

**GRIP TRAINING FOR THE POOR MAN**  
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HOBBIES ARE USUALLY EXPENSIVE. GRIP TRAINING IS NOT EXEMPT FROM THIS ENIGMA AND I FOUND OUT THE HARD WAY. I BEGAN MY GRIP ODYSSEY MORE THEN A YEAR AGO. AS THE MONTHS WORE ON, I FOUND MYSELF KNEE DEEP IN GRIP TOOLS, BUT WITH AN EMPTY POCKET. NEARLY \$500 ON GRIPPERS, ANOTHER \$200+ ON BLOCK WEIGHTS, \$500 OR MORE ON SPECIALTY ITEMS SUCH AS GRIP MACHINES, PINCH MACHINES, ROLLING HANDLES, THICK BARS, AND THE LIKE. TO A NEWBIE FIRST VENTURING ONTO THE BOARD, IT CAN SEEM LIKE THEY NEED TO MORTGAGE THEIR HOUSE IN ORDER TO TRAIN THEIR GRIP! ABOUT A MONTH AGO I SAT BACK AND TOOK A LOOK AT EVERYTHING I HAD. IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO DECIDED THAT IT WAS TOO DAMN MUCH! SO I BEGAN SELLING IT OFF. I WANTED TO GET BACK TO MY ROOT AND DO SOME BARE BONES TRAINING. SO THERE IS HOPE TO ALL BEGINNERS OUT THERE. IT IS VERY POSSIBLE TO BUILD A WORLD-CLASS GRIP ON A LOW BUDGET.

I WILL SAY, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE A FEW THINGS YOU WILL NEED TO BUY. THE FIRST IS SOME GRIPPERS. FIND THEM USED IF YOU CAN-THAT WILL SAVE SOME CASH. IF YOU ARE STARTING OUT, AND NOT INTERESTED IN CERTIFICATIONS, I RECOMMEND THE HEAVY GRIPS: [HTTP://WWW.HEAVYGRIPS.COM/](http://www.heavygrips.com/). THEY ARE THE CHEAPEST OUT THERE FOR THE QUALITY, AND YOU CAN SOMETIMES GET THEM ON DISCOUNT. IF YOU ARE STARTING OUT, THE SET OF 5 WILL BE PLENTY OF GRIPPER FOR YOU. OF COURSE, YOU CAN ALSO GET BEEF BUILDERS FROM [HTTP://WWW.WWFITNESS.COM/](http://www.wwfitness.com/) OR CAPTAINS OF CRUSH FROM [WWW.ELITEFTS.COM](http://www.elitefts.com). THOSE BRANDS ARE GOING TO COST MORE. IF YOU ARE BUYING JUST TO STRENGTHEN THE HAND, THEN GO WITH THE HEAVY GRIPS. ONE OTHER SOLUTION IS TO GET THE IVANKO SUPER GRIPPER: [HTTP://WWW.FRACTIONALPLATES.COM](http://www.fractionalplates.com) . THIS ALLOWS YOU A HUGE VARIETY IN RESISTANCE AT A NICE CHEAP PRICE. HOWEVER, I DON'T RECOMMEND THE IVANKO IF CERTIFICATION IS YOUR THING. YOU NEED TO FEEL THE GRIPPERS AND USE THE GRIPPERS TO GET GOOD AT THE GRIPPERS. FOR HAND STRENGTH- YOU CAN'T BEAT THE IVANKO!

THE OTHER THING YOU WILL NEED THAT WILL MAKE LIFE A LOT EASIER IS A LOADING PIN. I MADE MINE OUT OF SCRAP STEEL AND IT COST ME NOTHING. MINE IS A STEEL ROD, A 5-POUND BASE, AND A NUT WELDED TO THE TOP. IF YOU DON'T WANT TO MAKE ONE, YOU CAN BUY ONE PRETTY CHEAP AT [HTTP://WWW.WWFITNESS.COM/](http://www.wwfitness.com/). IT ALSO HELPS TO HAVE A COUPLE SMALL SECTIONS OF CHAIN, A NICE SUPPLY OF SCREW-IN HOOKS, AND SOME CLAMPS. NOW LET'S TRAIN!

## PINCH

ASSORTED PIECES OF WOOD WORK GREAT! 2x4s, 4x4s, AND BIGGER MAKE EXCELLENT BLOCK WEIGHTS. YOU MAY WANT TO SAND DOWN THE EDGES A BIT TO KEEP FROM TEARING THE SKIN OR GETTING SPLINTERS. SCREW A HOOK

INTO THE WOOD; ATTACH IT TO YOUR LOADING PIN, AND ROCK! THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS IN REGARDS TO THICKNESS!

SOFTBALL. BUY, OR FIND, A SOFTBALL. ATTACH A HOOK, AND YOU HAVE A GREAT PINCH TOOL. MAKE SURE TO KEEP YOUR HAND DIRECTLY ON TOP OF THE BALL, AND KEEP YOUR FINGERS OFF OF THE THREADS. THIS WILL BLOW YOUR HAND UP!

PLATES. OF COURSE, YOU CAN PINCH WEIGHT PLATES. STANDARD OR OLYMPIC PLATES WORK FINE. PINCH WITH YOUR ENTIRE HAND, BOTH HANDS, OR USE INDIVIDUAL FINGERS.

WOOD, REVISITED. A FAVORITE LIFT OF MINE IS TO PINCH 2 2x4s TOGETHER, WITH A CLOTH STRAP IN THE MIDDLE OF THEM. I THEN ATTACH THE STRAP TO THE LOADING PIN AND DO A WOOD PINCH STRAP HOLD. YOU HAVE TO REALLY CLAMP DOWN ON THE WOOD TO KEEP THE THIN STRAP FROM SLIPPING.

STEEL. MACHINE SHOPS WILL OFTEN HAVE SCRAP STEEL PARTS LYING AROUND THAT THEY WILL EITHER GIVE AWAY OR SELL EXTREMELY CHEAP. THESE CAN BE EXCELLENT BLOCK WEIGHTS. I HAVE 2 PIECES, EACH ABOUT 60 POUNDS, THAT ARE GREAT FOR TRAINING. MAKE SURE TO FILE DOWN ANY SHARP EDGES.

STONES, NATURES TRAINING TOOLS. YES, YOU CAN PINCH GRIP STONES. I OFTEN WALK THROUGH THE WOODS OR CREEK BED AND PINCH ALL THE STONES I CAN. THEY COME IN ASSORTED SIZES, SHAPES, AND WEIGHTS, AND THEY ARE FREE! CINDER BLOCKS AND BRICKS WORK AS WELL.

WEIGHT COLLARS. EVERYONE WHO TRAINS HAS SEEN THE SMALL SCREW ON WEIGHT COLLARS. YOU CAN GET SOME CHEAP, OR IN MY CASE, FIND SOME IN A GYM THAT ARE MISSING THE SCREW IN PART. ATTACH A SMALL PIECE OF ROPE AND YOU HAVE A GREAT HUB PINCH TOOL.

CANS AND JARS. THESE CAN BE USED TO PINCH BY THE TOP OR, IN SOME CASES, OVER THE BODY OF THE CAN OR JAR. JUST BE CAREFUL NOT TO GET CUT.

BASICALLY, IF IT IS HEAVY, YOU CAN PINCH IT AND GET A GOOD WORKOUT, CHEAP!

FOR JUST THUMB WORK, NOTHING BEATS THE \$2.00 SPRING CLAMP. FOR ADDED RESISTANCE, ADD SOME RUBBER BANDS, OR HAVE SOMEONE SQUEEZE THE OTHER END OF THE CLAMP.

## WRIST

IF YOU HAVE ACCESS TO WEIGHT PLATES, YOU CANNOT BEAT THE PLATE WRIST CURL AND PLATE CURL. ALSO, YOU CAN DO DUMBBELL WRIST AND REVERSE WRIST CURLS AS WELL AS BARBELL WRIST AND REVERSE CURLS. MAKE SURE TO ROLL THE WEIGHT ALL THE WAY TO YOUR FINGER TIPS AND ROLL IT ALL THE WAY UP.

BENDING. STEEL IS CHEAP. BUY IT. BEND IT. WATCH GRIP STRENGTH SKYROCKET.

TEARING. TEAR ALL MAGAZINES, PHONEBOOKS, AND PAPER YOU CAN GET YOUR HANDS ON. SIMPLY TEARING A SHEET OF PAPER AGAIN AND AGAIN AS IT GETS SMALLER IS ONE HECK OF A WORKOUT!

WRIST ROTATIONS AND LEVERING. IF YOU CAN AFFORD SLEDGE HAMMERS, GET A 6-POUND HAMMER AND ADD WEIGHT. YOU CAN ADD WEIGHT BY WELDING ON AN ATTACHMENT ON THE HAMMER, OR, BY SLIDING A WEIGHT PLATE UP THE HANDLE TO THE HEAD, THEN ATTACHING SOMETHING TO CLAMP IT ON. NOW-LEVER IT IN ALL DIRECTIONS, AND DO PRONATION (PALMS DOWN) AND SUPINATION (PALMS UP) ROTATION WITH IT. IF YOU CANT AFFORD THE HAMMER, USE A WOODEN DOWEL AND ATTACH WEIGHTS. A TREE BRANCH SMALL ENOUGH TO FIT OLYMPIC PLATE ONTO WORKS WELL.

WRIST ROLLER. GET A SHORT PIECE OF PVC PIPE; I PREFER THE 2.5" STUFF. DRILL A HOLE IN THE MIDDLE STRAIGHT THROUGH AND ATTACH A ROPE OR SOME CABLE. NOW YOU CAN SLIDE IT ONTO THE PINS IN A POWER CAGE, OR JUST HOLD IT. ATTACH THE ROPE OR CABLE TO YOUR LOADING PIN AND ROLL AWAY IN ALL DIRECTIONS.

#### THICK BAR

THE CHEAPEST WAY TO MAKE A THICK BAR IS TO USE PVC. IF YOU WANT IT THICKER THEN 2", YOU WILL HAVE TO HAVE A 2" BAR WITH A 2.5" "HANDLE" CLAMPED TO THE CENTER. I WOULDN'T TRUST THIS WITH A WHOLE LOT OF WEIGHT, AND I DON'T THINK I WOULD PUT PVC OVERHEAD WITH MORE THEN 50 ON IT. IT MAY HOLD IT, IT MAY NOT. I DON'T WANT TO FIND OUT. A BETTER SOLUTION IS TO GET SOME HOLLOW 2" PIPE AND HAVE SOMEONE WELD A 2.5" "HANDLE" IN THE CENTER FOR YOU.

YOU CAN MAKE A ROLLING HANDLE THE SAME WAY, JUST MAKE SURE TO WELD ENDS ONTO IT AND SOMETHING TO ATTACH THE LOADING PIN TO.

#### CRUSH

THAT'S WHAT THE GRIPPERS ARE FOR!

IF YOU CANNOT AFFORD THE GRIPPERS OR THE SUPER GRIPPER, YOU CAN DO A FEW THINGS. YOU CAN USE WIRE CUTTERS TO CUT DIFFERENT SIZES OF WIRE. IF YOU HAVE SOME PLIERS, YOU CAN ATTACH A STRAP TO YOUR LOADING PIN, CRUSH THE STRAP WITH THE PLIERS, AND LIFT WEIGHT. IF YOU HAVE ACCESS TO SLEDGE HAMMERS, YOU CAN DO THE HAMMER SQUEEZE. THAT IS WHEN YOU OVERLAP THE HANDLES OF THE HAMMERS, SQUEEZE THEM TOGETHER, AND PICK THEM UP.

#### EXTENSION

JARS. MY FAVORITE THING TO DO IS USE A JAR THAT I CAN FILL WITH PENNIES OR BENT NAILS. I PUT MY HAND INSIDE, EXTEND MY FINGERS, AND LIFT THE JAR. DON'T LIFT IT FAR; IF IT FALLS YOU WILL HAVE A MESS.

SAND. FILL A BUCKET WITH SAND, JAM YOUR HAND IN, AND OPEN YOUR HAND UP. REPEAT UNTIL DESIRED BURNING!

RUBBER BANDS. PUT THEM AROUND YOUR FINGERTIPS AND OPEN AND CLOSE YOUR HANDS.

THE CHEAPEST AND EASIEST WAY TO TRAIN EXTENSORS IS TO USE YOUR OTHER HAND AS THE RESISTANCE!

#### ASSORTED

ONE FINGER LIFTS. YOU CAN USE BARBELLS, DUMBBELLS, ROPES, OR CHAINS. ATTACH THE ROPE OR CHAIN TO PLATES IF THAT IS ALL YOU HAVE, GRAB IT WITH 1 OR MORE FINGERS, AND LIFT! IF YOU ARE USING CHAIN, IT HELPS TO HAVE SOME PADDING.

YOU CAN USE ROPE OR TOWELS TO DO DEADLIFTS OR PULL-UPS. THIS CAN BE DONE SINGLE OR DOUBLE ARMED.

FINGERTIP PUSH-UPS WILL BUILD TREMENDOUS FINGER STRENGTH.

BUILD FINGER DEXTERITY BY PINCHING SMALL PLATES WITH 1 FINGER AND THUMB AND "WALKING" THE PLATE THROUGH THE FINGERS.

WALK YOUR HANDS UP AND DOWN A SLEDGEHAMMER OR DOWEL.

#### HAND THERAPY

HOT COLD SOAKS. OPEN AND CLOSE YOUR HANDS REPEATEDLY IN HOT WATER FOR 2 MINUTES, THEN COLD WATER FOR 2 MINUTES. GO BACK AND FORTH FOR AS LONG AS NEEDED.

WEAR MITTENS TO BED TO KEEP YOUR HANDS WARM ALL NIGHT!

ROTATE DEXTERITY BALLS, OR BALL BEARINGS, ALL DIRECTIONS AND WITH PALMS UP AND DOWN.

ROLL UP A TOWEL OR NEWSPAPER IN YOUR HAND. START WITH YOUR HAND PALM DOWN GRASPING JUST A SMALL CORNER OF THE TOWEL/PAPER IN YOUR FINGER AND THUMB AND ROLL IT UNTIL IT IS IN YOUR HAND COMPLETELY.

THIS IS JUST A SMALL SAMPLING OF WHAT YOU CAN DO, ON A LIMITED BUDGET, TO TRAIN YOUR HANDS. BE CREATIVE, HAVE AN OPEN MIND, TRAIN HARD, AND HAVE FUN!

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