

Benefits of the Deadlift. Deadlifts work your back, legs & forearms. Deadlifts don't develop your legs like [Squats](#) do: your [hips start higher](#). That's why you can substitute Squats for Deadlifts in case of [knee injuries](#).

- **Back Strength.** Your back stays straight while the weight of the bar tries to bend it. Keeping your back rigid builds back strength.
- **Leg Strength.** Bringing your hips forward strengthen your hamstrings & glutes. Straightening your knees strengthen your quads.
- **Grip Strength.** You need to grip the barbell hard so it doesn't roll out of your hands when doing Deadlifts. This builds forearms & grip strength.



Use small plates if needed to get the correct bar height for Deadlifts

Before You Deadlift. Basic stuff you need to know before you even think about trying to Deadlift with correct technique.

- **Bar Height.** Deadlifts start with the bar at mid-shin level. Put plates on the floor if you don't have/lack the strength to use 20kg plates.
- **Lifting Shoes.** Shoes with air or gel filling are compressible, impairing power transfer & stability. Wear shoes with hard soles. weightlifting shoes, socks or barefoot are better than running shoes.



Proper Deadlift Stance. Remember position of laces vs. bar. Note the toes out.

Setup for Deadlift. Don't move the bar to get into proper position. Walk to the bar & position your feet correctly. Then grab the bar & Deadlift.

- **Foot Stance.** Shoulder-width stance with toes slightly pointing out. Curl your toes up. Jump up a few times: that's the stance for Deadlifts.
- **Bar Position.** Bar should be 5 to 10cm (2-4") from your shins when standing. Remember the position of your laces under the bar.
- **Chest Up.** Make a big chest & lift it up. Pull your shoulders back. Keep this position at all time & your back will never be able to round.
- **Look Forward.** Looking down makes your back round. Looking to the ceiling can cause neck pain. Look forward during the whole lift.
- **Grip Width.** Too small & your hands touch your legs on the way up. Too wide & you have to pull the bar higher. Use about 51cm/20" grip width.
- **Gripping the Bar.** Put the bar close to your fingers, not in the palm of your hands. This will minimize [callus](#) formation & torn skin.
- **Straight Arms.** Deadlifting with bent arms can tear your biceps muscles. Keep your arms straight. Tighten your triceps.



Proper Grip for Deadlifts: bar close to the fingers, not in the palm of your hands.

Performing The Deadlift. Deadlift by pushing from the heels & bringing your hips forward. Not by pulling back with your lower back. If you Deadlift correctly, you'll feel most stress in your upper-back, glutes & hams.

- **Shoulder-blades over Bar.** Put your [shoulder-blades directly over the bar](#), shoulders in front of the bar. Your hips will be at the correct height.
- **Bar Against Shins.** Pull the bar up in a straight line. The closer the barbell to your shins, the better.
- **Push From The Heels.** Simple trick: curl your toes up. This automatically puts the weight on your heels.

- **Bar Close to You.** Keep the bar in contact with your body during the whole lift, rolling the bar over your shins & thighs. The closer the bar, the less stress on your lower back & the more weight you can Deadlift.
- **Squeeze Your Glutes.** Bring your hips forward by pushing from the heels & [squeezing your glutes](#) hard. This prevents pulling with the lower back.
- **Lock The Weight.** The Deadlift ends when your knees & hips are locked. No need to roll the shoulders or hyper-extend the lower back.

Bringing the Weight Down. Don't lose time bringing the weight down. Do it controlled but not slow. The rule: hips unlock first, then knees.

- **Chest Up, Look Forward.** Neglecting to do both will make your back round. Keep your chest up, shoulders back & look forward.
- **Bar Close to You.** Keep the bar in contact with your thighs until it reaches knee level. It's friendlier on your back.
- **First Hips, Then Knees.** Flex at the hips first to return the bar below knee level. Then bend at the knees until the bar is on the floor.



Deadlift hip position: shoulder-blades over the bar, shoulders in front of the bar.

Common Deadlift Errors. Common mistakes you need to avoid to minimize risks of injuries when doing Deadlifts.

- **Hips Too High.** Use your knees: it's not a Stiff-legged Deadlift. Put the bar against your shins with the shoulder-blades directly over the bar.
- **Bending Your Back.** Increases the pressure on your spine thus increasing risk of injury. Keep your chest up at all time & look forward.
- **Hyper-extending Your Back.** As bad as bending. The Deadlift ends when your hips & knees are locked. No need to arch at the top.
- **Rolling the Shoulders.** Dangerous & inefficient. Your hip muscles move the weight, not your shoulders. Extend your knees & hips, stop.
- **Shrugging at The Top.** Unnecessary. If you need more trap emphasis do shrugs or [Power Cleans](#).
- **Pulling with Bent Arms.** You could tear your biceps by pulling with bent arms. Keep your arms straight, tighten your triceps.

