

Conquering The DVRT Clean & Press Test





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Clean and Press Challenge

The word “test” can often freak many people out, we rather think about the Clean and Press as a “challenge”. In DVRT we never do anything just to “do it”. We have clear purpose and direction and the Clean and Press challenge is another example of us trying to deliver a great experience for our DVRT education attendees.

How in the world is a VERY challenging drill helping YOU? One of our main motivations in implementing a physical standard was to get attendees working with the USB, thinking of programming, and building a base level of fitness that would help them have a great time at our physical courses. Let's break down why each of these components are necessary. Working with the Ultimate Sandbag



In 2003 I attended the Russian Kettlebell Certification (RKC). Back then probably more than 70% of the attendees had never even touched a kettlebell. Fast forward ten years and most people not only have kettlebells, but spend time preparing with them for the RKC.

When you touch any implement for the first time, there is a period of becoming familiar with the tool. In the case of the USB, the differences are greater than most. The differences in levels of stability and feel is unlike anything else. Therefore, becoming somewhat familiar with how the USB moves and feels is important as it allows us to spend more time refining your skills at the courses.

It can be a rather big shock for someone to touch a USB for the first time at our DVRT courses. Since a day flies by (it really does!) we want to ensure that everyone leaves feeling successful and competent in both using and teaching how to use a USB. Having attendees become more familiar with the USB helps us speed up that process so we can teach helpful troubleshooting techniques rather than starting from zero.



This strategy also allows us to quickly identify bad habits that your clients or others would pick-up in training. Our goal in the

DVRT course is to make sure you can teach any fitness level our principles and drills, but you must be able to demonstrate them to a high level first!

Programming



By working on the Clean and Press challenge we are also having you think about another key component of DVRT, programming. While most educational programs focus purely on teaching you more drills, we want to open your mind on how to put the pieces of the puzzle together.

Giving you a “problem” to solve forces you to become exposed to our DVRT principles and see how to accomplish your goal in the most efficient and effective means possible. That means really thinking and more importantly, applying, our DVRT principles. Changing the means in how you see fitness programming will make actually using the DVRT system far more powerful.

Getting Ready for the Course

The USB drills provide a very unique stress to the body. One attendee actually performed the whole program with a heart rate monitor and found he burned over 3,000 calories for the day! That is a lot of work being done.

If you have never experienced DVRT work using the course as your first time could be very challenging and difficult. Building a foundation can definitely help you make it through the course more successfully and enjoy the experience.

Our goal is that as an attendee, you will perform the work that is required throughout the program. Not only “get through it”, but actually have fun in the process. Using the Clean and Press challenge goes a long way in accomplishing these goals. Four A’s of Success
Senior DVRT instructor, Troy Anderson, describes the benefits of the Clean and Press challenge with four “a” words.

Accessibility: The Clean and Press teaches many different components of movement that are important in developing overall skills in the DVRT system. A hip hinge, core stability, lower body integration, upper body range of motion and strength. That’s a lot!



Even though there are many parts of the Clean and Press challenge it is a very doable drill as well. If you have no background in exercises like the Clean and Press, if you follow our progressions and directions you can gain great skill in the movement.

Accuracy: One big reason we had the Clean and Press challenge focus on heavier USBs was not just a strength consideration. When dealing with Strength and Burly USBs, there is more movement of the USB. Therefore, having really good technique is critical to performing the Clean and Press well. Therefore, just “muscling through” the drill isn’t possible.

Acceleration: One of the toughest aspects of fitness to teach is how to accelerate weight. However, it is one of the most important components to learning how to both produce and absorb force. The Clean and Press teach not just how to accelerate, but decelerate as well. Many injuries occur during deceleration not acceleration. Learning these principles at a base level is so important in overall fitness and performance success.

Attitude: There is an element of mental toughness and focus that is required to accomplish the Clean and Press challenge. It is not easy to finish the Clean and Press challenge, but overall in DVRT you need to possess patience, pose, and purpose. This specific challenge can help achieve those principles.

Performing the Clean and Press

The Clean and Press challenge is not really just a “press”. In order to be as efficient as possible, you may use a dip of a push press or push jerk. This means using the legs to help lift the weight of the USB overhead as well as to absorb it coming down.

In order to see the foundational techniques of the Clean and Press though watch this video: [CLICK HERE](#) to watch

Breaking Down the Program

One of the big keys in developing a good DVRT program for accomplishing the Clean and Press challenge is realizing you aren’t going to focus purely on weight. As discussed on our blog, many of our principles will focus on a variety of training goals.

Step 1: Get A Baseline

The first step is to get a baseline, see where you are starting at as a means to both see progress and know where your weaknesses lie. Know the standards.

Men:

- Under 170 pounds: 60 pound USB Strength x 50 repetitions
- 170-210 pounds: 80 pound USB Burly x 40 repetitions
- Over 210: 100 pound USB Burly x 40 repetitions



Women:

- Under 150 pounds: 40 pound USB Strength x 50 repetitions
- Over 150 pounds: 60 pound USB Strength x 40 repetitions

Performance Standards

- Each repetitions must be finished with the USB over the crown of the head.
- Every press must occur from the fists and can not be on the back side of the wrists.
- Each repetition must make contact with the ground.
- All 5 minute time limit

Step 2: Get a Game Plan

You are going to need some patience as the rate of improvement will vary for each individual. Follow the plan, don't perform it for one or two weeks and then jump ship because you haven't gone for 25 repetitions to 50 repetitions, it will take some time!

During your training make sure that your technique is always a top priority. If you do not possess great technique in your

Clean and Press challenge you will be not only be at risk for injury, but you will be working MUCH harder to per- form the same challenge.

Our plan is to only train three days a week. The Clean and Press will be the focus of each workout.

Workout 1

Heavy Day:

15 Minute Density Workout

Use a USB 10-20 pounds heavier than test weight

Perform as many sets of 5 repetitions in 15 minutes.

Rest as needed, record total number of sets and try to beat each workout.

Workout 2

Speed Day:

Use a USB 20 pounds lighter than test weight

3 Minute Density Workout

Perform as many repetitions as possible in 3 minutes.

This is to work in speed, accuracy, recovery, and conditioning



Every 2 Weeks

Perform one test workout. This will be you actually performing the test as you will be performing on certification date. It is suggested you perform this as alternative as heavy day. Five sets of ten is probably the most realistic plan to pass the Clean and Press challenge. Although not the only! However, you will find that routinely getting comfortable with double digit repetition sets is very important. It allows one to find a good pace and minimize fatigue. No matter what, you will probably be very fatigued but you will find the optimal pace. With this schedule you notice that even in a perfect world you may need a minimum of six weeks to prepare. The reality is you may need double the time to actually get ready. If you plan on attending a DVRT program and haven't signed-up yet, you can start training as soon as possible.

The reality is you may find a week where you perform 3 sets of 7 and 2 sets of 6. You should aim for the next level when you can perform all sets at the desired repetition scheme. Don't aim for 5 sets of 8 until you can hit 5 sets of 7.

"On the minute" refers to the time left until the next minute. For example, if you have a clock running 5 minutes down, when you hit 5 repetitions on your first cycle and the clock read 4 minutes 30 seconds, you get 30 seconds of rest until the clock reads 4 minutes. This forces you to find a pace and let's you know how fast you should be performing each repetition to ensure some level of rest.

What Else Should I Do?

Two days a week doesn't sound like a lot, but it isn't about how much training you can perform, but the results from the training. Fitness can be challenging mentally, just as physically. Our nature is to think more is better, the reality is "better is better". Meaning that seeing the optimal amount of stress to apply to the body is far more effective than just applying the MAXIMAL amount of stress.

During the workouts listed you don't JUST have to perform the Clean and Press workouts. In fact, my recommendation is that you perform a secondary circuit that addresses some weaknesses. How much you do is going to largely depend upon your individual fitness level.

Those that have been training in our DVRT program for awhile could perform an additional 3-4 set circuit, someone starting off may want to start with 2-3 circuits.

Other drills to focus upon would be those that help balance out your routine, build some foundational leg strength, and maintain diverse movement abilities. Here are a few ideas and make sure to check out our blog or Youtube Channel [HERE](#) to see some of these drills in action.



Circuit A:

Tactical Vaulting: 2-3 sets of x 5-6 per side Bent-Over Row (Neutral Grip): 2-3 sets of 8-10 Front Loaded Drop Lunge: 2-3 sets of 6-8 per side Front Planks: 2-3 sets of 30-60 seconds

Circuit B:

USB Iso Pulls: 2-3 sets of 2-3 reps of 15-20 seconds per side Shoulder Lateral Lunge: 2-3 sets of 8-10 per side

Kneeling Around the World: 2-3 sets of 6-8 per side

Front Loaded Good Morning: 2-3 sets of 10-15

Circuit C:

Front Loaded Squats: 2-3 sets of 8-10

Off-Set Grip Rows: 2-3 sets of 8-12 per side Rotational Lunge: 2-3 sets of 30 seconds

Around the World: 2-3 sets of 30 seconds per side

Common Questions

Q: What if I can't get the USB over the crown of my head?

A: Mobility issues can be a big deal, especially in the shoulders and thoracic spine. This is something we have addressed in many of our DVRT blog posts, but drills to focus upon are

1. Kneeling Around the Worlds
2. Bridge to Pullover
3. Breathing Snatch Overhead Holds

If you want to find out more how to specifically correct many of these common issues, check out our DVRT Corrective Course [HERE](#)

Q: I don't feel like I am close to the 50 repetitions in 5 minutes, what should I do?

A: Have patience and follow the plan. If after 4 weeks you have not improved SIGNIFICANTLY then please drop us a line at info@ultimatesandbagtraining.com or post on our Facebook fan page <https://www.facebook.com/UltimateSandbagTraining>. Far too many people jump off a program after 1-2 weeks and that is simply not enough time to improve to a significant degree.

Q: I only have access to one USB size, what should I do?





A: If you are serious about the DVRT program you are going to have to commit more than one USB. I am not suggesting you purchase 5 or 10, but 2 would be an absolute minimum. To help out, we are giving you a 15% coupon code "USB" that you can use to help you get prepared for the Clean and Press challenge.

Good Luck on your Challenge! If you follow the above plan I have great confidence you will accomplish your goal!

Tips From The Pros

Strength Coach, Robert Dos Remedios, CoachDos.com

Q: Most people think of terms of endurance, maximal strength, and/or power, but rarely power endurance. Should it be more of priority?

A: Absolutely. Power in general is of great importance especially as we get older and start to lose our ability to generate it. 'Real life' dictates that power endurance is something we should all be concerned with....that it should become a priority in our training and conditioning. Our ability to sustain power output becomes important from competitive athletes to weekend warriors to the mom or dad trying to keep up with their kids!

Q: What are some of the most common errors in programming power endurance into a program?

A: Being unrealistic in our training....getting power and traditional steady state training confused. It's important to understand realistic training intervals AND loading. We have to remember that power involves two key components, the pace/speed at which we move and LOADING. I see people doing very lightly loaded exercises for long durations and very limited rest intervals, all the while believing that this is the best way to train their power endurance. The USC clean and press is a great example of a power-endurance style workout!

Q: Our Clean and Press test relies a lot of power endurance. What Coach Dos advice could you give in people wanting to succeed at the test?

A: I am currently in my journey to pass the test (50 reps in 5 min. with a 100lb Burly) and believe me it's important to change your training up. Change up both your loading (heavier and lighter bags) and volumes (sometimes shooting for 50 reps or more, other times zoning in on lower reps ranges). This is a VERY technical exercise test....this variable CANNOT be ignored if you will fail. Trying to move too quickly from clean to press, not keep things smooth during the transitions and presses etc. will result in failed reps and can destroy your test attempt. Lastly, DON'T just focus on USB clean and presses..this should be part of your overall training NOT the only thing you train. A comprehensive training program is essential.

Q: What could you see being easy traps to fall into?

Doing nothing but the USB clean and press. It's easy to fall prey to wanting to try it day after day....many people figure 'hey, it's only 5 min long so how much effect can it actually have on



my overall recovery etc.' Well, it CAN and WILL affect your recovery, strength, and power. This is a brutal test ..not something that should be performed several times each week.

DVRT Master Instructor, Dan Jackowicz, dannytwoguns.com

"When you initiate the pull from the floor, focus on "pulling the handles apart." This not only engages the lats really well but makes sure that your hands are in a good position once they've loaded the bag and your hands aren't too close for the press."

DVRT Master Instructor, Steve "Coach Fury" Holiner

"Hey guys, this year we're going to be implementing a strength test into the system."

—Josh Henkin

Jeez, thanks Josh. That quote, taken the DVRT Master Instructors forum, was posted about 8 weeks before all the masters would be meeting in Josh's home base of Scottsdale, AZ. First off, I love well designed strength and technique tests. Testing forces potential instructors to invest some serious training time before a certification. It is my opinion, that certifications should be focused on sharpening the blade, not forging a sword.

The DVRT Ultimate Sandbag Training Clean and Press Test: For the sake of this piece I'm going to focus on my weight class for the test. Rest assured that my training advice is applicable to all divisions. At a bodyweight of 195 pounds I would need to Clean and Push Press an 80 pound Burly Ultimate Sandbag 40 times in 5 minutes.

I've done the snatch test a bunch of times. How hard can it be? I can be a dumbass. The DVRT Ultimate Sandbag Training Clean and Push Press is a highly technical full body lift that can smoke the entire body if not done properly. My hopes are that you will be able to use this technique and training protocol to crush it.

I left for Arizona having trained up to 47 reps with an 85 pound Ultimate Sandbag. The Master Instructors all went through the test on the second day of our workshop. I stepped up to the Ultimate Sandbag (USB) expecting to crush 50 reps. I stepped away from the USB furious (go figure). Only 36 reps. That sucked. My shoulders, biceps, legs and lungs were on fire. My technique started to fall apart with the exhaustion. It seriously took about an hour to recover. With defeat fresh in my mind, I broke down the areas I felt suffered in my technique and watched what some of the others were doing. I came up with a plan of attack.

Out of passion, or punishment, I got to the workshop early the next day, grabbed the Burly and stepped out behind the facility with my buddies, Joe Chalakee and Jason Newman to take another crack at the test. Folks, including Josh, thought I was crazy. This session was all about technique. Skill practice.

The results spoke for themselves. I got 43 reps (6 more than the previous day with a huge level of fatigue already built in.). My technique was spot on as well. The best thing was that I also recovered within 10 minutes with juice left in my legs and shoulders.



Before I drop some knowledge bombs on you, my first piece of advice would be to find a DVRT Master Instructor or take a DVRT Ultimate Sandbag Training workshop to get a massive head start skill wise.

Owning the Ultimate Sandbag Training Clean and Press technique. Here's how I did it. Set up for your first clean by actively pulling yourself, hinging the hips back, to the USB. This will pre-load tension to make that first clean solid. Be sure to pull the clean handles apart as you set up. Pulling the handles apart will fire up the lats and aid in catching the USB smoothly to the fists. Take a deep breath into the belly before exploding into the rep. Exhale power breathing style and shoot through your heels, standing up right and catch the bag onto your fists.

With the USB on your fists, take a deep breath and set up for the push press. Until you actually put the bag down after a set of reps, this standing front load position is your rest break. Use it! Power breath exhale again as you push press. Lock it out overhead. Don't grind the press. Push press it. Your shoulders will thank you.

Breathe into the belly as you pull the USB back into the front load position. Take in another breath as you unroll and follow the Burly onto your feet.

Do not lose tension when the Ultimate Sandbag hits the floor or top of the feet. Use that tension as a spring to launch the USB back onto the fists. Again, your rest period during the lift is in the front load position. Not on the floor.

I found that 8 reps a minute worked perfectly. That will give you 20-30 seconds of rest per set depending on your fatigue level in the later reps. Breathe and reset the USB during these true rest breaks.

High five your buddies as you walk away victorious.

That's the technique. Now how should you train for it?

THE FURY DVRT ULTIMATE SANDBAG TRAINING C&P PROGRAM:

*I recommend training twice a week for 4-8 weeks. Leave 2-3 days between heavy and light days.

Day 1 – Heavy Day: Use the actual test weight or 5-10 pounds heavier. Be fresh for this. Try 5 reps every minute for 8 minutes. Cut back if that it is too tough. If possible, I would cut sets back before reps.

Day 2 – Light (Speed) Day: Use a USB 10-20 pounds lighter than your test weight and shoot for 8 reps on the minute for 5 minutes. This will help you identify the tempo and cadence that will be needed for the actual test. I suggest doing this at the end of your normal training session. I find there is an added bonus of going through the test on the light day when you're already pre-fatigued. Safely. Don't be stupid if you're already spent.

All that really needs to change weekly is the Heavy day. You can stick with a USB 10- 20 pounds lighter through every light day. Two Ultimate Sandbags are all you need for this program.



HEAVY DAYS

Week 1: 5 reps a minute for 8 minutes.

Week 2: 6 reps a minute for 7 minutes.

Week 3: 7 reps a minute for 6 minutes.

Week 4: 8 reps a minute for 5 minutes and victory!

If you are unable to finish the reps/sets one week, simply stick with that week's programming until you can complete it. There are 4 weeks of padding in there for just that reason. Now some of the weight classes require more reps. Reps divided by the time will get you the reps needed pre minute on the speed day. This rep number is what you'll need to work up to by week 4-8 on your heavy day. Got it? Good.

The program is simple. The test is hard. Attack. Attack. Attack. Now register for that DVRT Ultimate Sandbag Training Level 1 cert you've always wanted. Use this program. Pass and join the family.

Steve is a Strength Coach at Five Points Academy in NYC. As a DVRT Master Instructor, Fury developed the popular Ultimate Sandbag and Dynamic Strength programs at the gym. As a StrongFirst SFG II, Steve is highly regarded in the community and often sought out by instructor candidates for training. Fury is also an assistant Muay Thai Instructor and is involved in hosting workshops at Five Points. Founded in 2011, Coach Fury's Kettlebell Club brings hardstyle kettlebell training to Park Slope, Brooklyn every Sunday. You can visit www.coachfury.com, [facebook/ coachfury](https://facebook.com/coachfury) or [@coachfury](https://twitter.com/coachfury) to get in contact or learn more about Steve.