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2010

CROSSFIT AVON

BRISTOL-UK

Athlete Handbook

For more information please see our website: www.crossfitavon.com

To join us please give Cathie a call on 07795 361797 or get in touch by email:
info@crossfitavon.com

World-Class Fitness in 100 Words

Eat meat and vegetables, nuts and seeds, some fruit, little starch and no sugar. Keep intake to levels that will support exercise but not body fat. Practice and train major lifts: deadlift, clean, squat, presses, C&J, and snatch. Similarly, master the basics of gymnastics: pull-ups, dips, rope climb, push-ups, sit-ups, presses to handstand, pirouettes, flips, splits, and holds. Bike, run, swim, row, etc, hard and fast. Five or six days per week mix these elements in as many combinations and patterns as creativity will allow. Routine is the enemy. Keep workouts short and intense. Regularly learn and play new sports.

Greg Glassman (Founder of CrossFit)

Welcome to **CROSSFIT AVON**

Welcome to the friendliest CrossFit Box in Bristol! We are really pleased that you have chosen to start your CrossFit journey with us. We are Bristol's first and largest CrossFit Box with some of the most experienced coaches in the region all dedicated to helping you achieve your goals.

Whether you have come to us to get fit and healthy, lose weight, improve at a specific sport or to compete at CrossFit we can help. Your progress and success really matters to us and we work as hard as we can to provide a fitness program that will help you achieve and exceed your goals in the most effective way.

This handbook will tell you everything you need to know about training at CrossFit Avon from a brief introduction to the CrossFit methodology to CrossFit jargon and the Beginners' movements. Please also familiarise yourself with our Athletic Levels as they act as a guide for the suitability of some of our other classes and are an excellent way of tracking your progress and balance.

Introduction to CrossFit

3 Principles of CrossFit

Functionality: CrossFit relies on compound movements (such as squats, lunges, rowing and pressing exercises) which work multiple muscle groups, teaching you to synchronise them. These movements are natural, being ones you'll use in everyday life or sport and teach you how to use your body properly.

Variation: At a CrossFit gym, one day you might be doing a low rep, strength building session, the next you might be working on medium distance running, and another day you might be doing a higher rep, lower load circuit training session against the clock. This type of programming best prepares you for life, by always keeping the body guessing and working on ALL areas of fitness. Most programmes are too focused on a single area of fitness at the expense of others.

Intensity: Studies have shown this to be the single variable most strongly related to optimising results from workouts. High Intensity means simply getting the work done in faster times than normally seen in the health club environment. You will find that many of our workouts are relatively short (typically between 4 and 20 minutes) with as little rest as possible. We work against the stopwatch to motivate our athletes to increase intensity. However, high Intensity is relative to each individual, and we will scale the workouts accordingly, making CrossFit training suitable (and in fact, ideal) for all.

Working Your Weaknesses

We encourage our athletes to find those things that they struggle with and improve them. This goes against many people's instincts to only do the things they're good at, but is vital for achieving a rounded fitness. So, don't "cherry pick" the workouts you're going to do.

How often should I do CrossFit?

CrossFit recommends a 3 days on, 1 day off routine (5-6 times a week). This is impractical for some people, as they like to train the same days each week and/or take weekends off. In this case, a 5 days on, one off routine could be performed instead. Our top athletes train with this regularity, or even more often.

Many of our athletes also participate in other sports as well, meaning they have less time for CrossFit training. Others choose to not commit to that many sessions a week.

We recommend you train at least 2-3 times a week at our gym. This means you will get regular exposure to the exercises and be able to perfect the techniques, plus you will get used to the intensity of the workouts. Training only once a week or less means slow progress and continued soreness.

Keeping a Journal

You will need to record the workouts you do at the gym. This will enable you to track your progress, and save time working out what weights/options you will need in workouts.

We have CrossFit Avon Journals available to buy for £10, which have everything laid out for you, or you can bring your own diary/notebook.

If using your own book, you will need to have a separate strength section in the back, which we can show you how to lay out. There is a filing cabinet at the gym for you to store your journal.

CrossFit Terminology & Abbreviations

The Box – CrossFitters refer to their gym as the “Box”

5 x 4-5 reps @ 31X0 – This means 5 sets of 4-5 repetitions. “31X0” refers to the tempo of each rep (3 secs down, 1 sec pause at the bottom, X means fast on the way up, and 0 means no pause at the top). There will also normally be a prescribed rest time between sets.

Met-Cons – Short for “Metabolic Conditioning”, these are workouts designed to elicit a metabolic response from the body (increased fat burning and hormonal response). They improve aerobic and/or anaerobic fitness, as well as toning / building muscle. Typically these workouts are short (4-20 minutes), high intensity (relative to the individual) and are often circuits of 2 or 3 exercises in CrossFit, although many other types of workouts could be described as Met-Cons.

WOD – “Workout Of the Day”. This might be a Met-Con, strength session, longer cardio effort, gymnastics practise, or any combination of those.

AMRAP – This stands for “As Many Rounds/Reps As Possible” and relates to a workout where you perform as much work as possible in a set amount of time

As Rx'd (or just ... RX) – This means “As prescribed”. A workout done without any scaling.

BW - Bodyweight

PR/PB – Personal Record / Personal Best (they mean the same)

C&J – Clean & Jerk

C2 – Concept 2 (The Rowing Machine)

DL - Deadlift

HSPU – Handstand Push Up

TGU – Turkish Get Up (an exercise)

What about Nutrition?

Your nutrition is vitally important to your success, in terms of performance in workouts, recovery from workouts, the changes in body composition you achieve and your long term health. We teach a hunter-gatherer diet known as “The Paleo Diet” and details can be found at: <http://www.crossfitavon.com/the-paleo-diet/>

One of our coaches, Cathie Smith, is also a nutritionist and is available for personal consultations to help you with your nutrition whether you are looking to lose weight, gain weight or to optimise your performance. Please speak to Cathie directly regarding this.

Midline Stability

In the following pages you will find details of how to brace your midline. This “Bracing Sequence” is vitally important for you to learn before coming to your first Beginners’ session. Put aside 10-15 minutes to read, memorise it and practise it. We expect you to be able to do this on its own when you arrive (we will then keep reminding you to hold it during the movements we will teach you in beginners classes).

Programming

There are 2 programs in our WOD classes. Everyone starts with the Fitness program as this is the most suitable for the majority of athletes. For those wanting to compete in CrossFit and have achieved a certain level of strength, skill and work capacity, there is the Performance program.

CROSSFIT AVON ATHLETIC LEVELS

	Level 1 (Beginner)	Level 2 (Intermediate)
Gymnastics	Air Squat: 60 in 2 minutes Press Up: M-10, W- 1 Strict Pull Up: M-1, W-3 sec Negative Strict Bar Dip: M-3, W-3 sec Negative Burpee: 10 in 1 minute Box Jump: 20 reps in 1 minute (20/16") Sit Up: 45 in 2 minutes Plank Hold: 2 minutes Handstand Hold (against wall): 10 secs Side Plank: 1 minute each side	Air Squat: 80 in 2 minutes Press Up: M-30, W-15 Strict Pull Ups: M-5 W-3 Strict Bar Dip: M-10, W-5 Burpee: 20 in 1 Minute Box Jump: 25 reps in 1 minute (24/20") Sit Up: 65 in 2 minutes Ring Chair Sit: 60 secs Handstand Hold (against wall): 90 secs Toes to Bar: 10 Handstand Push Up: M-1, W- 4" High target
Weightlifting	10 reps: Back Squat: 3/4 Bodyweight Front Squat: 2/3 Bodyweight Deadlift: Bodyweight Shoulder Press: 1/3 Bodyweight Bench Press M-1/2 BW, W-1/3 BW Overhead Squat: 1/3 Bodyweight American Swing: 20 reps (16/12kg) Wall Ball: 10 reps unbroken (9/6kg)	1RM: Back Squat: 1 & 1/2 Bodyweight Front Squat: 1 & 1/4 Bodyweight Deadlift: 1 & 3/4 Bodyweight Shoulder Press: 2/3 Bodyweight Bench Press: M-BW, W-2/3 BW Overhead Squat: Bodyweight Clean: Bodyweight Snatch: 3/4 Bodyweight Jerk: Bodyweight American Swing: 20 reps (24/16kg) Thruster: 15 reps (M-42.5kg, W-30kg) Wall Ball: 30 reps unbroken (9/6kg)
Monostructural	400m Run: M-1:45, W-2:00 1km Run: M-5:00, W-5:40 5km Run: M-30:00, W-33:00 500m Row: M-1:55, W-2:20 Skips: 100 (no miss) Double Unders: 1	400m Run: M-1:25, W-1:40 1km Run: M-3:40, W-4:20 5km Run: M-24:00, W-27:00 500m Row: M-1:45, W-2:00 1000m Row: M-3:40, W-4:10 Double Unders: 30 (consecutive, no miss)
Met-Cons		"Fran" (RX) - M-10:00 W-12:00 "Helen" (RX) - M-11:00 W-13:00

CROSSFIT AVON ATHLETIC LEVELS

Level 3 (Competitor)	Level 4 (Elite)
Air Squat: 100 in 2 minutes	Air Squat: 115 in 2 minutes
Pistol Squat: 10 Consecutive each leg	Pistol Squat: 30 Consecutive each leg
Press Up: M-75, W-50	Press Up: M-90, W-60
Strict Pull Ups: M-20, W-12	Strict Pull Ups: M-30 W-20
Kipping Pull Up: M-50, W-40	Kipping Pull Up: M-75, W-60
Strict Ring Dip: M-20, W-15	Strict Ring Dip: M-30, W -20
Burpee: 30 in 1 minute	Burpee: 35 in 1 minute
Box Jump: 30 reps in 1 minute (30/24")	Toes to Bar: 50
Toes to Bar: 30	Ring L Sit: M-60s, W-45s
Ring L Sit: M-30s, W-20s	Ring Handstand Push Up: M-3, W-1
Strict Muscle Up: M-5 W-2	Strict Muscle Up: M-10, W-5
Strict Handstand Push Up (Wall): M-20, W-12	Strict Handstand Push Up (Wall): M-30, W-20
Handstand Walk: 30ft	Handstand Walk: 120ft
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1RM:	1RM:
Back Squat: 2 x Bodyweight	Back Squat: 2 & 1/2 Bodyweight
Front Squat: 1 & 2/3 Bodyweight	Front Squat: 2 x Bodyweight
Deadlift: 2 & 1/2 Bodyweight	Deadlift: 3 x Bodyweight
Shoulder Press: 3/4 Bodyweight	Shoulder Press: Bodyweight
Bench Press: M-1&1/3 BW, W-BW	Bench Press: M-1&1/2BW, W-1&1/4 BW
Overhead Squat: 5 reps Bodyweight	Overhead Squat: 15 reps Bodyweight
Clean: 1&1/4 Bodyweight	Clean: 1&2/3 Bodyweight
Snatch: Bodyweight	Snatch: 1 & 1/4 Bodyweight
Jerk: 1 & 1/4 Bodyweight	Jerk: 1 & 2/3 Bodyweight
American Swing: 20 reps (32/24kg)	American Swing: 20 reps (40/28kg)
Thruster: 10 reps (M-60kg, W-42.5kg)	Thruster: 10 reps (M-80kg, W-55kg)
Wall Ball: 60 reps unbroken (9/6kg)	Wall Ball: 90 reps unbroken (9/6kg)
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400m Run: M-1:10, W-1:20	400m Run: M-1:00, W-1:10
1km Run: M-3:20, W-3:50	1km Run: M-3:10, W-3:35
5km Run: M-20:00, W-23:00	5km Run: M-18:00, W-21:00
500m Row: M-1:30, W-1:45	500m Row: M-1:20, W-1:40
1000m Row: M-3:15, W-3:40	1000m Row: M-3:00, W-3:30
2000m Row: M-6:50, W-7:50	2000m Row: M-6:30, W-7:30
Double Unders: 100 (consecutive, no miss)	Double Unders: 200 (consecutive, no miss)
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"Fran" - men: 4:00, women: 5:00	"Grace" - men- 2:00, women - 2:00
"Helen" - men: 8:30, women: 9:00	"Elizabeth" - men: 4:00, women - 5:00
"Cindy" - men: 25 rounds, women: 20	"Mary" - men: 15 rounds, women: 10 rounds

The CrossFit Avon Program

Beginners' Course

- Suitable for all.
- All new members must attend the Beginners' course prior to starting Fitness level WODs.
- Two part course teaching the foundational CrossFit movements.

WOD Fitness Program

- General fitness, health and wellbeing.
- No previous experience other than our Beginners' course.
- Suitable for the majority of our members.

Beginners' Weightlifting Course

- For those interested in learning the Olympic Weightlifting movements.
- Achieved at least a Level 1 on our Athletic Levels.
- No previous experience necessary.

Weightlifting Program

- Achieved at least a Level 1 on our Athletic Levels and have completed the Beginners' Weightlifting Course.
- For those with an interest in Olympic Weightlifting.
- For those whose intent is to move on to the Performance Program.

Open Sessions

- Suitable for anyone who has completed 8 main class WODs.
- Coaching available in Coached Open Sessions.
- A chance for you to work on specific movements/skills etc.

Speciality Classes

- Mobility, Boxercise and more!
- Suitable for all of our athletes.
- Please see our timetable and Facebook page for more details and upcoming dates.

WOD Performance Program

- For those who wish to compete in the sport of fitness.
- Proficient at Olympic Weightlifting movements.
- Achieved (or very close to) Level 2 on our Athletic Levels.

Personal Training / Individual Programming

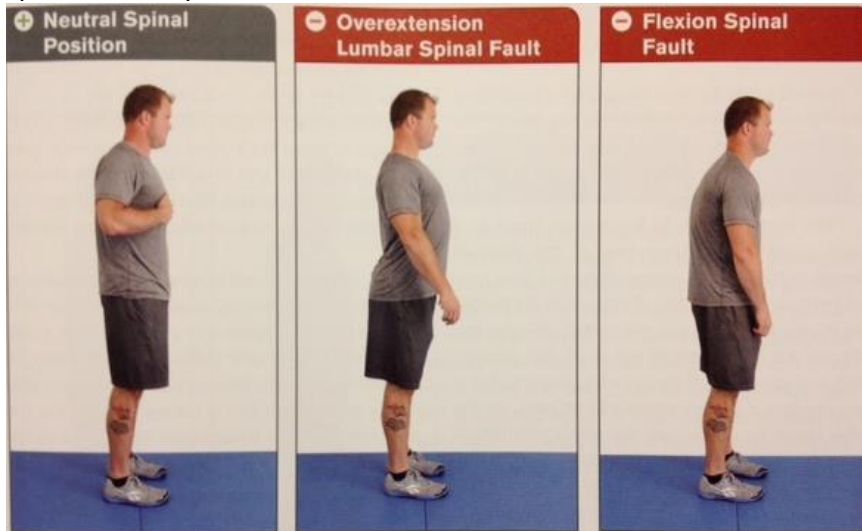
- Personal training for anyone interested in receiving a coached, personalised program to accelerate progress.
- Individual programming for advanced athletes.
- A mix of the two, please ask for an initial consultation.

The Beginners' Course

Midline Stability

It's time to start teaching you about functional movements. Coming up, you'll find the teaching points for the fundamental movements you'll be learning on your Beginners' Course. But before that, you need to understand how to keep midline stability. Keeping your spine in the correct position is essential for both safety and performance.

The aim is to keep a Neutral Spine Position:



And here's how to do it (these instructions are a condensed version of those in Kelly Starrett's book "Becoming a Supple Leopard", which is a great read):

Step 1 – Squeeze your butt as hard as you can

Position your feet under your hips (parallel to each other).

Screw your feet into the ground (think about pushing the floor away with the outsides of your feet).

Squeeze your butt as hard as possible (don't think about tilting your pelvis, this will happen anyway).

Step 2 – Pull your ribcage down

Pull your lower ribs in, balancing your ribcage over your pelvis.

Imagine your pelvis and ribcage are two bowls of water filled to the brim with water. You need to keep them both level, to avoid spilling any water. If you round forward, water spills out the front of your ribcage and the back of your pelvis. If you overextend, water pours out the back of your ribcage and front of your pelvis.

Step 3 – Get your belly tight

Keep squeezing your glutes, take in a big breath of air, and then exhale.

As you let the air out, engage your abs and get your belly tight.

Think about pulling your belly button to your spine (not sucking in/hollowing, but stiffening in place as you exhale).

Another way of thinking about this is lifting your pelvic floor (cue: sphincter to belly button).

Step 4 – Set your head in a neutral position and screw your shoulders into a stable position

Gaze forward and align your ears over your shoulders, hips and ankles.

Draw your shoulders back and release down (you don't need to squeeze shoulder blades together, just feel the tips of your shoulder blades reaching for your hips).

Squats

Air Squat

Set Up Stand with heels shoulder width apart and toes turned slightly out.

Execution Send the hips back and down.

Body weight should remain in the centre of the feet (just in front of the ankles).

Knees out – keep your knees in line with your feet throughout.

Chest up – lift arms up to maintain lumbar curve.

Go down until the hips are lower than the knees or to first point of resistance.

Initiate from the hips, by pushing the floor away through the heels and squeezing glutes, to drive upward movement.

Stand to full extension of hips and knees.

Scaling If you struggle with depth or form, try Box Squats.



Back Squat

Set Up Take a Barbell from a squat rack in either the Low Bar or High Bar position (your coach will explain this).

Stand with heels shoulder width apart and toes turned slightly out.

Execution All the same teaching points as the Squat, plus:

Keep shoulders braced against the bar throughout the squat.

Scaling If having a bar on your shoulders is too uncomfortable (shoulder/wrist injuries or tightness), you could try the Safety Bar squat, or you may need to stick to Goblet Squats in classes.



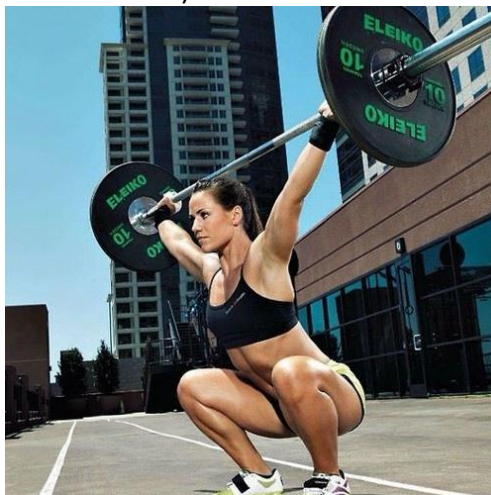
Front Squat

- Set Up** Hold a Barbell in the Front Rack position - hands outside of shoulders, fingertip grip, elbows up, weight supported by your shoulders.
Stand with heels shoulder width apart and toes turned slightly out.
- Execution** All the same teaching points as the Squat, plus:
Elbows up - as high as possible throughout the whole movement.
- Scaling** If you can't manage the rack position, try with your arms crossed and hands holding over shoulders (this is only a temporary solution as you will need to achieve the rack position if you want to progress to cleans).
Substitute for Dumbbell Front Squats or Goblet Squats.



Overhead Squat

- Set Up** Establish grip width by performing Pass Throughs - grip should be the narrowest that you can pass a PVC pipe over your head and down to your back with elbows locked.
Active shoulders – holding bar overhead, externally rotate shoulders (think “armpits forward” or “elbows down”) and imagine stretching the bar apart.
Stand with heels shoulder width apart and toes turned slightly out.
- Execution** All the same teaching points as the Squat, plus:
Keep active shoulders.
- Scaling** Keep the bar over your centre of gravity (the middle of your feet).
Use a PVC only, until you have the flexibility to perform the movement correctly.
Option to substitute for Overhead Lunges in WODs if not flexible enough (this is only a temporary solution as you will need to achieve the overhead position if you want to progress to Snatches).



Hip Movements

Deadlift

Set Up

Stand with feet under the Bar, at roughly hips width apart.

Hold Bar with either an overhand grip or mixed grip (one overhand and one underhand). Grip should be symmetrical and just wide enough so that the arms don't interfere with legs whilst pulling.

Angry Gorilla Position - Shoulders should be slightly forward of the bar, with chest out, back flat, abs tight, shoulders set and arms straight.

Execution

Keep the weight in the heels, engage the glutes and push the floor away.

The bar should travel straight up and the torso's inclination should be constant until Barbell has passed the knee.

Fully extend the hips at the top, bringing the shoulders behind the bar.

To return to the ground, push the hips back so the bar can go straight down without hitting the knees.

Keep the back flat throughout.

Scaling

If achieving a flat back is problematic, then a temporary solution is raising the bar by putting on blocks (or weights plates). Stretch to achieve flexibility.



Romanian Deadlift

Set Up

Starts from the top position of a deadlift. Either take a bar from a rack at knee/hip height or perform a normal Deadlift to get into position.

Execution

Soften knees and hinge at hips, as per the Deadlift, but don't bend the knees anymore than the initial softening.

Keep a flat back and go down as far as your hamstrings will allow, as far as a horizontal torso if possible.

This focuses on the hamstrings and glutes even more than the standard deadlift.



Russian Kettlebell Swing

Set Up

Stand with feet shoulder width apart.

Hold the Kettlebell in both hands between the legs.

Execution

Push the hips back and pull the Kettlebell back toward the thighs by rocking the bodyweight into the heels.

Brace wrists against inner thighs.

Powerfully extend hips to accelerate the bottom of the Kettlebell up and away.

As it ascends, counterbalance the forward pull of the Kettlebell by shifting the bodyweight back.

The Kettlebell should go to shoulder height.

As it descends along the same pathway, absorb the weight with the entire body and a very tight core.

Scaling

Use less weight.



American Kettlebell Swing

Set Up

Stand with feet shoulder width apart.

Hold the Kettlebell in both hands between the legs.

Execution

Push the hips back and pull the Kettlebell back toward the thighs by rocking the bodyweight into the heels.

Brace wrists against inner thighs.

Powerfully extend hips to accelerate the bottom of the Kettlebell up and overhead.

Full extension should be achieved at the shoulder joint, but beginners will want to tilt the wrists slightly forward to make sure the Kettlebell doesn't swing over the head.

As it descends along the same pathway, absorb the weight with the entire body and a very tight core.

Scaling

Use less weight.



Pressing Movements

Shoulder Press

Set Up

Stand with feet hip width apart.
Grip just outside shoulders.
Bar resting on the shoulders.
Elbows below and in front of the bar.
Core engaged.

Execution

Tuck chin in and get head out of the way.
Press Bar to full extension above the head (arms should be in line with your ears).
Active shoulders at top - push shoulders towards your ears.
Keep core engaged and don't lean back (midline stability).
Lower to start position and repeat.

Scaling

Use a lighter weight.



Push Press

Set Up

As per Shoulder Press.

Execution

Dip, by bending the hips and knees, while keeping the torso upright. The dip should be about a ¼ depth of a squat.
Immediately and powerfully extend the lower body, then press the bar overhead.
Lower to start position and repeat.

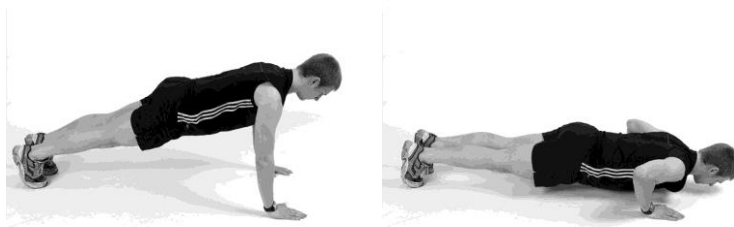
Scaling

Use a lighter weight.



Press Ups

- Set Up** Hands at chest height and just outside of shoulder width.
Body should be a straight line from knees to hips to shoulders.
Head and lumbar spine in neutral positions.
Set shoulders - think about screwing your hands into the floor (right hand clockwise, left hand anti-clockwise) and keep shoulders down away from ears.
- Execution** Lower chest and hips to touch the ground.
Keep shoulders set and the weight in the chest.
Push back up to start position, using both arms equally.
- Scaling** Knee Push Ups or Box Push Ups.



Other Movements

Strict Pull Up

- Set Up** Hold the bar with an overhand grip, just outside of shoulder width.
Hang to full extension of arms.
Get a "hollow body position" – shorten the space between your ribcage and pelvis.
- Execution** Set your shoulders – pull scapula down your back and externally rotate shoulders (imagine bending the bar...right hand clockwise, left hand anti-clockwise).
Pull equally with both arms.
Pull until chin has passed over the bar.
Lower, under control, to start position.
- Scaling** Banded Pull Ups, Pull Up Negatives or Ring Rows.



Single Arm Dumbbell Snatch

- Set Up** Stand with feet slightly wider than shoulder width.
Place a single dumbbell (DB) between your feet.
Squatting down, take the DB in one hand.
Keep shoulders set (chest out) and a flat back.
- Execution** Drive through your heels to stand up, keeping your arm straight until you get to the upper thighs.
Explosively extend the hips, shrug the shoulder and the elbow high and wide.
Drop into a catching position (soft knees, chest up) as you pull DB to straight arm position above the head.
- Scaling** Lower slowly, under control.
Use a lighter weight.



Toes to Bar

- Set Up** Hold the bar with an overhand grip, just outside of shoulder width
Hang to full extension of arms.
- Execution** Feet must go behind the vertical plane of the bar at the bottom of the movement.
Toes must touch the bar at the same time, between the hands, at the top.
There are “kipping” (swinging) and “strict” (no swing) versions of this movement and your coach will instruct you which is to be done and how to kip, if relevant.
- Scaling** Knees to Chest, or Floor Toes to Bar.

