



### *Training Movement Patterns*

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Most individuals at the gym (including personal trainers) focus their workouts on specific body parts. A traditional training routine will consist of something like this: back/biceps one day, chest/shoulders/triceps the next day, and the legs the following day. During these workouts, there is far too much emphasis on single joint isolated movements such as bicep curls, lateral raises, shrugs, and leg extensions (just to name a few). For competitive body builders it is essential to include isolation exercises into your program to ensure there is a balance in your physique. However, for anyone who is training to improve their overall fitness, gain muscle mass, lose weight, or achieve any other specific health/fitness goal it is more beneficial to focus on incorporating specific movement patterns instead of focusing on isolating muscles.

There are a number of benefits to centering your strength training workout around multi joint functional movement patterns. Training specific movement patterns ensures that there is balance in your routine because these lifts target all major muscle groups. The movements are also more functional than isolated exercises because the body is designed to move efficiently as a whole unit. Isolation exercises only target one part of the body (usually only one specific muscle group). A strength training program that is built around multi-joint movements will elevate your heart rate and increase the release of muscle building hormones.

Listed below are the seven major movements that should be the foundation for your strength training program. Exercises that correspond to these movements should be performed unilaterally (single limb), bilaterally (two limbs), and in multiple planes of motion (different directions and angles).

## Primary Movements Patterns

### **Pressing**

Pressing movements include overhead exercises such as shoulder presses with the bar, kettlebells, dumbbells, or any with other training tool. Your program should also include horizontal pressing movements such as standing cable chest press, bench press, and dumbbell bench press.

### **Pulling**

Just like pressing movements, pulling movements should be performed vertically and horizontally. Vertical pulling exercises include pull ups, chin ups, and cable pulling. Horizontal pulling exercises include any type of rowing motion.

### **Squatting**

Squatting movements are great full body exercises (Not leg presses, I am specifically talking about exercises performed in a standing position). This can include barbell squats, deadlifts, or single leg squats.

### **Lunging**

This includes exercises where you step out and return the starting position. These should be performed in multiple planes of motion, meaning it is beneficial to do lateral lunges, backward lunges, backward diagonal lunges, etc.

### **Rotating**

The body is designed to be able to rotate and twist. Your program should include different types of chopping and twisting exercises that can be performed with dumbbells, medicine balls, cables, and kettlebells.

### **Explosive Lifts**

These exercises include Olympic lifts, plyometrics, medicine ball drills, or any other exercises done dynamically. This element is often neglected but should be designed into your program if you are looking to increase your power and strength.

There are considerably more benefits to centering your workout program on multi-joint movement exercises compared to isolation exercises. When designing your strength training routine eliminate fluff. Single joint isolated movements such as tricep presses, hamstring curls, sit ups, and chest/rear delt flies are the fluff that should be replaced by the major movements listed above.