The #1 Vertical Jump Exercise

By - Jacob Hiller

About The Author

Jacob Hiller is a world recognized performance enhancement coach specializing in improving vertical leap and explosiveness. His research and resulting book The Jump Manual have been widely considered as the industry leading program for explosive athletic training.

Jacob is a also a former professional basketball player and maintains a 40 inch vertical.

His training has been recognized by ESPN, Sports Illustrated, Mens Health and many other nationally recognized publications.
Introduction to The #1 Vertical Jump Exercise

This is the single most effective exercise I’ve found (and I’m pretty sure I’ve tested just about everything out there over the past 20+ years, since I started trying stuff when I was like 10).

I say “single exercise” because it’s just one exercise.

I often get asked “How do you jump so high?!” and “What’s the best exercise for your vertical leap?!”

I usually avoid this question because increasing your vertical leap should be part of a comprehensive approach to your athletic development. There is NOT one single exercise that will get you jumping to your full potential. For that, you need a comprehensive approach.

However, if all you had time for was ONE exercise and you wanted to get the fastest gains for your effort…THIS would be it. And it’s an easy one to implement, that’s why I want to show it to you.
Why this works?

In order to make a movement, your body has to activate your muscles. I know, real deep science here… lol. Stay with me.

The way your body activates your muscles is by sending an electric impulse (a literal “shock”) from your nervous system to your muscles. This shock runs down through an electrochemical pathway. Think of this pathway like a race track.

For every movement you make, there's a specific “pathway” your nervous system uses so it can fire the right muscles.

These pathways are VERY important to your results. Here’s why:

When you jump, your body uses a jumping specific pathway. If you want to jump higher, you need to increase and strengthen that particular pathway. You can’t train to strengthen some OTHER pathway and expect to jump higher.

That’s why so many programs out there claiming to get you to jump higher are limited in the results they can give you because they make you do exercises that strengthen other pathways than what you use to jump with.

So, if you want the absolute most effectiveness you MUST train your specific jumping pathway. We’re going to do that using Jumping Specific Join Angle Training.
This exercise incorporates:

- Jumping Specific Joint Angles
- Central Nervous System Reconditioning (better muscle activation)
- Jumping Specific Strength Development

There’s a lot more to why this exercise works so well, but for now I won’t bore you with the details.

**How do I know this works?**

Shouldn’t it be obvious that by targeting the specific muscles and the specific neural pattern used for jumping that you can improve your jumping power?

It should be obvious, but for most athletes and coaches understanding how to do this properly is an elusive science.

So how did we figure it out?

Initially I figured out this works by trial and error. When I realized that “movement specific training” yielded “movement specific results” I began to get dramatic results from my own training.

I personally went from jumping 28 inches in my running vertical leap to jumping 44 inches and being able to get my head to the rim. This improvement literally changed my life as I began to progress in my athletic career, and eventually was able to achieve playing basketball at the professional level.

And these same training techniques also worked on athletes I trained, not just me.
Our Research Lab

In 2010 I invested thousands of dollars in my own research lab. So I was then able to test and see the results from a scientific / objective point of view.

What did we do?

I hooked myself and athletes up to electrodes and watched the muscle activation pattern as we did various exercises and movements.

We learned without a doubt, that by using “specific joint angles” in your training, you are able to precisely target the muscles used in your desired sport specific movements.

Our training and research then went beyond just using specific joint angles to how we can train the central nervous system to progressively send a stronger activation pattern to activate the desired muscles with a FASTER and STRONGER impulse.

This resulted in the best training stimulus and the fastest athletic gains we have ever seen in our training.

When you read this, it probably (hopefully) sounds obvious that this should work well. However, most online and offline training programs completely ignore these findings in most cases.
Most players and coaches follow a pattern of increasing ‘general’ strength and fitness levels rather than honing in on specific training strategies like this one.

This is why you see athletes train for years with very little carry over to their sport specific goals.

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**Cautions and Warnings**

1 - Make sure you are fit and healthy enough to undertake rigorous and intense exercise.

This means you shouldn’t have any current knee, hip, achilles, spine or other injuries that could make high impact training dangerous.

2 - Understand that this is just ONE exercise.

If you could only do ONE exercise to increase your athletic ability it would be this exercise. BUT if you want the best results from your training you should be using comprehensive approach to improving all aspects of your strength, quickness, and athletic coordination. Our comprehensive program can be found here - The Jump Manual.

3. **HOW you do it is just as important as WHAT you do.**

Even if you are doing the right exercise... the intensity, resistance, and quantity that you do is also VERY important. Just “doing” an exercise will not get you results.
How to do JAS Reactive Jump Squats

I call this exercise JAS (jump angle specific) reactive jump squats. That's quite a mouthful but it's the only way that I can thoroughly describe the exercise in as few words as possible.

Here is how you setup the exercise.

1. Take a picture of yourself right before you commence the movement of jumping. At the bottom of your jump.

This joint angle is the most important joint angle that needs to be strengthened muscularly and conditioned by your central nervous system to be explosive.

An individual who is strong at this joint angle will be able to begin the jumping movement with a high degree of power and velocity.

An individual weak at this point angle or whose nervous system is slow will have difficulty overcoming the resistance of their own body weight or generating velocity.

2. Choose a weight (dumbbell, barbell, med ball, vest, anything!) that challenges you, but does not alter your form.

Resistance is important for causing muscle tension and increasing the electrical muscular impulse.
I would recommend a weight that is 30% of your 1 rep max squat (meaning the weight you can squat once at the same jumping joint angle you see from your picture in step 1).

But your final judge should be whether or not you can do the exercise with perfect form and without staying more than 1 second on the ground.

3. Start the movement with your body in the same position as the picture you took in step 1.

4. Explode upwards using all the intensity you can possibly generate in your body.

5. Land on the balls of your feet in the exact same joint angles you started.

6. As soon as you land, and without pausing or gathering... Explode upwards again.

It's important to reduce your GCT (ground contact time). Which means you should spend as little time on the ground as possible. If you are on the ground for longer than a second the weight is too heavy.

7. Repeat steps 3 - 6 no more than 8 times OR until the intensity of each repetition diminishes.

8. Do a total of 35 total PERFECT reps. The number of sets you do is irrelevant.
This means you can start and stop as often as is necessary for every single rep to be at your maximum intensity, maximum height, and spending the minimum amount of time on the ground.

For example, if you can only do 3 before you feel tired or your intensity level drops, then stop. Rest for a bit until you can explode with max intensity. Then restart and stop when your intensity drops. Keep going like this, resting when necessary and then restarting until you’ve done the JAS Reactive Jump Squat 35 times perfectly (the right angle and at max intensity).

9. Do this exercise every 2 days.

10. Increase your weight by around 5 pounds every 2 weeks.

Unless you are not able to perform the exercise perfectly. Then you should stay with the same weight.

Points of emphasis

• It is important not to go down past the same joint angle that your ‘natural’ jumping angles are. This is because changing directions at that exact joint angles strengthens the muscles and central nervous system drive at that particular angle.

• Intensity is VERY important. Each rep MUST be done at your absolute maximum intensity. If you are fatigued, then you need to stop, rest, then restart.

• Land on the balls of your feet and do not let your knees cave inward. Keep your feet and ankles pointing / tracking in the same direction.

• Keep your “ground contact time” as low as possible. This means land softly and quietly, then explode immediately upon reaching the same joint angles.
Make sure you watch the videos that came with this workbook for further explanation and detail.

**Progressing Past This Exercise (Achieving a 40+ inch vertical)**

Is it possible to get to a 40 inch vertical if you weren’t born a “natural” athlete?

The answer is: ABSOLUTELY.

**I wasn’t born a “natural” jumper.** I had to work long and hard to make any kind of gains in my athleticism. I got frustrated because everything I tried, from stuff my coaches gave me to programs like Air Alert, even gimmickly stuff like the jump shoes, and nothing seemed to get me close to the potential that I felt was locked inside my body.

Once I finally figured out the principles and techniques like this one that took me from an average jumper to jumping higher than the majority of NBA players.

What I found was that there are 9 different aspects you need to improve in order to achieve your maximum athletic potential (this exercise I just showed you incorporates 2 of them).

To get the maximum results you need to train all 9 of these athletic attributes.

**I’ve outlined all of these 9 including the exact workout system** I developed so that anyone can follow it and implement them. It’s called “The Jump Manual” and it’s the most comprehensive approach available. Thousand of athletes have added 10+ inches to their vert in just 12 weeks following it and
some of them have stuck with it long enough to achieve a 40 inch vertical.

Like Coleman:

**Coleman Fitzsimmons › Jacob Hiller**
Hey Jacob I've been doing your program for two years now and when I first started out my vert was 20 inches and now its 38-39ish I can dunk with ease and I can now squat 440lbs on seated leg press I've dunked four times in games and I'm blocking kids shots off the back board like crazy!! I also had a 23 rebound game. your program has elevated my game alot and I'm always looking to improve so if ya have any new tips of exercises holla back, I wanna get my vert to atleast 45inches so I can start doin some really crazy dunks.

15 hours ago · Like · Comment · See Friendship

Jordan Comsa likes this.

**Walter Rostan Garcia Jr** How tall r ya?
3 hours ago · Like

**Jacob Hiller** Coleman that's awesome bro! Can you make me a dunk mix? I'd love for you to come to a coaching session.

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**Jacob Hiller's Wall**

*Back to Profile*

I don't have any video yet but here's a pic of a dunk I had in a game!!
And Ben:

"(when I started) I definitely couldn't dunk... It didn't take very long at all, I was seeing some gains pretty quick... (My freshman year) I was the only one in the entire school that could dunk. And (the seniors) were pretty jealous. I've gained about 13-14 inches. I measured (my vertical) in 8th grade and it was about 29" and now I'm at 42". Just trust the program and follow it as closely as possible..."

- Ben Linnell

If you'd like to learn more about this “comprehensive” approach to training your athleticism check out the 10 minute video HERE.
I hope you’ve enjoyed this workbook. I want to hear your progress from this, so hit me up.

Sincerely,

Jacob Hiller
Author of The Jump Manual

What is The Jump Manual?

Watch the video below to learn about our comprehensive athletic training program.

CLICK HERE TO WATCH