



IKFF

INTERNATIONAL KETTLEBELL AND FITNESS FEDERATION

Certified Kettlebell Teacher Course (CKT) Manual



The Global Leader in Mind/Body Fitness

www.ikff.com



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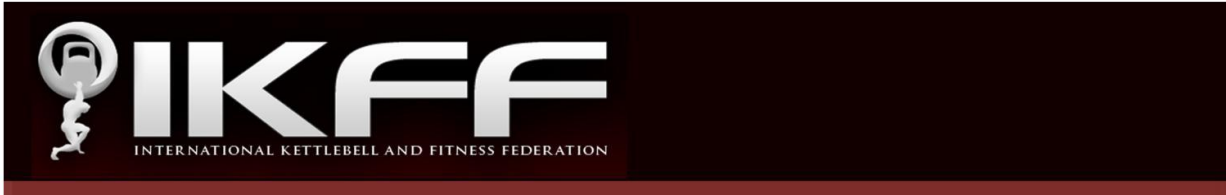
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Section 1

Welcome & Introduction to the IKFF

Thank you for choosing to be part of the IKFF team and registering for the CKT (Certified Kettlebell Trainer) certification!

What is the IKFF and what are we about?

Mission Statement:

As an organization, our mission is to promote kettlebell training and complete mind/body fitness on a global scale and to support our members in developing the all-encompassing skills needed to accelerate their own fitness and fitness-oriented business.

IKFF Core Values:

Member-Centered

We exist to support and help the growth of our members.

Integrity

We focus on excelling in what we are good at.

Global-Minded

The modern world is almost completely integrated. IKFF is at the cutting edge of fitness and health solutions for a global audience; our reach extends across the world.

Integrative

We are comprehensive and give equal attention to mind-body-spirit and to fitness-health-wellness/well-being.

Flexible

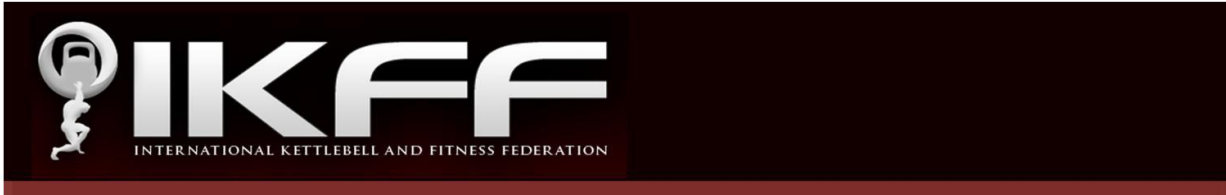
We constantly aim to improve and remain able and willing to learn, grow and modify as needed to improve.

Balance Mind-Body-Spirit

We strive to develop and maintain balance between the physical and psychological.

As a certification, we have three high level goals

Mastery of the basics – You will learn all the fundamental kettlebell exercises, several variations and most importantly, the key physical training principles underlying and associated with each movement.



Coaching skills – In addition to learning how to take your own fitness to higher levels, you will learn how to coach others safely and effectively utilizing a process Steve has refined over several years and thousands of clients.

Business/Marketing skills – Although this certification is primarily about improving physical performance and coaching skills, it would not be complete without a module on how to effectively market yourself and kettlebell training so you can start & grow your fitness based business.

Membership Benefits

As part of the IKFF team, you will experience the following benefits:

- Member of a globally recognized team
- Listed on the IKFF Instructor Locator
- Eligible for continued education through the IKFF (ex. – Level 2 CKT-FMD Course)
- Access to the IKFF online forum and private CKT forum
- Instructions on setting this up are covered in Section 6.

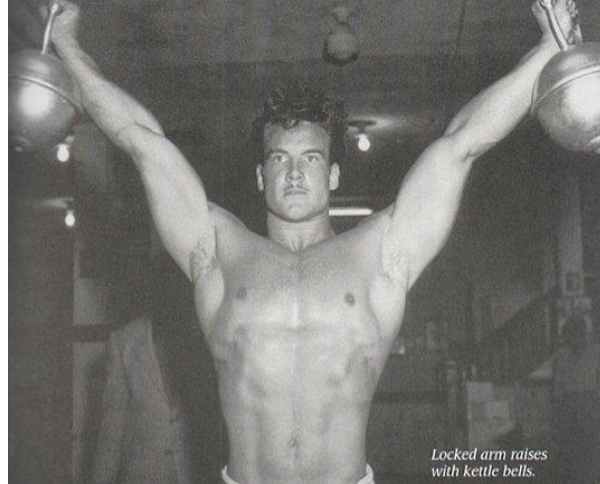
Goal of this Manual

The goal of this manual is straight-forward – to give you a reference source for the information we cover this weekend and all the information you need to ensure your experience with the IKFF certification is first class. In addition, this manual will be consistently updated as we are exposed to new information. The most updated version will always be available on the website (available to CKT's only).

Section 2 Introduction to Kettlebell Training

A Kettlebell is a traditional Russian training tool that has been used since the turn of the century to develop full body conditioning and fitness—the goal being the development of a body that is strong yet lean and athletic.

A kettlebell looks like a cannon ball with a handle. The shape of the kettlebell allows for unique positioning of the weight directly above your center of mass (unlike a DB or BB which must be held in front of the body) and allows you to keep your hand and wrists in neutral alignment, which enable for greater endurance and longevity in the core lifts so that you can produce a much higher volume of exercise and thus greater conditioning and fitness.



Some of the benefits of kettlebell training include:

- Improved strength
- The ability to effectively produce AND reduce force
- Incredible work capacity (strength endurance)
- Enhanced athleticism - flexibility, coordination, balance etc.
- Weight loss
- Injury prevention
- Mental toughness
- Lean & functional muscle mass
- Strengthening of the entire posterior chain
- Core strength
- Sport and combat applications

Equipment and Safety

Clothing

Wear clothing that is comfortable – not too loose or tight. When competing, it is necessary to wear shorts that are above the knees. This allows judges to view whether or not your knees are locked at key points during the lift.

Footwear

Olympic weightlifting shoes are ideal due to the slightly elevated heel and solid sole. The latter ensures a good transfer of power from the ground up. Conversely, running shoes are not recommended. The “squishy” sole is not conducive to power transfer or stability.



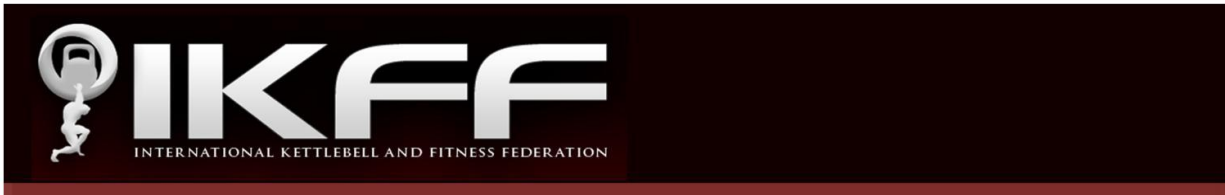
Gloves

Wearing weightlifting gloves is not recommended. This interferes with the ability of the proprioceptors in the hands to communicate with the rest of the body in terms of adjusting posture and movement.

Wrist Wraps

Wrist wraps (*ace bandages*) are used to keep the bell from slipping while positioned against the rest. Although not their primary purpose, they also offer a certain degree of padding.





Weight belt

A weight belt should be avoided. One of the objectives of kettlebell training is to train the body to support/stabilize itself without outside assistance. In addition, in many of the competitions, utilizing a weight belt as a “ledge” for rest could result in disqualification.

Training environment

Your workout area should be free of clutter. Don’t minimize this – one slip/trip with a kettlebell over-head is potentially fatal.

Progression

Gradually increase your weight, volume and intensity. Failure to do so WILL lead to over-training and/or injury.

Master the basics

Learn and repeatedly train/practice your basic kettlebell exercises before moving to their advanced variations. The key principles and techniques can always be found here. As mentioned above, there are negative consequences for progressing forward too rapidly.

Awareness of body alignment and movement mechanics

For each lift, make sure you are aware of the proper alignment, mechanics and groove (trajectory of bell). Small details can have a significant impact on your performance and safety.

Hand Care

Due to the friction and high repetitions associated with many of the lifts, the hands will develop calluses and potential tears. To remedy this, utilize a nail file to keep the calluses smooth (so the bell doesn’t “catch” on them) and invest in a good hand lotion. We recommend a product called **“Working Hands”**. This can be found at Lowe’s in the paint department. You can also purchase online [here](#).

Different Kettlebell Methodologies

- Kettlebell for general fitness
- Kettlebell sport
- Kettlebell juggling
- Kettlebell for specific sports/activities

General Movement Mechanics

Ballistic lifts

Exercises involving a high degree of movement, inertia and *fluid* explosiveness – the swing, clean, jerk, long cycle and snatch.

High tension lifts

Exercises involving less inertia and higher degrees of tension – the squat, military press and most of the core lifts.

Tension Regulation

The ability to monitor and apply differing degrees of tensions during a lift significantly affects variables such as strength, endurance and work capacity. As an example, successfully pressing a maximal weight requires a high degree of tension. However, using that same degree of tension in an exercise designed to build work capacity (ex. timed snatch sets) is counter-productive.

Breathing

Paradoxical breathing

This is the type of breathing we are exposed to via conventional fitness methodologies. This involves inhaling and pressurizing on the eccentric part of the movement and exhaling during or at the top of the concentric part of the movement. Breathing in this manner creates pressure in the thoracic cavity which protects the spine. This method is best used when lifting maximal weights and/or acclimating to a new exercise.

Example: Squat – inhale on the way down and exhale on the way up. Note: those with high blood pressure should check with a doctor before using this type of breathing.

Anatomical (Matching) breathing

Anatomical breathing is performed in a manner opposite of what is outlined above and is ideal for high repetition lifting over longer durations of time. Example – performing the competition lifts for a 10 min time period. Breathing in this manner has been shown to help control heart rate and thus improve performance. In the exercise section, we will outline how you should breathe during each portion of the lift. For the time being though, it's important to note that breathing correctly is a BIG deal. This has a dramatic effect on your performance and safety if done correctly or incorrectly.

Key Principles

Work Capacity

Although kettlebells can be used for developing maximal strength to some degree, they are best utilized as a tool for developing work capacity. In other words, strength endurance – the ability to work with sub-maximal loads for extended periods of time. Example - doing 100 consecutive jerks in 10 min with the 24kg bells.

Pacing

Linked to the idea of work capacity is the concept of pacing. In order to advance to longer sets, pacing is a must. As an example, if you perform 25 snatches per minute with a descent size bell, lasting the entire 10 minutes is unlikely (unless of course you are a world class k-bell lifter).

However, if you avoid “sprinting” and do 12-15 repetitions per minute instead, your chances are much better.

Volume

As it pertains to kettlebells, volume refers to the number of repetitions we do during a specific time period (ex. how many repetitions during a workout). Higher volume work is congruent with our approach to kettlebell training for two reasons. First, it’s practice/skill development - the higher the volume, the more practice you get. Of course, the quality of each individual repetition is critical as well. Perfect practice leads to perfect technique, but thousands of sloppy rep’s will reinforce poor mechanics.

Second, it’s a critical variable in developing working capacity (mentioned above). If your goal is 100 repetitions in a particular competition lift, your volume in training must reflect and exceed that.

Intensity

Intensity is a measure of the work you are doing in a unit of time. Variables such as weight of the k-bell, length of the set, recovery time, volume, leverage, etc determine whether intensity is high or low. To illustrate, if you are currently doing 32kg x 20 reps x 5 sets in the jerk with a 2 minute recovery time between sets, you could increase intensity by increasing the weight of the bells, increasing reps/sets, increasing pace (reps per min) and/or decreasing recovery time between sets. Below is an example:

Jerk:

32kg’s x 20 reps (10 reps per min) x 5 sets with a 2 minute recovery time between sets = 14,080lbs of work in 20 min

To increase the intensity in this example, we will shorten the recovery time.

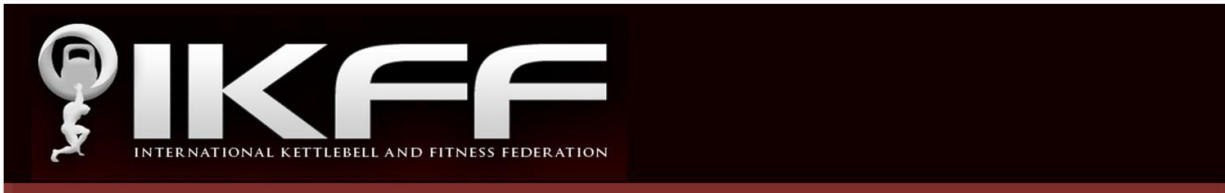
Jerk:

32kg’x 20 reps (10 reps per min) x 5 sets with a 1 minute recovery time = 14,080lbs of work in 15 min.

Note: Progress should be gradual. Variables like intensity and volume need to be cycled within the week, month etc. Failure to do so, leads to over-training and/or injury. It’s very important you are aware of how all these variables relate and influence one another. We will expand on this in the section on program design.

Primary movers vs. secondary movers

With the following exercises, it’s important to think of the body as a team. Rather than trying to isolate specific muscle groups, it’s important to divide the work amongst multiple body parts – most notably the legs, hips and back. These are the primary movers of the body and thus the most efficient. Arms would be a secondary mover. Due to their limited work capacity, their involvement should be minimal.



Dynamic Warm-Up and Joint Mobility

Due to the dynamic and intense nature of kettlebell training, we can't emphasize enough the importance of a thorough and applicable warm-up. This is necessary to increase the body's core temperature and lubricate the joints via activating the synovial flow. We recommend a minimum of 10-15 min before every workout. Ideally, follow your workouts with an additional 10-15 min to speed recovery, lessen soreness etc. For examples of various warm-up and mobility exercises, visit our IKFF You Tube Channel [here](#).

Section 3 Kettlebell Exercises

The below exercises are described in such a manner so that you understand the following:

1. Benefits
2. Mechanics and alignment
3. Breathing
4. Groove (trajectory of the bell)
5. Assistance exercises
6. How your performance will be evaluated

NOTE: In regard to the last point on evaluation, the criteria will be the same regardless of the exercise. Your performance will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Body alignment/mechanics
2. Proper breathing
3. Groove (trajectory of the bell)

NOTE: In regard to breathing, assume the following for all exercises:

When dealing with maximal/heavy weights, paradoxical breathing is typically the best choice. It creates pressure in the thoracic cavity, protects the spine and assists in generating high levels of tension. This is also a good match for beginners while acclimating to the exercises. Keep in mind that "maximal" and "heavy" are relative terms. For some, an 8kg bell is heavy. For others, a 32kg bell is light.

However, when dealing with sub-maximal weights and once the lifter has acclimated to the movements, anatomical breathing is a better match. As mentioned earlier, it's more efficient and helps control/manage your heart rate which in turns facilitates improved performance on multiple levels.

Swing

The swing is the foundational exercise in kettlebell training. It teaches the key motions and principles utilized in many of the other exercises – most notably the ballistic movements.

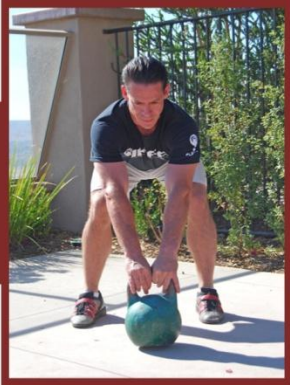
Benefits

Develops strength endurance (work capacity) and core strength. From a functional movement stand-



point, it teaches hip extension, how to produce & reduce force and linking the upper body and lower together into one unit.

Two Handed Swing



One Handed Swing – Front View



One Handed Swing – Side View





Description

Mechanics and Alignment

- For one handed swings, grab the corner of the bell utilizing a finger under thumb grip. For the two handed swings, the positioning of bell in the hands is obvious/straightforward
- Keep the knees in alignment with the feet
- For the downswing and upswing, head is in a neutral position.
- Utilize quadruple extension on upswing – ankles, knees, hips and torso
- Torso “follows” the bell on the downswing to reduce grip fatigue and improve flexibility/mobility
- Relax the arms – let the leg, hips and back do all the work. This should be a fluid motion – not rigid.
- Swing the bell to chest level
- At the top of the motion, lean the body back, elevate the shoulder via the traps and rise up on the toes.
- Time the lowering of the shoulder and toes on the downswing to help de-accelerate the bell and preserve the grip
- Remember to “actively” back-swing the bell between the legs to gain acceleration and develop flexibility in the posterior chain

Groove

- Visualize the bell as coming up/down and out a chimney. Leaning the body back at the top of the motion described above helps facilitate this. Another good visual is the letter “J”. This shows there is both a vertical and circular component to the trajectory/path of the bell.

Breathing

- Paradoxical – Inhale on the downswing, exhale on the upswing. This is applicable with beginners and/or utilizing heavy weights.
- Anatomical – **Variation 1:** exhale on the downswing, inhale on the upswing. **Variation 2:** exhale once at the back of the downswing, exhale again at the beginning of the upswing (no inhale in between) and then inhale at the top of the swing. You will notice that the double exhale creates a naturally strong and automatic inhalation

Assistance Exercises/drills

- *Active downswing drill* – Partner facilitates an active downswing by pushing the bell down/through the legs of the lifter. This ensures the lifter will follow the bell with the torso and learn how to create energy for the upswing from the downswing
- *Follow the bell with the eyes drill* – This will reinforce following the bell with the torso and maintaining a neutral head position.
- *Swing in front of a wall drill* – Lifters does the swing with a wall in close proximity to the front. This teaches proper groove.

Clean

The kettlebell clean is both a stand-alone exercise and the transitional point for the jerk, long cycle and pressing. This transitional point is commonly referred to as the “rack position”.

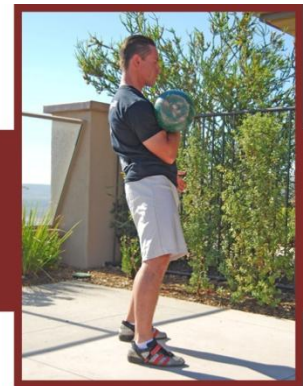
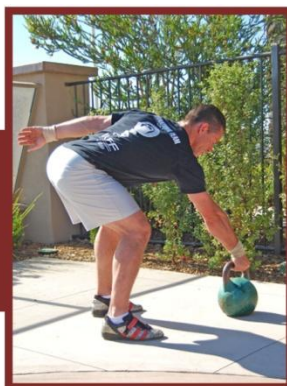
Benefits

Develops strength endurance, work capacity and core strength. From a functional movement standpoint, it teaches hip extension, how to produce & reduce force and link the upper body and lower together into one unit. The rack portion of the clean is useful for improving shoulder flexibility and teaching the body to relax while under load.

Clean – Front View



Clean – Side View





Description

Mechanics and Alignment

- Review the key points of the swing
- Grab the corner of the bell utilizing the finger under the thumb grip
- Head is in a neutral position
- Remember to utilize quadruple extension – ankles, knees, hips and torso
- Remember to have an “active” hand. This will facilitate bell coming around hand/wrist vs. over the top
- Once in the racked position, the bell rests in the triangle of the forearm and bicep. Although dependent on body type, the ideal is to bring the elbow to the iliac crest of the hip to gain maximum rest/leverage. The bell should rest on an angle from the inside of the thumb to the lower palm to reduce forearm fatigue. The hands can be open or in a “false grip” position while in the rack. Legs are locked, hips are forward, thoracic spine is rounded and there should be little, if no space, between the outside of the wrist and bell
- At the beginning of the downswing, remember to elevate shoulder and toes to help absorb the force of the downswing and spare the grip

Groove

- Visualize the bell as coming up/down and out a chimney. Leaning the body back as described above helps facilitate this. Another good visual is the letter J. This shows there is both a vertical and circular component to the trajectory/path of the bell.
- Bell travels up/down the body’s centerline. A common mistake is to clean out and away from the body’s centerline.

Breathing

- Paradoxical – inhale on the downswing, exhale on the upswing. This is applicable with beginners and/or utilizing heavy weights.
- Anatomical – Variation 1: exhale on the downswing, inhale on the upswing, exhale as bell lands in rack. Take a deep inhale as you elevate shoulder and rise up on toes before starting next downswing. Variation 2: Same as above but with the double exhalation described in the swing section.

Assistance Exercises/drills

- *Active downswing drill* – Partner facilitates an active downswing by pushing the bell down/through the legs of the lifter. This ensures the lifter will follow the bell with the torso and learn how to create energy for the upswing from the downswing
- *Follow the bell with the eyes drill* – This will reinforce following the bell with the torso and maintaining a neutral head position.
- *Clean in front of a wall drill* – Lifter does the swing with a wall in close proximity to the front. This teaches proper groove.
- *Clean to the side of the wall drill* – like above, but perform drill with the side of your body in close proximity to a wall. As mentioned above, this helps correct the common mistake of cleaning out/away from the body's centerline.

Pressing

Kettlebell pressing is unique in that the dimensions of the bell make it more challenging yet more stable when compared to dumbbell pressing. Although there is a constant “pulling” of the weight from the centerline (good for core and stabilization muscles), the bell sits very secure on the wrist/forearm. This later part facilitates higher volume work and thus better conditioning.

Benefits

A great exercise for conditioning the arms, shoulders, back and core. Due to the minimal degree of movement in this lift, it is also an excellent tool for teaching the proper hand position, shoulder position and over-head aligned used in more advanced lifts (ex. the snatch and jerk).

The *push press* is an excellent conditioner for the whole body. This involves a shallow squat/extension before pressing. It also functions as a beginning progression for teaching the jerk and assists in acclimating to a heavier bell before attempting a strict press with that same weight.

Pressing – Front View



Pressing - Side View



Description

Mechanics and Alignment

- Start from the rack position (review clean section)
- As you press the bell up, keep the forearm vertical
- Keep the shoulder locked/spiraled into socket
- Keep the legs locked unless doing the push press variation
- Utilize a chest/thoracic bump to initiate the press
- Ensure the bell is resting across the hand at a 45 degree angle
- Ensure the shoulder is rotated in medially at a 45 degree angle in the top position
- Raise the shoulder and toes before lowering to help de-accelerate the bell and absorb the impact as it returns to the rack position
- When performing high volume pressing, relax whenever possible to preserve energy and increase reps/work capacity
- When pressing heavy weights, generate high levels of tension in the following areas to improve power, stability and safety – glutes, abdominals, grip (hands) and lats.

Groove

- Bell travels up/down the body's centerline. Again, you can think of the visual of keeping the bell in the "chimney".

Breathing

- Paradoxical – inhale on lowering and exhale on extension. Again, this is for beginners and/or using maximal weights.
- Anatomical – inhale and you press the bell up, exhale on lockout, take in a deep inhale before lowering and exhale as the bell lands in the rack position. For the push press, the same as above except include an exhale as you go into the knee dip prior to the press.

Assistance Exercises/drills

- *Pressing next to a wall drill* – This reinforces the proper groove (keeps the arm from flaring out to the side)
- *One legged pressing drill* – useful for teaching how to press without the assistance of the legs
- *Lean forwards* – Great exercise from Coach Denis Kanygin. Start with one or two bells in the overhead position. From here, bring the chest and head forward as the bell and hips go to the

rear while the legs remained locked. This teaches a posture that is congruent with utilizing skeletal vs. muscle support and also decreases the range of motion used in many of the lifts.

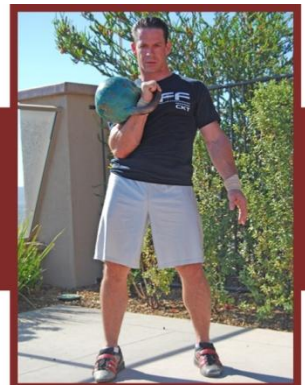
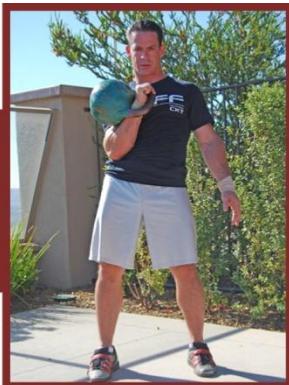
Jerk

The jerk is one of three events in kettlebell sport competition. Women compete with one bell, men compete with two. This movement is combined with the snatch in the “biathlon” event. The jerk total and snatch total are added together to determine placing.

Benefits

Develops work capacity, structural integrity, flexibility and is an excellent exercise for developing explosiveness in a vertical plane using a short range of motion.

Jerk – Front View





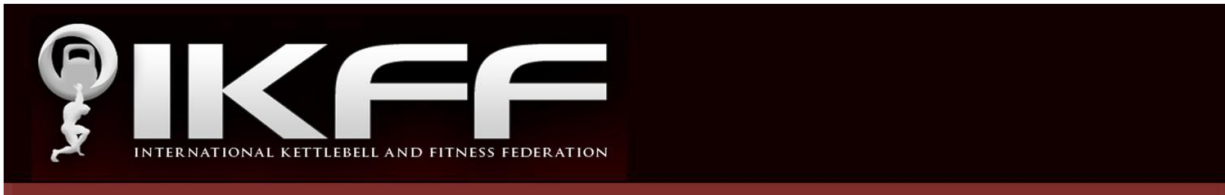
Jerk – Side View



Description

Mechanics and Alignment

- After cleaning the bell to the racked position, the bell is accelerated overhead via an explosion of the legs and back. This commonly referred to as the “bump”
- As you drop into first knee dip prior to bump, keep the elbows connected to the torso/hips. A common mistake is to let the elbows float during this phase of the lift
- After using your initial leg drive to bump the bells upward, add in a second knee dip to get under the weight and lock the elbows. In order for a rep to be considered “legal”, the arms must be locked while in the second knee dip
- The upward movement is finalized with the arms and legs locked
- Arm and hand position in the rack is consistent with what is described in the clean
- Overhead position is the same as in the press – bells is at a 45 degree angle in the hand and the shoulder is rotated in medially at a 45 degree angle. In addition, many lifters lean into the bells – chest is forward, hips are back and legs are locked.
- Before bringing the bells down to the rack, elevate the shoulders and toes to de-accelerate the bells and cushion the impact



Groove

- Again, think of the chimney analogy – bells travel up the centerline in close proximity to the body

Breathing

- Anatomical – exhale as you drop into the first knee dip, inhale as you bump the bells up, exhale in the overhead position, take a deep inhale as you raise the toes/shoulders up before bringing the bells down, exhale as the bells land in the rack.

Assistance Drills

- *Bump” drill* – bump the bells to chest or face level via the initial leg/thoracic drive. Focus on fully extending the knees and hips, coming up on the toes and using the thoracic spine to bump the ribcage and bells upwards. To see a video example of this, click [here](#).
- *Chest only bump drill* – Same as above but minus the leg involvement
- *Doorway drill* – stand in a doorway and come up on the toes, fully extend the knees/hips with the chest pointing upwards at approx. 45 degrees. Arms should be bent and hands are pressed up against the top of the doorway. This is your starting position. From here, drop quickly with your chest/head coming forward, your hips sinking to the rear, your heels driving down into the ground and your arms locking out. This drill is used to practice/simulate the second knee dip of the jerk. Of course, it can be done with any fixed object overhead – examples: low ceiling, partners hand, bar etc.
- *Lockout walks* – Another Coach Kanygin inspired drill helps lifters acclimate to the feel of the second knee dip position. With the bell overhead, sink into the second knee dip (chest/head forward, hips back, legs bent) and walk around. In addition to building familiarity with this posture, it’s also an excellent drill for endurance in the overhead position
- *Lean forwards* – start with one or two bells in the overhead position. From here, bring the chest and head forward as the bell and hips go to the rear while the legs remained locked. This teaches a posture that is congruent with utilizing skeletal vs. muscle support and also decreases the range of motion used in many of the lifts.
- *Bodyweight jerks* – Since this movements tends to me amongst the most challenging k-bell exercises to learn, it’s often useful to start out doing the motion minus the Kettlebells
- *Jump squats* – This is done with a barbell to develop explosiveness in the “bump”. With the barbell resting on the upper back, squat down and jump up explosively. Don’t leave the ground but do come up on the toes. Perform for higher reps.
- *Heavy one arm jerks* – To build conditioning and stability in the over-head position

Long Cycle

The Long Cycle is another competition lift and involves a clean plus a jerk. This is an extremely demanding exercise and thus yields great all-around results. Women compete with one bell and Men compete with two. This is a stand alone event (score is not coupled with numbers from another lift)

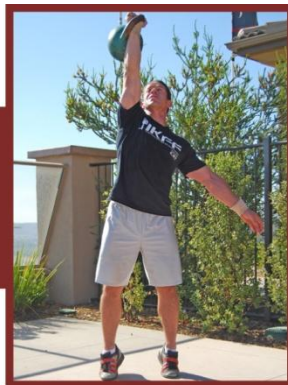
Benefits

Develops every attribute on the athletic continuum - strength, endurance, flexibility, balance, explosiveness, etc. The Long Cycle has all the benefits of both the clean and jerk. As a result, this exercise is consistently referenced as one of the most complete full body exercises in existence as it works all the muscles of the legs as well as all the push/pull muscles of the upper body.



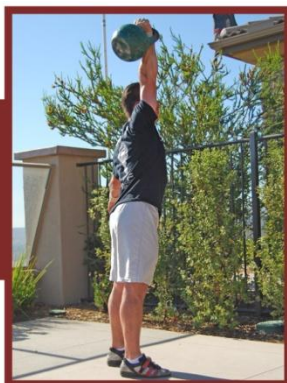
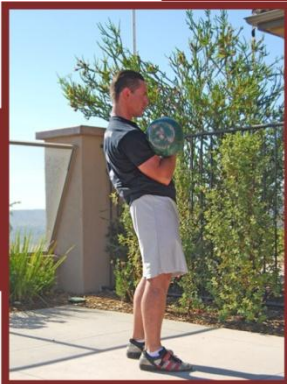
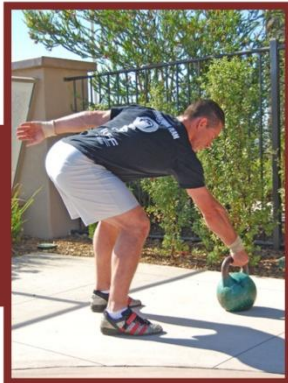
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INTERNATIONAL KETTLEBELL AND FITNESS FEDERATION

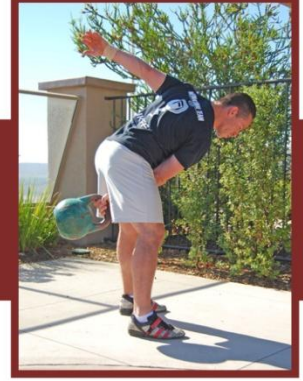
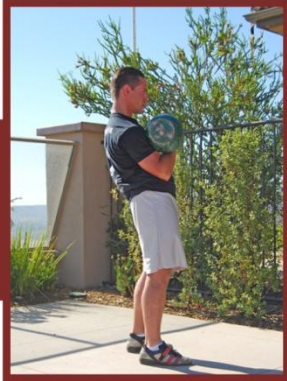
Long Cycle – Front View





Long Cycle – Side View





Description

Mechanics and Alignment

- Review the individual sections on both the clean and jerk
- Make the transition between the clean and jerk as smooth as possible. Thus, concentrate on cleaning to the racked position with as little adjustment as possible before every jerk. Any unnecessary motions/corrections wastes energy and effects your pace

Groove

- Again, think of the chimney. Bells travel in close proximity to the body and its centerline.

Breathing

- Anatomical – Inhale as you clean the bells for the first repetition, exhale as they land in the rack, take a recovery breath if needed, exhale as you drop into first knee dip, inhale as the bell travel up, exhale as you lock legs to finalize the rep. Take a deep inhale as you rise up on the shoulder and toes, exhale as the bells land in the rack, inhale as you rise up on the toes/shoulders as you begin to drop bells from the rack, exhale at the back of the downswing and then again as the upswing swing begins. This will force an inhale as the clean continues up and then exhale as you land in the rack again.

Assistance Drills

- Review the assistance drills in the individual sections on the clean and jerk
- Heavy double cleans – this will enhance strength and work capacity in this segment of the lift
- Heavy double swings –An excellent all around conditioner for the Long Cycle. There are no breaks and thus no way to really pace this exercise.

Snatch

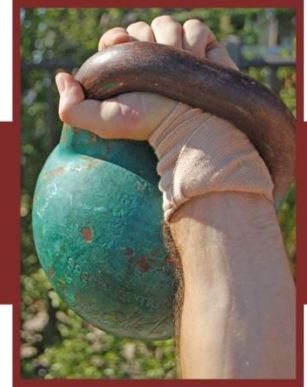
As mentioned above, the snatch and jerk are combined together in the biathlon event. Both men and women compete with one bell.

Benefits

The snatch, like many of the other ballistics lifts, develops strength, explosiveness, endurance, work capacity and core strength. Like the long cycle, this is a full body exercise that teaches the body to effectively produce/reduce force and significantly improves grip strength & endurance.



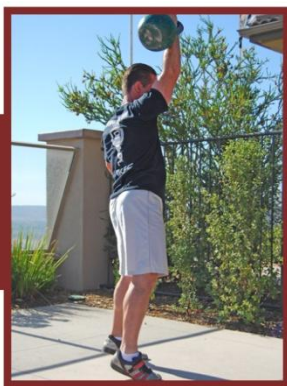
Snatch – Front View



Snatch – Front View (With Knee Second Knee Dip)



Snatch – Side View (With Second Knee Dip)



Description

Mechanics and Alignment

- Review the key points of the swing
- Grab the corner of the bell and ensure you have the index finger tucked under the thumb
- The motion is like a swing, but the bell continues to accelerate upward and locks out overhead
- Remember the quadruple extension on the upswing – ankles, knees, hips and torso
- On the upswing, make sure to punch through the bell or let it roll (corkscrew) around the forearm at the top to minimize impact
- If working with a heavier bell, you can implement a second knee dip just like in the jerk.
- At the top of the motion, the hand/shoulder position is identical to the jerk
- Before you begin the downswing, elevate the shoulder and toes (this will help absorb force/save grip), rotate the bell around the wrist and begin downswing with thumb up. At the bottom of the downswing, many will rotate the thumb backwards to help with grip de-loading.
- Remember to have an active downswing – this facilitates a stretch reflex in the hamstring and glutes which in turn gives your upward drive an elastic/rubber band effect.

Groove

- Again, think of the chimney. Bells travel in close proximity to the body and its centerline.

Breathing

- Starting from lockout, take in a deep inhale as you elevate the toes and shoulder and begin to downswing bell. Exhale at the back of the downswing and again at the beginning of the upswing. Inhale as the bell continues upwards and exhale at lockout. At the top, you can take recovery breaths as well.

Assistance Drills

- *Snatch in front of wall drill* – Like the swing and clean, this reinforces the proper groove
- *Snatch to the side of the wall drill* – like above but standing to the side vs. in front of a wall
- *Active downswing drill* – Like the swing and clean, this ensures the downswing produces energy for the upswing
- *Eyes on the bell during the downswing drill* – This facilitates a neutral head position
- *Lockout walks* – This drill helps lifters acclimate to the feel of the second knee dip position. With the bell overhead, sink into the second knee dip (chest/head forward, hips back, legs bent) and walk around. In addition to building familiarity with this posture, it's also an excellent drill for endurance in the overhead position
- *Pressing and one arm jerks* (ensures practice of good hand/shoulder position)
- *Heavy swings* – builds grip endurance minus the hand trauma (tears)

Squatting

Regardless of the workout ideology, the squat is universally accepted as a valuable tool in any athlete's or everyday person's training arsenal.

Benefits

Develops strength, muscle mass and all around conditioning for the legs and core muscles. In addition, when done through a full range of motion, the squat is an excellent tool for loosening the hips and improving mobility.

Single Bell Squat



Racked Squat



Overhead Squat



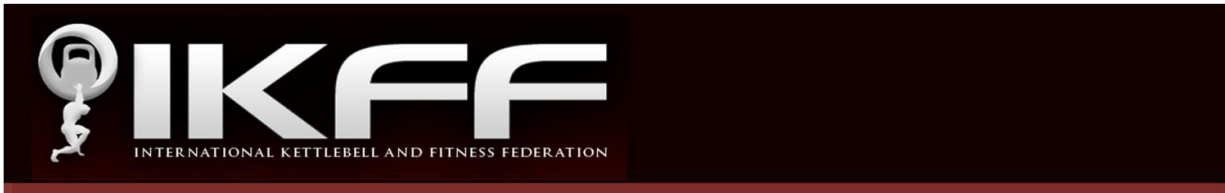
Description

Mechanics & Alignment

- On the descent, move the hips to rear as if sitting in a chair
- Descend into a rock bottom squat so that the hamstrings are touching the calves
- Keeping the weight on the heels, drive the hips up and forward until lockout - this involves fully extending the hips and knees
- To ensure stability and safety, keep the glutes and abs tense through the full range of motion
- For the overhead variation, it may be necessary to turn the torso and drop the shoulder (not holding the bell) to some degree to compensate for a lack of spinal and hip mobility

Assistance Drills

- *Deck squat* – Roll back and roll forward so you can use momentum as an aid in learning to squat from the bottom position. It also helps deactivate the “falling reflex” which prevents some from dropping down into a full squat
- *Box squats* – Utilize a box to reduce range of motion. Great drill for beginners



- *Wall squats* – stand in front of a wall and perform squats. This facilitates proper posture
- *Over-head squats with bar/band over-head* – same as above but with bar or band overhead to improve shoulder, spine and hip mobility.
- *Hip flexor activation drill* – partner pulls legs as you resist. Teaches the lifter how to activate the hip flexors/actively pull themselves down into the squat
- *Splits drill with partner* – two partners actively pull legs apart of the lifter in a manner that resembles a split. This teaches the lifter how to relax/open up the hips

Section 4 Coaching

The IKFF approach to fitness can be described as balanced. We want to give you a number of tools to draw from so that you and your clients don't just look good, but also possess a diverse set of athletic attributes – strength, stamina, explosiveness, flexibility/mobility, work capacity, agility and the list goes on.

Our goal for our certifications is no different – we want you to not only understand the exercises, but also understand how to teach these movements in a safe and effective manner.

In this section, we will focus on three important aspects of the coaching process:

- Assessing abilities, limitations and goals
- Understanding the different styles of learning
- Program design

Assessment

Before any type of direct instructions begins, we strongly urge you to do a thorough assessment with your client. You want to gather a high level snap-shot of the following:

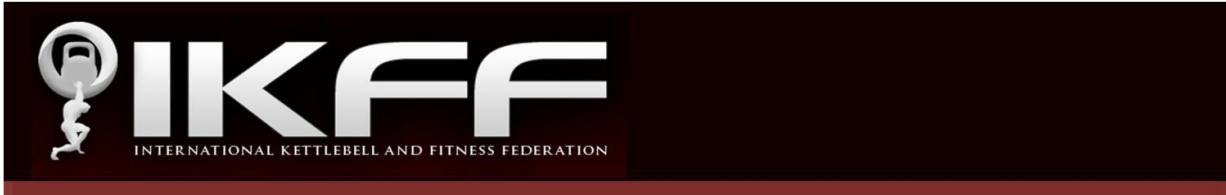
- What are their short term, mid-term and long term goals?
- What is their movement ability?
- Lifestyle/other variables - motivations, sleep patterns, nutritional habits etc.

In regard to assessing movement ability, we strongly recommend doing some type of movement screen. We will have a detailed article on this on the website very soon from our Functional Movement Specialist Bob Budai.

For assessing goals and lifestyle variables, we strongly suggest not only talking with your client but having them complete a questionnaire as well.

Another important area to assess is what type of learning style your client most closely identifies with. The three primary learning styles are:

- Visual learners (learn by watching)
- Auditory learners (learn by listening)
- Kinesthetic learners (learn by doing)



Most people tend to have a dominant style of learning but use all three to some degree. Thus, we recommend utilizing the below process:

- Describe the movement
- Demonstrate the movement
- Describe the movement again with a focus on key points
- Have them do the movement

Of course, you will develop your own coaching style over time, but the above will at least give you a general framework to work from.

Program Design

Entire books have been written on this topic, so what we will try to provide here is a high level overview and some examples.

Basics

Due to the influence of bodybuilding, much of the focus tends to be on training muscles. Although awareness of anatomy is important, we focus on training **movements**. Below is a list of movements that should be part of any program design:

- Upper body – Vertical push
- Upper body – Horizontal push
- Upper body – Vertical pull
- Upper body – Horizontal pull
- Lower body – push
- Lower body – pull
- Core – conventional
- Core – rotational

Another variable that needs to be considered in program design is what you/ your client's goals are. Below is a quick summation of how to train for specific goals:

Strength

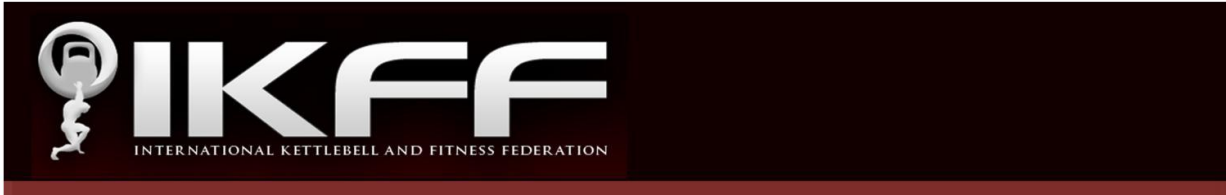
- Weight: heavy
- Reps: low (1→5)
- Sets: high (5 → 10)

Mass

- Weight: moderately heavy
- Reps: high (6 →15)
- Sets: moderate (3 →5)

Cardio

- Weight: light
- Reps: very high (15 →)
- Sets: multiple circuits



Work capacity (Competition)

- Weight: light to moderate
- Reps: high to very high (50 → 200 +)
- Sets: Timed (5min →20+)

Structuring the Individual Workout

In terms of structuring the actual workout, below is a general outline:

- Warm-up/Joint mobility.
- Primary goal/exercises
- Assistance work
- Core work
- Recovery work – qigong, stretching etc.

Training for Kettlebell Sport

When training for kettlebell sport, there tends to be two general approaches:

1. Time based training
2. Volume based training

These two approaches are not mutually exclusive. They can be integrated to a degree.

Time Based Training – Like the name implies, this approach is centered around the variable of time. The goal is to progressively do longer and longer sets until you reach 10 minutes. Once you reach 10 minutes, you then starting building volume/reps per min. 10 minutes is used as a benchmark since that is the time allotted during a k-bell competition. As an example, below is what a time based jerk workout may look like.

Warm-up & Mobility Work: 10-15 min

Jerks

32kg x 8 min x 8 reps per min

32kg x 6 min x 5 reps per min

32kg x 5 min x 5 reps per min

More advanced lifters would follow this with various assistance exercises. As an example:

One arm jerks

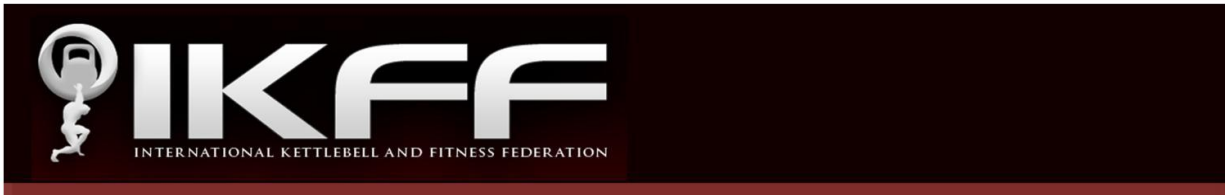
40kg x 2 min per arm x 2 sets

Jump Squats

315 x 50 x 3 sets

Light cardio – 30 min

Mobility work/stretching: 15-20 min



A progression may look like this:

Week 1-2: 32kg x 3 sets of 5 min

Week 3-4: 32kg x 1 set of 6 min, x 2 sets of 5 min

Week 5-7: 32kg x 1 set of 8 min, x 2 sets of 5 min

And so on...

Benefits of this approach

- It simulates competition
- It conditions the "rack position"
- Teaches proper "pacing"
- Develops structural integrity due to the longer periods of time under load
- Can be high intensity. Example – an 8 min set is a lot of work in a short amount of time. As a result, you have to be aware of over-training/CNS burnout with this approach. Too many longer sets in a week will catch up with you very quick.
- Develops mental toughness

Drawbacks of this approach

- It's rack focused – if you don't have the ideal anatomy, volume and progress is limited due to the quick fatigue the rack produces
- Even with a good rack, volume is lower than when compared to other approaches
- It tends to promote bad technique to a certain degree in those with less than ideal racks - as your rack fatigues, the quality of your reps decreases.

Volume Based Training – This is the opposite of time based training to a degree. The goal is to progressively build volume, and although time is always a variable, it's secondary in this approach. Below is an example of a volume based jerk workout.

Warm Up & Mobility Work: 10-15 min

Jerks

32kg x 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 13, 11, 9, 7, 5, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17

More advanced lifters would follow this with various assistance exercises. As an example:

Bumps

32kg x 3 sets of 100 reps.

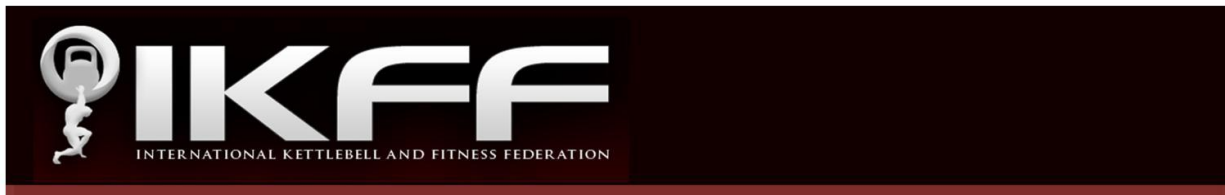
K-bell Squats

32kg x 10 reps x 5 sets

Light cardio – 30 min

Mobility work/stretching: 15-20 min

A progression would involve gradually adding repetitions and/or sets over time. Intensity can also be increased by doing the same/more work with less recovery time between sets.



Benefits of This Approach

- Improves technique via the higher volume yet shorter sets. The fatigue within a set is lower, and as a result, the quality of the rep is typically higher
- The rack position is not a limiting factor like it is with timed sets. Thus, this approach tends to be well suited to bigger athletes/those with less than ideal rack positions
- The higher volume is ideal for improving overall/general conditioning
- Develops mental toughness

Drawbacks of This Approach

- It does not simulate competition to the same degree as the timed approach
- Workouts tend to be 60 min to 90 min in length. Thus, if you have a busy schedule, there may be some conflicts with your lifestyle
- As with the timed approach, over-training is a very real possibility if you push to hard and/or don't get enough rest and good nutrition

Integrating the Two

As mentioned, both of these approaches have benefits. You can integrate them to a certain degree. As an example, I could do 5 sets of 20 reps with the 32kg bells (volume approach) and ensure that I pace each set out at 8-10 reps per min (timed approach). Of course, you can only take this so far – if you tried to do 10 x 8 min sets, you would end up severely over-trained.

Test Day

If you are going to compete in kettlebell sport, it's important you have a test day where you simulate what you will experience in competition. Ideally, it makes sense to make this on the same day/time as you would compete. Thus, if your competition is on Saturday and you will be on the platform around mid-morning, it makes sense to do your test sets at the same time. It's also recommended that you do them in similar context – with people lifting next to you, people watching etc.

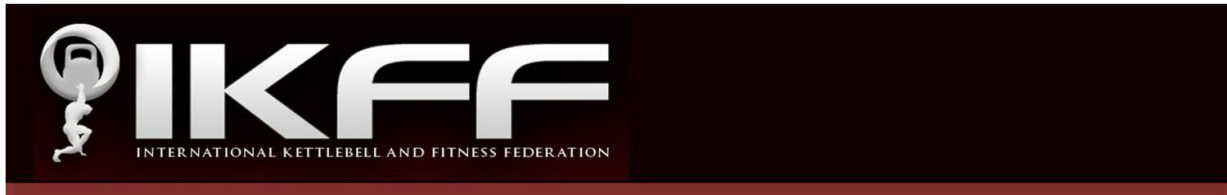
In terms of frequency, some recommend testing every week and others recommend testing once a month. We feel the former is too frequent and doesn't give enough time for progress between training sessions (leading to frustration/disappointment). The later may not be enough – if you only do one test set a month, it's difficult to become confident at something you do infrequently. Plus, it's good to get consistent feedback on where your numbers are at so you can make adjustments. So, as a solution, try a 7-8 minute set at the two week mark and a 10 minute set at the 4 week mark.

Basic Criteria in Designing Your Program

Determining which training program is best for you is dependent on a number of factors:

- Goals
- Lifestyle
- Recovery ability
- Sleep patterns
- Nutritional habits
- Stress levels
- Which program is most congruent with your mental/emotional make-up

Thus, to avoid injury and ensure you stick with your program, all of the above variables should be taken into account. As an example, if you can't sleep due to high stress levels and you dislike spending more



than 40 minutes in the gym, implementing a high volume/high intensity program may not be the best match for you.

Periodization

Periodization is an organized approach to training that involves progressive cycling of various aspects of a training program during a specific period of time. It is a way of alternating training to peak for a specific event, season etc.

With kettlebell lifting, it is recommended you cycle your training in some way to plan for a peak performance – whether it's a competition or a personal goal. This helps you avoid over-training and schedules a peak performance for a specific time. Good for the body and good for the mind.

Periodization can involve cycling on both a macro and micro levels. As an example, to train for a competition 6 months away, a general plan may be to start with strength training as a focus for 3 months and cycle into more kettlebell specific training for 3 months. Within each of these segments, I could have 4 week cycles where I progressively build towards a specific goal. Thus, the volume and intensity of the workouts would fluctuate within the month and the week to avoid over-training and ideally prepare the body to deliver a peak performance on a certain day. Below is an example of how training might look from a weekly and monthly stand point.

Mon = high intensity/high volume, Wed = high intensity/moderate volume, Fri = low intensity/low volume

Using a scale of 5-10 to measure volume/intensity:

Week 1 = 8, Week 2 = 10, Week 3 = 6, Week 4 = 5 (test day would be this week)

And due to our sport having multiple events, you can also cycle which exercise you work on which day. Example – Mon is Jerk day, Wed is snatch day etc.

Have a general plan of Attack

Regardless of your choice and how specific you want to be in your training, you need a general plan of attack on how you are going to accomplish your goal. We recommend:

1. Know the outcome you want
2. Take action
3. Have sensory acuity – be aware of whether you are moving towards or away from your goal
4. Be flexible – change your plan if necessary
5. Have a physiology and psychology of excellence – if you are negative and/or have poor nutritional and lifestyle habits, your chance of achieving your goals are minimized

Section 5

Developing Your Own Personal Training Business



Where to Start

1. Define your:
 - Mission statement – for help on this, visit this link([Mission statement builder](#))
 - Business model
2. Find a mentor/role model
3. Network with other successful trainers

Marketing Basics

1. Get a Website. (Contact Mike Eves if you need help)
2. Compile a contact list
3. Create fliers for upcoming events
4. Develop business cards
5. Send promotional e-mails
6. Develop a newsletter
7. Write an article for a publication
8. Set up an online Blog
9. Participate in online forums
10. Offer free demonstrations, lectures, seminars etc.
11. Produce an e-book
12. Sign-on with affiliate programs
13. Upload promotional/highlight videos to You Tube
14. Compete
15. Post workouts in online training logs
16. Help others!

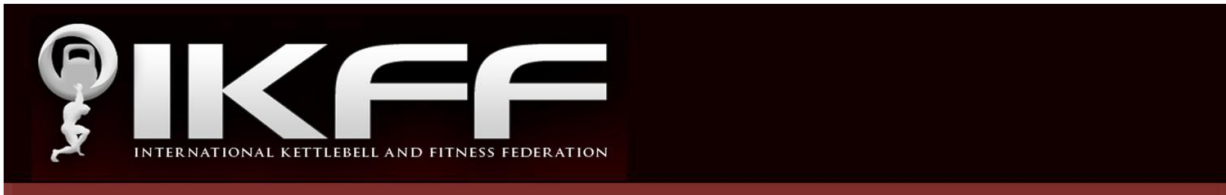
Section 6 Resources

We want to offer you as much post-certification support as possible. Below is information in regard to:

- Instructor Locator
- CKT Instructor Discount
- Online Forum
- Affiliate Program
- Media Page
- Social Media
- Steve's new book
- Course Manual
- IKFF Logo
- You Tube Channel

Instructor Locator: This is located on our website and provides visitors with a global breakdown of instructors, where they are located, contact information etc. Please contact Mike Eves to have your name listed:

- Name:
- Location: (city)
- E-mail:



- Website:
- Bio: (Brief – limit to one or two paragraphs)
- Picture: (face shot)

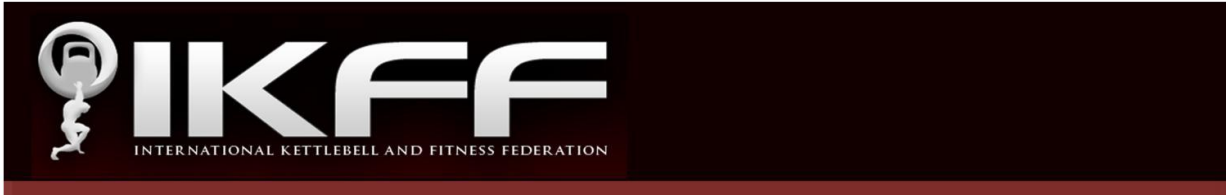
*If you are uncomfortable providing a picture, at least respond with the other information. At a bare minimum, provide your preferred contact info, website (if applicable) and your location information.

Online Forum - As mentioned above, we now have an online forum. Once you have completed the login process mentioned above, you will have immediate access. This is a great way to communicate with trainers from all over the world and interact with potential clients. You can easily post videos (videos play directly on the forum – no getting bumped to a new page), attach a picture to your profile (funny is okay but keep professional), send private messages from anywhere in the website and post your workouts. In regard to the later, this is a great way to get feedback from other coaches and top competitive lifters.

Media page – We are in the process of configuring/loading pictures from all the past courses. However, the video page is up! This pulls in the 50 most recent videos from our You Tube channel. We have clips related to nutrition, k-bell training, mobility, agility, k-bell sport and even some fun videos. Keep in mind, we are not professional comedians (with the exception of Jason Dolby ha ha), but that said, Steve wrestling in a bear outfit in Finland is pretty hilarious..ha ha

Social Media Integration – Throughout the website you will see links to our Facebook, Twitter and You Tube accounts. Please send us a friend request when you get a chance.

Steve's New Book – Steve's new book is available and ready to ship! You can find a link to this under the store tab or on the sidebar of virtually every page. If you are interested in bulk ordering/discount pricing, send me an e-mail and I can provide that for the books as well as all of Steve's DVD's.



Thanks again for the support and choosing to join the team!

**All the best,
Steve & Ken**

Questions – e-mail Ken at kenblackburn@ikff.net