

- What I personally do for my workouts is my heavy lift for the day (bench, squat, or deadlift), and then go into a few hypertrophy exercises (8-10 reps for 3-4 sets with reasonably heavy weight) and then a couple accessories (maybe lagging body parts, or just individual muscles, i.e. bicep curls). This regimen is kind of a mix of powerlifting and bodybuilding; bodybuilders mostly stick to hypertrophy, because that is the optimal range for gaining strength, and therefore size over time. Logically, you can only gain size of muscle if you can lift more weight, so the two go hand in hand. If you are a natural bodybuilder, you must go about hypertrophy, because with steroids, you can basically do whatever weights you want with whatever rep range and still gain muscle. This is of course an exaggeration, but you get the idea. Powerlifters focus mostly on the compound lifts, and make that the main component of their workout. Their focus is to make sure the motor pathways for their lifts are solid, and they are constantly getting stronger at that particular motion, not necessarily strong at everything else. Personally, I prefer to mix the two, because I like the best of both worlds; being able to track my strength progress at certain movements (bench, squat, deadlift) while still building a pleasing physique. This may not be parallel with your goals, but this is simply my preference.
- If you have a lagging body part, and you want to bring it back to par with the rest of your body proportions, just hit it more often. Maybe if your biceps are lagging, just hit a few sets of curls every leg day, in addition to pull day, and they should gradually catch up.
- If you find your grip strength weak or lagging behind your deadlifts, just hang from a pullup bar every day for as long as you can, or a few days a week at least.

→ BENCH

- ◆ Be sure to warm up your chest and back, and start with the bar for high reps
- ◆ Use wrist wraps if you are using really heavy weights to help keep the wrist straight and stable
- ◆ Retract your scapula, and arch your back so that the contact points are the upper back and glutes
- ◆ Line your eyes with the bar; they should be directly under the bar
- ◆ Keep your points of contact as tight as possible during the movement, as well as the muscles you're using
- ◆ Envision bringing your shoulders as close to your heels as possible to reduce stress and place the pressure on your chest
- ◆ On flat bench, bring the bar just below or at the nipple, otherwise your shoulder takes too much stress
- ◆ Use a full range of motion, and bring the bar all the way down to the sternum
- ◆ Push the bar up to above your shoulders, at the original starting point, not above your sternum; envision it going backwards
- ◆ Make the negatives controlled, and focus on the eccentric just as much as the concentric movement
- ◆ Use your feet for drive and stability, keeping them as far back as possible while still being flat on the floor
- ◆ Envision bending the bar towards you so that you tuck your elbows and the movement feels natural
- ◆ Make sure your forearms are perpendicular to the ground; the longer your arms, the lower on your body this position is
- ◆ Do not roll your shoulders at the end of the movement, and do not unlock your shoulderblades
- ◆ Coordinate your breath with the movement to maximize efficiency

→ DEADLIFT

- ◆ Wear flat shoes or lift barefoot; barefoot is technically better for maximum weight because your feet are close to the ground, and the range of motion is smaller. However, if you are more worried about overall strength gain and range of motion, having soled shoes on should not matter. Most gyms do not allow bare feet anyway.
- ◆ Wear a belt for maximum weight, since it gives your core something to push against. Again, if you don't really care about maximum weight for that certain workout going beltless is better for activating more back muscles, but keep in mind it will put more stress on your lower back.

- ◆ Wear wrist straps if you have trouble hanging on to the bar after a few reps, or if you eventually get to the point where you can lift more than you can hold. However, not wearing wrist straps develops your grip strength and is generally considered more alpha.
- ◆ Keep the bar as close to your shins and body as possible to maximize power
- ◆ With conventional, your feet should be at a position where you can generate the most power, typically where you can jump the highest; feet should usually be roughly at shoulder width, and hands should be just outside the shins
- ◆ For sumo, your shins should be at 90 degrees to the ground at the bottom of the movement, and your feet should be angled outward; this will put you lower to the ground, and as a result, the range of motion is smaller, and for most bone structures, sumo is easier than conventional.
- ◆ Keep the back straight throughout the lift; do not arch or round the back at all
- ◆ Before the lift, pull all slack out of the bar by engaging your lats; envision bending the bar; do not jerk the bar up
- ◆ Do not lock your knees early; the knees and hips should hinge around the same time, minimizing pressure on the lower back
- ◆ As soon as the bar leaves the ground, squeeze your glutes and drive your hips forward, and squeeze the glutes at the top. For lifting the most weight, holding your breath before the motion and during the motion keeps the core tight and engaged against the belt. This goes against the common misconception that you should exhale during the motion.
- ◆ Your core, back, and glutes should remain tight throughout the whole motion
- ◆ Don't drop the weight, but don't lower the weight slowly; unlock your glutes, and let the bar fall controlled in the same bar path

→ SQUAT

- ◆ Warm up with body-weight squats, leg kicks, the hip abductor machine, and squatting with the bar for high reps
- ◆ Use knee sleeves to keep the joints warm and prevent injury, and a belt to help engage the core and protect the lower back
- ◆ To get the bar off the rack, use squat with both feet under the bar, and then squeeze your glutes forward, not a calf raise
- ◆ Keep your arms as close together as possible while still being comfortable, and keep feet roughly shoulder-width apart
- ◆ Neither arch nor round your back; keep it straight and stable
- ◆ Don't cave your knees at any time during the motion
- ◆ Keep your feet flat on the ground at all times; envision grabbing the floor with your feet
- ◆ Squat with as much depth as possible without letting your butt wink; keep in mind however that going all the way down so that your thighs touch your calves and then bouncing up, is kind of cheating. You are using the momentum from going down to go up. Stopping the squat motion when your thighs are parallel to the ground is fine, if not better.
- ◆ Pull the bar down so that your back and the weight stays tight, and keep the core engaged as well
- ◆ Optimally, keep your elbows underneath the bar, not behind it
- ◆ Try to break at the knees and the hips simultaneously
- ◆ High bar squats are when the bar is resting on your traps, and low bar squats are when your bar is resting slightly below the shoulders. People conventionally are able to lift more weight with low bar.