistake of doing too many exercises; apply improper use of volume; and use flawed training frequency. Training frustration is soon to follow with the inevitable lack of progress from not having a clear target. When designing a program, you must consider that you can only be good at so many things. Thus, one of the keys to designing an effective program for strength and size is to keep things simple and focus on doing a few things well. Moreover, you balanced development is critical as is proper exercise selection. Lets get into some key ingredients for maximizing a kettlebell program for size and strength.

The first you need to do is focus on are exercises that provide the most bang for you buck. I like to break down a full body workout into five categories. Pick one pressing exercise, one pulling exercise, one exercise for the quads, one for the hamstrings, and one core exercise. This ensures that the entire body is getting a workout and prevents trainees from focusing too much on one area. For example, men like to focus on the upper body and women like to focus on the lower body. To avoid imbalances and being mistaken for a California bodybuilder, focus on working the entire body and pick one exercise per category. Lets discuss each category:

Pressing: A pressing exercise will take care of the shoulders, triceps, and depending on what you pick the chest as well. Here are some kettlebell pressing exercises to choose from:

The Double Clean and Military Press (clean before each press)

Double Military Press

Double Sots Press

Alternating Military Press

Floor Press

Alternating Floor Press

Pulling: pulling exercises are a necessity to ensure balanced development for the upper body. Moreover there is a synergy between pulling and pressing muscles. The better you get at pulling, the stronger your pressing will be and vice versa. Here are some excellent pulling exercises for you to choose from

Pull-ups with a kettlebell attached (use a dipping belt)

Renegade Row

Double Bent Over Row

Alternating Bent-over Row

One-arm Rows with two kettlebells (see Pavel's "More Russian Kettlebell Challenges DVD)

Quads: To avoid looking like a California bodybuilder you need to work on the legs. Even if you do not care about leg development, if you care about upper body development you need a strong foundation. I have had online clients that blast through pressing plateaus by increasing leg strength. Your body is only as strong as your weakest link. Build a strong foundation with the following exercises:

Double Front Squat

Double Lunge

Suitcase Squat

Double Front Box Squat

Hamstrings: The next critical area is the back of your legs. You need to balance the quad development from the squats with some hamstring exercises. In addition, if you are an athlete, you need strong hamstrings for explosive strength and speed. Choose from the following:

Double Swing

Double Clean

Double Snatch

Full Body Attack (on my new DVD, The Kettlebell Solution For Speed and Explosive Strength)

Double One Legged Squat

Core: The last important area to cover is the midsection. The midsection is the hook that connects the lower body to the upper body and if your core is weak so is your entire body and you will not be as strong as you could be with a well-developed powerful midsection. Choose from the following list:

Double Windmill

One-arm Windmill

Turkish Get-up

Turkish Get-up Sit-up

Now that we have all of the bases covered. Lets go over program design options. If your main goal is to get bigger and stronger then split your workouts into upper body and lower body and workout each area two times per week. Here is a sample program:

Monday: (Upper Body Focus)

A-1: Double Clean and Press 5x5

A-2: Double Bent Over Row 5x5

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, wait a minute and then do a set of A-2, wait a minute and so forth. Continue in this fashion until you have completed 5x5 on both exercises. When you can do 5x5, add another set and do 6x5. Your long-term goal is to do 10x5

Tuesday (Lower Body Focus)

A-1: Double Front Squat 5x5

A-2: Double Swing 5x5

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, wait a minute and then do a set of A-2, wait a minute and so forth. Continue in this fashion until you have completed 5x5 on both exercises. When you can do 5x5, add another set and do 6x5. Your long-term goal is to do 10x5

Take a one-minute break and then do:

Turkish Get-up 2x5 l,r (left and right with one-minute breaks)

Thursday: (Upper Body Focus)

A-1: Double Floor Press 5x5

A-2: Pull-up with a kettlebell 5x5

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, wait a minute and then do a set of A-2, wait a minute and so forth. Continue in this fashion until you have completed 5x5 on both exercises. When you can do 5x5, add another set and do 6x5. Your long-term goal is to do 10x5

Friday (Lower Body Focus)

A-1: Double Front Lunge 5x5 each leg

A-2: Double Snatch 5x5

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, wait a minute and then do a set of A-2, wait a minute and so forth. Continue in this fashion until you have completed 5x5 on both exercises. When you can do 5x5, add another set and do 6x5. Your long-term goal is to do 10x5

Take a one-minute break and then do:

Double Windmill 2x5 l,r (left and right with one-minute breaks)

Now if you are under some time constraints and only have time for two workouts per week then try doing two full body workouts per week. This is

also a great program for people that require more rest days for adequate recovery. Here is a sample program:

Monday

A-1: Double Floor Press 3x5

A-2: Pull-up with a kettlebell 3x5

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, wait a minute and then do a set of A-2, wait a minute and so forth. Continue in this fashion until you have completed 3x5 on both exercises. Your long-term goal is to work up to 6x5 per exercise.

Take a one-minute break and then move on to:

B-1: Double Front Squat 3x6

B-2: Double Swing 3x6

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, wait a minute and then do a set of A-2, wait a minute and so forth. Continue in this fashion until you have completed 3x6 on both exercises. When you can do 3x6, add another set and do 4x6. Your long-term goal is to do 6x6 per exercise

Take a one-minute break and then do:

Double Windmill 2x5 l,r (left and right with one-minute breaks)

Thursday

A-1: Double Clean and Military Press 3x5

A-2: Renegade Row 3x5 l,r (left and right)

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, wait a minute and then do a set of A-2, wait a minute and so forth. Continue in this fashion until you have completed 3x5 on both exercises. Your long-term goal is to work up to 6x5 per exercise.

Take a one-minute break and then move on to:

B-1: Double Front Lunge 3x6

B-2: Double Snatch 3x6

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, wait a minute and then do a set of A-2, wait a minute and so forth. Continue in this fashion until you have completed 3x6 on both exercises. When you can do 3x6, add another set and do 4x6. Your long-term goal is to do 6x6 per exercise

Take a one-minute break and then do:

Turkish Get-up 2x5 l,r (left and right with one-minute breaks)

To summarize, the keys to building an effective kettlebell program for size and strength is to focus on compound exercises and balanced development. Make sure to cover the five major categories for balanced development and organize a program in such a way that all of the bases are covered with the appropriate amount of training days, volume, and intensity.

The Secret Relationship Between Sex Hormones And Productive Strength Training

I will get right to the point. If you do not have a high sex drive then you are not healthy and you are not maximizing the benefits of training. If you do not feel strong and powerful after workout then you probably did more damage than good with regards to your health. Instead of optimizing your anabolic hormones (also known as sex hormones) you have depleted them. Depleting your anabolic hormones places you in an aging state which is counter productive to recovery. Fail to recover several times and you will get weaker and weaker at each workout. While getting blood work is very important and I will cover what tests you should have done in this article, there are a few free ways to determine whether your training is optimizing anabolic hormones.

First, lets talk about the two main hormones that are very important to training. Testosterone and Growth Hormone. I am not going to get into detail on each hormone, you can do some research on your own at www.worldhealth.net However, I will say that if your Testosterone levels are low, forget about ever being really strong or more importantly feeling good about life. Symptoms of low testosterone are: low sex drive, low confidence, increased bodyfat, and poor outlook on life. In other words if

your Testosterone levels are low, you do not feel like having sex, you let people push you around, you are overweight, and you probably think that life is lame. I rather jump off a cliff then live life that. Forget about prozac and other ways to cover the symptoms. Get to the root cause which could very well be low T levels.

In addition to everyday well being, new studies are showing that people that have low testosterone are more likely to get heart disease. Now one study that I read about online (I forget where but do a google search and you can find it yourself) conveyed the importance of high testosterone levels with regards to building muscle and strength. A study was done in which one group worked out and received testosterone therapy. The next group worked out and did not receive testosterone therapy, and finally one group received testosterone therapy and did not work out. Guess which group had the best results? Obviously the group that got T therapy and worked out. However, what is interesting is the group that got T therapy but did not work out got better results than the group that worked out but did not get T. Of course, the training program that they were on could have been really lame. No doubt that is a possible factor. However, that does not even come close to ruling out the fact that the group that did not work out actually got stronger and bigger with T therapy. Now I am not telling you this to encourage you to take testosterone. That is between you and your Doctor. I am telling your this to demonstrate clearly how important optimal T levels are to training. the optimal range for T is 600-900ng/dl for total and 200 to 600 for bioavailable (this is how efficient your are at using what you are producing). Normal is considered 200ng/dl to 900ng/dl. However, that is a very broad range and normal does necessarily mean ideal. I rather be closer to 900ng/dl than 200ng/dl and if you care about being strong and virile then you should as well. Ladies, I do not know what the optimal ranges are for you. Do some research find out and then let me know. T levels are important for women as well but obviously what is ideal for a woman is much lower than what is ideal for a man.

Now lets talk about Growth Hormone. Without normal levels of GH, you will not reach normal development as a human being. That is the extreme and an example would be midgets or "little people" if we are trying to be PC which I do not care to be as deplore PC without every bone in my body. Okay back to GH, most people probably fall between 125 ng/dl all the way up to as high as 425ng/dl. A decent range is 175ng/dl to an outstanding 425ng/dl. However, once again I do not care about what is normal, I want to

know what is ideal. According to an anti-aging Doctor that I go to, over 250ng/dl is good. Over 300ng/dl is great and over 400 ng/dl it exceptional. Why care about GH? Without optimal levels of GH your physique composition will be far from ideal, your recovery from workouts will be poor, your sex drive may most likely be low, your sleep will be poor, your mood will be poor, and your energy will be low. You will have that dragging feeling through out the day and will probably need lots of coffee just to make it through the day. Once again I am not recommending GH shots. That again is between you and your doctor. Personally I rather optimize T and GH via training, nutrition, and lifestyle rather than with drugs. That is my personal choice though and I respect yours.

Now that we understand the importance of T and GH lets talk about how to optimize both with training. Heavy weight training and low reps have a positive impact on T levels. A dramatic example of this would be rest pause training (see my article at: www.mikemahler.com After a rest pause workout, I feel very strong and powerful rather than weak and depleted after doing something such as 10x10 on barbell squats. A powerlifting approach to training is a great way to jack up T. You just have to make sure that you determine the ideal amount of volume or better yet pay me to do that via my online program design services. Here is the deal. If you feel strong and powerful after a strength training workout, you are training in a way that optimizes T. Also, for men if you have a morning erection the day after your workout, then you T levels are doing well. If not, then it may mean that you T levels were lowered from the workout. Not a sure fire test, but a pretty good indicator. Also men, morning erections should be a daily event if your T levels are optimal. If it only happens a few times per week, then your levels are probably okay. Once a week means your levels are bad and if less than that, you are probably not even a man anymore. The only way to know for sure if your levels are optimal is to have blood work done. Otherwise it is all guess work.

Moving on, we know that the right amount of heavy weight training is great for T levels, what about GH? High intensity cardio is great for increasing GH assuming that you do not do too much. A example would be The Tabata protocol, HOC, PHA, or the Descending sets program (BTW, do not ask me what these programs are. I have written about all of them. Do some research and find out). However, if you are a minimalist like me, try adding a finisher to your strength workouts. For example, end a workout with 100 Hindu Squats as fast as possible or 3x15 on one-arm kettlebell snatches or five 50

yard sprints with one-minute breaks in between each sprint. How do you know if you increased GH levels? Try this simple test. Keep your workout to 45 minutes or less and right after you workout, take a thirty-minute nap on an empty stomach. When you wake up, you should have a ravenous urge to eat sugar. This is a nice indicator that your GH levels are way up. When GH levels go way up, your body wants to maintain homeostasis and bring the levels back down to a normal range. The way to do that is to increase insulin output. When insulin goes up, GH goes down. Now, I am not saying that you should fast after a workout that is just plain stupid. You want to have a big meal or a protein shake within an hour after you workout. Doing so after the nap still gets it done within the hour known as the "window of opportunity" and also provides some great information. A protein shake with juice or some other form of sugar is a good idea after workouts as that is the optimal time to increase insulin. Insulin helps deliver nutrients to the muscles effectively and quickly. This is why creatine and other amino acids are often taken with sugar after working out.

Okay so heavy weight training for T and high intensity cardio for GH. What exercises should you pick? Lots of curls and triceps pushdowns right? Hell no! The best exercises to pick are compound drills that will do the most bang for your buck. This is relevant for both T and GH. High rep squats for example are great for GH and low rep deadlifts are great for T. I do not have to convince you of either. if you ever done either, you know what I mean. If you have not then do not bother commenting. Here is a sample program to optimize both hormones:

Monday

A-1: Barbell Clean and Military Press 3x3

A-2: Weighted Pull-up 3x3

Take 90 second breaks in between A-1 and A-2. Go back and forth between the two drills until all of the designated sets are done. When you can do five reps on the last set, increase the weight by five pounds.

Barbell Deadlift 3x3 (two to three minute breaks and when three sets gets easy, do four sets. Work up to five sets and then increase the weight by five to ten pounds and go back to three sets per exercise)

Finisher:

100 Bodyweight squats as fast as possible or 20 one-arm kettlebells snatches l.r. Go as heavy as possible but do not train to failure. As Pavel recommends, leave a rep or two in the bank.

Wednesday

A-1: Medium Grip Floor Press 3x3

A-2: Barbell Bent-over Row 3x3

Barbell Squat 1x20 (Start with 50% of your one rep max and work on doing 20 reps without stopping. You want the lactic acid build up to optimize GH) Double Kettlebell Front Squats are also a great alternative.

Friday

A-1: Weighted Dips 3x3

A-2: Underhand Lat Pulldown or Weighted Chin-up 3x3

Double Kettlebell Swing 1x15-20 (Do all reps as fast as possible and get a nice lactic acid build up in your hamstrings. Double Kettlebell Snatches (no pun intended) are also good if you have the technique down)

Now obviously training has to be personalized to you to get the optimal results. The above is just a sample program. Your lifestyle, quality and quantity of your sleep, nutrition, supplement program, and individual physiology are all very important parts of the equation and need taken into equation. Stress management is also very important.

While productive strength training does not have to be complicated, optimizing the results of training is and most people are far too lazy to bother. That is fine with me. Good luck with training and keep doing what you are doing. However, if you want to maximize your training, the more you know about yourself the better. What you do not know will hurt you. It is not a question of if, it is a question of when. One final tip. Low carb diets are a great way to keep GH levels high since they keep insulin levels low. Thus, go low carb during the day and high carb after working out for the best of both worlds. Good amounts of healthy fat are critical for optimal testosterone levels. Low fat equals low T which is why people on low fat diets look terrible. Yes I am a vegetarian which is often low fat and low

protein. However, I eat like a meat eater. Meaning that I consume high levels of protein and healthy fat and get most of my carbs from low glycemic fruits and veggies.

Okay here is the blood work that you should have done and supplements to help get to optimal levels:

Testosterone (free and total)

Ideal ranges:

Men: 500ng/dl to 1200ng/dl for total levels, free levels: 100 to 400ng/dl

Women: 80ng/dl to 120ng/dl, free levels: .9 to 3.9 ng/ml

Recommended Supplements:

“Strength Energy”:

<http://www.ultimatemedresearch.com/stnencr2oz.html>

“Doctor’s Testosterone Gel:

<http://www.papanature.com/store/ProductDetails.aspx?c=Herbs&pid=FYT-10074>

Pregnenolone

Ideal ranges for men and women: 50-200ng/dl

“Strength Energy”:

<http://www.ultimatemedresearch.com/stnencr2oz.html>

DHT

Standard Ranges:

Men: 40-1000 pg/ml

Women: 5-178 pg/ml

“Strength Energy”:

<http://www.ultimatemedresearch.com/stnencr2oz.html>

“Doctor’s Testosterone Gel:

<http://www.papanature.com/store/ProductDetails.aspx?c=Herbs&pid=FYT-10074>

Saw Palmetto:

<http://www.bodybuilding.com/store/schiff/pro.html>

Estradiol

Men: Under 30 pg/ml

Women: Too complicated for me to comment on. Talk to your Doctor.

“Myomin”

<http://www.energeticnutrition.com/vitalzym/myomin.html>

DIM:

<http://www.energeticnutrition.com/vitalzym/dim.html>

MACA Powder:

<http://www.rain-tree.com/products/maca-powder.htm>

PSA (for men)

Men: Less than 4mg/pl

Saw Palmetto:

<http://www.bodybuilding.com/store/schiff/pro.html>

SHBG: Sex Hormone Binding Globulin

Men: 13 to 71 nmol/L

Female: 8 to 114 nmol/L

“Strength Energy”:

<http://www.ultimatemedresearch.com/stnencr2oz.html>

“Doctor’s Testosterone Gel:

<http://www.papanature.com/store/ProductDetails.aspx?c=Herbs&pid=FYT-10074>

DHEA (saliva test)

Men: 150 to 550 ug/dl

Women: 100 to 500 ug/dl

“Strength Energy”:

<http://www.ultimatemedresearch.com/stnencr2oz.html>

“Doctor’s Testosterone Gel:

<http://www.papanature.com/store/ProductDetails.aspx?c=Herbs&pid=FYT-10074>

Cortisol (saliva test)

Good range for men and women: 2 to 9.0 mcg/dl (blood)

Saliva: 5 to 15ng/ml in the morning

4 to 7ng/ml during the day

.3 to 5ng/ml in the evening

“Phosphatidylserine” <https://www.prosource.net/product.jsp?path=-1%7C6477&id=249>

Thyroid

(TSH) Good range for men and women: .35 to 5.50 uiu/ml

(T4) 4.5 to 12RIA

Free T3: 2.3 to 4.2 pg/ml

“Hot-rox”: <http://www.bodybuilding.com/store/biot/hot.html>

UMR ‘Weight loss pack”:

<http://www.ultimatemedresearch.com/weightlosspack.html>

IGF-1 (more stable measure of GH)

Men and Women: 250 to 450 ng/ml

“Ageless growth”:

http://www.davedraper.com/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?Store_Code=DDI&Screen=PROD&Product_Code=SAG&Category_Code=S

Source for article:

www.ultimatemedicalresearch.com

Six Common Training Mistakes

Mistake #1: Not Keeping A Training Journal

Imagine running a business without keeping any records. You just keep working and hope that you are making more than you are spending. You have no way of knowing for sure if you are even making a profit and no way of knowing for sure if you are improving each month. Without proper

accounting, a business is doomed. Training is no different. When you keep a training journal you keep yourself accountable. You learn what works and what does not work. You learn how lack of sleep affects training and how stress in your life affects training. An honest training journal allows you to avoid having the illusion that you are making progress when you not making any progress at all. Do not just write down what you did at each workout. Write down other things that are going on in your life. If you had a great workout think about what happened to result in a great workout that day. Did you sleep well the night before? What did you eat before the session? Were you in a good mood that day? Did you take a new pre-workout supplement? The more you know, the more you are likely to repeat the same feeling at another workout. On the other hand, if you had a terrible workout, think about the factors that may have contributed to that and see if you can avoid them in the future.

Another reason to keep a training journal is that there is a natural human drive to want to improve. If you know what the number is, you will want to beat it at the next workout. If you have no idea what you are doing at each workout, how will you know if you are moving forward or not.

You cannot just rely in how you feel. You could feel great after a workout and think that you re stronger and then look at your training journal and realize that you are weaker than your last workout or that you showed no improvement at all. Lets use the example of teaching a training seminar to illustrate this point. Lets say that you made \$2000 profit at a seminar in NYC and generated \$5000.00 revenue at another seminar. On paper it looks like the second seminar was more profitable. However, lets say that the expenses that went along with the second seminar amounted to \$3000.00. Thus, your profit is \$2000.00 again which means that there is no improvement in profit between the seminars. If you did not keep track of expenses you would not know this valuable information. Training is the same. Run your workouts like a business and you will stay on track and increase the likelihood of making progress.

Mistake #2: Training For The Stimulus Rather For Results

Go to any gym and you will see trainees that have been doing the same workout for many years. They are doing the same exercises; same weights; same workout order, and enjoy the same lack of results. As the saying says expecting different results from the same actions is a form of insanity. Many

trainees become process oriented in which they just go through the motions at each workout. Now, do not get me wrong, going through the motions is better than not doing anything at all (Unless you are doing Richard Simmon's "Sweating To The Oldies"). Moreover, training for the stimulus is not necessarily a negative thing. If the stimulus of training makes you feel better then your time is not wasted completely at the workout. However, if you want to make progress, you have to be results oriented rather than process oriented or attached to the stimulus. Your discipline will be rewarded with progress in training rather than stagnation in training.

To use an analogy from business, you want to be focused on making money rather than acquiring praise. Of course, acquiring praise and feeling good about what you do are important and nice perks. However, if your business is not making any money, then the latter perks do not really matter. Whether you like it or not, money is a measurement that allows you to know if your business is improving or not improving. Getting more reps in a workout, using more weight, getting more done in less time, are all forms of progress measurement.

In addition to being focused on the results, you want to be focused on the most efficient path to the result. If you can achieve a goal in three weeks with three workouts per week rather than six, why do six? Why do more, if you are not going to get improved results? Sure, the extra work is worth applying for an improved outcome, but not for the same outcome or worse yet an inferior outcome. If you just focus on being process oriented when you run a business, you will have the illusion that you are improving but will not necessarily have the results for it. Focus on achieving results and measuring your work and you will have no doubt that you are moving forward.

Mistake #3: Lack Of Focus

Ever get excited about one thing, and then two minutes later, forget about it and get excited about something else? Sure, all of us probably have at some point. Regardless, to get good at something you have to put in some time. People that get bored easily are most likely people that fail often. Staying on course takes focus and discipline and the ability to manage boredom. I think that failing at everything is more boring then getting good at a few things.

Now when it comes to training programs, there are a lot of options and it can be difficult to pick one. Regardless, it is critical that you do exactly that and stick with one program for at least three weeks. Just make sure that you have a clear idea of what the program that you pick entails. If you are going to start a high volume-training regimen, make sure that you do it at a time in your life in which you are sleeping well, have time to eat well, and have time to train consistently. If you have a lot of stress in your life and an erratic schedule, pick a program that is more appropriate for that situation. Once you get started, stick with the program for a while. Pick one goal, accomplish it and then move on. You should know exactly what you are going to do at 90% of your workouts and what the end result is. Going to a job and punching in hours might work for nine to fivers, but will not work for training. Do not start a workout without knowing what you are trying to accomplish. Do not start a set, without knowing how many reps you are going for. Just remember that lack of focus and lack of discipline will equal lack of results. Imagine opening a bike shop and then closing it the next day and deciding to sell lampshades instead. Then a week later, you decide that you want to be a personal trainer. Chances are high that you will fail at everything that you try, as you do not have the focus and discipline to finish what you start. If you change your mind every two minutes in business, you inevitably go under. It will not be a question of if, but a question of when. Training is not any different. Now the target and go after it until it is achieved. Then switch gears. Remember that it is easy to start a project and much harder to finish what you start.

Mistake #4: Assuming Training Has To Be Complicated To Be Effective

Strength training is not rocket science. Your program does not have to involve what is the equivalent of a calculus equation to be effective. In fact, the more complicated a program is, the more likely it is to fail.

Develop a strong foundation in the basics and focus on exercises that will give you the most bang for your buck. Forget about tons of exercises for your arms when you can only bench press 185 and squat 155. Forget about bicep specialization programs when you cannot even do a pull-up. I often get emails from trainees that are beginners that train six days per week in which they designate a day for each body part. Such programs may be fine for experienced trainees that have a solid foundation. However, for beginners it is far from the best path to take. Full body workouts with a focus on compound exercises such as the: Deadlift, Barbell Squat, Bench

Press, Military Press, Bent-over Row, and Pull-up is a great place to start. Get your bench press up to 300lbs, Military Press up to 200lbs and Deadlift up to 400lbs before you think about complicated routines.

Mistake #5: Training With Maximum Intensity Too Often

No doubt that productive weight training takes lots of hard work. Regardless with the exception of money and sex, too much of anything is not always the most productive path to take. Training with maximum intensity too frequently will fry your central nervous system. Once that happens you will become sluggish mentally and your body will follow accordingly. In other words, everything will feel heavy in the gym and you will feel out of sync. The harder you train the less frequently you can train. However, training infrequently is not ideal either. Training is a skill and like playing the piano or learning a new language, it is something that has to be practiced often. The more you do something without burning out the better you will get and the more efficient you will become. If you are on a program in which you do the Military Press once every two weeks and are not doing any exercises that are similar to the Military press in between each session, each time you execute the Military Press it will feel like you are doing it for the first time. Take some advice from top strength coach Pavel Tsatsouline and treat the majority of your workouts as practices. Every once in a while do a maximum effort such as every 10-14 days to see how you are progressing and to keep you excited about training.

Mistake #6: Not Having A Life Outside Of Training

Real strength goes far beyond what you can do physically. If someone can bench press 500lbs but is weak mentally and morally, then that person does not have complete strength. One of the greatest benefits of physical training is the confidence and strength you build in that arena can be carried over to other areas of your life. The confidence that you build with productive strength training should be carried over to other areas of your life. If the gym is the only place in which you feel comfortable and confident, then you have missed out on the major benefits of training.

Critical Factor For Effective Program Design

Many trainees make the mistake of looking for the perfect program. They go from one program to another hoping to hit the jackpot. The reality is that no

one program is perfect and no one program will work forever. In addition to knowing exactly what you are training for, you have to know a great deal about yourself. One of the reasons why many generic programs do not work for individuals is that generic programs cannot take the individual into account. Your stress levels, sleeping patterns, nutrition, physiology, and drive are not part of the equation. Lets talk about goals first.

Following a training regimen without a specific goal in mind is like taking a road trip without a map or directions. You may end up at your destination, but chances are that it will take a lot longer to get there. There is also a good chance that you will never get there. You are leaving far more to chance without having a specific plan. Vague goals such as I want to want to get leaner, build muscle, and get faster are not going to cut it. You have to be far more specific than that. For example, having a goal of losing twenty pounds, getting your bodyfat down to 10%, and doing twenty pull-ups is a specific and measurable goal. You know exactly what the target is and can devise a specific plan to get there. Next you have to pick a deadline to give yourself a sense of urgency. Otherwise, the goal will just go on your procrastination list. To make it a reality, have a target date.

Second, what are you prepared to do? What are you prepared to give up to achieve your goal? No worthy goal is achieved without sacrifice. You may have to give up hanging around negative people that want you to be a loser like them. You may have to give up eating out for several months. You may have to get rid of the TV to ensure that you get eight hours of sleep every night. You cannot have it all, all of the time.

Third, what do you know about yourself? Your physiology plays a significant role in your training progress. Not having information about your physiology is like driving a car without knowing what the gas levels are, air

pressure levels, oil levels etc. Hopefully, nothing will break down but why leave it to chance? To avoid car problems, you take your car in for a check up. Your body needs a check up as well. What you do not know about yourself will hurt you eventually. It is not a question of if, but a question of when. For example, if your growth hormone levels are low then forget about body composition goals and intense training. Intense training with low GH levels will just deplete you further. Moreover, your training could be the cause of the low GH levels, which means you need to make a serious mid course correction. Getting stronger and putting on solid muscle will be

much more difficult if your testosterone levels are low. If your thyroid levels are low, fat loss will be far more difficult. The only way to know for sure what your levels are is to have your doctor run some blood work. Have your doctor test your testosterone levels (free and total), DHT, estradiol, DHEA, cortisol, IGF-1, and thyroid function. Look for a holistic doctor in your area that can give you some meaningful feedback on what you can do. Here is a directory: <http://www.alsears.com/index.php?id=24>

Fourth, it is very important that you keep a training journal to track your progress. Not keeping a training journal is similar to running a business and not keeping records. Money is coming in and it is going out and hopefully you are ahead each month. Does not sound very promising. Moreover, how are you supposed to improve if you do not know where you are? Training journals also keep you accountable. If you had a poor month of training, you can look at your journal and see why. In addition to recording each workout, record the sleep quality the night before, what you ate before training, what you ate after training, your energy levels and so forth. The more detailed the training journal the better but do not feel the need to turn your training journal into an epic novel. You do not need to include your sexual fantasies in it and if you do, keep it to yourself ;-)

3x3 Program For Incredible Gains In Size Or Strength

I am a big fan of programs that focus on doing a few things very well. Complicated programs are rarely built to last and few trainees benefit from them. One of my favorite programs is the 3x3 program. Why 3x3? The 3x3 program allows you to focus on heavy weights and low reps. You do three sets of three reps at each session with varying intensities. The volume is fairly low so high frequency is a viable option. The 3x3 program is also great for size and strength goals or just sheer strength goals. It all depends on what exercises you pick and how the workout weeks are structured. The 3x3 protocol is also a great prelude to the 5x5 program. Why? The 3x3 program will get you very strong and the stronger you are the more effective the 5x5 program will be.

10 Benefits of the 3x3 Protocol

1. Calls for heavy loads which leads to serious increases in strength
2. Low volume and low reps allow greater focus

3. CNS will be stimulated and you will feel strong and powerful after each workout
4. Can be used for pure strength or strength and size.
5. Can be done frequently (3-5 times per week)
6. Does not take long if you focus on compound exercises
7. Easier to execute perfect form on low rep and low set workouts
8. Can be used to increase speed and explosive power as well
9. Is safe as the more reps you do the more likely you are to do one rep wrong.
10. Great for building dense hard muscles that are as strong as the look.

Lets talk about how to use the 3x3 program for strength and size or just strength alone. If you want to pack on some size with the 3x3 program, jack up the calories and focus on exercises that provide the most return for your efforts. The usual suspects include: Deadlifts, Squats, Bent-over Rows, Military Presses, Bench Presses, and Weighed Pull-ups. Workout four times per week. Two upper body days and two lower body days. For a strength focus, apply a higher frequency and focus on Deadlifts, Military Presses, and Weighted Pull-ups. Do three to five workouts per week. If three workouts, do one heavy workouts, one medium workout, and one light workout. If five workouts per week, do one heavy workout, two medium workouts, and two light workouts. For example, 90% of your three rep max on one day, 80% of your three rep max on two days, and 70% of your three rep max on two days.

Here are two sample 3x3 programs. The strength focus workout will build hard dense muscles without adding bulk and the strength and size workout will get you bigger and stronger rather than just bigger.

3x3 for Strength Only

Monday (Heavy Day: 90% of three rep max)

Barbell Clean and Military Press

Dumbbell Renegade Row l,r

Barbell Deadlift

Wednesday (Medium Day 80% of three rep max)

One-arm Dumbbell Clean and Military Press l,r (left and right)

Weighted Pull-up

Barbell Deadlift

Friday (Light Day 70% of three rep max)

Double Dumbbell Clean and Press

Barbell Bent-over Row

Barbell Deadlift

Rotate the exercises every week. For example in week two, the Barbell Clean And Press is moved to the medium day and the Double Dumbbell Clean and Press is moved to the heavy day. This way every exercise gets to have a day in the spotlight. Can you do the same exercises every time. You could, but doing different but similar exercises will be more effective and decrease the likelihood of overuse injuries. Why is the heavy day on Monday? Generally you will be stronger at the beginning of the week and your strength will taper off as the weeks goes on. Thus, it makes sense for the workouts to become easier as the week progresses. Take three minute breaks in between each set.

3x3 For Size And Strength

Monday: Upper Body (90% of three rep max)

A-1: Incline Barbell Press

A-2: Weighted Pull-up

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, rest for 90 seconds and then do a set of A-2 and rest for 90 seconds. Continue until all three sets have been completed.

Tuesday: Lower Body (90% of three rep max)

B-1: Barbell Squat

B-2: Stiff Legged Deadlift

Do B-1 and B-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of B-1, rest for 90 seconds and then do a set of B-2 and rest for 90 seconds. Continue until all three sets have been completed.

Thursday: Upper Body (80% of three rep max)

A-1: Weighted Dip

A-2: Weighted Pull-up

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, rest for 90 seconds and then do a set of A-2 and rest for 90 seconds. Continue until all three sets have been completed.

Friday: Lower Body (80% of three rep max)

B-1: Barbell Front Squat

B-2: Glute-ham Raise or One-arm Dumbbell Swing l,r (left and right)

Do B-1 and B-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of B-1, rest for 90 seconds and then do a set of B-2 and rest for 90 seconds. Continue until all three sets have been completed.

Again, rotate the exercises each week. When you can do five reps on the last set for each exercise on the heavy day, add five pounds. Adjust the lighter days as your strength increases.

What about cardio? On the strength focus workouts do some moderate cardio sessions on Tuesday and Thursday. For example do five rounds of 25 pushups, 35 Bodyweight Squats, 25 sit-ups, and 35 Jumping jacks. Do each exercise in circuit fashion and take a one-minute break at the end of each round. Repeat 4-5 times per workout. For the size focus workout, do 2-3 rounds on two off days. These muscular endurance workouts are also great for active recovery so get them in.

3x3 for Kettlebells?

Can the 3x3 program be applied to kettlebell training. Sure, just focus on challenging exercises that make low reps difficult. Here are two sample programs using the example of a trainee that can do five side presses with an 88lb bell and five Double Swings with 88lb bells. Adjust the weights accordingly to your current strength levels.

Monday (Heavy Day)

Kettlebell Side Press 1,r (88lb bell)

Double Swing (chest level) (88lb bells)

Wednesday (Medium Day)

Double Kettlebell Clean and Press (70lb bells)

Weighted Pull-up (70lb bells)

Double Snatch (70lb bells)

Friday (Light Day)

One-arm Seated Mil Press 1,r (53lb bell)

Renegade Row (53lb bells)

Double Hang Snatch (53lb bells)

Rotate the exercises every week. For example in week two, the Side Press is moved to the medium day and the One-arm Seated Mil Press is moved to the heavy day.

3x3 Kettlebell Program For Size and Strength

Here is a sample program using the example of a trainee that can Clean and Press two 88lb bells five times and Double Front Squat two 105lb bells five times. Again adjust the program to your strength levels.

Monday: Upper Body (heavy day)

A-1: Double Kettlebell Clean And Press (88s)

A-2: Weighted Pull-up (88lb bell)

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, rest for 90 seconds and then do a set of A-2 and rest for 90 seconds. Continue until all three sets have been completed.

Tuesday: Lower Body (heavy day)

B-1: Double Front Squat (105s)

B-2: Double Swing (88s)

Do B-1 and B-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of B-1, rest for 90 seconds and then do a set of B-2 and rest for 90 seconds. Continue until all three sets have been completed.

Thursday: Upper Body (heavy day)

A-1: Double Floor Press (105s)

A-2: Renegade Row (105s) l,r

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, rest for 90 seconds and then do a set of A-2 and rest for 90 seconds. Continue until all three sets have been completed.

Tuesday: Lower Body (heavy day)

B-1: Double Front Squat (105s)

B-2: One-arm Snatch (105) l,r

Do B-1 and B-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of B-1, rest for 90 seconds and then do a set of B-2 and rest for 90 seconds. Continue until all three sets have been completed.

Again, rotate the exercises each week. For cardio with kettlebells do 3-5 sets of one-arm swings (10-15 reps per arm) with a moderate kettlebell on two off days.

Westside Inspired Kettlebell Program

Louie Simmons is one of the best strength coaches in the business and a legend in the powerlifting community. He has produced some of the strongest men and women in the world with his innovative and unconventional methods. One of the foundations for Louie's "Westside" program is the emphasis on speed. Louie states that if you are fast he can make you strong.

While powerlifting looks like a slow sport, the intent is to move the weights as fast as possible. Your fast twitch muscle fibers are what make you strong and incorporating some speed training is very important. As a result, Louie has a few training days each week that are focused on speed training. For example, he will have an athlete take 50-60% of his one rep max on the bench press and do several sets of three as fast as possible with short breaks. The speed that is developed from such training carries over well to heavy training. The faster you can move a heavy weight, the less time you are under tension and the less likely you are to fail.

Seventy-two hours after doing some speed work, it is time to have a maximum effort day to apply your new skill set. Focus on one exercise for a few weeks and build up to a new PR (personal record). Then switch to another exercise that is similar and repeat. For example, in month one, focus on the Double Military Press. In month two, focus on the seated Military Press and in month three focus on the Alternating Military Press.

The following program is outstanding for trainees that want to get faster and more explosive for the purpose of getting stronger for training. While this program can also be beneficial to athletes, you do not have to have a sport-specific purpose in mind to benefit from this program. In other words it is a great program for the purpose of simply getting stronger for the sake of getting stronger.

Monday: (Speed Day: Upper Body Focus)

Clean and Speed Press 8x3 (eight sets of three and take one-minute breaks in between each set)

One-arm Hang Snatch 6x3 1,r (six sets and one-minute breaks)

Renegade Row 2x5 1,r (two sets of five and one-minute breaks)

Tuesday (Speed Day: Lower Body Focus)

Explosive Lunge 8x3 (eight sets of three and take one-minute breaks in between each set)

Explosive Double Swing 6x3 1,r (six sets and one-minute breaks)

Turkish Get-up 2x3 1,r (two sets of three and one-minute breaks)

Thursday (Strength Day: Upper Body Focus)

A-1: Double Military Press 5x5

A-2: Double Bent Over Row 5x5

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words do a set of A-1, rest for ninety seconds and then do a set of A-2 and rest for ninety seconds. Keep going back and forth until you have completed 5x5 for both exercises. Use heavy kettlebells. The last set should be very difficult and a maximum effort should be applied.

Rest for a minute and then do

Double Windmill 3x5 1,r (left and right and one-minute breaks in between each exercise.

Friday (Strength Day: Lower Body Focus)

A-1: Double Front Squat 5x5

A-2: Double Swing 5x5

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words do a set of A-1, rest for ninety seconds and then do a set of A-2 and rest for ninety seconds. Keep going back and forth until you have completed 5x5 for both exercises. Use heavy kettlebells. The last set should be very difficult and a maximum effort should be applied.

Rest for a minute and then do

Slow and Controlled Sit-ups 3x5 (4 seconds up and 4 seconds down)

For more info on the DVD, click here:

<http://www.mikemahler.com/store/Speed%20DVD.htm>

For more info on Louie Simmons, go to <http://www.westside-barbell.com>

High Frequency Training: More Frequency Equals Faster Results

I do not know about you, but I am tired of training programs that tell you that the keys to getting bigger and stronger are to keep workouts infrequent so that you avoid over training at all costs. Some trainers even recommend taking up to twenty-one days off in between each workout for adequate recovery. Basically the idea is that training should become like a haircut in which you only need to hit the weights once a month. I am sure that many people would love the idea of only having to workout once a month to get bigger and stronger. Hell, most people would like the idea of only having to work once a week to make more money. However, back here on planet earth jobs and training programs that are extremely infrequent will fail for most people. Like any other skill, training takes practice. You have to get good at the exercises that you are using in order to maximize progress. Only naïve trainees think that exercises like deadlifts, squats, and overhead presses are easy to learn. Sure, they are easy to learn incorrectly. However, perfecting the latter drills takes time and lots of practice. There are tons of details for maximizing the benefits of each exercise that can be learned only via experience. Until you get really good at executing the exercises in your regimen, your progress will be average at best. The more often you practice without burning out, the better you get at something. In the context of strength training, getting better at lifting weights equals being able to lift more weight. Add some calories to the mix and the size will follow. It is time to forget about training tell you drop and then taking a week off and looking at training as a practice. Most people cannot afford to not be able to walk for three days after a heavy squatting workout. Fortunately, masochistic training is not required for maximizing training progress. Lets get into what high frequency training (HFT) is all about and how to utilize it to maximize the benefits of training.

First, let me start off my saying that I do not think that High Intensity Training is garbage. Training to your limit and taking the appropriate time off to recover works for about 3-6 weeks at a time. After that, you have to

switch to something else to continue to make progress. Failing to do so will fry your central nervous system. How do you know when your CNS is fried? Well, when everything feels heavy and you are working harder to lift weights that should feel easier, you know that you are on the wrong track. To really maximize the benefits of a HIT training you have to be really good at the exercises that you are doing. Otherwise your form will get sloppy and the inevitable injuries will follow. Thus, try doing HFT for six weeks before doing a six-week program of HIT and I think that you will be happy with the results. Okay without further adieu lets take about HFT.

According to Steve Justa, author of “Rock Iron Steel, The Book Of Strength”, many of the old time strongman used to do daily training in order to get stronger rapidly. Here is what Steve said about the benefits of daily training, “The great thing about this type of training is that you will build strength without ever making yourself tired, because the body is adjusting naturally and rhythmically.” Now the key with frequent training is to pick the right intensity level. You cannot train to your limit daily or close to it. You will be hitting the same exercises several times a week. Training with the right intensity level will turn every workout into an active recovery session in which each session helps you recover from the last one. However, training with the wrong intensity level will hamper recovery from the last workout and you will be putting the breaks on your progress with each successive workout.

The hardest part of frequent training is actually believing that it works. Most of us are used to training with intensity and using soreness the next day as a measurement of how effective the workout was. Finishing a workout and feeling fresh and energetic is blasphemy to most serious trainees and takes a while to get used to. However, the point of training is to make progress, not to go for the stimulus of training. Save that for the losers at your gym that have been bench pressing 185 for singles for the last ten years. The goal that we are after is maximum proficiency and efficiency to get the most out of our training.

Rather than digging a hole into your recovery abilities, HFT will improve your recovery abilities. How is that possible? Your body adapts what you subject it to as long as it is done in a gradual manner. If you are trying to get a tan it is much better to subject yourself to a small amount of sunlight daily rather a large amount on one day. The large amount will cause you to get burned. The gradual amount will cause your body to adapt without getting

burned. The more frequently you can do something without burning out, the better you will get at it and the more progress you will make. You will adapt to what you subject yourself to (within reason of course). Once your body and CNS realize that you are training frequently, adaptation will occur as long as the proper stimulus is used. If you get yourself used to taking a week off between each training session, then you will adapt to that. However, what is more efficient applying frequency and adapting sooner or taking long breaks and taking longer to adapt? I would go with the former. The more often that you can hit a muscle group and recover the faster you will make progress.

Next, HFT training works because you improve at the actual skill of lifting weights. When you are trying to learn a new skill such as driving a car or playing the guitar the more often that you practice it the better you will get. Think back to a time when you were learning a new skill such as riding a bike. Did you practice riding a bike once a week or once a month? If you did then it probably took you a long time to learn the skill. However, most kids who picked up the skill of riding a bike rapidly practiced daily. Many years ago when I learned how to snowboard, I sucked for the first three days. However, by the fourth day, my body started adapting and by day six and seven I really started making progress. If I had quit after the first day and tried again a week or more later, it would have been like starting all over again.

As hard as it may be for you to believe, lifting weights is a skill just like anything else. The reason why novice trainees make so much progress is due to the fact that they are learning the skill of training. The first time a trainee tries a bench press, he or she does not have the skill set of moving the bar from Point A to Point B in the most efficient manner possible. As a result the bar is all over the place. Watch a professional powerlifter bench press 500lbs and look at the bar's path. Notice how control is maintained through the entire duration of the move. Only an ignorant trainee would say that there is not that much to doing a bench press. All that you are doing is pressing a weight from your chest to lockout right? Wrong, if bench pressing were that easy, then everyone could get good at it and put up some heavy weights. If you want to be able to move some heavy weights around, you have to master the skill of executing each exercise. Until the skill is mastered you will never be as good as you could potentially be.

Lets get into how to put HFT into action. HFT involves doing five full body workouts per week. The program that I am going to reveal here is based on

the 5x5x5 program that I learned from top strength coach Pavel Tsatsouline. Check out his excellent book “Beyond Bodybuilding” at <http://www.dragondoor.com/b31.html?kbid=1245>

for more info on that. The program that I have here involves more volume and is designed for rapid increases in size and strength rather than just strength. Lets get into it I recommend that you train Monday through Friday and then take the weekend off. However, feel free to pick the days that work best for your schedule. Just make sure that you take two days off. How about doing a workout everyday? This is possible and could work very well. However, I think that taking two days off per week is good for a mental break. Waking up every morning and realizing that you have to train that day will get old fast and start to ware on you.

Now it would be a mistake to go from infrequent training right into frequent training. Thus, there needs to be a gradual break in period. Instead of starting off with five full body workouts per week, do three workouts the first week. Thus an example of week one would be:

Monday-Wednesday-Friday

Deadlift or Squat

Bench Press or Overhead Press

Bent Over Row or weighted pull-up

Side Bend or weighted sit-up

The first thing that you will notice is that there are not too many exercises in the program. When training frequently you have to be a minimalist. You will have to prioritize on a few exercises that you want to get really good at. What exercises should you pick? Pick exercises that address your weaknesses. If you have a strong bench press but a weak overhead press, pick the overhead press for your pressing move. Your bench press will not get weaker and most likely it will be stronger when you bring it back into your regimen. If you are great at doing bent over rows, but horrible at weighted pull-ups, then pick weighted pull-ups for your pulling move. Both the squat and the deadlift work a lot of muscles in the lower body so it would not be wise to do both daily. Again, pick the exercise that requires the most improvement.

Use your seven rep max on each exercise and do one set of five repetitions. Take a one-minute break in between each exercise. This workout should feel easy and that is exactly how it should feel. It will take a lot of will power for most trainees to stop at five reps and move on to the next exercise. You will literally feel like you are wasting your time as this approach to training is like something that people would do in bizarre land. Nevertheless, your patience and will power will pay off if you follow the plan and stay on course.

In week two, add another full body workout on Tuesday. Thus, now you are doing a full body workout on Monday-Wednesday and then taking Thursday off. Proceed to get Friday's workout in and then take the weekend off. Again, use the same weights that you used in week one.

In week three, add another full body workout on Thursday. Now you are doing five full body workouts per week. Do to the fact that you are not training to failure or close to it, you will not be over-training. If you are over-training and feeling weaker from workout to workout, then you did not follow my directions. This style of training takes some getting used to and if you are too myopic to try something different then what the masses tell you to do, then give up and go home. For everyone else, lets love on to week four.

In week four, you are going to add another set to each exercise so now you are doing two sets of five per exercise. Take three-minute breaks in between each set and one-minute breaks in between each exercise. Use the same weights that you used for each exercise in week three on both sets.

In week five, you are going to add one more set for a total of three sets. Again use the same weights that you used in week four on all three sets. Take three-minute breaks in between each set and one-minute breaks in between each exercise.

Now in week six it is time to increase the weight and reduce the volume. Add five pounds to all of the upper body exercises and ten pounds to the lower body exercises and start over with one set per day done five days per week. Cycle your way back up to three sets per day and then add some more weight.

Well there you have it, a training regimen that goes against everything that you have learned. Sometimes, you have to unlearn what you have learned to

continue to improve. Give this program a shot for six weeks and draw your own conclusions.

When Life Gets Stressful, Turn To Back-up Training Programs

You are two weeks into a killer training program and everything is going right. Your nutrition plan is dialed in, you are getting eight hours of deep sleep every night, and you are focused and energetic at every workout. You love the feeling of being stronger at each workout and the sense of accomplishment that comes with finishing every workout like a winner. The way things are going you have no doubt that you are on track to achieve your training goals for the year. Then all of a sudden something unexpected happens. The harsh realities of life hit you like a snowball in the face. All of a sudden you are only getting in five hours of sleep per night and you are stopping by Starbucks so often that their quarterly earnings have doubled just on your purchases alone. The training program that you were achieving incredible progress with is no longer realistic so you decide to quit working out for a while until the storm of life quiets down. Unfortunately, that time does not arrive for several months. When you finally make it back to training, all of the gains that you had made are gone. Even worse you are weaker than before you started the last program. If only you had had a back up plan.

Training like anything else in life requires a back-up plan. When you go on a road trip ideally you will not get any flat tires. However, life is rarely ideal and if and when a flat tire does occur, you want to have a spare so you are not standing on the side of the road with your thumb in the air.

The problem is that many trainees approach working out with an all or nothing attitude. Either you are training with all guns blazing or not at all. Mottos such as “train heavy or go home” or “no pain, no gain” are ingrained in the psyches of many trainees. As a result, many trainees do not think that condensed workouts are not even worth doing which is far from the truth. In this article , I am going to use the well-known 5x5 training program as an example of an ideal program and provide some sample back-up options.

5x5 Program For Strength And Size

The classic 5x5 program really does not need much of an introduction. I have written about it many times and it is a well-known program for building strength and size. Briefly, it calls for doing five sets of five

repetitions for each exercise. When you can do five reps on all five sets, add five pounds. Here is a sample 5x5 program:

Monday and Thursday (Upper Body Focus)

A-1: Incline Dumbbell Press 5x5

A-2: Barbell Bent-over Row 5x5

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, wait 90 seconds and then do a set of A-2 and wait 90 seconds. Continue until you have completed all of the sets.

Barbell Curl 2x5 (one-minute breaks)

Tuesday and Saturday (Lower Body Focus)

A-1 Barbell Box Squat 5x5

A-2: Barbell Stiff-legged Deadlift 5x5

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, wait 90 seconds and then do a set of A-2 and wait 90 seconds. Continue until you have completed all of the sets

Hanging Leg Raise 3x5 (one-minute breaks in between each set)

While the above 5x5 program is not exactly a brutal program, it can be too much for many trainees when stress is high. Thus when your cortisol levels are surging, switch gears and apply the following:

5x5: Back Up Program (Option A)

Monday and Thursday (upper body focus)

A-1: One-arm Dumbbell Bench Press 2x5 1,r

A-2: Renegade Dumbbell Row 2x5

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, wait 90 seconds and then do a set of A-2 and wait 90 seconds. Continue until you have completed all of the sets.

Why did I pick the One-arm Dumbbell Bench Press and the Renegade Row? In addition to working all of the muscles in the upper body, both of these exercises activate the core tremendously. Thus in addition to covering the pushing and pulling muscles, your core is taken care of as well in a time efficient manner. Translation: you do not have to do any additional abdominal work.

Tuesday and Friday (Lower Body Focus)

Barbell Deadlift 2x5 (three-minute breaks)

Only one exercise! Are you crazy? No but you are if you think that you can get away with training with high intensity and high volume when stress is high. Just because a program is very simple in terms of lack of complexity does not mean that it is not effective. In fact one of the main reasons why most trainees fail with programs is due to picking overly complex programs. Enough on that lets get back to the deadlift. The standard barbell deadlift is basically a mix of the squat and stiff legged deadlift. While it will not provide as complete a leg workout as doing squats and stiff legged deadlifts, it will get the job done and is the ultimate exercise for the trainee with limited time. In fact if you only have time for one exercise, the barbell deadlift is your weapon of choice.

This 5x5 back up program can be used in many ways. If you are having a rough week you can replace the 5x5 program with the back-up program completely. If you have a moderate increase in stress, you can replace two of the workouts from the 5x5 program with two of the workouts from the backup program. For example replace Thursday's upper body workout with the backup option and Friday's leg workout with the deadlift workout from the backup program. Finally, if you are having a rough day, just replace your scheduled workout with the corresponding workout from Back-up Program A.

While Back-up Program A is sufficient for many trainees, it may not be enough for those under a higher level of stress. At that point it is time to reduce the program even further and become the ultimate minimalist. Check this out:

5x5 Back-up Program B

Monday and Thursday

One-arm Dumbbell Bench Press 2x5 1,r (three-minute breaks)

Barbell Deadlift 2x5 (three-minute breaks)

Well, it does not get much more basic than this. The One-arm Dumbbell Bench Press takes care of the upper body and the Barbell Deadlift takes care of the lower body. What about a pulling exercise such as pull-ups or bent-over rows? In addition to being a great lower body exercise, the Barbell Deadlift is a pulling exercise as well. Yes this program is not perfect and would not be what I would pick when stress is low. However, worst-case scenario you will maintain strength with this program and more than likely you will make progress. It is much easier to do a bang up job on a few things than it is with several things.

Now what do you do, if you cannot even find time to get the back-up program B program into play? It is time to find a new job or get a new life. There is no reason why you cannot find time to get two 10-15 minute workouts in per week. If your stress levels are so high that you cannot recover adequately from the above program then you need to re-evaluate your life. Regardless, if you fall in this category, take the sets down to one per exercise. Where do you go after that? Check out Tony Little's Gazelle machine as clearly strength training is not for you.

Back-up Program For Kettlebell Training (Strength focus)

Back-up Program A

Monday and Thursday (upper body focus)

A-1: One-arm Clean and Military Press 2x5 1,r

A-2: Kettlebell Renegade Row 2x5

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of A-1, wait 90 seconds and then do a set of A-2 and wait 90 seconds. Continue until you have completed all of the sets.

Tuesday and Friday (Lower Body Focus)

B-1: Double Kettlebell Front Squat 2x5

B-2: Double Kettlebell Swing 2x5

Do B-1 and B-2 back to back. In other words, do a set of B-1, wait 90 seconds and then do a set of B-2 and wait 90 seconds. Continue until you have completed all of the sets.

Back-up Program B

Monday and Thursday

Kettlebell Side Press 2x5 l,r (three-minute breaks)

Double Kettlebell Swing 2x5 (three-minute breaks)

Section II: Training for Size and Strength with Kettlebells

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Primary Exercises

Double Kettlebell Military Press

If you are not interested in building cannonball shoulders that are well developed from all angles, then I recommend that you avoid the Double kettlebell Military Press. Take a healthy dose of lateral raises instead while you watch Dr. Phil and Days Of Our Lives. It is no secret that the Standing Military Press is the best exercise for building strong and well-developed shoulders. The problem is that many people cannot do barbell or dumbbell military presses with heavy weights due to injuries. Personally, the barbell military press and the dumbbell military press aggravate my shoulder problems. Kettlebell military presses on the other hand only cause pleasurable pain. You know the pain that lets you know that you are getting bigger and stronger. Even Double Military Presses with two 88lb bells do not aggravate injuries in my left shoulder. Why is this the case? Due to the fact that the weight is off centered with kettlebells, they place my shoulders in a favorable plane during the duration of the press. I can start with the bells close to the body and let the bells pull my shoulders back as I reach the lockout position. Each shoulder is pressing an independent object and can find a range of motion that is comfortable for each side. In addition to building bigger and stronger shoulders, the double kettlebell military press will increase shoulder flexibility and stability as well.

Performance

Clean two kettlebells to your shoulders. Breathe in as you clean the bells to the rack position. Hold the kettlebells in tight against your core as if you are a boxer bracing for a punch. Try to touch your elbows to your midsection so that you have a strong foundation to press off of. The shortest distance between two locations is a straight line. Remember that when you do the overhead press. Imagine that the bells are connected and that you are pressing a barbell. Press the bells up and out only as much as necessary to complete the exercise. As the kettlebells pass your head, lean into the bells slightly so that they are locked out behind your head. Take a bench press tip from legendary powerlifting coach Louie Simmons and lower the kettlebells with your lats. Your lats are much stronger muscles than your shoulders and will assist in stabilizing the shoulders for maximum strength. Lowering two kettlebells is your chance to get your lats loaded up for the next press.

Performance Tips

- A Military Press is only as good as the clean that you do before it. Make sure that you clean the bells with 100% confidence before pressing.
- Imagine that you are pressing a barbell and keep the bells in tight.
- Try holding your breath as you press the kettlebells (Caution: Make sure to clear this with your doctor if you have high blood pressure or any heart problems).
- Look straight ahead (not up or down) as you press and lower the kettlebells.
- Flex your lats as hard as possible before pressing the kettlebells for added stability and power.
- As you lower the kettlebells back to the starting position, actively pull them down with your lats as if you are doing a lat pull-down or chin up.
- Contract your abs and glutes as hard as possible as you press the kettlebells for added stability and power.
- Crush the kettlebell handles as hard as possible for increased strength.
- Pull your shoulders down before each repetition
- Flex your legs, butt and abs as hard as you can for maximum stability. Imagine that you're trying to turn your body into a solid bench to press off of.

Double Kettlebell Bent-over Row

While not as sexy as The Double Military Press , the Double Bent-over Row is a critical component of overall upper body strength and in addition to building up your back and lats, will build up your biceps more effectively than curls will. Don't believe me? Take a look at the huge arms of champion powerlifters such as Ed Coan and Scott Mendelson. They both do heavy bent-over rows and have the guns to prove it. In addition to the superficial vanity benefits of heavy rows, they also assist in stabilizing the shoulders, building up the rear delts, and developing a strong pair of wings to press off of. In other words, the strength that you build from heavy rows will improve heavy overhead presses and floor presses as well. Real strength is about balance and you need to have strong pulling muscles as well as pressing muscles for real overall functional strength and size. The thick handles on kettlebells will take rows to the next level by forcing you to contract your forearms harder to initiate the pull.

Performance

Place two kettlebells between your feet. Bend your knees slightly and then push your butt out as much as possible as you bend over to get in the starting position. Imagine that you are trying to sit in a chair behind you. Arc your back and hold your chest high as you sit back to get into the optimal pulling position (Imagine that you are a Venice Beach bodybuilder if you are having difficulty with this). Grab both kettlebells and pull them to your stomach. Lower the bells back to the floor under control and repeat.

Performance Tips

- Flex your lats before you pull the kettlebells.
- Pull the kettlebells to your stomach rather than straight up.
- Look straight ahead at all times.
- Arc your back and hold your chest high in order to avoid rounding your back.
- Flex your stomach and glutes for added stability.
- Breathe in as you pull the kettlebells and breathe out as you lower the bells back to the floor.

Double Kettlebell Floor Press

There is no doubt that the bench press is an exceptional exercise for building a strong and solid upper body. Most people that disagree are probably people

that have weak bench presses and would rather convince you that the exercise is not effective rather than admit that they are simply poor bench pressers. That said, the bench press is one of the, if not the most overly used exercises. This overuse has resulted in a plethora of rotator cuff injuries, pec tears, and numerous other shoulder problems. This does not mean that the exercise should not be done. It just means that it is part of an overall cake rather than the entire cake. A safer version of the bench press is the floor press. With the floor press you will not place excessive wear and tear on your shoulders and pecs, but will still reap the spoils of war. What is great about the kettlebell floor press is that they bells naturally drop down further than dumbbells do, so you get to press the bells through a longer range of motion. They are also much easier to get into place than dumbbells or barbells. Finally the kettlebell floor press is much safer than the bench press since getting pinned with two kettlebells is not possible. Does this mean that the kettlebell floor press is superior to the barbell bench press? In some ways yes and in other ways no. It is superior in the sense that you do not need spotters and the fact that you work more stabilizer muscles. Yet, it is inferior in the sense that progressive resistance is not as seamless. Even the heaviest kettlebells will be too light for many strong men and other factors have to be manipulated to maximize the exercise such as tempo and holding the bells at the bottom.

Performance

Lie on the floor and position two kettlebells close to your pecs. Use your stronger arm to help get the bell into place on your weaker side first. Then pull the bell on your stronger side close to your body to position it for pressing. Once you have the bells in place, push the kettlebells straight up toward the ceiling. Lower the kettlebells back to the floor pause for a second and continue with another repetition.

Performance Tips

- Imagine that you are trying to push yourself through the floor as you press the kettlebells.
- Flare your lat as you press the kettlebells
- Hold your breath as you press the kettlebells (Caution: Make sure to clear this with your doctor if you have high blood pressure or any heart problems).
- Contract your abs and glutes as hard as possible as you press the

- kettlebells for added stability and power
- Crush grip the kettlebell handle as hard as possible for increased strength
- Place a kettlebell in your weaker arm side first
- Keep your legs straight ahead at all times. Do not bend them in.

Double Kettlebell Front Squat

There is no exercise that will build your legs more effectively than the squat. Do not even bother trying to avoid squats. If you want big, strong, powerful, functional legs then you must do the squat. If I could only pick two exercises to build up my body as quickly as possible I would pick the Squat and the Deadlift. For athletic purposes, I often recommend the Front Squat over the back squat. In sports such as wrestling, mixed martial arts, and football you explode into an opponent that is in front of you, not balanced across your back. Thus, learning how to fight against resistance in front of you with the front squat will carry over more effectively to sports. Kettlebell front squats are much easier to learn than barbell front squats. With barbell front squats the barbell will bend your wrists back forcefully which most trainees will find very uncomfortable and difficult to master. Kettlebell front squats are easy on the wrists and much more comfortable to rack than barbell front squats. Also if you get in trouble with kettlebell front squats it is very easy to bail out. Just drop them in front of you and step away. Just make sure that you do them outdoors rather than in your living room.

Performance

Clean two kettlebells to your shoulders and take a stance that you find comfortable for your body type. As you squat down, push your butt out. Looking straight ahead at all times, squat as low as you can and pause at the bottom. Rise back up and repeat.

Performance Tips

- Breathe in as you squat down and hold your breath as you stand up (Caution: clear this with your doctor if you have high blood pressure or any heart problems).
- Look straight ahead at all times or look up, but do not look down.

- Flex your glutes and stomach as hard as possible before rising back up from the bottom position of the front squat
- Press the kettlebells into your upper body to keep the kettlebells in place

Kettlebell Turkish Get-up

I learned the Turkish Get-up from top strength coach Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu champion Steve Maxwell. The Turkish Get-up will turn your midsection into a wall of steel and like the windmill will build shoulder stability and flexibility as well. In fact, I noticed that my left shoulder got much more stable and stronger on the Military Press after practicing the TGU for several weeks. The TGU is a midsection exercise that quite frankly will make you feel like a man. It is not an easy exercise to perform and most people look like a fish out of water when they first attempt to do the TGU. With proper technique, your body will work in synergy to complete the exercise seamlessly.

Performance

Lie on your back and use two hands to position a kettlebell to the lockout position of one arm. Lets use the right side as an example to discuss proper performance. Keep the bell locked out at all times. Bring your right leg in and use your right leg to pivot to the left. Roll onto your left triceps and keep rolling until your hand touches the floor. Use your left hand and right leg to drive forward. As you are driving forward, bring your left leg in and take your right leg forward. Now keep driving forward until you are in the bottom position of a lunge. Take a second to gather yourself and then stand up. To complete the rep, reverse the movement to get back to the starting position. Do a lunge back to the bottom, then place your left hand behind your back until you feel the ground. Bring your legs forward and use your left arm to guide you back to the starting position. Take a second to gather yourself and then proceed to another repetition.

Performance Tips

- Focus on keeping the kettlebell locked out at all times
- Flex your stomach and glutes to drive off of the floor into the lunge position.

- Look at the kettlebell at all times.
- Breathe in as your drive forward to the lunge position. Use shallow breathing to stand up from the lunge position and then breathe out after you stand up. Breathe in to get back to the starting position.
- Keep the rep range between one and three until you master the technique. Once you feel comfortable, take the rep range up to five to six reps per side to really build up a solid midsection.
- To increase the difficulty of the TGU, take a tip from Steve Maxwell and do some sit-ups before the TGU. This will pre-exhaust your abs so that your midsection gives out at the same time that your shoulders do. For more killer tips from Steve, visit his website at www.maxercise.com

Double Kettlebell Windmill

An important part of having a solid physique is a strong midsection. Hundreds of crunches and sit-ups with zero resistance will not get you there. The abs are muscles that need to be trained like any other area. They need a strong dose of heavy weights from multiple angles. The Double Windmill will build up your obliques like no other exercise. Forget about side bends, the Windmill is far more effective. In addition to building up your obliques, the double windmill will build up shoulder flexibility as well as the hamstrings. It is basically a stiff legged deadlift to the side.

Performance

Place one kettlebell in front of your front foot and clean and press a kettlebell overhead with your opposite arm. Keeping the kettlebell that is overhead locked out at all times, push your butt out in the direction of the locked out kettlebell. Turn your feet out at a forty-five degree angle from the arm with the locked out kettlebell. Lower yourself until you can pick up the kettlebell next to your front foot. Pause for a second and reverse the motion back to the starting position.

Performance Tips

- Look at the locked out kettlebell during the entire duration of the windmill.

- Focus on pushing your butt out to the side as if you are trying to sit down. Imagine that you are doing a stiff-legged deadlift to the side.
- Breathe into your abs as you lower yourself to the floor and hold your breath as you return to the starting position.
- Crush grip the kettlebell next to your foot and stand up slowly.
- In the beginning, keep the rep range between one and three. Double Windmills require a great deal of concentration. Once you master the technique, take the reps up to five to six per set.

Double Kettlebell Swing

The Double Kettlebell Swing is one of the best ballistic exercises that you can do with kettlebells. One of the key benefits of the double swing is that it is not a technically difficult exercise. In other words, it is easy to learn. It takes tremendous hip drive and hamstring power to drive against two heavy kettlebells and to project them to chest level or higher. In addition to building powerful rapid hip action, the double kettlebell swing is an excellent hamstring exercise that carries over well to other exercises such as the barbell deadlift. The double kettlebell swing is also a tremendous core exercise as you really have to brace yourself as the kettlebells swing between your legs. Failure to do so will cause the kettlebell to throw you off balance. There is also some primal fun that goes along with swinging two heavy kettlebells that is very empowering.

Exercise Description

Place two kettlebells between your feet. While you will most likely have to take a wider stance than you would when doing a regular one-arm swing, do not stand too wide. The wider you stand the less hip drive you will have. Only stand as wide as you need to in order to comfortably place two kettlebells between your feet. Push back with your butt and bend your knees to get into the starting position. Make sure that your back is flat and look straight ahead. Swing the kettlebells between your legs forcefully. Quickly reverse the direction and drive through with your hips taking the kettlebells straight out to chest level. Let the kettlebells swing back between your legs and repeat.

Performance Tips

- Breathe out at you swing the kettlebells to chest level and breathe in as the kettlebells swing between your legs.
- Contract your midsection and glutes at the top of the exercise and as the kettlebells swing between your legs
- Breathe into your stomach and brace your abs as the bells swing between your legs. Imagine that you are bracing for a punch.
- Keep the rep range to between three and six until you get the technique down. Once you feel comfortable the sky is the limit. However, for the purpose of building size, strength, and power use heavy kettlebells that make performing more than ten repetitions in one set difficult.

Double Kettlebell Snatch

The double kettlebell snatch is the ultimate ballistic drill that you can do with kettlebells. It works just about every muscle in the body and teaches several muscle groups how to work synergistically to get the job done. You start by driving the kettlebells off of the floor with your hamstrings, lower back, and feet. As the bells pass your chest, the energy transfers to your upper body to complete the exercise. This is an incredible exercise for combat athletes such as football players and wrestlers. For the rest of us it is an incredible way to build up the hamstrings, back, and delts.

Performance

Place two kettlebells between your feet. Take a stance that allows you to place two kettlebells between your legs comfortably. Similar to the double swing, take a stance that is wide enough to get the bells between your feet, but not any wider than necessary. Taking too wide a stance will decrease hip drive power. Swing the kettlebells back between your feet and then quickly reverse the direction. As the kettlebells get to chest level, pull them back and dip under the bells as they go overhead. Imagine that you are trying to throw two kettlebells behind you. Punch through to lock the bells out. Stand up with the kettlebells locked out overhead to complete the movement. Then lower the bells back to your shoulders before returning them to the starting position. Advanced trainees can get away with swinging two kettlebells from lockout to between their legs. However, I do not recommend this technique as it is a good way to lose your knee caps permanently.

Performance Tips

- Breathe in to your stomach as you drive the weights overhead and breathe out as you take the kettlebells back to the starting position.
- Contract your midsection and glutes at the top of the exercise and as the kettlebells swing between your legs
- Breathe into your stomach and brace your abs as the bells swing between your legs. Imagine that you are bracing for a punch.
- Keep the rep range to between one and three until you get the technique down. Once you feel comfortable the sky is the limit. However, for the purpose of building size, strength, and power use heavy kettlebells that make performing more than ten repetitions in one set difficult.

Secondary Exercises

While you can get incredible results by simply focusing on the core exercises, it is important for both variety and to avoid pattern overloads to vary your training from with similar exercises that get the job done. Many of the secondary exercises listed here are also great ways to increase the difficulty of the core exercises without having to increase the resistance.

Double Kettlebell Sots Press

This exercise is named after an old-time strongman named you guessed it Sots. His shoulders were huge from doing the Sot's press and your shoulders will be as well after you master this exercise. The Kettlebell Sots press makes the standard Military press much more difficult and is a very effective way to increase the intensity of the Military Press. With the Sots press you are doing the Military Press from the bottom position of a front squat. By doing so, your legs are taken out of the equation and you have to pressurize like crazy to stay stable for pressing. This exercise also requires a good amount of shoulder flexibility and stability so do not be discouraged if it takes some work and patience to master. The Sot's press signifies the highest level of shoulder work that you can do with kettlebells. If you can already Sot's press two 88lb kettlebells then you are strong enough and do not need this DVD. Contact me for a refund and start working on your own DVD!

Performance

Clean two kettlebells and go into the bottom position of a front squat. Push your butt into your calves and stay as tight as possible. From the bottom position of the front squat, press the kettlebells up until they are locked out overhead. Hold the lockout position for a second and then lower the bells with your lats back to the starting position. Stay in the bottom position of the front squat as you proceed to the next rep.

Performance Tips

- Try holding your breath as you press the kettlebells (Caution: Make sure to clear this with your doctor if you have high blood pressure or any heart problems).
- Look straight ahead (not up or down) as you press and lower the kettlebells.
- Flex your glutes and abs for added stability.
- Contract your lats for added stability
- Crush grip the kettlebell handles.
- Make sure that your glutes are resting on your calves for maximum stability
- Do not do this exercise if you cannot do a full squat

Alternating Kettlebell Renegade Row

This is an outstanding drill that I picked up from Coach John Davies, author of “Renegade Training For Football.” In addition to being an excellent exercise for your upper back and lats, the Renegade Row is a killer core exercise and a great chest exercise. Yes, even the chest is worked with the Renegade row. How is this possible? The chest is activated tremendously to stabilize the body for rowing with the Renegade Row. Don’t be surprised if you notice that your pecs are sorer than your lats the next day after doing Renegade Rows. Because you are off balance with the Renegade Row, the abdominal muscles are also worked tremendously to maintain balance. There are not too many upper body muscles that the Renegade Row does not work.

Performance

Get into the top position of the pushup holding on to two kettlebells that are less than shoulder width apart. Take a shoulder width stance and push one

kettlebell into the floor forcefully while you pull the other kettlebell in the working arm. Hold the kettlebell in the working arm in the top position for a second and then lower the kettlebell under control back to the floor. Switch arms after each repetition.

Performance Tips

- Push the kettlebell of the non-working arm into the floor with as much force as possible.
- Breathe in as you pull one kettlebell and out as you lower the Kettlebell.
- Flex your butt and stomach for added stability
- Flex the lat of the working arm before pulling each kettlebell off of the floor.
- Take a wider stance to make the exercise easier and a closer stance to make the exercise harder.

One-arm Kettlebell Seated Press

Unlike the seated press that many trainees do at gyms across the US, the kettlebell seated press does not compress your spine and takes your chest out of the equation. How? To perform a kettlebell seated press you sit on the floor with your legs spread out comfortably in front. You do not do the kettlebell seated press against a wall or any kind of support. You are the support. As a result, you cannot lean back and bring your chest into the equation. This is good news for your shoulders, as many trainees tend to have overdeveloped pecs, which do much of the working during standing military presses. I have seen men that can Military press a 70lb kettlebell easily for reps, but cannot do one rep from the seated position. How is this possible? Because they have strong pecs and weak shoulders. However, after doing the seated press for a while your shoulders will catch up rapidly. In addition, you cannot use your legs to stabilize your body for added pressing power. You have to make your midsection as tight as possible to press the kettlebells overhead. If you hit a plateau on the standing Military Press or simply have a kettlebell that is too easy for standing Military Presses, then upgrade the intensity by applying the Seated Press.

Performance

Sit on the floor with your legs spread out comfortably. Place one kettlebell between your legs. Use two hands to position the kettlebell into place. Do this by grabbing the handle with one hand and place the other hand on the base of the bell to get it in place. Once you have the kettlebell in place, pull your shoulders down, flex your stomach as hard as possible, and press the bell overhead when you feel tight. Press the kettlebell overhead until you reach a full lockout. Once you reach the lockout position, breathe out a little bit, and then breathe in to pull the bell back to the starting position.

Performance Tips

- Try holding your breath as you press the weight (Caution: Make sure to clear this with your doctor if you have high blood pressure or any heart problems).
- Look straight ahead (not up or down) as you press and lower the kettlebell.
- Flex your abs before you press the kettlebell
- Contract your lats for added stability
- Crush grip the kettlebell handles
- Lower the bells with your lats

Double Kettlebell Push Press

The Kettlebell Push Press is a full body exercise that creates synergy between the lower body and the upper body. The legs are used to drive the kettlebells overhead. This is a very useful exercise for trainees that cannot strict press a pair of heavy kettlebells. For example, lets say that you can press two 70lb bells eight times with strict form, but you cannot press two 88lb bells. You have the strength to do it. However, you do not have the confidence. By incorporating a leg drive via the push press you will get used to the heavy weights and build a pattern of success. After getting used to the feel of the heavier bells, your confidence will rise and a strict Military Press with the heavier bells will be sure to follow. The Push press is also a useful exercise for variety and for working with heavier bells. To maximize the exercise for the purpose of building brute strength and size, do a slow negative on each rep. In other words, use a powerful leg drive to get the kettlebells to the lockout position. Then lower the kettlebells using a four second count back to he starting position. Use another powerful leg drive to power the kettlebells overhead and proceed with another slow negative.

Studies show that you build more size from lowering heavy weights than from pressing them and the push press allows you to lower heavy weights that you cannot press.

Performance

Clean two kettlebells to your shoulders. Squat down a few inches and reverse the motion rapidly. Use the momentum from the legs to drive the kettlebells overhead. Once the kettlebells are locked out, lower the kettlebells to your shoulders and repeat. Stay very tight upon cleaning the kettlebells and when you squat down a few inches to power up the leg drive. However, when you reverse the direction get loose in order to move quickly and then get tight again once the bells are locked out overhead.

Performance Tips

- Push the kettlebells off of your upper body.
- Do not squat down too far.
- Breathe in as you lower the weights and breathe out forcefully as you push press the kettlebells overhead.
- Look straight ahead at all times.
- Flex your stomach and butt as you lower the kettlebell to brace for the kettlebells.

Alternating Floor Press

With this exercise you get to work on imbalances by pressing one kettlebell at a time. This is a great exercise for adding variety to your regimen and to work on weak links.

Performance

Lie on the floor and position two kettlebells on the floor next to your shoulders. Use two arms to get the bell on the weaker side into place on your chest. While holding on to the bell on your chest, pull the other bell towards your other pec and get it into the starting position on your chest. Press one kettlebell to lockout. While you lower the locked out kettlebell, immediately press the kettlebell in the opposite hand.

Performance Tips

- Flare your lat as you press the kettlebell.
- Hold your breath as you press the kettlebell (Caution: Make sure to clear this with your doctor if you have high blood pressure or any heart problems).
- Contract your abs and glutes as hard as possible as you press the Kettlebell for added stability and power.
- Crush grip the kettlebell handle as hard as possible for increased Strength.
- Imagine that you are pressing yourself through the floor as you press one kettlebell.

Double Lunge

This is a great exercise to work one leg at a time. Unlike the one-legged squat this exercise does not require as much balance and does not engage the stabilizer muscles as much. Thus, you will be able to work on building stronger and bigger legs with the Double Lunge. This is a great alternative to the Double Front Squat.

Performance

Clean two kettlebells and hold them hid on the shoulders. Take one step forward and squat down until your hind knee touches the floor. Step back and repeat. Make sure that you switch sides with each set.

Performance Tips

- Pull yourself down with your hamstrings
- Breathe out as you step down and breathe in as you step back to the starting position
- Contract your abs and butt in the bottom position for maximum stability and power.

Double Clean

In addition to being a great ballistic lift, the Double Kettlebell Clean is an exercise that you have to master in order to be a good kettlebell presser and

kettlebell squatter. If your kettlebell clean is sloppy, then in addition to banging your wrists, your confidence will take a nose-dive and you can forget about pressing heavy kettlebells overhead.

Performance

Place two kettlebell in front of you. Sit back as if you are trying to sit in a chair behind you and grab the kettlebells. Looking forward, swing the kettlebells between your legs and quickly reverse the direction. Drive through with your hips, pop your pelvis up and drive the kettlebell to the rack position. Focus on getting your hands around the kettlebells rather than letting the kettlebells flip over your hands and bang your wrists.

Performance Tips

- Breathe into your stomach as you drive the kettlebells to the rack
- Stand up straight at the end of the move.
- Swing the kettlebells between your legs as if you are trying to pass a football to someone behind you.
- Hold the bells in tight and close to the body at the top.
- Breathe out as you swing the bells between your legs

Mahler's Plans of Attack

There are literally thousands of training programs that you can choose from to get bigger and stronger. Some are very good. However, most of them are garbage and a waste of your time. Over the course of the last few years, I have test driven many programs with kettlebells that have worked very well for myself and for many of my clients. Lets go over several effective programs that you can do with kettlebells and then go over a sixteen-week training cycle for maximum gains in size and strength.

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5x5 (Five Sets Of Five)

5x5 training is a standard protocol that has been around for many years. It is also an extremely effective way to pack on size and strength. It was a favorite of legendary bodybuilder Reg Park who just happened to be Arnold's idol. Here is how it works. Pick a training weight and do five sets of five reps. If and when you can complete all sets of five, increase the weight by five to ten pounds and shoot for five sets of five again. Take three-minute breaks in between each set. Obviously incremental weight increases are not possible with kettlebell training so we have to look at other factors to manipulate. One factor to manipulate is time under tension. When you can do 5x5 with a quick tempo, increase the negative to four seconds and the positive to two seconds. When that becomes easy, try five seconds up, a pause at the bottom and five seconds down. Another factor to manipulate is the breaks between each set. Instead of taking three-minute breaks in between each set, take two-minute breaks. When that becomes easy, decrease the breaks to ninety seconds. When that becomes easy, go to sixty seconds. When you can do 5x5 with one-minute breaks and slower tempos, I have no doubt that you will be ready for some heavier bells. A third variable that can be manipulated are the training exercises. When you can do 5x5 on the standing Military Press, work on 5x5 on the seated press, and then 5x5 on the Sots Press. When you can do double swings easily with 5x5, move up to double snatches. There is always something that you can do to make an exercise harder or a training regimen more effective.

Here are two sample 5x5 kettlebell programs

Option One

Monday

A-1: Double Military Press

A-2: Alternating Renegade Row

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do one set of A-1, wait a minute and then do a set of A-2, wait a minute and then do another set of A-

1 and so forth. Keep going back and forth between A-1 and A-2 until you have completed all five sets.

B-1: Double Kettlebell Front Squat

B-2: Double Kettlebell Swing

Same directions as A-1 and A-2

Wrap up with

Double Windmill 2x5 l,r (left and right) Take two minute breaks in between each set. One complete set equals five reps on each side.

Wednesday

A-1: Double Floor Press

A-2: Double Bent-over Row

Same directions as above

B-1: Double Front Squat

B-2: Double Snatch

Same Directions as above

Wrap up with

TGU 2x5 l,r (left and right) Take two minute breaks in between each set. One complete set equals five reps on each side.

Friday

A-1: Seated Military Press

A-2: Renegade Row

Do A-1 and A-2 back to back. In other words, do one set of A-1, wait a minute and then do a set of A-2, wait a minute and then do another set of A-1 and so forth. Keep going back and forth between A-1 and A-2 until you have completed all five sets.

B-1: Double Kettlebell Front Squat

B-2: Double Kettlebell Swing

Wrap up with

Double Windmill 2x5 l,r (left and right) Take two minute breaks in between each set. One complete set equals five reps on each side.

Option Two

Day 1:

A-1: Double Military Press

A-2: Double Bent-over Row

B-1: Double Floor Press

B-2: Double Renegade Row

Wrap Up with

TGU 5x5 l,r (left and right)

Day 2

A-1: Double Front Squat

A-2: Double Snatch

Wrap Up with

TGU 5x5 l,r (left and right)

Take a day off in between each workout. In other words, do day one on Monday, day two on Wednesday, and then Day 1 again on Friday.

Key Points

Option one involves three full body workouts per week. This is a great program for people that have solid recovery abilities, lifestyles that are not too stressful, and solid nutrition each day. Option two is for people that need more time between each workout. You have more days before a training day repeats itself and more time for recovery. The workouts are split into upper body one day and lower body the next day so that you have less to focus on. Both program work very well. One will work better for you than the other so try them both out and monitor your progress. Stick with the one that works best for you.

German Volume Training (GVT)

I learned about German Volume Training (GVT) from top strength coach Charles Poliquin several years ago. Coach Poliquin stated that many German athletes used the GVT protocol to successfully add ten pounds of muscle. Here is how it works. Take 60% off your one rep max on an exercise and do ten sets of ten reps. Use the same weight on all ten sets and do not increase the weight until you can do ten sets of ten with the same weight. This program is of course very effective, but extremely brutal. Ten sets of ten on exercises such as squats and deadlifts are real pukers and great way to handicap you for the rest of the week. I remember the pain of getting up in the morning the day after doing GVT for legs. Another drawback with GVT is that while following a 10x10 protocol will increase muscle size, it does not increase brute strength. In fact many trainees reported that they actually got weaker after six weeks of GVT. Hardly the results that we are after. Thus, I think that changing GVT from 10x10 to a starting program of 10x5 is more appropriate. Now since we cannot increase the weights incrementally with kettlebells, lets work on other factors. First, start with 10x5 and when you can complete 10x5, go up to 10x6. When you can complete 10x6, go up to 10x7. Once you can do 10x8, move up to heavier kettlebells or pick harder kettlebell drills and start back at 10x5. You can even start at 10x2 or 10x3 to get started and gradually work up to 10x5 and above. Use the same kettlebells for all ten sets rather than doing the some sets with heavier bells and some sets with lighter bells. One final modification that you can do with GVT is to pick two exercises instead of

one. For example, do Double Lunges for five sets of five and then double front squats for five sets of five right after. The total volume will still be ten sets. This is a great way to get around possible overuse injuries and the sheer boredom that can come with doing ten sets of the same drill over and over again.

Here are two sample GVT/Kettlebell Programs

Option One

Day 1:

A-1: Double Front Squat 10x5

B-2: Double Swing 10x5

Double Windmill 3x5 l,r (left and right)

Day 2:

A-1: Double Military Press 10x5

A-2: Renegade Row 10x5

TGU 3x5 l,r (left and right)

Option Two

Day 1:

A-1: Double Lunge 5x5 Double Front Squat 5x5

A-2: Double Snatch 5x5, Double Swing 5x5

Guard Sit-up 2x5 l,r

Day 2:

A-1: Seated Military Press 5x5, Standing Military Press 5x5

A-2: Renegade Row 5x5, Double Bent-over Row 5x5

Double Windmill 5x5 l,r (left and right)

Key Points

Both options will work very well. If you are someone that needs more variety in your workouts, then try option two first. If you really want to improve an exercise such as the Double Military Press, then try option one. Take a day off between each workout. In other words, do day 1 on Monday, day 2 on Wednesday and then Day 1 again on Friday.

EDT (Escalating Density Training)

EDT is one of the best programs that you can do with kettlebells for strength and size. Especially if size is your number one goal. EDT was created by top strength coach Charles Staley, author of Escalating Density Training. Coach Staley realized after many years of being in the strength training world that the real key to getting bigger and stronger is to do more work in less time. When you do more work in less time, you increase the volume and intensity without increasing the length of the workout. Your body adapts by getting bigger and stronger if you make sure to eat enough and recover from these brutal workouts. Here is how EDT works. Pick two antagonistic exercises such as the kettlebell floor press and double bent over row. Set the clock for twenty minutes and do as many reps of both exercises as you can in that twenty rep period. Only rest as long as necessary between sets to maximize the time period. Once the twenty minute period, which Coach Staley refers to a PR (personal record) Zone is up, stop training and record the total number of reps completed on both drills. Your goal at the next session is to do more total reps. For example, if you did twenty-five total reps on the double floor press with two 70lb bells, shoot for twenty-six total reps at the next workout. When you have increased the total reps that you can do by 25% with a given pair of kettlebells, then upgrade to the next weight up. How effective is EDT? When I tried EDT with kettlebells over a year ago, I took my max of six reps on the Double Mil Press with two 70lb bells to nine reps in a few weeks. Here is what my client Mike Brown said about an EDT/Kettlebell program that I designed for him, "I just had to write and tell you that the program is kicking ass for me. I tried to get a two-arm press with the 72's two weeks ago and could barely get one rep. Today I got 12 sets of triples and probably could have gotten four or five for the first few,

which I'll try next week." Mike went on to eventually knock off ten reps with two 88lb bells on the double military press. Here are two sample EDT programs for you to choose from:

Option One

Day 1: Upper Body

PR Zone 1 (20 Minutes)

A-1: Double Military Presses

A-2: Double Bent-over Row

Five minute break

PR Zone 2 (15 Minutes)

Alternating Floor Press

Renegade Row

Two minute break

Core Work

2x5 (two sets of five) of Double Windmill

Day 2: Lower Body

PR Zone 1 (Twenty-five Minutes)

Double Front Squat

Double Kettlebell Swing

Core Work

2x5 (two sets of five) of TGU

Option Two

Day 1: Upper Body

PR Zone 1 (20 Minutes)

A-1: Seated Military Press

A-2: Renegade Row

Five minute break

PR Zone 2 (15 Minutes)

A-1: Double Floor Press

A-2: Double Bent-over Row

Two minute break

Core Work

2x5 (two sets of five) of Guard Sit-up

Day 2: Lower Body

PR Zone 1 (15 Minutes)

One-legged Kettlebell Squat (Left and right)

Double Kettlebell Snatch

PR Zone 2 (15 minutes)

A-1: Double Kettlebell Front Squat

A-2: Double Kettlebell Swing

Core Work

2x5 (two sets of five) of Double Windmill

For more info on Charles Staley, visit his website at <http://www.myodynamics.com>

Key Points

Both EDT programs are very demanding and require careful attention to factors outside of your workouts such as sleep, nutrition, and stress. If you have a lot of stress in your life and are not getting a minimum of eight hours of sleep per night then forget about EDT. Go with a lower volume approach such as the 5x5 protocol. For a greater focus on strength, try the following modified EDT program:

With my modified EDT program instead of focusing on total reps in which you take super short breaks and gut out as many reps as possible, we are going to focus on strength by keeping the breaks at one minute between each exercise and by keeping the rep range to two-four reps per set. Moreover, the PR Zone has been eradicated so that trainees do not feel like they are fighting the clock. The initial goal is to do ten sets of two on two antagonistic exercises in a single workout. For example ten sets of two on Double Kettlebell Front Squats and Double Kettlebell Swings. Take one-minute breaks in between each exercise.

Start off your first workout by doing ten sets of two. If you completed all ten sets of two, then work on doing ten sets of three at the next workout. When you can do ten sets of three with a training weight, increase the reps to four at the next workout. Finally, once you can do ten sets of four with the training load, move up to a heavier pair of kettlebells or pick a harder exercise. Now stay at the new training load until you can do ten sets of four again. Keep the breaks at one minute in between each exercise.

My modified EDT workout is taking the efficiency of Coach Staley's EDT focus, but shifting the focus on volume to training load intensity. By making the breaks longer and using heavier weights with fewer reps, you will shift the focus of EDT to strength rather than size. Also you are giving yourself more time to adapt to a new training stimulus, which in turn will allow you to stay on the modified EDT program longer without burning out. Are you still going to get bigger, of course if you up the calories. Otherwise, you should notice more muscle density in addition to rapid increases in strength. Here is an eight-week program that you can follow with kettlebells to get into action:

Modified EDT Kettlebell Workout

Workout 1: Lower Body Emphasis

A-1 Double Kettlebell Front Squat

A-2 Double Kettlebell Snatch

Do one set of two on A-1, take a one-minute break and then do a set of two on A-2. Keep going back and forth until you have completed ten sets of three on each exercise. If you complete all ten sets, then go up to three reps per set at the next workout.

Take a three-minute break and then do:

Double Windmill 3x5 l, r (three sets of five left and right)

Workout 2: Upper Body Emphasis

A-1: Double Kettlebell Bent Over Row

A-2: Double Kettlebell Military Press

Again, do one set of two on A-1, take a one-minute break and then do a set of two on A-2. Keep going back and forth until you have completed ten sets of two on each exercise. If you complete all ten sets, then go up to three reps per set at the next workout.

Take a three- minute break and then do:

A-1 Alternating Floor Press

A-2 Alternating Renegade Rows

Do three sets of five on each exercise back to back. In other words, do one set of the Alternating Floor Press, wait a minute and then do a set of Alternating Renegade Rows. Keep the weight the same on these exercises throughout the duration of the program.

Rest Pause Training (RPT)

I learned about the benefits of “Rest-Pause Training” (RPT) from legendary bodybuilder Mike Mentzer several years ago. With this style of training, you'll want to take your one-rep max (1RM) on an exercise and do several reps with 10-15 second breaks in between each rep. Once you can no longer lift a weight in proper form, reduce the weight by 10% and continue with the singles. In reference to his experimentation with RPT, Mike stated that he added 20lbs to every exercise that he was working and increased his strength by 66% at the end of his rest pause program. Moreover, Mike's size went up big time. Granted, Mike was probably using steroids at the time. Nevertheless, the strength increases were still impressive and most trainees would be happy with a 10% increase in strength.

As effective as Mentzer's approach to RPT training is, I have found that you have to break into it gradually, especially if you are not used to low-rep heavy weight training. Start by taking your 3RM on an exercise and do sets of one with one-minute breaks. Once you can do five singles with one-minute breaks, decrease the breaks to forty-five seconds. Once you can do five singles with the compressed breaks, decrease it again to thirty seconds. Work your way down to fifteen-second breaks. Once you have gotten down to fifteen-second breaks, increase the weight by 5% and start over with one-minute breaks. By cycling the intensity you will be able to stay with RPT training for longer periods and avoid overtraining. Moreover, you will avoid potential injuries by gradually working into RPT training instead of *diving* into it. Now once again with kettlebells we do not have the option of incremental loading. Thus, instead of increasing the weight once you have the breaks compressed, increase the reps to two and start over with longer breaks. Work up to three reps per set rest pause style and you will be ready for a harder Kettlebell exercise or some heavier kettlebells.

For more info on low rep training for various applications, my friend and strength coach Matt Wiggins wrote an excellent book on the benefits of low rep training called *Singles and Doubles: How The Ordinary Become Extraordinary*. Matt goes into more detail regarding how he modified RPT training for a variety of sport-specific benefits. Check out his work at: www.workingclassfitness.com.

Here are two sample RPT/Kettlebell Programs

Option One

Monday

Double Military Press 5x1

Double Bent-over Row 5x1

Double Front Squat 5x1

Double Snatch 5x1

Double Windmill 2x5 1,r (left and right) Do these sets in regular rep fashion.

Wednesday

Push Press 5x1

Renegade Row 5x1 1,r (left and right)

TGU 5x1 1,r (left and right)

Double Swing 2x5 (do these in regular rep fashion)

Friday

Double Front Squat 5x1

Double Floor Press 5x1

Kettlebell Pull-up 5x1

Double Snatch 3x3 (regular reps)

Guard Sit-up 5x1 1,r (left and right)

Option Two

Monday and Thursday

Double Mil Press 5x1

Kettlebell Pull-up 5x1

Double Kettlebell Floor Press 5x1

Double Kettlebell Bent-over Row 5x1

Guard Sit-up 5x1 left and right

Tuesday and Friday

Double Snatch 5x1

Double Lunge 5x1

Double Kettlebell Windmill 5x1, l,r

Double Kettlebell Front Squat 5x1

Key Points

Option one is involves three full body workouts per week while option two involves two workouts per week for each body part and is a split routine. In other words, you do the upper body on one day and the lower body on the next day. My advice is to start with Option One for four weeks and then do Option two for four weeks. Make sure to avoid doing RPT workouts too late in the day as the heavy weights and low reps really stimulate the CNS and you will have difficulty sleeping if the workouts are done too late in the day.

Cluster Training

Top strength coach Charles Poliquin considers cluster training to be one of the most effective methods for increasing strength. This style of training is essentially a higher volume version of RPT training. To perform a "cluster," select a weight that is 90% of your 1RM and do five singles with 10-15 second breaks between each rep. Upon completion of the five singles, rest for three to five minutes and then do a another five singles in the same fashion. Repeat for three more sets for a total of five sets.

This is a brutal form of RPT that must be done infrequently. Many athletes will need to take a minimum of two days off between each workout and most will probably not be able to do this regimen more than once every five days. I recommend that you try the RPT protocol outlined above before giving cluster training a shot. I also recommend that you break into cluster training gradually. Start with your 3RM and take one-minute breaks in between each set. Once you can do five sets of five rest pause reps with one-minute breaks, decrease the rest periods to 45 seconds. Gradually work your way down to 15 seconds and then increase the reps to two and start over again. Once you can do five sets of two cluster take the reps up to three reps for a total of 15 reps per set and a whopping 75 reps per cluster. Coach Poliquin goes into detail on cluster training along with several other methods of increasing maximal strength in his excellent book *Modern Trends In Strength Training*. For more info, go to <http://www.charlespoliquin.net>

Here is a Cluster Training/kettlebell training program that you can use to jump into action.

Monday

Double Kettlebell Front Squat 5x5

Double Kettlebell Snatch 5x5

TGU 2x5 (regular rep style left and right)

Thursday

Double Kettlebell Military Press 5x5

Double Kettlebell Bent-over row 5x5

Double Windmill 2x5 (regular rep style left and right)

Key Points

Take two days off between each workout. In the example above, Monday's workout would be repeated on Saturday and then Thursday's workout would be repeated on Tuesday. Also remember that 5x5 in this context means 5x5 cluster training style, rather than five regular reps in a row per set. A set here

is five rest pause reps, which will be repeated five times per exercise. The intensity and volume is very high so make sure that you get a lot sleep and adequate nutrition daily. Take two-minute breaks in between each exercise.

High Intensity Training (HIT)

High Intensity Training is one of the most controversial training programs around. People either swear that it is the greatest thing since sliced bread or that it is complete garbage. Like many things in life, the truth is often in the middle. The truth about HIT and really any program is that it does not work forever. Many people test drive HIT and are amazed with the progress that they make in the first few weeks. They often believe that they have found the holy grail of training and preach the benefits of HIT to everyone in site. Even after their progress comes to a screeching halt in four to six weeks, they still hang onto the false belief that HIT is superior to every other form of training. Unfortunately this blind devotion only results on training plateaus and frustration. Executed correctly, HIT works great for about four weeks. After four weeks, you adapt and it is time to move on to something else. Lets go over what HIT is and then discuss how to incorporate it into kettlebell training for strength and size.

With HIT the goal is to do a few sets, usually no more than three and to take each one to failure. For many HIT trainees, it is usually one all out set that is take to absolute failure. Absolute failure means that you cannot possibly get another rep in the set no matter what. Once you have completed this one super intense set, you move on to the next exercise. You have done all that you can do to build that muscle. Sounds great in theory. However, it is not the best approach to take to really benefit from HIT. I believe that doing three low rep sets and taking the third set to your limit is a better approach. With this approach you build up your confidence with the first two sets and then go all out on the last set. Also, instead of going to absolute failure use some common sense. For example, on the third set of five, shoot for as many reps as possible. Lets say that you do seven reps. You doubt that one more rep will go so you stop at seven. Wise move as building a pattern of success is always better than risking a pattern of failure. You got close enough, so increase the weight or difficult at the next workout and live to fight another day. You don't have to puke after a workout or risk an unnecessary injury with poor form. Also, forget about forced reps, negatives, and all that jazz. As Franco Columbu once said, "forced reps are better done by you." Just

take your last set to the limit and end it. Here are two sample HIT/Kettlebell programs that you can use to blast through some strength and size plateaus:

Option One:

Monday

A-1: Double Military Press 3x5

A-2: Double Bent-over Row 3x5

B-1: Double Front Squat 3x5

B-2: Double Swing 3x5

Double Windmill 3x5 l,r (left and right)

Wednesday

A-1: Double Floor Press 3x5

A-2: Alternating Renegade Row 3x5

B-1: Double Lunge 3x5 (left and right)

B-2: Double Snatch 3x5

TGU 3x5 l,r (left and right)

Friday

A-1: Double Sots Military Press

A-2: Double Bent-over Row

B-1: Double Front Squat 3x5

B-2: Double Swing 3x5

Guard Sit-up 3x5 l,r (left and right)

On the last set of every exercise, do as many reps as you can in good form. No crappy reps or forced reps allowed. When you can do seven reps on the last set, upgrade to some heavier kettlebells or pick a more difficult exercise.

Option Two

Day 1:

A-1: Double Military Press 3x5

A-2: Double Renegade Row 3x5

A-1: Double Floor Press 3x5

A-2: Double Bent-over Row 3x5

Double Windmill 3x5 l,r (left and right)

Day 2:

A-1: Double Front Squat 3x5

A-2: Double Swing 3x5

B-1: Double Lunge 3x5 (left and right)

B-2: Double Snatch 3x5

TGU 3x5 l,r (left and right)

With this program you will take a day off between each workout. For example, do Workout 1 on Monday and do Workout 2 on Wednesday. Then take Thursday off and do Workout 1 again on Friday. Focus on taking the third set on each exercise to the limit. Shoot for seven reps and when you can do seven reps, upgrade to heavier kettlebells or upgrade to more intense kettlebell exercises.

Key Points

Option one is based on the work of HIT promoter Ellington Darden, while Option Two is more influenced by “Heavy Duty” author and top bodybuilder Mike Mentzer. With option one you do three full body workouts per week. With option two the days are divided into upper body and lower body days and the frequency is much less. Option Two is better for people that need more recovery. My advice is to start with Option One if you are getting adequate sleep and nutrition and move onto Option Two if you are not making progress after a few weeks.

Russian Bear Program

This is a great program that I picked up from top strength coach Pavel Tsatsouline, author of “Power To The People.” Here is how Pavel describes the Russian Bear Program, “Tension increases the uptake of amino acids, protein building blocks, by the muscles. Therefore the higher is the tension(weight) and the longer time the muscle spends under it(reps)-the better are your chances of making it big.” You guessed it, the Russian Bear Program is a high volume program, which focuses on both intensity and volume. For the Bear program pick a pair of kettlebells that only allow you to do 4-6 reps in solid form. Perform 10-20 sets per exercise. Avoid training to failure and stop a rep or two short. Now in Pavel’s book, he recommends using a heavy weight for the first set, 90% of that weight for the second set, and 80% of the first set for sets 3 to 10-20. Again, with kettlebells, we do not have the option of incremental loading so we have to modify the Bear program. There are three options that I recommend. One, do the first set with a difficult exercise such as the Sots Press, then do the second set with the seated press, and sets three to twenty with the standing Military Press. Or do six reps on the first set, then do 4-5 reps on the second set, and then 3-20 sets of 3 reps with the same kettlebells. Finally, pick a kettlebell that only allows you to do 1-2 reps, for example double 88lb bells on the Standing Military Press and do five reps rest pause style on the first set. Then do 6 reps with 70lb bells on the second set, and three to twenty sets of three with the 70s after that. Take five minutes between the first and second set and then take one-minute breaks between each set after that. Flex your muscles as hard as possible on each set. Here is a sample “Russian Bear” program

Option One:

Monday

Double Military Press

Set one with two 88lb bells 1x5 rest pause style with 10 second breaks between each rep

Set two with two 70lb bells 1x6 regular rep style

Sets three to twenty with two 70lb bells, 1x3-4 regular rep style

Double Bent Over Row

Set one with two 88lb bells 1x5 (regular rep style if you can otherwise rest pause style with 10 second breaks in between each rep)

Set two with two 70lb bells 1x6 regular rep style

Sets three to twenty with two 70lb bells 1x3-4 regular rep style

Double Front Squat

Set one with two 88lb bells 1x8 regular rep style or 1x8 rep pause style with ten-second breaks in between each rep.

Set two with two 70lb bells 1x8 regular rep style

Sets three to twenty with two 70lb bells, 1x5-6 regular rep style

Double Windmill 2x5 l,r (two sets of five left and right)

Wednesday

Double Sots Press

First set 1x5

Second Set 1x5 with Double Seated Press

Third set to twenty 1x5 with Double Military Press

Renegade Row

First set 1x5 rest pause style with a kettlebell that you can only do 1-2 reps with.

Second set, 1x5 with a lighter kettlebell

Third Set to twenty, same weight as second set for sets of three

Double Snatch

Set one with two heavy kettlebells that you can only do 1-3 reps. Do 1x5 regular rep style or rest pause style with ten-second breaks in between each rep.

Set two with next size kettlebells down six reps

Sets three to twenty with same bells as second set, three to four reps per set

TGU: 2x5 l,r (two sets of five left and right)

Friday

Double Military Press

Set one with two bells that you can only do 1-3 reps with. Do 1x5 rest pause style with ten-second breaks between each rep

Set two use a pair of the kettlebells that are the next size down and do six reps

Sets three to twenty use the same bells as set two and do three to four reps per set.

Double Bent Over Row

Set one with heavy kettlebells bells 1x5 (regular rep style if you can otherwise rest pause style with 10 second breaks in between each rep)

Set two a pair of the kettlebells that are the next size down and do six reps

Sets three to twenty use the same bells as set two and do three to four reps per set

Double Lunge

Pick a kettlebell that you can only do 1-3 times per leg and do five rest pause style reps. Take ten second breaks in between each rep.

Set two use a lighter kettlebell and do one set of 5-6 left and right

Sets three to twenty: use the same kettlebell and do sets of three per leg.

TGU 2x5 l,r (two sets of five left and right)

Key points

Make sure to move from one exercise to the next as fast as possible. This program requires a lot of work and you want to keep each workout below an hour in length. Start off by working up to ten total sets and gradually work up to twenty-two total sets (includes sets one and two). If you cannot complete the workout in under an hour, then cut the core work out until you can. For more info on Pavel, go to <http://www.powerbypavel.com>

Greasing The Groove (GTG)

I learned about the unique form of training from top strength coach Pavel Tsatsouline, author of “The Russian Kettlebell Challenge.” This is a great method for improving one to two exercises rapidly. Here is how it works using the example of the Double Front Squat. Instead of doing several sets in a workout at once, do several sets daily spread evenly throughout the day. For example, do a set in the morning, in the mid afternoon, late afternoon, evening and late evening for a total of five sets per day. Start by doing 50% of the max reps that you could do per set. In other words, if you can do ten reps with two 70lb bells on the double front squat, do five reps per set. Add a rep every week and test your max once every three weeks. I have no doubt at all that you will be doing more reps at the end of three week. There are several reasons why GTG works. One, you are always fresh on every set. Thus, you avoid burning out. Two, the more you practice something, the

better you will get at it. If you wanted to learn how to play the piano, would you play as hard as you could once a week? Of course not! You would practice playing the piano as often as you could. The more you practice, the better you get. Strength training is not any different. With GTG, you get more and more efficient on a particular exercise. The more efficient and comfortable you get, the more weight you can use. The more weight you can use the bigger you get.

I know what you are thinking, why not do 3-4 exercises five times a day and get bigger and stronger all around? Unfortunately, that will not work and I know as I have tried that before. You can only concentrate on so many things at a time. Thus, limit GTG to no more than two exercises. In my opinion, just working on one is best. Pick an exercise that you really need to work or one that you really want to improve and execute it GTG style. Make sure not to do that exercise in your training program. In other words, if I am going to GTG the Double Military Press, then the double military press will not be in my regular workouts. Nor will any shoulder or pressing exercises to avoid overlap and over training. Also, do not go crazy with GTG and do 20 sets a day, start with 3-5 and work up to 10. This of course is assuming that you have time. Considering that it does not take much time to knock off one set, it should not be too big a deal.

If you work 9-5 like most people, bring a kettlebell to your office or leave one in your car. Take an exercise break a few times a day and knock off some reps. Will people think you are crazy? Maybe, but who cares what people think. When they see how strong and big you are getting, everyone will be asking you what you are doing. Be a part of the few and not the many and avoid the path of least resistance. For the purpose of getting bigger and stronger work up to doing 5-7 reps per set GTG style. Cycle the intensity. In other words, start with 50% of your max reps, but work up to 90% of your max reps and stay there for a few weeks. Then upgrade to a heavier kettlebell or more difficult exercise and start with lower reps again.

Sixteen week Training Cycle

Now that we have several plans to get us stronger and bigger with kettlebells, lets put it all together into a sixteen-week training cycle. For the first four weeks, pick one of the 5x5 options. For the second four weeks, move up to higher volume training. Choose either GVT, EDT, or the Russian Bear program. For the third four weeks, ramp up the intensity and

lower the volume with HIT, and then for the final four weeks tap into the CNS and focus on strength with RPT. Feel free to do GTG during the 5x5 phase or during the RPT phase. Avoid GTG during any cycle of EDT, GVT, or HIT. Man that is a lot of acronyms. Once you wrap up the sixteen-week program, do three weeks of light training and then start another sixteen-week cycle. With cycling training every four weeks, you will avoid burnout, boredom, and training plateaus. Get started now!

Section 2: Kettlebell Training For Speed And Explosive Strength

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Full Body Exercises

Double Clean and Speed Press

The Clean and press is a well-known full body exercise that hits just about every muscle in the body. With the double clean and speed press, you are going to work on completing the exercise as quickly as possible while staying as tight as necessary on the pressing portion. To do so, you have to be able to transition from loose to tight back to loose again without missing a beat. This is a very useful skill to acquire for combat athletes. The Double Clean and Speed Press will teach you how to activate fast twitch muscle fibers that will make you faster and stronger. Thus if you have hit a plateau on the regular kettlebell Military Press, try doing Speed Presses for a few weeks and blast through the plateau.

Performance

Clean two kettlebells to your shoulders. Breathe in as you clean the bells to the rack position. Hold the kettlebells in tight against your core as if you are a boxer bracing for a punch. Try to touch your elbows to your midsection so that you have a strong foundation to press off of. Push your pelvis forward and up to facilitate this position. Remember that the shortest distance between two locations is a straight line. Keep that in mind when you do the Speed Press. Imagine that the bells are connected and that you are pressing a barbell. Press the bells up as rapidly as possible while staying as tense as

necessary. Look up slightly at the bells as you press them up. Lower the bells back to the shoulders quickly and under control. The second they are back in the rack position immediately take them back to the starting position and do another rep. This is an advanced version of the clean and press that is not for novices. You cannot press safely with maximum speed unless it involves maximum control as well. Ease into this one gradually. In other words, do not get sloppy in order to move the kettlebells quickly. Proper form should not be compromised.

Explosive Squat Shrug

This is a great exercise for developing full body explosive power. You start the power with the lower body and transfer it into the upper body in each repetition. The best part about this exercise is that it is not technically demanding and fairly easy to learn. It does not require the technique of the clean or snatch, yet has many of the benefits. It is also a tremendous trap developer and strengthener.

Performance.

Place a kettlebell on the outside of each foot. Squat down and pick them up as if they are two suitcases. Keep your eyes forward and arch your back in the starting position. Stand up quickly and drive through with the hips and get airborne on each rep. As you get off the floor, push your chest out and pull your shoulders up and try to pinch your shoulder blades together. Let your shoulders go back in the socket as you land back on the ground.

Full Body Attack (Beginner)

This is an incredible exercise that will teach you how to use your body as one unit and build explosive power from the ground up. It is particularly beneficial for combat athletes. Often in a fight you have to get from the floor to your feet explosively against the resistance of an opponent. That is exactly what you are doing with the "Full Body Attack." My friend Dylan Thomas, RKC (Check out Dylan's site at: <http://www.dragondoor.com/cgi-bin/instructor.pl?ipage=246&rm=mode2>) came up with a modified version of the Full Body Attack that is great for beginners. Instead of ending the movement with a clean and push press, you end with a deadlift.

Performance

Place two kettlebells shoulder width apart on the ground. Get into the top position of the pushup with both hands on the kettlebells. Jump forward explosively while holding onto the kettlebells. Now you are in the starting position of the Double Kettlebell Clean. Do a deadlift instead of a clean. Lower the bells to the floor and return to the starting position. Breathe in before you do the deadlift and hold your breath as you stand up with the kettlebells. Breathe out as you lower the bells back to the floor.

Full Body Attack (Advanced)

This is an incredible exercise that will teach you how to use your body as one unit and build explosive power from the ground up. It is particularly beneficial for combat athletes. Often in a fight you have to get from the floor to your feet explosively against the resistance of an opponent. That is exactly what you are doing with the "Full Body Attack."

Performance

Place two kettlebells shoulder width apart on the ground. Get into the top position of the pushup with both hands on the kettlebells. Jump forward explosively while holding onto the kettlebells. Now you are in the starting position of the clean. Clean both kettlebells and drive through with the hip flexors rapidly.

Your elbows should be tucked in and in line with your stomach at the top of the movement. Bend your knees slightly, reverse the motion quickly and drive the kettlebells overhead. Now reverse the motion and do another rep. For the purpose of building speed and explosive strength, keep the rep range to no more than three. Focus on moving as quickly and as explosively as possible while maintaining solid form.

Full Body Defense

In addition to learning how to go from the ground to your feet explosively, a combat athlete needs to be able to go from the feet to the ground rapidly as well to avoid takedowns. That is precisely what the "Full Body Defense" will assist you with.

Performance

Start the exercise by cleaning two kettlebells to your shoulders. Push your pelvis up at the top of the clean so that that you can press your elbows against your stomach and keep the kettlebells tucked in. Take the kettlebells to the floor so that you are in the starting position of a double clean.

Now jump back while still holding onto the kettlebells and arch your back. When executed properly, you will look like you are doing a yoga stretch or end position of a Hindu Pushup. Immediately jump back into the clean position, clean the kettlebells, and then proceed with another rep.

Double Stomp Jerk

The Double stomp jerk is the opposite of the Russian kettlebell jerk. The Russian kettlebell jerk teaches you how to be as loose as possible and how to conserve energy. With the kettlebell stomp jerk you are going to be as explosive as possible. This is another great exercise for developing explosive upper body power.

Performance

Clean two kettlebell to the rack. Squat down a few inches and reverse the direction quickly. Get slighting airborne by jumping a few inches off of the floor and stomp your feet into the floor. If you hear a “Thud” sound when you land you know that you did this exercise correctly. Keep the rep range between three or less and do several sets. This is not an endurance exercise but a demonstration of explosive strength. Use it accordingly. Breathe out as you drive the kettlebells overhead and breathe in as you lower the bells to the shoulders.

Upper Body Explosive Power

Lifeline TNT Military Press

Stuck at a Military press plateau? You need the power of forced acceleration and the TNT Military Press will get you there in full effect. With weights the resistance goes down the closer you get to the completion of a repetition. With resistance bands, the resistance increases the closer you get to the completion of a rep. Thus you have to keep the tension on from start to finish. There is no drop off point in which you can decrease the tension. You

learn how to apply force to the entire rep. Work with the TNT cable for a few weeks and then go back to Kettlebell Military Presses. You will have a sensation of the kettlebells flying up on the first rep. One thing that I really like about the TNT Cable is that the cables have handles. The handles allow you to hold the cables like two kettlebells for a very precise transfer.

Performance

Step in the middle of the bands and grab both handles like two suitcases. Make sure that the handles are even. Squat down and clean one handle to get it into the rack position. Quickly clean the other one and stand up. Confused? Do not worry, that is what the DVD is for so go watch it again! Make sure your legs are locked and that you are applying maximum tension. Look up slightly and press the cables up. Keep your eyes on the handles and focus on pressing the cables in a straight line. Basically, use the same form that you would use when pressing two kettlebells (holding the breath, power breathing etc). There is no negative resistance with kettlebells so do not lower the handles slowly. Let the handles come down quickly and under control.

Purchase the TNT Cable at:

<http://www.mikemahler.com/store/TNTcable.htm>

Alternating Hang Clean

This is a killer exercise for building upper body explosive power. It takes the hamstrings and lower body out of the equation a great deal so the traps have to generate power to get the bells in place. Also a great exercise for variety when you have two kettlebells that are too easy for regular cleans.

Performance

Deadlift two kettlebells and hold them out to the sides like two suitcases. Crush grip one kettlebell and clean it to the rack. Once you get the bell in motion, focus on getting your hand around the bell, rather than letting the bell flip over and bang up your wrist. Once you have one bell in the rack, position take it back to the starting position and immediately clean the bell in the other hand. Keep the reps low and focus on exploding on each rep. Breathe in as you clean a bell and breathe out as you take the bell back to the starting position.

Alternating Hang Clean and Press

Now we are going to take the Alternating Hang Clean up a notch by adding a press to each rep. Now you are learning up explode with your upper body and go from a loose state to a tight state to transition into the press and then getting loose again by going back to the clean.

Performance

Deadlift two kettlebells and hold them out to the sides like two suitcases. Crush grip on kettlebell and clean it to the rack. Once you get the bell in motion, focus on getting your hand around the bell, rather than letting the bell flip over and bang up your wrist. Once you have one bell in the rack position, tighten up and Military Press the bell. Lower it back to the rack quickly but under control and then back to the starting position. Immediately clean the other kettlebell and knock off a hang clean and press. Breathe in as you clean the bells and hold your breath or apply power breathing to press the bells. Breathe out at the lockout and then breathe in as you lower the bells to the starting position. Repeat for three to five reps per side.

One-arm Hang Snatch

The Kettlebell Snatch is a great exercise for developing full body explosive power with particular emphasis on the hamstrings. With the hang snatch, we are going to reduce the involvement of the hamstrings and focus on developing explosive traps.

Performance

Deadlift one kettlebell and hold it between your feet. Sit back a few inches and quickly reverse the direction exploding through with the hamstrings and traps to develop the power to drive the kettlebell overhead in one move. Wrap your hand around the kettlebell as it goes over and punch through. Breathe in as you drive the weight overhead and breathe out as you take it back to the starting position.

Double Hang Snatch

Time to take the benefits of the one-arm hang snatch up a big notch. The Double Hang Snatch requires more explosive power and coordination. Make sure you master the one-arm hang snatch before moving up to the Double Hang Snatch.

Performance

Deadlift two kettlebells and stand up. Sit back a few inches and quickly reverse the direction driving through with the hamstrings and hips. Drive the kettlebells overhead and squat under the bells to get them to the lock out position. Stand up with the bells to complete the rep. Breathe in to get the bells overhead and breathe out to return them to the starting position.

Kettlebell Front Snatch

The Kettlebell Front Snatch is an incredible upper back developer that I learned about from Pavel. Pavel states that power lifting great Donnie Thompson and grip master John Brookfield are big fans of this exercise because it builds a strong upper back. It is also a great exercise for building explosive upper body power.

Performance

Swing a kettlebell between your legs and quickly reverse the motion. Drive through with your hips and instead of punching through overhead as you would on a regular snatch, punch through at head level. To make the exercise even harder, punch through at chest level. The second you punch through, contract your muscles from head to toe to brace for the impact. Breathe in as you front snatch the kettlebell and let a little bit of air out as you return the bell to the starting position.

Guard Attack

This is an exercise for MMA fighters and grapplers. Sports in which you often end up on your back called the guard and have to fight off an opponent in the mount position. Learning how to be strong and powerful out of the guard position is a valuable skill. The Guard Attack will help build explosive strength from the guard position. It is also great for building strong and a powerful chest, strong triceps, strong shoulders, and impressive core strength.

Performance

Lie on the floor and position two kettlebells on the floor next to your shoulders. Use two arms to get the bell on the weaker side into place on your chest. While holding on to the bell on your chest, pull the other bell towards your other pec and get it into the starting position on your chest. Lets use the right arm to illustrate the performance of the Guard Attack. Press with your right hand and use your right foot to shift your weight to the left. As you lower the bell, press with the left hand and use your left foot to shift your weight to the right. Use maximum speed when doing this drill. You want to be fast and explosive in the guard position.

Lower Body Explosive Power

Explosive Double Swing

The Double Swing is one of the most powerful ballistic drills that you can use with kettlebells. There is no way to muscle up two heavy kettlebells. You have to have powerful hamstrings to make double swings happen. With the Explosive Double Swing you are going to focus on driving through with the hips as fast and as powerful as possible. Do not worry how high the bells get. In fact, they should not get higher than chest level. Keep the tension and focus on the hamstrings. A large percentage of the lower body explosive power comes from the hamstrings. Keep that in mind when doing Explosive Double Swings. If your lower back gets sore then you are not doing the exercise correctly.

Performance Tips

Place two kettlebells between your feet. While you will most likely have to take a wider stance than you would when doing a regular one-arm swing, do not stand too wide. The wider you stand the less hip drive you will have. Only stand as wide as you need to in order to comfortably place two kettlebells between your feet. Push back with your butt and bend your knees to get into the starting position. Make sure that your back is flat and look straight ahead at all times. Do not look between your legs as the bells swing back between your feet. Swing the kettlebells between your legs

forcefully. Quickly reverse the direction and drive through with your hips taking the kettlebells forward. Let the kettlebells swing back between your legs and repeat.

One-arm Kettlebell Stomp Snatch

The stomp snatch is another exceptional kettlebell drill that develops tremendous hamstring explosive power. Unlike the GS Sport snatch, which is fluid so that high reps can be accomplished, the Kettlebell Stomp Snatch focuses on maximizing speed and explosive strength. Heavy kettlebells are used for low reps.

Performance

Swing a kettlebell between your feet. Quickly reverse the direction and drive through with the hips as the bell goes up, jump off of the floor a few inches to go with the upward momentum. As you land drive your feet into the floor making a loud stomp sound. Breathe in as you drive the bell overhead and breathe out as you take it back to the floor. Similar to the Stomp Jerk, the Stomp snatch is not a muscular endurance drill so keep the rep range between 3-5 and do several sets. This is not an endurance exercise but a demonstration of explosive strength. Use it accordingly

Explosive Kettlebell Lunge

Forget about lame lunges that you see in women's aerobics classes. This one actually has value and is worth doing. It teaches you how to absorb shock and put the breaks on with your hamstrings. This is an invaluable skill for sport specific application. Moreover, it is not technically demanding and it is relatively easy to learn.

Performance

Grab one kettlebell and hold it like a steering wheel at chest level. Jump up and land in the bottom position of a lunge. Staying in the bottom position of a lunge, jump up and quickly reverse your legs so that you end up in the bottom position of the lunge with the opposite leg forward. Breathe in as you explode and breathe out as you land in the lunge position.

Kettlebell Split Jerk

The Kettlebell Split Jerk is another excellent exercise for building explosive power for takedowns as well as learning how to put the breaks on with your hamstrings.

Performance

Clean a kettlebell to your shoulder. Dip down a few inches, pop the kettlebell up and immediately jump into a lunge to get under the kettlebell and lock it out overhead. Stand up to complete the movement with the kettlebell locked out at all times. From there, lower the kettlebell to your shoulder and repeat.

Again, focus on getting under the weight rather than pressing it overhead. Many people make the mistake of pressing the weight overhead and then jumping into a lunge when the weight is locked out overhead. Just pop the kettlebell up to your forehead and explosively drive right under it. The point of this exercise is to develop strength for takedowns, not to fatigue the shoulders. Similar to the Kettlebell Split Snatch, the Kettlebell Split Jerk does not lend itself well to high repetitions.

Nevertheless, it is not as technical as the Kettlebell Split Snatch and does not require as much effort. Thus, a rep range of three to six reps per set is a good range to use. Just make sure that each rep is completed with perfect form. The key here again is to develop explosive power. There are much better exercises to use for muscular endurance.

Kettlebell Split Snatch

Kettlebell Split Snatches will build tremendous explosive power for takedowns.

Performance

Start with one kettlebell between your feet. Push your butt back as if you are trying to sit down in a chair to get into the proper starting position. Look straight ahead at all times. Explosively rip the kettlebell off of the ground as if you are trying to start a lawn mower. At the same time jump into a lunge position in order to get under the kettlebell. Once the kettlebell is locked out overhead, hold the position for a second and then stand up with the kettlebell

locked out overhead at all times. The kettlebell should go from the ground to a locked out position in one uninterrupted move.

After the move is completed, lower the kettlebell back to the starting position and repeat. Regarding breathing, breathe in as you rip the kettlebell off of the ground and out as you lower it back to the starting position. Imagine that you are trying to get under the kettlebell rather than drive it overhead. Due to the fact that technique is a tremendous factor with Kettlebell Split Snatches, keeping the rep range to three or less will work well for Kettlebell Split Snatches. The key here is to develop tremendous explosive power rather than burning yourself out with high reps. Every rep of the Kettlebell Split Snatch should be executed with perfect form.

Rotational Throwing Strength

Crossover Snatch

Rotational strength is very important for throws and powering an opponent to the ground. Also a great exercise if you are a big fan of “Saturday Night Fever.” All joking aside, this is an incredible exercise for explosive strength from a different angle than regular snatches.

Using the right arm as an example for instruction, place a kettlebell on the outside of your left foot. Reach across with your right hand and grab the kettlebell handle. Snatch it across your body and overhead in the opposite direction. Lower the bell to your shoulder and then take it back to the starting position. Switch arms with each set. Keep the range between 3-5. This is not the ideal exercise for high repetitions.

Training Programs

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Circuit Training For Speed And Explosive Power

This is a program for athletes that want to focus primarily on speed and explosive power. Other goals such as muscular conditioning and hypertrophy are not taken into consideration. Circuit training is an efficient method for getting a full body workout and getting used to the exercises on the DVD. If you love variety, then you will love circuit training as you can do a different exercise at every workout. Just make sure that you pick at least one exercise from every category to focus on balanced development.

Monday:

Double Clean and Speed Press

Explosive Squat Shrug

One-arm Hang Snatch

Full Body Attack

Explosive Double Swing

Do three reps per exercise and take one-minute breaks in between each exercise. Take a one-minute break at the end of each circuit and repeat five times per workout.

Wednesday

Guard Attack

Full Body Defense

One-arm Front Snatch

Crossover Snatch

Split Snatch

Friday

Lifeline TNT Military Press

Alternating Hang Clean

Split Jerk

One-arm Stomp Snatch

Do three reps per exercise and take one-minute breaks in between each exercise. Take a one-minute break at the end of each circuit and repeat five times per workout.

Full Body Workouts For Speed And Explosive Strength

After you have done a month or so of circuit training, you can ramp up the volume and do some full body workouts in which you do several sets of one exercise at a time before moving on to the next exercise. This is a great program to improve performance on the exercises on the DVD, which in turn will carry over to your sport. Just make sure that you start each session with a full body exercise and then move onto the explosive exercises for the upper and lower body. Or focus on your weak areas. If developing explosive hamstrings is your number one priority, then focus on exercises such as Explosive Lunges and Stomp Snatches as your primary exercises.

Monday

Double Clean and Speed Press 5x3 (one-minute breaks)

Full Body Attack 5x3 (one-minute breaks)

Explosive Lunge 5x3 l,r (one-minute breaks)

Wednesday

Explosive Squat Shrug 5x3 (one-minute breaks)

Double Stomp Jerk 5x3 (one-minute breaks)

Alternating Hang Clean and Press 3x3 (one-minute breaks)

Split Snatch 5x3 l,r (one-minute breaks)

Friday

Lifeline TNT Military Press 5x3 (one-minute breaks)

Explosive Double Swing 5x3 (one-minute breaks)

Crossover Snatch 5x3 l,r (one-minute breaks)

Training For Size and Explosive Strength

Here are some programs for athletes that want to get bigger and train for explosive strength as well. When training for multiple goals, a trainee must realize that compromise is a necessity. In other words, do not expect to get bigger on a combination program than you would on a size only program. Regardless, with careful planning meaningful progress can be achieved.

Option One:

Monday: (EDT For Size and Strength)

Upper Body Focus

PR Zone 1: (20 minutes)

A-1: Double Military Press

A-2: Double Bent Over Row

Do as many total reps of A-1 and A-2 in the designated twenty-minute PR Zone. Pick a weight that you can do 8-10 times and start off by doing sets of 4-5 and take thirty-second breaks or less. As fatigue kicks in, reduce the reps and increase the breaks. Record the total number of reps that you achieved for each exercise at the end of the PR Zone. Your goal at the next workout it do more reps in the same timeframe.

Take a two-minute break and then do

Turkish Get-up 2x5 l,r (two sets of five left and right)

Tuesday (EDT For Size and Strength)

Lower Body Focus

PR Zone 1: (20 minutes)

A-1: Double Front Squat

A-2: Double Swing

Do as many total reps of A-1 and A-2 in the designated twenty-minute PR Zone. Pick a weight that you can do 8-10 times and start off by doing sets of 4-5 and take thirty-second breaks or less. As fatigue kicks in, reduce the reps and increase the breaks. Record the total number of reps that you achieved for each exercise at the end of the PR Zone. Your goal at the next workout it do more reps in the same timeframe.

Take a two-minute break and then do

One-arm Windmill 2x5 l,r (two sets of five left and right)

Thursday (Speed And Explosive Strength)

Upper Body Focus

Double Jerk 8x3 (eight sets of three and take one-minute
breaks in between each set)

One-arm Hang Snatch 6x3 l,r (six sets and one-minute breaks)

One-arm Snatch raise 3x3 l,r (three sets and one-minute breaks)

Friday (Speed And Explosive Strength)

Lower Body Focus

One-arm Stomp Snatch 8x3 (eight sets of three and take one-minute
breaks in between each set)

Explosive Lunge 6x3 l,r (six sets and one-minute breaks)

Full Body Attack 3x3 l,r (three sets and one-minute breaks)

Option Two:

Monday: (5x5 for Size and Strength)

Upper Body Focus

PR Zone 1: (20 minutes)

A-1: Double Military Press 5x5

A-2: Renegade Row 5x5

Do 5x5 on both A-1 and A-2. Do a set of Double Military presses, rest one-minute and then do a set of Renegade Rows. Keep going back and forth until you have completed 5x5 on both exercises.

Take a one-minute break and then do

Turkish Get-up 2x5 l,r (two sets of five left and right)

Thursday: (EDT For Size and Strength)

Lower Body Focus

PR Zone 1: (20 minutes)

A-1: Double Front Squat 5x5

A-2: Double Swing 5x5

Do 5x5 on both A-1 and A-2. Do a set of Double Military Presses, rest one-minute and then do a set of Renegade Rows. Keep going back and forth until you have completed 5x5 on both exercises.

Take a two-minute break and then do

One-arm Windmill 2x5 l,r (two sets of five left and right)

Thursday (Speed And Explosive Strength)

Upper Body Focus

Clean and Speed Press 5x3 (five sets and one-minute breaks)

Alternating Hang Clean 5x3 l,r (five sets and one-minute breaks)

Guard Attack 5x3 l,r (five sets and one-minute breaks)

Friday (Speed And Explosive Strength)

Lower Body Focus

One-arm Stomp Snatch 5x3 (five sets and one-minute breaks)

Split Snatch 5x3 l,r (six sets and one-minute breaks)

Full Body Attack 5x3 l,r (three sets and one-minute breaks)

Option Three

Monday: (German Volume Training for Size and Strength)

Upper Body Focus

A-1: Alternating Military Press 10x5

A-2: Alternating Renegade Row 10x5

Do 10x5 on both A-1 and A-2. Do a set of Alternating Military presses, rest one-minute and then do a set of Alternating Renegade Rows. Keep going back and forth until you have completed 10x5 on both exercises.

Take a one-minute break and then do

Turkish Get-up 2x5 l,r (two sets of five left and right)

Tuesday: (German Volume Training for Size and Strength)

Lower Body Focus

A-1: Double Front Squat 10x5

A-2: Double Swing 10x5

Do 10x5 on both A-1 and A-2. Do a set of Front Squats, rest one-minute and then do a set of Double Swings. Keep going back and forth until you have completed 10x5 on both exercises.

Take a two-minute break and then do

One-arm Windmill 2x5 l,r (two sets of five left and right)

Thursday (Speed And Explosive Strength)

Upper Body Focus

Clean and Speed Press 5x3 (five sets and one-minute breaks)

Hang Snatch 5x3 l,r (five sets and one-minute breaks)

Explosive Squat Shrug 5x3 l,r (five sets and one-minute breaks)

Friday (Speed And Explosive Strength)

Lower Body Focus

One-arm Stomp Snatch 5x3 (five sets and one-minute breaks)

Split Jerk 5x3 l,r (six sets and one-minute breaks)

Full Body Attack 5x3 l,r (five sets and one-minute breaks)

Training for Muscular Conditioning and Explosive Strength

One way to get faster is to get rid of some fat. In addition, many athletes need to train for various goals. For example, for MMA athletes, explosive power and speed is important. However, conditioning is also critical. Thus a combination program that focuses on both components is important. Two great programs for burning fat and building muscular endurance are: Peripheral Heart Action (PHA) and High Octane Cardio (HOC). Lets talk about PHA first.

P.H.A is basically a form of circuit training in which you group several exercises together that work the entire body. Instead of pumping a lot of blood into one muscle, the goal according to John McCallum, author of "The Complete Keys To Progress", "is to increase your circulation enormously

without congesting your muscles. You pump blood through your muscles rather than just into them." The keys with P.H.A training are to one focus on compound exercises and to move from one exercise to the next as quickly as possible. Feel free to take one-minute breaks in the beginning between each exercise and reduce the breaks gradually over time until you are not resting at all in between each set.

Monday (PHA)

Group 1

Double Clean and Mil Press 5 reps

Double Bent-over Row 6 reps

Double Front Squat 10 reps

Double Kettlebell Swing 8 reps

Slow and Controlled Sit-up 5 reps (4 seconds up and 4 seconds down)

Here is how the program works. Do each exercise in Group One in circuit fashion. In other words, do one exercise after the other with short or no breaks. At the end of the sequence, take a one-minute break and then repeat four more times for a total of five rounds.

Wednesday (Explosive Strength Day)

Explosive Squat Shrug

Double Stomp Jerk

Alternating Hang Clean

Split Snatch

Do three reps per exercise and take one-minute breaks in between each exercise. Go through the circuit five times per workout.

Friday: (PHA)

Group 1

One-arm Clean and Push Press 10 reps l,r (left and right)

One-arm Bent Over Row 10 reps l,r

One-arm Snatch 10 reps l,r

One-arm Front Squat 10 reps l,r

Kettlebell Pass Between The Legs 10 reps

Here is how the program works. Do each exercise in Group One in circuit fashion. In other words, do one exercise after the other with short or no breaks. At the end of the sequence, take a one-minute break and then repeat four more times for a total of five rounds.

Option Two:

With this option, speed and explosive strength is primary.

Monday (Explosive Strength Day)

Explosive Squat Shrug

Full Body Attack

Double Stomp Jerk

Alternating Hang Clean

Split Snatch

Do three reps per exercise and take one-minute breaks in between each exercise. Go through the circuit five times per workout

Wednesday PHA (Peripheral Heart Action) Training

Group 1

Double Clean and Mil Press 5 reps

Double Bent-over Row 6 reps

Double Front Squat 10 reps

Double Kettlebell Swing 8 reps

Slow and Controlled Sit-up 5 reps (4 seconds up and 4 seconds down)

Here is how the program works. Do each exercise in Group One in circuit fashion. In other words, do one exercise after the other with short or no breaks. At the end of the sequence, take a one-minute break and then repeat four more times for a total of five rounds.

Friday (Explosive Strength Day)

Clean and Speed Press

One-arm Hang Snatch

Guard Attack

Explosive Lunge

Crossover Snatch

Do three reps per exercise and take one-minute breaks in between each exercise. Go through the circuit five times per workout

Next, lets talk about how to combine HOC with the speed and explosive strength drills. HOC is based on a form of training that boxer's use called "Roadwork." Legendary boxers such as Muhammad Ali used to do "Roadwork" frequently in order to get in great shape. "Roadwork" is still a staple in the arsenal of today's fighting elite. Here is how it works, go out for a jog and every fifty yards or so, drop down and do some bodyweight exercises such as push-ups and sit-ups. Crank out twenty-five reps and then get up immediately and start jogging again. After another fifty yards or so, drop down again and crank out some more bodyweight drills. This is a very efficient way to build up cardio and muscular endurance that will carry over to the ring. It is also an extremely effective method for burning fat. Regardless, there is a way to increase the benefits of "Roadwork" tremendously by combining moderate aerobic training with high intensity aerobic training. Kettlebell ballistic exercises are perfect for the intense aerobic portion.

Monday

High Octane Cardio (HOC)

One-minute of Jump Roping at moderate pace

Clean and Push Press 10 reps l,r (left and right)

One-minute of Jump Roping at moderate pace

One-arm Snatch 10 reps l,r

One-minute of Jump Roping at moderate pace

One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r

One-minute of Jump Roping at moderate pace

Two-arm Swing 10 reps

One-minute of Jump Roping at moderate pace

30 Jumping Jacks

One-minute of Jump Roping at moderate pace

One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r

One-minute of Jump Roping at moderate pace

One-arm Push Press 5 reps l,r

One-minute of Jump Roping at moderate pace

One-arm Snatch 5 reps l,r

One-minute of Jump Roping at moderate pace

One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r

One-minute of Jump Roping at moderate pace

30 Jumping Jacks

Do each round back to back and then take a one-minute break before going to the next round. A round is one set of jump rope work and one exercise set. When you can do all ten rounds with one-minute breaks, decrease the breaks to forty-five seconds.

Wednesday (Explosive Strength Day)

Clean and Speed Press

Double Hang Snatch

Explosive Lunge

Full Body Attack

Crossover Snatch

Do three reps per exercise and take one-minute breaks in between each exercise. Go through the circuit five times per workout

Friday (High Octane Cardio)

10 Suitcase Squats (moderate kettbells)

One-arm Snatch 10 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Push Press 10 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

Two-arm Swing 10 reps

10 Suitcase Squats

Explosive Pushup 15 reps

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Push Press 5 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Snatch 5 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

30 Jumping Jacks

Do each round back to back and then take a one-minute break before going to the next round. A round is one set of jump rope work and one exercise set. When you can do all ten rounds with one-minute breaks, decrease the breaks to forty-five seconds.

Option Two:

Monday (Explosive Strength Day)

Clean and Speed Press

Double Hang Snatch

Explosive Lunge

Full Body Attack

Crossover Snatch

Do three reps per exercise and take one-minute breaks in between each exercise. Go through the circuit five times per workout

Wednesday (High Octane Cardio)

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Snatch 10 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Push Press 10 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

Two-arm Swing 10 reps

10 Suitcase Squats

Explosive Pushup 15 reps

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Push Press 5 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Snatch 5 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r

10 Suitcase Squats

30 Jumping Jacks

Do each round back to back and then take a one-minute break before going to the next round. A round is one set of jump rope work and one exercise set. When you can do all ten rounds with one-minute breaks, decrease the breaks to forty-five seconds.

Friday (Explosive Strength Day)

Explosive Squat Shrug

Snatch Front Raise

Split Jerk

Full Body Defense

One-arm Stomp Snatch

Do three reps per exercise and take one-minute breaks in between each exercise. Go through the circuit five times per workout

Descending Sets Program For Fat Loss and Muscular Conditioning

The final program that I will cover is the Descending Sets Program that I picked up from Marc Lobliner. Pick a ballistic exercise such as the Double Swing or Double Snatch and do the following:

Set 1: 15 reps

Set 2: 15 reps

Set 3: 12 reps

Set 4: 12 reps

Set 5: 10 reps

Set 6: 10 reps

Set 7: 8 reps

Set 8: 8 reps

Set 9: 6 reps

Set 10: 4 reps

Take one-minute breaks between each set and work on getting the breaks down to thirty seconds. Pick a weight that you can knock off twenty reps with. This workout is a smoker. For variety you can do one Descending sets workout per week, one speed and explosive strength workout per week, and one HOC workout per week. Take at least one day off in between each workout. For example:

Day 1:

Descending Sets Program with Double Snatches

Day 2:

Speed and Explosive Strength

Explosive Squat Shrug

Snatch Front Raise

Split Jerk

Full Body Defense

One-arm Stomp Snatch

Do three reps per exercise and take one-minute breaks in between each drill.

Day 3:

High Octane Cardio (HOC)

25 Bodyweight Squats

One-arm Snatch 10 reps l,r

25 Bodyweight Squats
One-arm Push Press 10 reps l,r
25 Bodyweight Squats
One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r
25 Bodyweight Squats
Two-arm Swing 10 reps
25 Bodyweight Squats
Explosive Pushup 15 reps
25 Bodyweight Squats
One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r
25 Bodyweight Squats
One-arm Push Press 5 reps l,r
25 Bodyweight Squats
One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r
25 Bodyweight Squats
One-arm Push Press 5 reps l,r
25 Bodyweight Squats
One-arm Snatch 5 reps l,r
25 Bodyweight Squats
One-arm Swing 10 reps l,r

25 Bodyweight Squats

30 Jumping Jacks

Do each round back to back and then take a one-minute break before going to the next round. A round is one set of jump rope work and one exercise set. When you can do all ten rounds with one-minute breaks, decrease the breaks to forty-five seconds.

Section IV

Sample Kettlebell Exercises And Technique Tips



One-Arm Kettlebell Swing

Place one kettlebell between your feet. Push back with your butt and bend your knees to get into the starting position. Make sure that your back is flat and look straight ahead. Swing the kettlebell between your legs forcefully as if you are passing a football to someone behind you. Quickly reverse the direction and drive through with your hips explosively taking the kettlebell straight out. Let the kettlebell swing back between your legs and repeat. Switch arms with each set. Remember that the swing is primarily a hamstring exercise and that is where all of the power is generated from. It is not a front raise.



One-arm Kettlebell Snatch

Place a kettlebell between your feet. Bend your knees and push your butt back to get in the proper starting position. Look straight ahead and swing the kettlebell back between your legs as if you are passing a football to someone behind you. Immediately reverse the direction and drive through explosively with your hips. Pull the kettlebell towards your body as if you are starting a lawn mower. The trajectory of the kettlebell will resemble a J Curve rather than an arc. As the kettlebell rises to your shoulder open your hand and get your hand around the bell rather than letting the bell flip over and bang up your wrist. Punch through straight overhead to complete the snatch.



One-arm Kettlebell Clean

Place a kettlebell between your feet. As you bend down to grab the kettlebell, push your butt back and keep your eyes looking forward. Swing the kettlebell between your legs as if you are passing a football behind you. Quickly reverse the direction and drive through forcefully with the hips. Bring the kettlebell straight up using body momentum (don't even think about trying to curl it). Open your hand and get your hand around the handle rather than letting the bell flip over and bang up your wrist.



One-arm Kettlebell Bottom Up Clean (Hang Position)

Hold a kettlebell like a suitcase. Swing it back and then forward and crush grip the handle to hold it in place in the rack position. Keep a loose grip until you reach the rack position and then crush grip the handle and flex your entire body to hold the bell in place.



Kettlebell Sots Press

Clean a kettlebell and go into a full squat. Stay in the bottom position of the front squat and press the kettlebell overhead until it is locked out completely. Lower the kettlebell back to the starting position and repeat. Stay in the bottom position of the squat for the entire duration of the set. Make sure you push your glutes into your calves and contract your midsection for increases stability and power. If you cannot do a full squat, then you cannot do the Sots Press.



Kettlebell Windmill

Clean and press or snatch a kettlebell overhead with one arm. Keeping the kettlebell that is overhead locked out at all times, push your butt out in the direction of the locked out kettlebell. Turn your feet out at a forty-five degree angle from the arm with the locked out kettlebell. Lower yourself until your non-working hand touches the floor or front foot. Pause for a second and reverse the motion back to the starting position



Kettlebell Side Press

Clean a kettlebell with one arm. Push your hip out in the direction of the cleaned kettlebell. Turn your feet out at a forty-five degree angle from the arm with the kettlebell. While you are sitting back and lowering yourself, actively press the kettlebell at the same time. Continue to bend to the side until the kettlebell is locked out.



Kettlebell Bent Press

Clean a kettlebell with one arm. Push your hip out in the direction of the cleaned kettlebell. Turn your feet out at a forty-five degree angle from the arm with the kettlebell. While you are sitting back and lowering yourself, contract your lat as hard as possible and move your body away from the kettlebell. Continue to bend to the side until the kettlebell is locked out. The difference between the Bent Press and the Side Press is that there is no press with the Bent Press. You simply hold the bell in position and extend your forearm as you shift your weight away from the kettlebell.



Kettlebell Turkish Get-up

Lie on your back and use two hands to position a kettlebell to the lockout position of one arm. Lets use the right side as an example to discuss proper performance. Keep the bell locked out at all times. Bring your right leg in and use your right leg to pivot to the left. Roll onto your left triceps and keep rolling until your hand touches the floor. Use your left hand and right leg to drive forward. As you are driving forward, bring your left leg in and take your right leg forward. Now keep driving forward until you are in the bottom position of a lunge. Take a second to gather yourself and then stand up. To complete the rep, reverse the movement to get back to the starting position. Do a lunge back to the bottom, then place your left hand behind your back until you feel the ground. Bring your legs forward and use your left arm to guide you back to the starting position. Take a second to gather yourself and then proceed to another repetition



Double Kettlebell Kettlebell Military Press

Clean two kettlebells to your shoulders. Breathe in as you clean the bells to the rack position. Hold the kettlebells in tight against your core as if you are a boxer bracing for a punch. Try to touch your elbows to your midsection so that you have a strong foundation to press off of. The shortest distance between two locations is a straight line. Remember that when you do the overhead press. Imagine that the bells are connected and that you are pressing a barbell. Press the bells up and out only as much as necessary to complete the exercise. As the kettlebells pass your head, lean into the bells slightly so that they are locked out behind your head. Take a bench press tip from legendary powerlifting coach Louie Simmons and lower the kettlebells with your lats. Your lats are much stronger muscles than your shoulders and will assist in stabilizing the shoulders for maximum strength. Lowering two kettlebells is your chance to get your lats loaded up for the next press.



Double Kettlebell Push Press

Clean two kettlebells to your shoulders. Squat down a few inches and reverse the motion rapidly. Use the momentum from the legs to drive the kettlebells overhead. Once the kettlebells are locked out, lower the kettlebells to your shoulders and repeat. Stay very tight upon cleaning the kettlebells and when you squat down a few inches to power up the leg drive. However, when you reverse the direction get loose in order to move quickly and then get tight again once the bells are locked out overhead.



Double Kettlebell Bent Over Row

Place two kettlebells between your feet. Bend your knees slightly and then push your butt out as much as possible as you bend over to get in the starting position. Imagine that you are trying to sit in a chair behind you. Arc your back and hold your chest high as you sit back to get into the optimal pulling position (Imagine that you are a Venice Beach bodybuilder if you are having difficulty with this). Grab both kettlebells and pull them to your stomach. Lower the bells back to the floor under control and repeat



Renegade Kettlebell Row

Get into the top position of the pushup holding on to two kettlebells that are less than shoulder width apart. Take a shoulder width stance and push one kettlebell into the floor forcefully while you pull the other kettlebell in the working arm. Hold the kettlebell in the working arm in the top position for a second and then lower the kettlebell under control back to the floor. Switch arms after each repetition.



Kettlebell Pistol (One-legged Squat)

Hold a kettlebell close to your chest like a steering wheel. Hold the non-working leg up and squat all the way down with the working leg. Pause at the bottom for a second and then stand up. Pull yourself down slowly with your hamstrings and contract your abs, glutes, and quads for maximum tension and stability.



Double Kettlebell Front Squat

Clean two kettlebells to your shoulders and take a stance that you find comfortable for your body type. As you squat down, push your butt out. Looking straight ahead at all times, squat as low as you can and pause at the bottom. Rise back up and repeat. Pull yourself down with your hamstring and breathe in as your lower yourself down to the bottom. Hold your breath and stand up.

(Photographs courtesy of Michael Neuveux)

For More Information On Mike Mahler, go to
<http://www.mikemahler.com>