

KETTLEBELLS KETTLEBELLS



THE NEW **BOOM** IN FITNESS!!!

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If you are interested in rapidly increasing your strength, power and flexibility, you need to look into kettlebell training. Kettlebell training is quickly becoming one of the most popular exercise tools in the fitness industry, and for good reason: with one tool you can condition your entire body much faster than with any other exercise equipment (i.e. machines). The benefits are almost immediate, with increases in strength, power, agility, flexibility, balance and endurance occurring within the first few days and weeks.

Now that I've sparked your interest, you're probably asking yourself: "what the heck are kettlebells?" Kettlebells are cast iron weights that look like a cannonball with a handle on it. You might have seen them in old turn of century black and white photos with strong men pressing one in the air as they pose for a photo. Originally from Russia, kettlebells are called "giryas," and first appeared in the Russian dictionary in 1704. Kettlebells were so mainstream and popular in Tsarist Russia, that any strongman or weight lifter was called a "girevik" or kettlebell man (Tsatsouline 2005). Apart from their Russian roots, kettlebell training offers some very exciting qualities that are unique due to the design of the bell. The following qualities are some of the key factors that make kettlebell training effective.

Why Train with Kettlebells?

Full Body Workout – the basic kettlebell exercises are all multi-joint exercises which means that more than one joint is working. In fact, the majority of kettlebell movements work most of the primary muscles and joints of the human body. For improved performance in work or sport, research and common sense have shown and continue to prove that the body must operate as one integrated unit. Research in the field of Motor Control, shows that any attempt to completely isolate a muscle is actually almost impossible, as the body knows “*movements, not muscles!*” KB exercises streamline your workout regime, more results in less time.

Hip Power = Speed – Kettlebells teach you how to powerfully explode the hips. This powerful hip extension is what allows athletes to generate force and perform explosive movements such as jumping, twisting, kicking, squatting, lunging and sprinting. For regular people (non-athletes), stronger hip-extensors (gluteus, hamstrings and low back muscles) results in easier performance of many daily activities such as walking, hiking, bending, stepping and getting out of a chair. As people age, these common activities of daily living often become difficult and sometimes impossible in some situations. The results can be disastrous (trips, falls, hip fractures, etc.)!

Force Generation – The ability to generate force is what makes an athlete strong and fast. The kettlebell improves both strength and speed. One is able to do slower strength moves like presses, squats, deadlifts and rows as well as dynamic more ballistic movements such as cleans, snatches, swings and jerks.

Thick handles – The thicker handles condition the forearm, wrist and finger muscle more than barbells and dumbbells. You develop tremendous grip strength while using kettlebells.

Variety – there are virtually endless combinations of movements you can perform with kettlebells. For example – you can perform a clean followed by a squat, lunge and then a press. Kettlebell training is fun, period!

Endurance – Performing high rep kettlebell swings, cleans, snatches and jerks develop high levels of endurance and work capacity. In fact the United States secret service now perform a 10 minute snatch test with their agents, a true test of stamina and power.

Agility and Balance – Among the qualities needed to excel at any given sport are agility and balance. The ability to move your feet quickly and with precision is what makes you agile like a cat. Your ability to stay standing despite an unstable environment or when you get hit by an opponent in boxing, martial arts or football is real balance. Kettlebell exercises improve agility and balance because the offset weight of the KB pulls you in different direction requiring you to counteract its' force and momentum.

Where Should I start?

The foundational exercise is called the “Swing” and it teaches you how to powerfully extend the hips.



- Sit back as if you are sitting in a chair (stick your butt backwards).
- Bend at hips joints and slightly bend knees.
- Keep eyes looking forward the entire time.
- Swing the bell in between the legs as if you were reaching in back of you.
- Explosively extend hips and swing the KB to waist level.
- Perform 5 to 15 repetitions for 2 to 3 sets.
- Lock out hips and knees in top position by contracting your gluteus and quadriceps.

More fun and great exercises using Kettlebells. Enjoy!!!

Renegade Row



Snatch

In conclusion, kettlebell training is effective, challenging and fun for athletes and fitness enthusiasts at all levels. I highly recommend that if you are looking to spice up your fitness routine that you add kettlebells into your workouts. Kettlebells work well in combination with many other forms of training including kickboxing, boxing, traditional weight training, olympic lifting, spinning, running, walking and the list goes on and on. Enjoy the pain and the results!