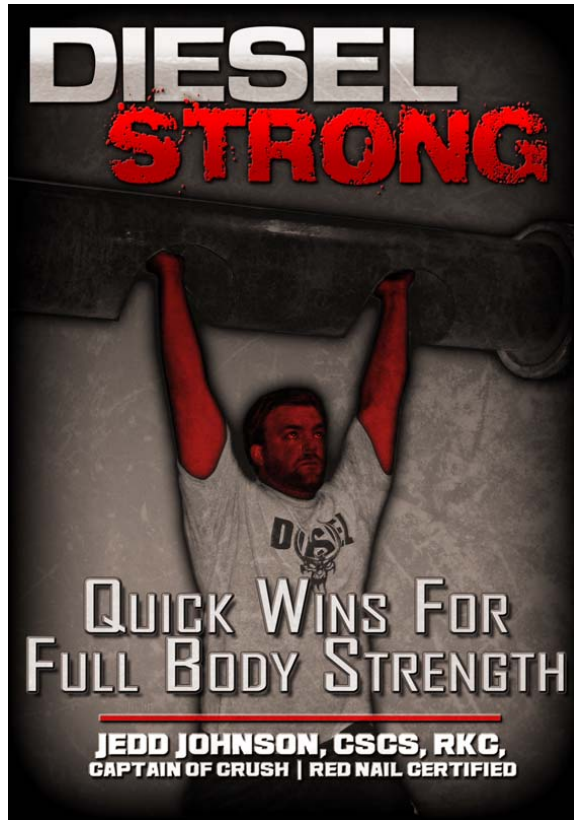


© Copyright 2011, The Diesel Crew, LLC

All rights reserved. No part of this manual may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by an information storage and retrieval system, with the expressed written permission from Jedd Johnson.



Copyright © 2011, The Diesel Crew, LLC
All Rights Reserved.

Published in the United States by:

The Diesel Crew, LLC

P.O. Box 806, Wyalusing, PA 18853

Tel: 607.857.8997

Email:

Jedd.Diesel@Gmail.com

Websites:

<http://www.DieselCrew.com>

<http://www.TheGripAuthority.com>

Author: Jedd Johnson, CSCS, RKC

Manufactured in the United States

First Edition: July 2011

DISCLAIMER

Strength training for all sports involves a potential risk for serious injury. The techniques discussed and utilized in this manual are being demonstrated by highly trained professionals. No one should attempt any of these techniques without proper personal instruction from trained instructors. Anyone who attempts any of these techniques, under supervision or not, assumes all risks. The Diesel Crew, LLC, DieselCrew.com, nor any partners of The Diesel Crew, LLC shall not be liable to anyone for use of any of these exercises, drills or instructions.

DIESEL STRONG is informational only. The data and information contained herein are based upon information from various published as well as unpublished sources and merely represents training, strength and power development literature and practice as summarized by the authors and editors. The publisher of this manual makes no warranties, expressed or implied, regarding the currency, completeness or scientific accuracy of this information, nor does it warrant the fitness of the information for any particular purpose. This summary of information from unpublished sources, books, research journals and articles is not intended to replace the advice or attention of health care professionals. It is not intended to direct their behavior or replace their independent professional judgment. If you have a problem with your health, or before you embark on any health, fitness or sports training programs, seek clearance from a qualified health care professional.

COPYRIGHT ©

Copyright © 2011 **The Diesel Crew, LLC**. All Rights Reserved.

No part of this information may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, distributing, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the author. The authors and publisher disclaim any responsibility for any adverse effects or consequences from the misapplication or injudicious use of the information presented in this text. Inquiries should be addressed to The Diesel Crew, LLC, Webmaster, PO Box 806, Wyalusing, PA 18853, USA.

For complete information on all of the **Diesel Crew's** products and more valuable information available to help you get incredible results in your training, visit www.DieselCrew.com and www.TheGripAuthority.com.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

1. I am aware that The Diesel Crew, LLC, and its members Jim Smith and Jedd Johnson, are not medical doctors and are not qualified to determine a participant's physical capability to engage in strenuous exercise.
2. Medical clearance from my physician may be required prior to participation in any exercise program and/or engaging in any of the exercises contained within this eBook.

WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY:

(READ CAREFULLY BEFORE PERFORMING ANY EXERCISES IN THIS MANUAL)

I UNDERSTAND AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE ARE RISKS INVOLVED IN PARTICIPATING IN ANY EXERCISE PROGRAM AND / OR ANY EXERCISES CONTAINED WITHIN THIS EBOOK IN CONSIDERATION FOR BEING ALLOWED TO UTILIZE THE INFORMATION IN THIS EBOOK, I AGREE THAT I WILL ASSUME THE RISK AND FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR DETERMINING THE NEED FOR MEDICAL CLEARANCE FROM MY PHYSICIAN AND OBTAINING SUCH CLEARANCE, THE SAFETY AND/OR EFFICACY OF ANY EXERCISE PROGRAM RECOMMENDED TO ME, AND ANY AND ALL INJURIES, LOSSES, OR DAMAGES, WHICH MIGHT OCCUR TO ME AND / OR TO MY FAMILY WHILE UTILIZING THE INFORMATION IN THIS EBOOK AND TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT ALLOWED BY LAW I AGREE TO WAIVE AND RELEASE ANY AND ALL CLAIMS, SUITS, OR RELATED CAUSES OF ACTION AGAINST THE DIESEL CREW, LLC, JIM SMITH AND JEDD JOHNSON, THEIR EMPLOYEES, OR AFFILIATES (COLLECTIVELY THE DIESEL CREW, LLC), FOR INJURY, LOSS, DEATH, COSTS OR OTHER DAMAGES TO ME, MY HEIRS OR ASSIGNS, WHILE UTILIZING ALL THE INFORMATION OR PARTAKING IN THE EXERCISES CONTAINED WITHIN THIS EBOOK. I FURTHER AGREE TO RELEASE, INDEMNIFY AND HOLD THE DIESEL CREW, LLC FROM ANY LIABILITY WHATSOEVER FOR FUTURE CLAIMS PRESENTED BY MY CHILDREN FOR ANY INJURIES, LOSSES OR DAMAGES.

DIESEL STRONG: Quick Wins for Full Body Strength

When it comes to weight training, the days of getting a big pump, and training for size alone are over. It's time to make your time in the gym more worthwhile by developing strength along with the physique.

After all, doesn't it make more sense to bring some functionality and athletic ability along with the muscle mass?

Following are some of staple movements and training methods we use at Diesel Crew (DieselCrew.com) that you can use to make yourself a stronger, tougher, and healthier version of yourself. Because isn't that what it's really about - strength and conditioning methods that you can build into your lifestyle and carry with you for decades to come?

We've all heard the stories about how this guy's grandpa could crush walnuts in his bare hands, or how this kid's grand-pap lifted a fallen tombstone off of a little kid, saving his life.

Don't you want to be like this? When you're 70, 80, or 90 years old, don't you want to be the guy that everyone talks about that is still hitting 20 push-ups in a row with a smile on his face, still can run a mile in under 8 minutes and is still lean and mean?

That's what I thought.

Following are various Diesel Training Methods you can start using now in order to get bigger, stronger, and more athletic.

Foundational Strength Movements

In order to be as truly strong as possible, you must build a solid foundation. This can be done by using the basic movements as a foundation of the rest of the strength we build.

Lifts such as Squats, Deadlifts, Bench Press and Standing Military Press are basic movements that should be the basis of a complete strength training program. They are the keystone movements of a good program and once these basics are mastered, other variations can be used for variety and to continue to progress.

Another great basic movement that should be found in any well-rounded strength and muscle building program is the Clean. It really doesn't matter if you have refined technique where you pull the bar up and catch it in the deep squat like they do in the Olympics or if you stick with more of a power position pull where you catch it above parallel. As long as you perform this lift safely, you will reap the benefits.

The key to safe Clean technique is to avoid any excessive extension of the lumbar spine. If when you pull the bar upwards or when you are catching the bar you are bending way back in the spine, lighten the weight and try to grease the groove until the proper form comes naturally.

A basic pictorial of how to perform the Clean is below. Notice the neutral spine position remains while tremendous drive and explosion is created by the lower body, posterior chain and the upper back muscles.



But what exactly is it about lifts like the Squat, Deadlift, Presses and Cleans that make them so awesome for muscular development and make them so popular strength coaches and among serious trainees? It is all explained below...

Ground Based Movements

If your goal is to be as strong and as athletic as possible, then you want to perform Ground Based Movements. Ground Based Movements are also called Closed Kinetic Chain Movements.

These are terms that come from the strength and conditioning field and they are used to describe exercises in which the lifter is bearing the weight of the body and the load being lifted with his feet touching the ground. Often, you are also standing.

The opposite of a Ground Based / Close Chain Movement is an Open Chain Movement. With Open Chain Movements, you are usually seated, lying down on a bench or working against a cable weight stack.

While these movements have their place, they should not make up the majority of your training if you truly wish to become Diesel Strong.

All this boils down to where force is being generated – through the ground in some form, or not. When you are standing upright and driving through the ground, you are creating force like an athlete. This is very important for exercise selection.

The main reason Open Chain Movements should be done at a minimum is because of their lack of carryover to athletics. For instance, how many sports can you think of where you are sitting on your ass or laying on your stomach or back? Not many. In fact if you find yourself on your belly, back or ass, you probably just got punched, kicked, or tackled by someone who is more Diesel

Stronger than you are, which means you need to do even more of the Closed Chain Movements and less of the Open Chain ones.

However, that is not to say that all Open Chain Movements are bad. In fact some of them are obviously pretty BAD-ASS.

For instance, the Bench Press is done lying on your back on a bench. However, what you have to understand is that if you do the Bench Press correctly, you are using almost your entire body. Your feet dig into the floor, your legs are curled and your glutes are tensed like mortars about to explode in order to drive the bar off your chest.

Multi-Joint Movements

Multi-Joint Movements are exercises that involve movement over more than one joint in the body. For instance, the Clean is a Multi-Joint Movement because it involves movement at the ankle, knee, hip, shoulder and elbow. No matter what variation of the Clean you use, the movement is still Multi-joint.

Another outstanding Multi-joint Movement is the Bent Over Row. Although the legs and glutes are not involved as heavily as the Clean or Deadlift, Bent Over Rows are still Multi-joint and you can still move a lot of weight with them. You can even employ cheat techniques from time to time to involve more of the lower body, recruit more muscle, and increase the demand of the lift. Of course, safety is still very important. Don't cheat to the point that you have to put your low back under unsafe stress that can lead to an injury.

What's great about Multi-joints is that since there is movement occurring in so many places in the body, it demands a great deal of muscular activity as well.

This level of muscular activity also brings with it an increase in the body's natural testosterone levels, which also in turn can help spawn new muscular growth and development, and isn't that one of your main objectives – more muscle mass?

Generally, Multi-joint movements also allow you to move more weight than Isolation movements as well and this is another attractive trait about them.

The opposite of a Multi-joint movement is a single-joint or isolation movement. These types of exercise require movement at just one joint. Since the joint movement is minimal that also means that muscular involvement will be reduced and thus the body's release of testosterone will also be reduced.

Just like Open Chain exercises, Isolation Movements should be used sparingly. Of course, they do have their place, especially for rehabilitation and pre-rehabilitation purposes.

For instance, if you are prone to developing injuries in the elbow, it is wise to invest some time focusing on movements that will prevent injury there, such as Reverse Curls with an EZ Bar. This movement has helped me many times over the years to get rid of painful tendonitis / tendonosis in my elbows, as well as keeping it from coming back.

The problem with Isolation movements that gets people in trouble is an over-reliance on them. For instance, some people do an exorbitant amount of Bicep Curls. While a few sets per week of Bicep Curls is perfectly fine, doing them two or three times a week is excessive. Of course, hit them hard when you hit them so that they stay strong in proportion to the rest of the body, but three

Bicep workouts a week is a waste of your time when you could be doing other more productive movements.

Following are some of the most beneficial Closed Chain Movements that you can include in your program for maximizing your Diesel Strong potential. Some may have been mentioned elsewhere or might appear again. Also, this is by no means an exhaustive list of all Closed Chain Movements.

- Bench
- Incline Bench
- Squat
- Front Squat
- Zercher Squat
- Deadlift
- Overhead Press

Exercise Selection and Programming

Authors have written entire books on Exercise Selection and Programming. The fact is there are many ways to go about it, but what I'd like to do is outline how I generally set up my workouts. This is how I have done it for years and it worked for me when I was training the Olympic lifts seriously, when I was competing in Strongman for several years, and I still use it today in my days of Grip Sport competition.

This is how the majority of workouts are set up:

- I. Warm-up
- II. Explosive Movement

III. Strength Movement

IV. Accessory

V. Accessory

I. Warm-up

Every workout needs to begin with an appropriate warm-up. This is something I neglected for too long, but now it is an established part of my program.

II. Explosive Movements

Explosive Movements require more power and strength stores in the body, so they should be done first in the workout. Lifts that would fit into this category would be Clean and Jerk, Snatch, Push Press, Heavy Throws, Power Curls etc.

III. Strength Movement

Once the explosive stuff is out of the way, then it is time to hit the movement that will build your strength foundation. These are generally more of a controlled movement without as much explosion and power generation. Examples would include Bench, Squat, Deadlift, strict overhead work like Military Press, Rows, etc.

Notice that the majority of the movements listed in sections I and II are both Multi-joint Movements and Ground Based. These are the exercises that are going to build your strength and power levels, so they need to be done when you are fresh.

IV, V, etc.

The rest of the workout is accessory work. This is where you would look at your current training levels and target your weaknesses or other areas that you want to bring up. These sections are also where you would do any rehabilitation or pre-habilitation work. This is also where I stick my Grip Training movements.

Taking Your Strength to the Next Level

Up until this point, we have focused on developing our strength and power foundation. Now we will move on to target other forms of training in order to move toward becoming DIESEL STRONG.

The following are methods you can use in order to make your basic lifts more challenging.

Extension of the Movement

Once you have a good foundation with Multi-joint and Ground Based Movements, you may want to move beyond these normal gym lifts and branch out to more challenging tests of strength and athleticism. One way to do this is to employ extension off the movement.

Extension off the Movement is a Diesel Strength principle that is based on Kinetically modifying the movement in order to make it more challenging. In other words, instead of just performing the normal, standard lift, we will evolve one or more aspects of it and make it more of a challenge. There are many ways to do this and following are some examples.

Accommodating Resistance for End Range Strength

Accommodating resistance involves adding giant rubber bands or chains to the bar we are lifting in order to increase the overall weight of the implement near the end-range of the exercise.

For instance, conventional wisdom would suggest that as we near the end-range of an exercise, it would become easier to perform. As an example of this, most of us can usually lift more weight in a quarter squat than we can in a full ass-to-the-grass squat. However, when you think about it, where do we most often miss a lift? At the lockout.

Louie Simmons of Westside Barbell recognized this regular occurrence and began training the Bench Press, Squat, and Deadlift with accommodating resistance added to the bar in submaximal conditions. By adding Bands or Chains to the bar in the Bench Press, for instance, at the bottom of the movement the lifters would be moving straight weight at the bottom, but as the bands stretched and as the links off the chain began coming off the floor, the weight would get heavier as the bar came closer to lockout.

Accommodating Resistance is a great way to take your training to the next level. Not only does it strengthen the end-range of your lifts, but it also adds a level of instability to the movement as the bands and especially the chains can be hard to control, especially for those first trying these methods.

Thicker Implements for Increased Grip Strength

The Powerlifts (Bench Press, Squat, Deadlift) are the best movements for developing pure strength because they are done in a linear fashion and they

use a barbell that is rather easy to control for these movement patterns. However, by changing the normal barbell or dumbbell out for a thicker implement, such as an Axles (thick pipes) and Thick Handled Dumbbells, you can make these movements even more demanding.

Because Axle and Thick Handled Dumbbells have thicker grips than the normal barbell or dumbbell, they are more of a challenge for you to grip. Axles and Thick Handled Dumbbells are usually about two inches in diameter and since the fingers will not wrap all the way around a handle of this size, there will most likely be a space between the fingertips and thumb.

This space between the fingers and thumb will increase the demands put on the hands, which in turn decreases our ability to fully control the implement, making the lifts harder. Also, because the lifts are more taxing on the hands, they also increase your Grip Strength.

Grip Strength involves all of the musculature from the elbows down to the fingertips. A strong Grip allows you to pull more weight. It also allows you to exhibit more control over and implement that you are pushing against. So not only should you be able to pull more weight in your Deadlifts and Rows, but you should also be able to push more weight in your Bench Press and Military Press.

The benefits of enhanced Grip Strength do not stop there. When your lower arms and hands are stronger, you are able to perform more repetitions in your workouts. Imagine not having to stop at 8 reps in your Rows, and if you could perform 10. How much strength increase would that amount to in a couple of months. How much additional muscle could you pack on?

Your hands don't only have to be pushing or pulling when you perform the movement in order for a strong Grip to be an asset. Even in lifts where the hands are helping to support the bar, Grip strength will be beneficial. For instance, in the Back Squat, your hands are helping to hold the bar in place. With a stronger Grip, you can squeeze the bar harder, triggering a Radiant Tension response which can help to stabilize the core more efficiently and allow you to perform more repetitions and add more weight to the bar.

Finally when your hands are stronger you become more resilient to injuries and you can recover from injuries more quickly. Essentially by working the Grip more intensely by using Thick Bars from time to time in your training, you are bullet proofing the end-point of the kinetic chain for many lifting and sporting movements.

Of course, Thick Bars are not the only form of Grip Training. In the accompanying bonus item, Quick Wins for Grip Strength, I cover many more examples of Grip Training tools you can use to quickly increase your grip strength and your performance in many lifts and sports.

Movement Under Tension

It is one thing to pick something up. It is another thing altogether to pick something up and walk or even run with it.

So what we have done at Diesel is employed the use of weighted carries, farmers walks, sled dragging and other forms of movement while bearing a load. We have found this to be extremely beneficial in our strength development as well as our recovery and conditioning abilities. Here are some examples...

Movement under Tension is a training concept we use with our athletes at Diesel that involves moving over a distance while under load. Strongman competitions are famous for Movement under Tension events where an odd object must be lifted and carried over a distance, such as atlas stone loading and moving wheel barrels. Movements like this are great for integrating grip strength with powerful full body movements. Following are a few examples of Movement under Tension.



Keg Carry: Although keg carrying is used as a way to train the lower body, core, and back, it is also a very taxing form of training for the grip, especially if you perform multiple repetitions and if you perform carries. As shown above, a monkey grip is used to clamp the keg against the torso and belly in order to carry it for a distance.



Farmer's Walks: The Farmer's Walk is a great movement because it is Multi-joint, Ground Based, involves a carry, works a great deal of musculature and hits the grip hard. It also has proven to be a great form of conditioning and makes you breathe very hard. It's a great way to hit the core as well, especially if you are sick of the run-of-the-mill core movements like crunches and sit-ups. These can be done not only with Farmer's Walk implements, but also dumbbells, Shrug Bars, Block Weights, etc.

These are of course just a couple of examples of exercises that involve Movement Under Tension. If you think about it, there dozens if not hundreds of things you can carry, and they can be moved in multiple positions, not just in front or at the side. Here is a list of other Movement Under Tension possibilities.

Yoke Carry: Using a Yoke, Squat bar, or other implement loaded on the back of the neck/shoulder area and carried over a distance.

Shoulder / Fireman's Carry: Carrying something on one shoulder and carrying the awkward load over a distance, such as a Sandbag Carry.

Dragging: Pulling something behind you while you walk forward, sideways, or backwards. This is most often done by pulling a sled that is attached to a pulling harness, rope, or other connective device.

Odd Objects

Odd Object training is beneficial for anyone, from the strength enthusiast training in the garage or backyard, to athletes of all sports, especially those that involve running, jumping and other explosive movements.

Odd Object lifting prepares you for the movements of life and sports. Below are just some of the ways...

Triple Extension: Triple extension is the rapid succession of extension in three joint areas – the hips, knees, and ankles. Triple extension is responsible for generating the power needed for many explosive sporting movements. Running, leaping, bounding, crow-hopping, diving and others are all examples of sporting movements where the lower body is engaged at a high rate of force production. Odd Object lifting, especially when done quickly and explosively mimics these movements and has excellent carryover and transfer to performance on the court, field, etc.

N-Planar Force Production: Another benefit of Odd Object training is N-planar force production. N-planar force production means that force is created over a nearly endless array (N) of directions, increasing the challenge of each lift.

Motion happens along 3 planes:

- Sagittal Plane: The plane of movement forward and backward.
- Frontal Plane: The plane of movement left and right.
- Transverse Plane: The plane of motion in rotation.

Odd Object training enables the athlete to move and generate force through all of these planes. Therefore it is an outstanding tool for becoming DIESEL STRONG.

Functional Movement Patterns: “Functional” is a term that just about every strength coach and personal trainer has heard or seen used. I think the purpose of this word originally was to describe movements done in the strength and conditioning environment that yielded good carry-over to the sport, or at least that’s what I thought it was supposed to mean when I first heard it back in 2001. Unfortunately, the word “functional” has been used to describe so many different things that it has been cheapened and bastardized. I’ve seen it used in describing the Olympic Clean and Jerk and I’ve seen it used to describe leaping from one swiss ball onto another. Give me a break...

Regardless of what the current accepted definition of functional is, I use it to describe exercises and lifts that I believe mimic sport-specific movements and have an outstanding potential for carry-over. In my opinion, Odd Object lifting fits the bill for application of the word “functional” for many reasons.

Odd Object lifts load the shoulders, spine and the musculature that supports the spine. This is important for sports where loading to these three regions is possible, whether it be by actually carrying something, or by hitting against something with those body areas.

As you can see there are many benefits associated with Odd Object training, but think about it this way: Do you want to just be able to lift barbells and dumbbells, or do you want to be ready lift anything life throws in front of you - air conditioners, sofas, pianos... Conventional training only goes so far. With Odd Object Training, you can be prepared to for anything!

There are lots of different kinds of Odd Objects that you can use to train with. Here are a few:

Kegs

Keg Lifting is a very fun and rewarding form of training.



Because of the bulk and unpredictability of a keg, the athlete must continue to react and make adjustments in the grip and core bracing throughout the range of motion of an object lift.

Where to Get Kegs: Kegs can sometimes be hard to come by. The most common place to obtain kegs are at the local beer distributor. You can go and buy a full half keg of beer and then keep the keg for training and lose the deposit, or if you speak with one of the employees, you may be able to get a retired or damaged keg.

You can also find kegs at junk yards and scrap yards. Prices will vary depending on what the going rate is for stainless steel and how willing the establishment is to let go of it. Some scrap yards seek to collect massive amounts of stainless steel so it can all be turned in at once.

How to Open and Fill Kegs: There are two main ways to open and fill a keg without compromising the strength of it. The first way is by opening or removing the tap. This can be done with some needle nose pliers. Once you take it apart, go to the hardware store and get a rubber cover that will fit over the tap and harness it on there tight with a hose clamp.

The other way to open and fill a keg is by removing the plug in the side. The plug or cork can be knocked out with a hammer or pulled out by stabbing it with a screwdriver. If the plug is lost inside the keg or damaged when removing it, a stopper can be purchased at a hardware store to seal it back up.

What to Put in Kegs: Kegs can be filled with many materials. Each material below is effective. Choosing the manner which you use to fill the keg depends on how heavy you want the keg to be once filled and how dynamic you want the keg to be when you lift it.

Water – One of the cheapest and lightest way to fill a keg, but also one of the most dynamic. A keg filled with water weighs about 150 to 170 pounds. The sloshing of the water inside the keg makes for a very unpredictable, challenging and fun training tool. Water can be easily drained out of the keg if it ends up being too heavy for the athlete to handle.

Sand / Dirt / Gravel – Materials such as these are also very affordable. They can also be removed fairly easy if the keg is too heavy for the athlete to effectively train with. However, these types of materials are more apt to settle inside the keg and result in a less dynamic training tool.

Scrap Steel – Many strength enthusiasts enjoy bending nails, bolts, and other steel, but later on have a hard time figuring out what to do with the steel once it is bent. Bent steel is great for loading a keg because it fits in very well and remains somewhat dynamic, shifting inside the keg as it is being lifted and moved.

Little or Nothing – Kegs can be kept empty or mostly empty and used for throwing. Kegs can be thrown for height or distance. They can be thrown bilaterally or unilaterally. They can be pushed straight forward like a chest pass, heaved backwards, thrown over the head in triple extension, or tossed diagonally when kept lighter and less filled.

How to Use Kegs: Many conventional movements done with barbells or dumbbells can also be done with kegs. These movements will be made much more difficult when using a keg because kegs are larger, their center of gravity sits out away from the athlete, and their shape makes them harder to grip and thus control. This additional difficulty makes the athlete work harder, increasing work capacity which will also increase performance in their sport later on.

Here are some of the movements that are possible when training with kegs:

- Cleans
- Front Squats

- Press / Jerk
- Clean & Press
- Bear Hug Squat
- Zercher Squat
- Deadlift
- Swings
- Shouldering
- Snatches
- Conan's Walk (Zercher Carry)
- Throw for Height
- Throw for Distance
- Platform Loading (Atlas Stone)
- Bear Hug Get-up
- Turkish Get-up
- Keg Hub Lift (by Tap)
- Shoulder Carry

Keg Lifting is a great supplemental form of exercise for athletes and strength enthusiasts alike, in addition to more conventional training methods using normal barbells. Kegs provide additional challenge to the lifter, building non-planar, chaotic strength, and mental toughness. The size, shape, and weight of the keg makes keg lifting a reasonable manner of training for the Atlas Stones in a strongman contest if purchasing or making atlas stones is out of the question or time does not permit.

Sandbags

Sandbags present many of the same benefits and enable the same uses as Kegs. If you need to see those benefits again or if you would like exercise

suggestions for Sandbag Training, just slide up in this document. The most important thing to know is how to make one in order to train for it.

Making a sandbag is a fairly easy task. To do so you will need a few materials:

Army Duffel Bag (or some other sort of bag made of a durable material): Army Duffel Bags are great for making a sandbag, so they are the only bag that I suggest you use. Army Duffels are designed to be resilient. In all the years I have trained with sandbags, I have never seen an army duffel break during training, and we have put them through hell.

Gym bags and other duffel bags with zippers are not going to hold up to the beating that you will give your sandbag. Either the zipper will fail or the stitching near the zipper is going to tear.

You should look for an Army Duffel that closes with a clip that interlocks between several grommets. These things are built to be rugged and they will literally take a beating without breaking and rarely does the clip come undone from the grommets as long as it is clipped properly.

Army Duffels can be purchased from Army surplus stores, Ebay, and other locations. The one we have used for years came from Ebay and has stood up to years of punishment.

Feed Bags: Feed bags can be purchased at many locations, especially Farm Supply Stores. They are fairly cheap and sometimes free, depending on where you go. They come in many designs and sizes, but all of the kinds I have seen have been fairly tough. The material they are made of is not as tough as the sandbag, though. If you drop your sandbag as often as we have, eventually

the material will rupture and your filler may come out. This is no big deal, as you can always open the duffel back up, replace the bag and get back to training.

Hose Clamps: Hose clamps are small pieces of thin metal that loop around themselves and can be tightened down by turning a small screw on the clamp. You will need at least one hose clamp for every feed bag you fill and place in your sandbag. If your sandbag does not have the grommet and clip attachments, you will need at least one more hose clamp.

Contractor Bags (or some other sort of durable plastic garbage bag): Because of the chance that the feed bags might break and allow your filler material to fall out, it is a good idea to use contractor bags for a little extra reinforcement. These are tough as well, but will break from abuse over time. Again, they are not too expensive and can be replaced quickly.

Filler Material (sand, dirt, pea gravel): The first material we used for filler in our sandbag was just sandbox sand that we got from WalMart. Sandbox sand is very easy to transport because it comes in plastic bags. This way, you can move the sand with a car, and even lay it on the seat or carpeted floor because very little sand leaks out. Luckily, there's no need to buy, borrow, or steal a pick-up truck for fear of ruining something in your car. Sandbox sand is also very affordable.

If you would like to go an even more affordable route, you could use dirt to fill your sandbag. I do not recommend this, because you never know what else is in the dirt, but you can take your chances if you would like to.

Many athletes these days are going with pea gravel for their sandbag filler. Pea gravel is not as cheap as sand but it is gaining popularity because it is cleaner than sand. With pea gravel, if an interior bag breaks open you can sweep up any escaped gravel very easily and return it to the bag.

One downside to the use of sand is that if a bag breaks inside the sandbag, every time the bag drops or gets shouldered violently, a small puff of sand will fly out, which could get into your eyes, nose or mouth.

Stones

Lifting Stones just plain makes you feel like a Bad Ass. Stones are one of the **most alluring events** in all of the sport of Strongman. There is just something primal about stone lifting that harkens us back to the times of our ancestors, something animalistic and savage.



And even if you don't have the nice spherical-shaped Atlas Stones like are used in Strongman competitions, you can still become brutally strong by lifting Natural Stones found out in the woods or smooth stones found in streams and creeks.

Aside from making you feel like a Superhero when you lift them, Stone Training brings about many other benefits as well.

First off, Stone Lifting requires similar joint angles and force production to many sport power positions. Think along the lines of Football Linemen, Martial Artists, Rugby Players, and Wrestlers. These sports produce the most rugged and toughest athletes, and stone lifting builds you up in much the same way.

Stone lifting also helps make you explosive and powerful. Loading the stone to the high chest position or to a platform trains triple extension, and helps build jumping and leaping power. Stone lifting is a very glute-intensive activity, and having strong glutes will help you out in your Squat, Deadlift, Clean and many other more conventional lifts.

Finally, Stone Lifting will train your arms, chest and upper back like no other training method can because you must be able to produce tremendous crushing action in order to lift a stone, regardless of its actual shape. Atlas Stones require you to wrap your arms around in order to engage in the lift. Natural stones or slabs of broken concrete, both force you to under-hook them and cradle their weight in order to carry them. Aside from Zercher lifts, there are very few conventional training lifts that put you into these positions.

Tires

The Tire Flip develops the type of strength needed for sports like Football, Rugby, Judo, and Wrestling. When you flip a tire you are training your body to tackle, hit, throw and mangle whatever is put in front of you.

Tire flipping perhaps targets the posterior chain like no other type of training. Made up of the glutes, the lower back, and hamstrings, the posterior chain is the area of the body responsible for generating mass quantities of power in athletics.



Tire flipping is also an excellent way to develop speed against a resistance. Speed is essential in order to perform a flip. Tire flipping can turn you into a fast and fierce athletic freak!

Tire flipping is also the ultimate Multi-joint movement, because not only does it require firing of the hips, knees, and ankles, but it also loads your spine and core and requires you to use your shoulders and elbows in order to push it around, training the body like a well-oiled machine for performance.

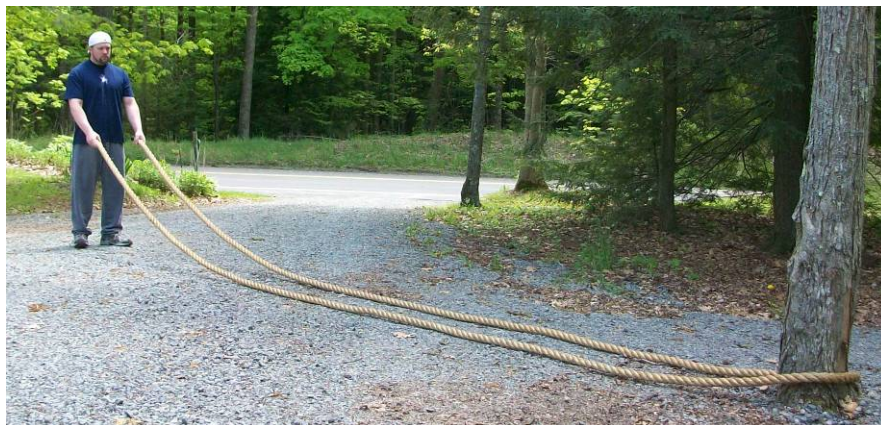
Tires don't just make you rugged and strong. They also bring about superior conditioning. This is not only because so much muscular activity is taking place, but also because often the tire is flipped time after time after time. There is a reason you see Mixed Martial Artists flipping tires on TV these days. It's because Tires can make your lungs burn in ways they never have before from conventional conditioning methods.

Ropes

Thick Rope first appeared in strongman competitions for years, especially heavy pulling events, like the train pull. Also, in recent years, thick rope training has been gaining popularity for grip strength and full body conditioning, especially the Battling Ropes system.



To give credit where it is due, the Battling Ropes concept was shown to me by John Brookfield and then further marketed by Anthony DiLuglio. I did not think of this concept myself, but I do train with these methods because they are phenomenal for lower arm strength and stamina.



In order to perform Rope Battling, it first must be somehow secured around a sturdy object. This is as simple as looping it around a fixed object, or in this case, the trunk of a tree.

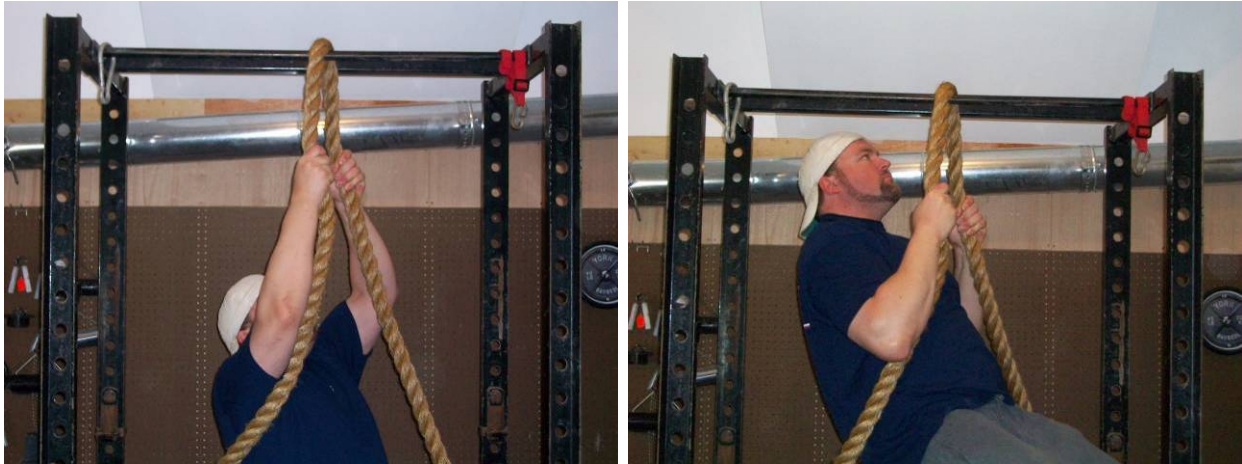


Once secured, there are two main ways to Battle the Rope. The first is by simultaneously lifting both arms up and then thrashing them down at the same time. This causes the rope to undulate.



The other primary way of Battling the Rope is to pump one arm up while pumping the other one down, and then alternating back and forth.

Thick Rope training does not only need to be used for undulating movements. It can be also used for climbing, swinging, lifting, pulling, throwing, and other ways.



Rope Pull-ups: Rope Pull-ups are easy to set up and perform. Just throw one end of the rope up over a pull-up bar or other stationary object. Then grab one end of the rope with each hand and go from there.



Rope Arm-Over-Arm Pulls: Attach one end of a rope to a sled, prowler, or other type of dragging tool. Grasp the other end of the rope and pull the load to you.

Kettlebells

Sometimes it seems as though kettlebells are taking the world by storm. Ten years ago, almost nobody knew about them. Five years ago, the companies that sold them were few and far between and now they are available everywhere.



Kettlebell training is an effective way of training that can produce tremendous conditioning due to the number of reps that can be trained and the level of effort that can be sustained. Also, many kettlebells have fairly thick handles which lead to more emphasis on supporting grip strength. Pictured above is a 95-lb kettlebell with a handle thicker than a normal Olympic bar.

Kettlebells are particularly awesome because they allow for unilateral training, working just one side of the body at a time. Examples are One Hand Swings, Clean and Press as well as the Snatch.

Unilateral training is extremely important for a well-rounded program because most things in life are done in a unilateral basis. From walking, to running and even jumping, much of what we do is unilateral. Since our bodies are already

programmed to perform in this manner, we should also train in this manner, and then our conventional bilateral lifts will become even stronger.



One Hand Swing

Perhaps my favorite form of Kettlebell training is flipping and juggling. Kettlebells can be flipped forwards and backwards, vertically and horizontally, from one hand to another or from one hand to the same hand, behind the back, around the legs, and more.

For more kettlebell juggling techniques, check out these two posts on the Diesel website.

Kettlebell Juggling Basics - <http://www.dieselcrew.com/basic-kettlebell-juggling-explained/>

Advanced Kettlebell Juggling - <http://www.dieselcrew.com/advanced-kettlebell-juggling/>

Conclusion

As you can see, there are many, many ways to train in order to take your strength and muscular development to the next level.

By now, you should be ready to get off your ass and get some serious training in. Whether it is modifying the normal kinetic pattern of the bench Press or Deadlift or if you want to take on the challenge of some sort of Odd Object training, a whole new chapter of strength training has been opened.

If you are looking to hit the ground running, I do have some additional resources you may be interested in to help you on your journey to becoming DIESEL STRONG...

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

FROM JEDD JOHNSON & DIESEL CREW

The Ultimate Sled Dragging Manual: Sled dragging is a very beneficial type of training for athletes because of its potential to develop strength, power, speed, and to support restoration. Within this manual, we define dozens of sled dragging exercises which will bring a variety to your sled dragging that you never thought was possible.

<http://www.dieselcrew.com/ultimate-sled-dragging-ebook/>

Introduction to Strongman Training: This DVD covers everything you need to know to enter into the ranks of strongman competition or just to apply these outstanding training methods into your existing program. Covers **Logs**,

Tires, Stones, Odd Objects, Yoke, Farmers as well as how to Warm-up, Recovery Methods, and Strongman Support Gear for complete Injury Prevention. <http://dieselcrew.com/strongman-training.html>

Stone Lifting Fundamentals DVD: This DVD covers everything you need to know to safely add stone lifting to your training repertoire. Designed to benefit strongman competitors, strength coaches, and strength enthusiasts, we cover the basics of stone lifting as well as advanced stone training techniques. <http://www.dieselcrew.com/stone-training/>

Combat Core Strength – This is the most complete, intense, and extreme collection of core training exercises available in the world, perfect for all athletes, especially baseball players. <http://www.combatcorestrength.com>

Home Made Strength DVD – Download the online DVD and immediately learn how to construct 8 bad-ass pieces of equipment that cost a fraction of the price and will last you for years. Build strength without breaking the bank! Physical DVD offer also included! <http://www.homemadestrength.com>

Home Made Strength II: Grip Strength Edition – Build 10 new pieces of equipment, plus a loading pin that will allow you to build Grip Strength that will help you increase your lifts in the gym and your performance in your sport. Crush PR's without breaking the bank! <http://www.homemadestrength.com/homemadegrip.htm>

Accelerated Muscular Development – The only complete Muscle Building resource on the Internet. Designed by Jim Smith, AMD covers Warm-up,

Training, Recovery, Diet, Stretching, Rehab and Prehab exercises to start building muscle right away and to continue to do so safely for years to come.

<http://www.acceleratedmusculardevelopment.com>

If you have any questions or if there is anything I can help you with, I'd be glad to work with you. Please feel free to email me at jedd.diesel@gmail.com or call the Diesel Hotline at 607-857-6997.

Other ways to get ahold of me:

Website: <http://www.DieselCrew.com> <= Hundreds of Articles

Website: <http://www.TheGripAuthority.com> <= The Best Grip Instruction

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/jeddjohnson> <= Subscribe Today

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=598607154> <= Add Me!

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/jeddjohnson> <= I Hate Twitter!