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Lift Heavy Run Fast

Deconstructing
The
Deadlift



THE DEADLIFT

THE DEADLIFT

You run, right? More than likely you've run for the train or the bus. You jump; maybe onto the carriage just before the doors shut. You sit, if you're lucky enough to get a seat. Being a good sport, you stand to politely give your seat to someone who needs it. Without even realising it, you are constantly using your posterior chain – your hamstrings, glutes and lower back. The deadlift is one of the best exercise you can do to strengthen that.

Whatever sport you play, or activity you do, your posterior chain is your driving force. Sprinting, jumping and changing direction all involve these muscle groups. The more you can incorporate the deadlift into your training, the better you'll perform.

THE DEADLIFT

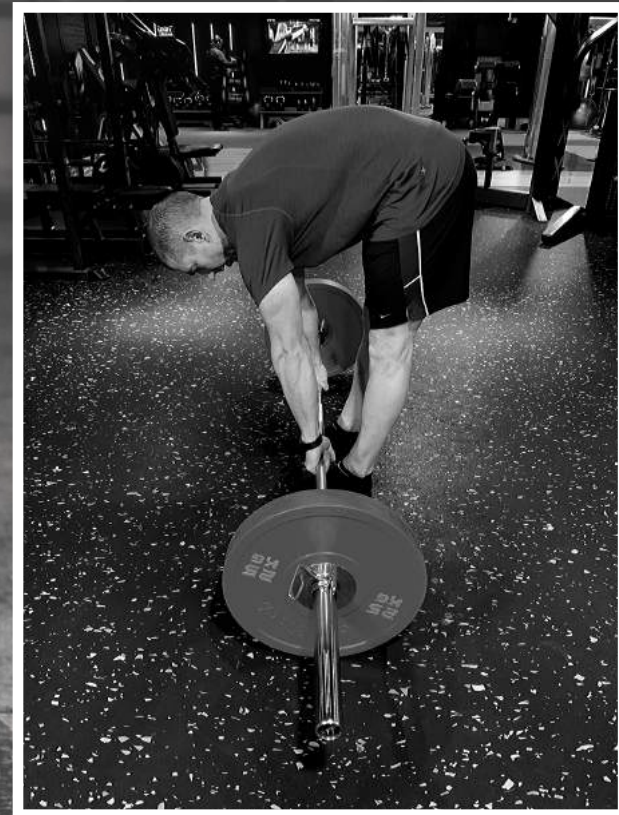
THE SET UP

Start with the bar on the floor, not on the rack, with weight plates loaded at either end. Place your feet directly under your hips and walk to the bar until its over your mid foot.



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With straight legs, bend down and grab the barbell shoulder width apart. Keeping hold of the bar, bend your knees and push your shins into the bar.



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By keeping your chest out and pushing your hips back your lower back should drop into a flat or neutral position. At this point you'll feel the hamstrings tighten and your set up is ready.

The bar is in the right position when the shoulder blades are directly above it.



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1. Chest out (try and see your t-shirt logo in the mirror)
2. Lower back flat or neutral, grip tight, arms locked and squeeze your armpits together (think of holding oranges in your armpits and squeezing the juice out of them)
3. Tighten the muscles around your upper back thus locking the whole back.
4. Take a deep breath and brace your abs (like someone is going to punch you in the stomach) this will help to stabilise your lower back. Tense your whole body from your feet to your hands.
5. Imagine bending the bar around your shins.

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6. Drive your heels AND toes into the floor and push the ground away from you.
7. Thrust your hips forward and straighten your knees simultaneously so the hips and shoulders rise at the same time.
8. At the end position (lock-out) tighten your buttocks. This will prevent you from over extending your lower back (leaning back) and also from stopping the movement too short.



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THE DESCENT

1. Slide the hips back (like you want to shut a car door with your buttocks) whilst holding your chest out
2. Keep pushing your hips back allowing the bar to slide down your legs. Bend the knees once the bar has passed them
3. Return the weight to the floor in a position where your back is flat or neutral and your chest is out. This should be the exact same position as the start of the movement.



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KEEP IT INTERESTING

Great variants of the deadlift are the sumo version, where you take a wide 'sumo like' stance which suits those with long legs; or a 'Trap Bar Deadlift' which is good for those who suffer from back pain as it focuses more on the hips than the lower back.

TOP TIP

The deadlift is a hip hinging movement therefore the key to this is learning to shift the hips back and forth, not up and down.

"Now, don't use the lift or escalator, go and bound up that hill or those stairs using your posterior chain."