

MUSCLE

BULLETIN®

Edited by Laura Roberson

THE EXERCISE EVERY ATHLETE MUST DO

The deadlift isn't just for powerlifters. Because it's a total-body exercise that builds strength, it can improve sports performance too, according to a new paper in *Strength and Conditioning Journal*. In fact, here are three variations of the classic move that can give you an edge on the court, the field, or even the slopes.



SUMO DEADLIFT

Roll a barbell against your shins and grab it using an overhand or mixed grip, your hands about 12 inches apart. Stand with your feet about twice shoulder-width apart and your toes pointed out. Bend at your hips and knees; without allowing your back to round, pull your torso up, thrust your hips forward, and stand up with the barbell. Lower the bar to the floor, keeping it as close to your body as possible.



SINGLE-ARM DEADLIFT

Place a dumbbell on the floor next to your right ankle. Bend at your hips and knees and grab the weight with your right hand. Without allowing your back to round, stand up with the dumbbell as you thrust your hips forward slightly. Lower the weight to the floor, and then repeat on your left side.

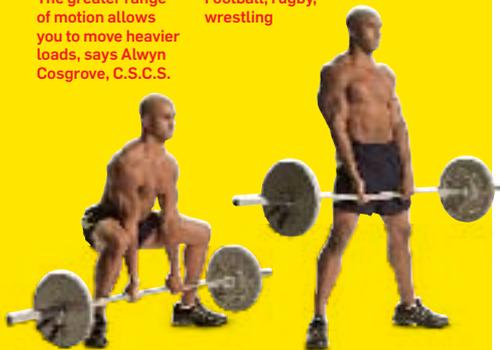


CLEAN PULL

With your feet shoulder-width apart, roll a barbell against your shins. Bend at your hips and knees and grasp the bar using a shoulder-width, overhand grip. Keeping your back naturally arched and your arms straight, pull the bar up by thrusting your hips forward, straightening your legs, rising on the balls of your feet, and shrugging your shoulders. Lower the bar to the floor, and repeat.

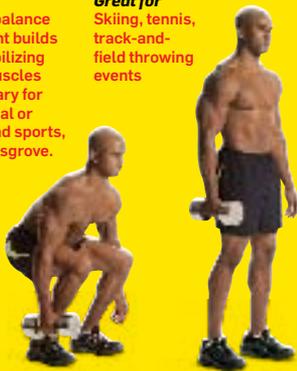
Benefit
The greater range of motion allows you to move heavier loads, says Alwyn Cosgrove, C.S.C.S.

Great for
Football, rugby, wrestling



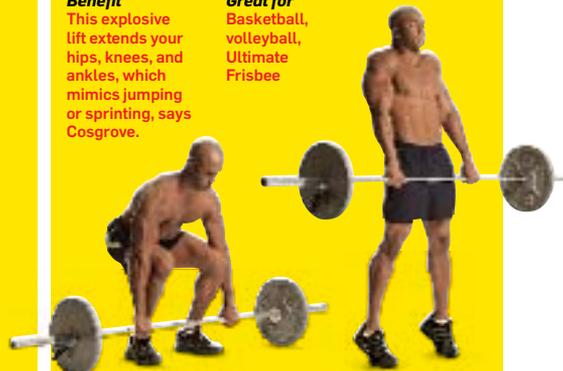
Benefit
The imbalance of weight builds the stabilizing core muscles necessary for rotational or overhead sports, says Cosgrove.

Great for
Skiing, tennis, track-and-field throwing events



Benefit
This explosive lift extends your hips, knees, and ankles, which mimics jumping or sprinting, says Cosgrove.

Great for
Basketball, volleyball, Ultimate Frisbee



WHY MUSCLES AND VODKA DON'T MIX

Skip the screwdriver: **Drinking alcohol after you lift may slow muscle recovery**, according to new research from New Zealand. In the study, men who drank vodka and OJ half an hour after lifting were weaker 2 days later than the lifters who hadn't. Alcohol may alter immune function, slowing tissue repair, says study author Matthew Barnes, Ph.D.(c). A full meal before drinking can limit the effect, he says.

DUMBBELLS OR DRUGS?

Biceps offer more than flex appeal: **Muscle reduces insulin resistance**, a red flag for diabetes, say UCLA scientists. They found that people with low muscle mass were 67 percent more likely to be insulin resistant than their brawnier counterparts. Without enough muscle, your body struggles to use insulin to regulate blood

sugar, which may trigger type 2 diabetes. Bulk up with this month's poster workout from Drew Brees's trainer.

LAT-PULLDOWN SECRET

Don't sweat the details: **When you do lat pulldowns, it doesn't matter how far apart or close together you place your hands**, say Penn State researchers. Turns out,

you activate your lats the same. Still, the way you grab the bar could make a difference. "Using an overhand grip puts you at a mechanical disadvantage compared with an underhand grip," says study author Daniel Russell, Ph.D. "And that forces your lats to work harder to move the same weight." Surprisingly, the scientists found no difference between grips for any other muscle groups, including the biceps.

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PERCENTAGE OF POWERLIFTERS WHO SAY THEY USE THE CLEAN PULL AS PART OF THEIR TRAINING ROUTINE

Source: *The Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*

Photographs by BETH BISCHOFF, grooming: Vassilis Kokkinds/Ford Artists NYC