



ESSENTIAL SOCCER STRENGTH TRAINING

8

WEEK WEIGHT LIFTING PROGRAM
FOR GETTING STRONGER

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Consult Your Physician

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INTRODUCTION

In soccer, total body strength is required. Lower body strength is needed for running, kicking, and tackling, while upper body strength is used for throw-ins, protecting the ball with the body, and holding off opponents.

Muscle strength also increases the support of ligaments and joints, and helps protect against the potential risk of injury.

Essential Soccer Strength Training provides insight into key weight exercises and an 8 week lifting program that will help any soccer player get stronger.

As with any exercise regimen, safety should always be the #1 priority. With weightlifting this is even more important. Make sure you or someone else acts as a spotter for the player at all times.

Another important element to any weight training is variation. Your players' bodies will naturally adapt to any routine so by varying the number of reps and the amount of weight they lift will help the body continue with optimal muscle growth.

The amount of weight a player should lift will vary depending on the player's size, strength, and experience with lifting. If you and the player aren't sure how much weight to use, it's always best to start low and work your way up to find a one rep max. The exercises outlined in any good program will be based on doing repetitions at a percentage of the maximum weight the player can lift.

For example, say the most the player can bench one time is 300 pounds. Obviously, they are going to lift less than that max multiple times to build-up strength. So, they may be asked to do 70% 8 times. This means they'll bench press 210 pounds (210 is 70% of 300) 8 times.

In the interest of achieving the greatest results and in keeping the player injury free, you should coach them to only lift weights three times a week. They also need to take back to back days off every single week. Therefore, this program is outlined for players to lift on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. That way back-to-back days off will be on Saturday and Sunday. This allows for proper muscle recovery which is essential to maximum muscle growth.

Obviously you and the player can agree to lift weights on other days besides the ones in this program. Just make sure they only lift three days a week and always have back-to-back days off.

Performing the exercises as they are outlined should take players about 45 minutes. Therefore, it can easily fit into even the busiest players' schedules and off season training.

SQUATS

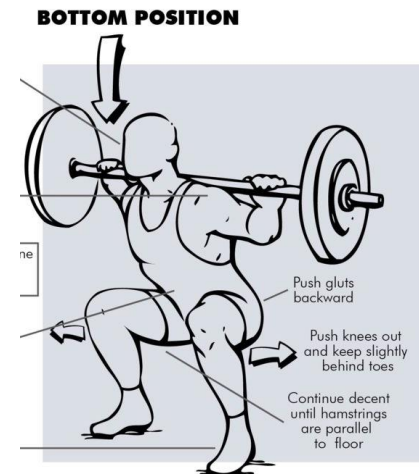
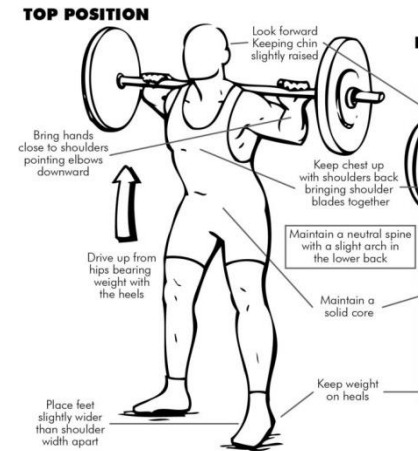
A Squat begins with the bar racked at about the height of the player's chest. The first thing they should do is get their hips in a good soccer position. Their entire body should be in line. Their hands should be shoulder length apart.

They should bring their head under the bar and rest the bar against their shoulders. Then they should lift and bring the bar back away from the rack.

Next the player should bend down until their hips are almost parallel with the floor. They don't want to bend too far because that will put strain on the knees and that could potentially result in an injury.

Once they are done they should then come back up to a standing position. When they come up, if they want to build muscle mass for power, then they should come up slowly. However, if they want the squats to help them get faster then they should pop-up fast.

While the player is doing squats, you should make sure they are keeping their back straight. To help, the player should always have their head up and their shoulders back. If the head comes forward then the shoulders and the back will follow. Do not let your players do this.



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Image Source:
<http://nfpgear.com/blog/the-power-of-the-perfect-squat/>

BENCH PRESS

The Bench Press helps players build upper body strength for leverage when fighting for the ball or shielding it from opponents. This is particularly important in corner kick scenarios and when defenders are one on one against a forward.

The player should lie back on the bench with their knees bent and feet firmly on the floor. Their entire body should be in line – the feet, knees, hips, waist, and shoulders. Their hands should be shoulder length apart as they grab the bar. Remember, this is best to help players have more upper body power and the hands should always be inside the frame of the body.

The act of lifting the bar up until the arms are completely extended and then bringing the bar down to the chest should be controlled at all times.

Remember to always have a spotter for the player who is bench pressing the weights.

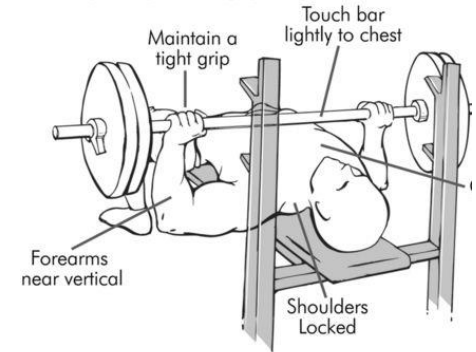
INCLINED BENCH PRESS

The Inclined Bench Press is a variation of the Bench Press. Instead of the player lying completely on their back, they are only lying back about three quarters of the way.

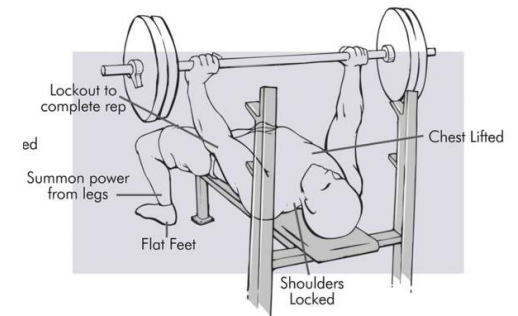
They still need to be under control at all times and also need to extend the bar all the way up until the arms are fully extended.

Players should have their bodies aligned at all times and the hands and feet should be shoulder width apart (all in line).

BOTTOM POSITION



TOP POSITION



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POWER CLEAN

The Power Clean is a little more difficult than the other weight lifting exercises we've discussed. Therefore the player should begin by lifting only the bar until they get the feel for the right way to do this exercise. Have the player get into an athletic position and squat down to pick up the weight.

It's very important that they don't bend their back because this will put too much pressure on the spine and the muscles in the back. To ensure they don't bend their back, they're head should be up and the shoulders should be back at all times. Also, their rear end should drop down as they bend.

Once they pick up the weight, they should bring it up to the hips, assume an athletic stance, and then continue up to the shoulders by bending his arms at the elbow and raising the arms as far as possible while they are bent. From that position the player should fold their arms under and drop under the bar with their shoulders while dipping their hips so that their hands turn over and the bar now rests against the shoulders and chest, just under the chin.

The act of bringing the weight up should be all one fluid motion from the time it leaves the floor to the time it's lifted to the shoulders into a resting position. Then they can drop the weight to hip level and lower the weight to the floor. Once they get the hang of lifting just the bar, they can then begin to add weights.



WEEKS 1 AND 2

MONDAY				
EXERCISE	SETS	1 ST SET	2 ND SET	3 RD SET
Bench Press	3	65% x 8	70% x 8	75% x 8
Squats	3	60% x 6	65% x 6	70% x 6
Inclined Bench Press	3	60% x 6	65% x 6	70% x 6

WEDNESDAY				
EXERCISE	SETS	1 ST SET	2 ND SET	3 RD SET
Bench Press	3	65% x 8	70% x 8	75% x 8
Squats	3	60% x 6	65% x 6	70% x 6
Inclined Bench Press	3	60% x 6	65% x 6	70% x 6
Power Clean	3	Bar x 6	Bar x 6	60% x 6

FRIDAY				
EXERCISE	SETS	1 ST SET	2 ND SET	3 RD SET
Bench Press	3	65% x 8	70% x 8	75% x 8
Squats	3	60% x 6	65% x 6	70% x 6
Power Clean	3	Bar x 6	Bar x 6	60% x 6

WEEKS 3 AND 4

MONDAY				
EXERCISE	SETS	1 ST SET	2 ND SET	3 RD SET
Bench Press	3	65% x 10	70% x 10	75% x 10
Squats	3	60% x 8	65% x 8	70% x 8
Inclined Bench Press	3	60% x 8	65% x 8	70% x 8

WEDNESDAY				
EXERCISE	SETS	1 ST SET	2 ND SET	3 RD SET
Bench Press	3	65% x 10	70% x 10	75% x 10
Squats	3	60% x 8	65% x 8	70% x 8
Inclined Bench Press	3	60% x 8	65% x 8	70% x 8

FRIDAY				
EXERCISE	SETS	1 ST SET	2 ND SET	3 RD SET
Bench Press	3	65% x 10	70% x 10	75% x 10
Squats	3	60% x 8	65% x 8	70% x 8
Inclined Bench Press	3	60% x 6	65% x 6	70% x 6
Power Clean	3	60% x 6	65% x 6	70% x 6

WEEKS 5 AND 6

MONDAY				
EXERCISE	SETS	1 ST SET	2 ND SET	3 RD SET
Bench Press	3	70% x 10	70% x 10	80% x 10
Squats	3	65% x 8	70% x 8	75% x 8
Inclined Bench Press	3	65% x 8	70% x 8	75% x 8

WEDNESDAY				
EXERCISE	SETS	1 ST SET	2 ND SET	3 RD SET
Bench Press	3	70% x 10	75% x 10	80% x 10
Squats	3	65% x 8	70% x 8	75% x 8
Inclined Bench Press	3	65% x 8	70% x 8	75% x 8

FRIDAY				
EXERCISE	SETS	1 ST SET	2 ND SET	3 RD SET
Bench Press	3	65% x 10	70% x 10	75% x 10
Squats	3	60% x 8	65% x 8	70% x 8
Inclined Bench Press	3	60% x 6	70% x 6	75% x 6
Power Clean	3	60% x 6	65% x 6	70% x 6

WEEKS 7 AND 8

MONDAY				
EXERCISE	SETS	1 ST SET	2 ND SET	3 RD SET
Bench Press	3	75% x 10	80% x 10	85% x 10
Squats	3	70% x 8	75% x 8	75% x 8
Inclined Bench Press	3	70% x 6	75% x 6	80% x 6
Power Clean	3	70% x 6	75% x 6	75% x 6

WEDNESDAY				
EXERCISE	SETS	1 ST SET	2 ND SET	3 RD SET
Bench Press	3	75% x 10	80% x 10	85% x 10
Squats	3	70% x 8	75% x 8	75% x 8
Inclined Bench Press	3	70% x 8	75% x 8	80% x 8

FRIDAY				
EXERCISE	SETS	1 ST SET	2 ND SET	3 RD SET
Bench Press	3	80% x 10	85% x 10	85% x 10
Squats	3	70% x 8	75% x 8	80% x 8
Inclined Bench Press	3	75% x 6	80% x 6	85% x 6
Power Clean	3	70% x 6	75% x 6	75% x 6

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