

Swing, Squat, Sweat

8 Week, 24-Workout, Full Body Kettlebell Program You Can Do At Home

Designed to be scalable for all levels of experience

What You'll Need:

- a) (at least) 1 Kettlebell* + 1 Exercise mat + 1 Sturdy Chair, Bench or Couch
- b) About 45-60 minutes, 3x/ week for 8 weeks OR 2x/ week for 12 weeks
- c) [The Actual Program](#)
- d) That's it

What It Involves:

A Days: 8 Strength Workouts
B Days: 8 Circuit Workouts
C Days: 8 Conditioning Workouts

*Includes: Warm up for each workout, hyperlinked exercise demos
Optional Add-On: Virtual coaching sessions for kettlebell technique*

What You'll Develop:

Strength, Flexibility, Power, Aerobic Capacity, Technical Skills

About the Program

The single kettlebell focus was chosen as a direct response to the time in which this program is being created - March 2020, when COVID-19 has forced every gym in the United States and throughout the world to shut its doors. Many of us are doing our best to stay physically and mentally healthy under the circumstances, while limited by the primary barriers of small spaces, minimal equipment, and a tendency to feel inconsistent and aimless with training plans due to this sudden, unprecedented change. There are *thousands* of free, at-home workouts being posted online every single day, but I still hear friends say "I don't know what workout to do. I really miss when someone was writing my program for me." This program is my answer to all of the above.

About Me

I have been working with individuals and teams in the realm of fitness and performance since 2013, when I graduated from McGill University with a B.A. in Philosophy. I am a certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS), 200-Hour Yoga Instructor (RYT-200), Level 1 Olympic Weightlifting Coach (USAW-SP), CrossFit Coach (CF-L2) and Hardstyle Kettlebell Instructor (RKC).

How to Use this Program

There are a couple ways you could choose to approach this program. You may use it as your complete workout plan; or, if you are interested in 5-6 days per week of exercise, you may choose to supplement with other domains of fitness. There are many ways to break it up, and none of them are wrong. The most important thing is that you find a routine, level of activity (total volume and intensity), time and place that works for you. What works for you is largely dependent on your prior experience with exercise, your work, school or volunteer schedule, the demands placed on you by friends or family, how much sleep you get each night, and your recovery time frame (How quickly can your body recover from a workout? Do you need 12, 24, or 48 hours between workouts to feel energized, fresh and injury-free?). As you can see, this makes for huge variability in what works for any given person.

For example, I personally would approach the program as such, since I am used to more volume in my weekly routine:

Monday: KB Strength Day

Tuesday: Swim, Bike or Row Workout

Wednesday: KB Circuit Day

Thursday: Active Rest - Yoga/Stretch, Long Run

Friday: KB Conditioning Day

Saturday: Tempo or Interval Run

Sunday: Active Rest - Yoga/Stretch, Long Walk

A beginner exerciser's routine may look more like this:

Monday: KB Strength Day

Tuesday: 10-30 min Walk

Wednesday: KB Circuit Day

Thursday: Rest

Friday: KB Conditioning Day

Saturday: 30 min Run, Bike, Walk, Run or Swim

Sunday: Rest

What Weight Kettlebell Should I Buy?

Short Answer:

This is really going to vary by person. That said, the following is my best generalized response:

For women:

If you can choose three: #18, #35, and #44

If you can choose two: #18, #35

If you must choose one: #26 or #35

For men:

If you can choose three: #26, #35, #53

If you can choose two: #35, #53

If you must choose one: #35 or #44

If you already weight train, use your prior experience to choose a weight that feels good for you. If your home gym budget is flexible, grab two bells of each weight so you can do double up on movements!

(Bells are traditionally measured in kilos, so the # options may seem un-intuitive/confusing at first.)

Long Answer:

The question I get asked most frequently by aspiring kettlebell-users is: “What weight should I buy?” Unfortunately, this is hard for me to answer without having worked with you before. In an ideal world, you would have three or more kettlebells: one heavy (for deadlifting, two-arm swinging, etc.), one medium (for cleaning, snatching, lunging, squatting, etc.) and one light bell (for bottoms up presses, warm up, skill development, and technical work) . Each movement requires different muscle groups of varying strength, size and function, for which a different weight will be most appropriate to create the most effective stimulus without resulting in either zero training effect (on one side of the spectrum) or overuse/injury (on the other side of the spectrum).

On Regressions, Progressions and Modification Options

Throughout the program I will specify certain holds and progressions. Always use common sense and good judgement to modify up or down based on your level of strength, movement proficiency and equipment availability. If the program specifies “Lateral Lunge Front Rack Hold”, but you cannot currently get your hips parallel with your knee on a lateral lunge, or the movement feels wobbly and challenging at bodyweight, then eliminate the kettlebell and do the movement unloaded. As another example, if your bell is too heavy for a front rack hold for that particular movement, swap for a suitcase or goblet hold. Conversely, if you are highly proficient at lateral lunges, and you have two bells available, go for a double bell front rack lateral lunge. Always adjust the movement to your ability level and equipment limitations. Everything is scalable.

Hardstyle Kettlebell Training (in a nutshell)

The tenets of this program are based on [Hardstyle Kettlebell](#) training methodology as taught via the RKC ([Russian Kettlebell Challenge](#)) certification, which I achieved in June of 2017. Hardstyle is a term used in martial arts to describe techniques that meet force with force. In practice, this means being alternately explosive and relaxed throughout ballistic movements (like the swing and snatch) while using total body tension to get through grinding strength movements (like presses and squats). It relies on the effective practice of consistent, specific breathing techniques and focused, technical efforts. When done correctly, it results in an effective strength and conditioning program that increases strength, speed, flexibility and athleticism.

Hardstyle Kettlebell Training (in more depth)

According to the *RKC Instructor Manual* (a [Dragon Door](#) publication), pg.18:

“Most historians trace the recent popularity of the kettlebell as beginning in 1998 with the publication of an article by Pavel entitled “Vodka, Pickle Juice, Kettlebell Lifting and Other Russian Pastimes” in a publication called MILO: A Journal for Serious Strength Athletes. Pavel’s publisher, Dragon Door, proposed Pavel write a book and Dragon Door would start manufacturing cast-iron kettlebells in the United States.”

Since then, kettlebells have only continued to grow in popularity throughout the world - and for good reason: Kettlebell training is effective, efficient and simple. Great athletes move from their hips, and kettlebells are all about the hips.

Ballistic practice (swings, cleans, snatches) develop fast twitch fibers by means of explosive force production, resulting in strength gains despite training with lighter loads.

Classic strength movements (deadlift, squat, lunge, press, row, etc.) can be performed with significant challenge whether through anterior, overhead, bilateral or unilateral loading while resulting in less strain on the central nervous system due to lighter overall loads than a barbell.

The kettlebell’s offset center of gravity challenges the shoulder stabilizers through a full range of motion, acting to reinforce shoulder health and resiliency.

Movement How-To’s:

[How to Hinge](#)

[How to Breathe](#)

[How to Hold the Kettlebell](#)

[Russian Swing](#)

[Kettlebell Clean](#)

[Kettlebell Snatch](#)

[Turkish Get Up](#)

[Windmill](#)

[Arm Bar](#)

Refer [Here](#) for Entire Collection of Movement Demos

When in doubt, refer to any content produced by StrongFirst.com, or a SFG or RKC certified instructor, for reliable information on proper kettlebell technique.