



JUGGERNAUT

COWBOY METHOD

**SEE BIG GAINS WITH CHAD WESLEY SMITH'S
ADAPTATION OF THE TEXAS METHOD**

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COWBOY METHOD

CHAD WESLEY SMITH

WANNA SQUAT MORE? THEN YOU GOTTA SQUAT MORE!

The Cowboy Method was born out of the Texas Method-I originally called this the Big Texas Method but The Cowboy Method is just catchier and Big Texas make me keep thinking about those cinnamon rolls you can buy in vending machines.

The premise of The Cowboy Method was born out of Glenn Pendlay's Texas Method squat program. Pendlay's Texas Method revolves around a 3x/week squatting program of High Volume on Mondays, Low Volume on Wednesdays and a rep max on Fridays or Saturdays, it is a great program that will yield excellent results for you.

For many people reading this though, you

need more, you need more volume, more muscle, more practice of the movements, enter The Cowboy Method. If you are a beginner/intermediate lifter, you need more VOLUME, if you are an advanced lifter, a high volume phase can help you put on muscle, give you a break from the heaviest weights and challenge you in new ways.

Let's take a moment to address something important, YOU MUST BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF IN REGARDS TO YOUR LEVEL. I squatted 800 pounds at my first powerlifting meet, I would consider myself an intermediate lifter at that point. An intermediate lifter with advanced talent. I had been training for 12



years at that point, let that perspective sink in for a moment.

A more beginner/intermediate lifter needs more volume for two primary reasons, 1-They are inefficient and lack the ability to receive as a high as stimulus from lower volume/higher intensity work as an advanced lifter and 2-They need more practice in the movements to become more efficient. If your sport is powerlifting, then the squat, as done in competition is sport practice-don't lose sight of this fact.

The Cowboy Method's expanded workload will

give you the opportunity to pack muscle on your whole body while improving your squat technique and movement efficiency.

It is critical for this, and any program, that you breed success and confidence by smartly picking your weights so you make all your planned lifts. Missing weights doesn't make you stronger, making them does.

Plan your weekly rep maxes well, focusing on small improvements from week to week. These small improvements will add up to huge gains over time. When looking to choose your rep

$(\text{WEIGHT} \times \text{REPS} \times .033) + \text{WEIGHT} =$

PROJECTED MAX

maxes, work backwards from the last week's goal and make small incremental jumps (3-5 pounds) per week in your projected max using the projected max equation above.

Understand that projected maxes based on higher rep ranges (6-10 reps) are less accurate than projections from lower rep ranges. Rep maxes will also tend to skew higher for female lifters or thinner males lifters.

A WEEK OF COWBOY METHOD SQUATS WILL BREAK DOWN AS FOLLOWS:

- Monday- Back Squats for Low Intensity and High Volume
- Wednesday- Front Squats for Medium Intensity and Medium Volume
- Friday or Saturday- Back Squats for a Rep Max (High Intensity and Low Volume)

It is imperative that you focus on maximizing the force you put into the bar on every rep. Monday's low intensity work will particularly necessitate this to achieve the desired training effect.

Now that we have discussed the parameters of this 13 week plan. If you are a less experienced lifter, you can forgo the deload weeks and test week. It is written sets x reps on Mondays. On Wednesdays, 55/60/65/70/75%x5, means 5 reps at each percentage. On Fridays while working up to a rep max, do the least amount of warmups necessary to be prepared for your top set. Keep your warmup sets to 5 reps or less and if you need more warmups, try and perform them at lower intensities. Females and weaker lifters should adhere to the shorter end of the rest ranges on Mondays.

SQUAT TUTORIAL WITH CHAD WESLEY SMITH



Chad Wesley Smith takes you through a full squat tutorial — explaining everything from stance and setup through the finish. Click play to watch this video.

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Lets look at selecting your weights for rep maxes each Friday/Saturday. You want to work backwards from your goal weight. Let's use Joel Thompson, owner/head coach at CrossFit Tustin as an example. Joel began The Cowboy Method with a best squat of 305 and a goal of reaching 355. Joel is a taller, thinner lifter (6-3 200#) so we know that he will be better with the higher rep ranges relatively, so we want to make those on the heavier side of things, this is why his 10rm is projecting to 319, while I heavier lifter's 10rm would project to just above his actual max.

STARTING MAX-305

- 10rm-240x10, P1rm-319
- 8rm-255x8, P1rm-322
- 5rm-280x5, P1rm-326
- 8rm-265x8, P1rm-335
- 5rm-290x5, P1rm-338
- 3rm-310x3, P1rm-340
- 5rm-295x5, P1rm-344
- 3rm-320x3, P1rm-352
- 2rm-335x2, P1rm-357
- 1rm-355x1

COWBOY METHOD SQUAT PROGRAMMING

WEEK 1		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-10x5 at 60% w/ 45-60 sec rest	Front Squat-55/60/65/70/75%x5	Back Squat-Work up to 10rm
WEEK 2		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-10x4 at 67.5% w/ 75-90 sec rest	Front -Squat60/65/70/75/80%x3	Back Squat-Work up to 8rm
WEEK 3		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-10x3 at 75% w 105-120 sec rest	Front Squat-65x5,70x4,75x3, 80x2, 85%x1+	Back Squat-Work up to 5rm
WEEK 4 (DELOAD)		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-5x3 at 60%	Front Squat-3x3 at 60%	Back Squat-Walkout and hold
		95% of goal max for 10 sec
WEEK 5		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-8x5 at 65% w/ 60-75 sec rest	Front Squat-60/67.5/75/82.5%x4	Back Squat-Work up to 8rm
WEEK 6		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-8x4 at 72.5% w/ 90-105 sec rest	Front Squat-65/72.5%x3, 80/87.5%x2	Back Squat-Work up to 5rm
WEEK 7		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-8x3 at 80% w/ 120-135 sec rest	Front Squat-70x4, 77.5x3, 85x2, 92.5%x1+	Back Squat-Work up to 3rm

COWBOY METHOD SQUAT PROGRAMMING

WEEK 8 (DELOAD)		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-5x3 at 65%	Front Squat-3x3 at 65%	Back Squat-Walkout and hold
		100% of goal max for 10 sec
WEEK 9		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-5x5 at 70% w/ 75-90 sec rest	Front Squat-65/75/85%x3	Back Squat-Work up to 5rm
WEEK 10		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-5x4 at 77.5% w/ 105-120 sec rest	Front Squat-70/80/90%x2	Back Squat-Work up to 3rm
WEEK 11		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-5x3 at 85% w/ 135-150 sec rest	Front Squat-75x3, 85x2, 95x1+	Back Squat-Work up to 2rm
WEEK 12 (DELOAD)		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-5x3 at 70%	Front Squat-3x3 at 70%	Back Squat-Walkout and hold
		105% of goal max for 10 sec
WEEK 13 (TEST WEEK)		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Front Squat-Work up to 1rm	Off	Back Squat-Work up to 1rm

3 FRONT SQUAT TIPS WITH DAN GREEN



Check out these three valuable front squat tips from multiple World Record Holder, Dan Green. Click play to watch this video.

CLICK HERE TO PLAY VIDEO ▶

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Sometimes the weights may feel easy and sometimes they will feel heavy, create your plan and work it. As you repeat a rep max (8rm, 5rm, 3rm), even a 5 pound PR is progress, as cliché as it may sound “it’s a marathon not a sprint” so embrace every opportunity for a PR. I would encourage you to avoid wearing a belt during this program whenever possible, this will likely mean, no belt on Mondays and all but Wednesday’s top sets and potentially during the early weeks on Friday/Saturday for your rep max.

In regards so assistance work, if you are using this program for powerlifting, using 2-5 sets for each of of a single leg quad dominant movement (step ups, lunges, split squats), hamstring/ low back dominant movement (RDLs, GHRs, Reverse Hypers, Good Mornings, Swings) and abs will be sufficient. If you are using this for CrossFit, read on.

THE OTHER LIFTS

Well now that we have got your squat covered, how about the other lifts? Before we get into how to implement the bench and deadlift, let me get a question I know is coming out of the way.

Can I do the Cowboy Method for my bench? Sure! Don't do it with the squat and bench at the same time though, but if your squat is strong and bench is lagging, give it a shot. Use the same percentages but bench instead of back squat and overhead press (strict) instead of front squat.

Can I do the Cowboy Method with my deadlift? Maybe. I wouldn't personally, 3x a week of pulling would be murderous but if you survive you could thrive on it. I would do the high volume work (Monday) from low blocks in your comp

stance, medium volume work (Wednesday) from medium blocks in your opposite stance and the heavy work in your comp stance from the floor.

Assuming we are doing it with the squat as the primary lift though there are 2 different ways I like to implement the bench press. Implementing these will depend on your schedule and your benching abilities.

The first way is for the weaker presser who requires higher volume. This is basically a reflection of the squat program with you doing the opposite volume. So on Monday we bench heavy, Wednesday overheads for medium volume and Friday bench for high volume.

A full training cycle for the bench here would break down as follows...

COWBOY METHOD BENCH PROGRAMMING

WEEK 1		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-Up to 10rm	Overhead-55/65/75%x5	Bench-5x10 at 60%
WEEK 2		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-Up to 8rm	Overhead-60/70/80%x3	Bench-5x8 at 67.5%
WEEK 3		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-Up to 5rm	Overhead-65x5, 75x3, 85%x1+	Bench-5x6 at 75%
WEEK 4 (DELOAD)		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-3x5 at 60%	Overhead-3x3 at 60%	Bench-3x5 at 65%
WEEK 5		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-Up to 8rm	Overhead-60/70/80%x4	Bench-4x8 at 65%
WEEK 6		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-Up to 5rm	Overhead-65/75/85%x2	Bench-4x6 at 72.5%
WEEK 7		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-Up to 3rm	Overhead-70x4, 80x2, 90%x1+	Bench-4x5 at 80%

COWBOY METHOD BENCH PROGRAMMING

WEEK 8 (DELOAD)		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-3x5 at 65%	Overhead-3x3 at 65%	Bench-3x5 at 65%
WEEK 9		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-Up to 5rm	Overhead-65/75/85%x3	Bench-3x5 at 70%
WEEK 10		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-Up to 3rm	Overhead-70/80/90%x2	Bench-3x4 at 77.5%
WEEK 11		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-Up to 2rm	Overhead-75x3, 85x2, 95%x1+	Bench-3x3 at 85%
WEEK 12 (DELOAD)		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-3x5 at 70%	Overhead-3x3 at 70%	Bench-3x5 at 70%
WEEK 13 (TEST WEEK)		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Bench-Up to 1rm	Off	Military-Up to 1rm

BENCH TECHNIQUE WITH BRANDON LILLY



Brandon Lilly, one of the best full meet bench pressers in the world, improves your bench with these 3 simple technique fixes. Click play to watch this video.

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The second option for training the bench press on The Cowboy Method is for the more advanced lifter who is capable of handling heavier weights, thus requiring more recovery. For this variation, I would suggest you train your bench on Tuesday using **Brandon Lilly's Cube Kingpin variation which you can learn more about here**. When choosing this variation, I would encourage you to do a back/bodybuilding day on Saturdays, assuming you are squatting on Fridays, or flip those days.

Training the deadlift within the Cowboy Method is simple. Due to the very high volume of squat training, the deadlift will be trained once per week, on Wednesdays after front squats, following a Cube Method style rotation. Rotating weekly between speed, reps and heavy work.

The utilize this method, try out the following routine...

COWBOY METHOD DEADLIFT PROGRAMMING

WEEK 1

Wednesday

Speed Deadlift-15x1 at 60%, very short rest

WEEK 2

Wednesday

Deadlift from 1" Deficit-55/65/75%x5

WEEK 3

Wednesday

Deadlift from 2" Blocks-Up to Heavy 3

WEEK 4 (DELOAD)

Wednesday

Front Squat-3x3 at 60%

WEEK 5

Wednesday

Speed Deadlift-12x1 at 65%, very short rest

WEEK 6

Wednesday

Deadlift from 1" Deficit-60/70/80%x3

WEEK 7

Wednesday

Deadlift from 2" Blocks-Up to Heavy 2

COWBOY METHOD DEADLIFT PROGRAMMING

WEEK 8 (DELOAD)

Wednesday

Deadlift-3x3 at 65%

WEEK 9

Wednesday

Speed Deadlift-9x1 at 70%, very short rest

WEEK 10

Wednesday

Deadlift from 1" Deficit-65x5, 75x3, 85%x1

WEEK 11

Wednesday

Deadlift from 2" Blocks-Up to Heavy 1

WEEK 12 (DELOAD)

Wednesday

Deadlift-3x3 at 70%

WEEK 13 (TEST WEEK)

Wednesday

Deadlift-Up to 1rm

THE DEADLIFT WITH BRANDON LILLY



Brandon Lilly helps you fix 3 common errors in the deadlift that will help your pull skyrocket. Click play to watch this video.

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THE COWBOY FOR CROSSFIT

One of the Cowboy Method's greatest applications is for CrossFit athletes. CrossFitters, to generalize, are a population of beginner/intermediate lifters and require high volume work. Because success as a CrossFit athlete is largely dependent on an athlete's work capacity, a large volume of work in the squat, the exercise that will have the greatest carryover to performance across the board, will prove very beneficial.

Organizing the large number of movements the CrossFitter must be proficient in, as well as the variety of energy systems required, is a great challenge that requires a well thought out program. My favorite template for the competitive CrossFit athlete utilizing the Cowboy Method for their squat training is...

MONDAYS

- 1-Clean and Jerk
- 2-Back Squat
- 3-Lower Body Dominant MetCon

TUESDAYS

- 1-Gymnastics Skill Work
- 2-Pullups
- 3-Pressing (Bench or Overhead)
- 4-Upper Body Accessory Work
- 5-Aerobic Capacity

WEDNESDAY

- 1-Snatch
- 2-Front Squat
- 3-Deadlift
- 4-Lower Body Dominant Metcon

THURSDAY

- 1-Aerobic Capacity

FRIDAY

- 1-Snatch
- 2-Clean and Jerk
- 3-Upper Body Dominant MetCon

SATURDAY

- 1-Squat
- 2-Wildcard MetCon

A FEW CONSIDERATIONS ON THIS TEMPLATE.

1-When training gymnastics (Handstand Pushups and Muscle-Ups), improving your strict and eventually weighted strength will yield greater improvements, once you have an efficient kip. The same will hold true of pullups, get better at strict/weighted pullups and you will be able to do more kipping pullups, until a point is reached that your ability to do kipping

pullups is less about strength and more about strength endurance/lactic threshold.

2-Aerobic Capacity work should be done in the style of 'tempo work' which you can learn more about here in my article, **Conditioning for Strength Athletes**. Aerobic capacity is hugely important to CrossFit success so increasing the workload from what is prescribed in that article could be necessary. I would advocate 2-3 sets on Tuesdays and 3-5 sets on Thursdays, or however much work can be done within the proper zones in 20-60 minutes.

3-Lower body dominant metcons should focus on Olympic lifts, squats, deads, pistols and swings. Gymnastics, pullups, handstand walks, and pressing variations. Both types can include aerobic work such as rowing, running, swimming, airdyne, etc.

Tracking and creating a logical progression to your MetCon work is important. Though CrossFit is largely a sport of the unknown and sometimes random, you still have an idea of the general possibilities of the work to be done. If you are always doing new MetCons it is very difficult to track your progress, so while it is important to be varied in your training, being constantly varied may not be in the competitor's best interest.

COWBOY FOR CROSSFIT PROGRAMMING

WEEK 1		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Lower Body Dominant MetCon-Short/Hi	Lower Body Dominant MetCon-Med/Med	Upper Body Dominant MetCon-Long/Low
WEEK 2		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Lower Body Dominant MetCon-Med/Med	Lower Body Dominant MetCon-Long/Low	Upper Body Dominant MetCon-Short/Hi
WEEK 3		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Lower Body Dominant MetCon-Long/Low	Lower Body Dominant MetCon-Short/Hi	Upper Body Dominant MetCon-Med/Med

There are two simple ways to progress your MetCon work so that you can your progress in them. The first is a linear progression strategy, where from one week to the next you will either do the same MetCon and try to finish in a faster time, add a few reps to each movement in a MetCon and try to finish in the same or faster time as the previous week or increase the weight of each movement at the same reps and try to finish in the same or faster time. In this scheme you would do the same MetCon each Monday

for 3 weeks, same MetCon each Wednesday for 3 weeks and same MetCon each Friday for 3 weeks.

The second and preferred option is a Cube style rotation for your MetCons. This means that one day will be dedicated to short/high intensity (heavy) work, one day to medium duration/medium intensity work and finally one day to long duration/low intensity work and where these days fall would rotate each week.

CORRECTING THE SQUAT WITH CHAD WESLEY SMITH



Chad Wesley Smith, American Record Holder in the squat, helps you quit making 3 common mistakes in your training. Click play to watch this video.

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In both of these scenarios, the 'Wildcard Metcon' would be anything you want covering any duration, intensity and movement parameters you choose.

4-Success in the Olympic lifts, across broad intensity/volume domains, is critical to success as a competitive exerciser. In this template, you have 2 days dedicated to each the snatch and clean & jerk.

The first day each week should be dedicated to volume work, potentially up to sets of 5 and complexes are good options here, but mostly

should be reserved to double and triples done on controlled rest periods (EMOMs and Every :90), work like this will help build strength, practice technique and improve work capacity.

Friday's Olympic lifting work will be reserved for max work. There are two ways to go about this, 1st option is to rotate your movement each week (hang from different positions, blocks, floor) for 1-3rm or 2nd option for the more advanced lifter who requires more specificity, just stick with the classic movements.

IMPROVE YOUR SNATCH WITH COLIN BURNS



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USAW Champion in the snatch, Colin Burns takes you step by step through the snatch so you can improve in this difficult lift . Click play to watch this video.

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For more in-depth information, I post competitive CrossFit, powerlifting and strongman programming (Colin Burns' posts weightlifting programming too) every week within **STRONG360**, Juggernaut's one-of-a-kind membership platform giving you access to programming, webinars, exclusive articles, troll-free forums and a community of athletes and coaches looking to share information to learn and improve!

Hopefully this article gave you some insight to improving your lifts and performance. Thank you for supporting Juggernaut and a great cause, **Autism Speaks**, that is very dear to me.

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CWS