Taylor Health
14415 N. 73rd St.
Scottsdale, AZ 85260
P: 480-757-7770

HOW TO LIFT

Techniques of Lifting

Proper technique will improve performance, minimize workout time and help prevent injuries.

Stretching

Stretch before lifting:

- To prepare the joints for motion
- To extend the range of motion of the muscles
- To help avoid injuries

Stretch after lifting:

- To taper off the stress on muscles, to "wind down”
- To relax
- To reduce soreness

How to Stretch:

- Stretch until you feel a slight tension. Hold a position for 10-20 seconds. Relax a moment, then extend the stretch slightly farther for another 10-20 seconds.
- Relax
- Don't bounce or jerk
- No pain. Back off if it hurts. If the stretch is painful you'll actually tighten up the very muscles you're trying to loosen.

Stretches for Weight Training

Warming Up
Warming up prepares your joints and muscles for activity. Often lifters do a light first set to warm up– this brings the blood to the specific muscles to be worked. Others warm up more thoroughly by doing push-ups or light calisthenics, running, exer-cycling, etc. If the weather is cold, or you're sore from previous workouts, be especially sure to warm up well. The head and

feet are the body's air conditioning units. Keep them covered in cold weather to keep the body warm.

Proper Position
Stance. When lifting in a standing position (curls, overhead press, etc.) your feet should be:

- A little wider than shoulder width apart
- Balanced fore and aft

Many lifters wear shoes or boots with a heel to help offset the shifting of their center of gravity when lifting heavy weights. Sometimes a board is placed under heels when doing squats to help maintain balance.

Head– Keep head and neck straight during your lifts. Many injuries are caused by twisting the head, neck, or trunk. Leverage is reduced and muscle injuries can occur when the spine is twisted.

Breathing

- Do not hold your breath throughout the entire exercise. It can stop the flow of oxygen to your brain and cause you to pass out. This is extremely dangerous if you have heavy weight overhead.
- Breathe both in and out through your nose and mouth. By breathing in only through your nose, you may not get enough oxygen.

How to breathe: Inhale during the beginning of the lift, momentarily hold your breath during the most difficult part, then exhale as you finish the lift. When doing a bench press, for example, inhale as you lower the weight to your chest, momentarily hold your breath as you begin to press the weight up and then exhale during the latter part of the movement.

Flexibility and Range of Motion
If you exercise through the whole range of motion of the joints, you will maintain and probably increase your flexibility. Testing has shown that top bodybuilders and weight lifters are among the most flexible athletes.

Safety

1. Try not to train alone. Even at home, try to have someone there to help if it is needed. Most serious weight training injuries occur when the lifter is training alone.
2. Always have a spotter for bench presses and squats when you are getting close to your strength limit. Serious accidents have occurred when lifters have been pinned by the weight doing bench presses.

Pearl, Bill. Getting StrongerBolinas, CA, Shelter Publications, 1986 pg. 18-19

3. Use collars on barbells. If you don't, the weights can slip off one end, causing the other end to dive for the floor, throwing you off balance and possibly injuring your back or other joints or muscles. Take the few seconds to put on the collars.
4. Use proper positions for all exercises.
5. Do not jerk or twist when lifting. These movements increase stress and can lead to injury.
6. Be especially careful doing the following exercises:
    a. Full squats, especially with heavy weights. This puts great stress on the lower back and the ligaments and tendons in the knee.
    b. Back hyperextensions, especially with heavy weights. Although these are good for strengthening the lower back, using too much weight too soon can cause muscles to tighten and spasm. Start light and add weight gradually.
    c. Deadlift. Keep your back straight and lift with the legs. Keep your head up, eyes on the ceiling, squeeze buttocks and tighten abdominals.

Pearl, Bill. Getting StrongerBolinas, CA, Shelter Publications, 1986 pg. 18-19