

# Olympic Lifting for Triathletes

How to effectively incorporate Olympic lifts for your  
triathletes

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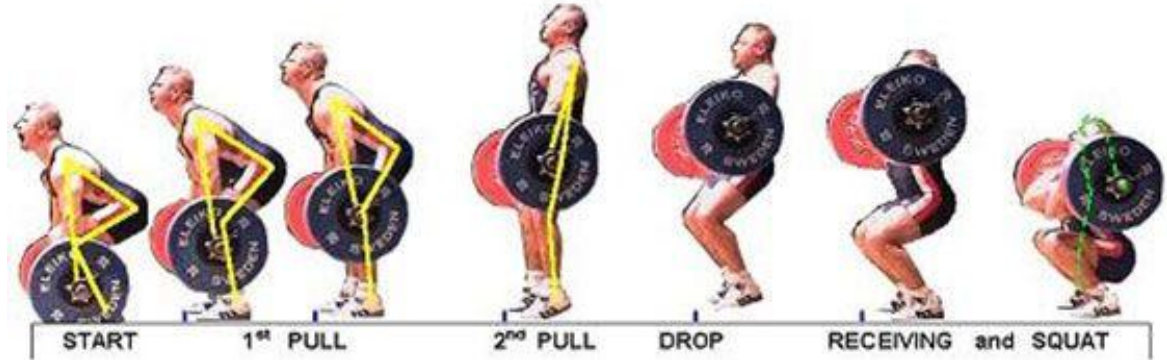
# Types of Lifts to Consider



# Full Clean

## Benefits to Triathletes

- Improve speed
- Improve leg strength
- Improve flexibility
- Improve power
- High skill level



# Power Clean

## Benefits to Triathletes

- Improved speed and explosive power
- Medium skill level



# Snatch

## Benefits to Triathletes

- Only select athletes
- Requires very good flexibility
- Could benefit speed, flexibility and explosive power if executed properly
- Very high skill level



# Power Snatch

## Benefits to Triathletes

- Not as much flexibility required as full snatch
- Speed and power. Body position awareness
- Very high skill level

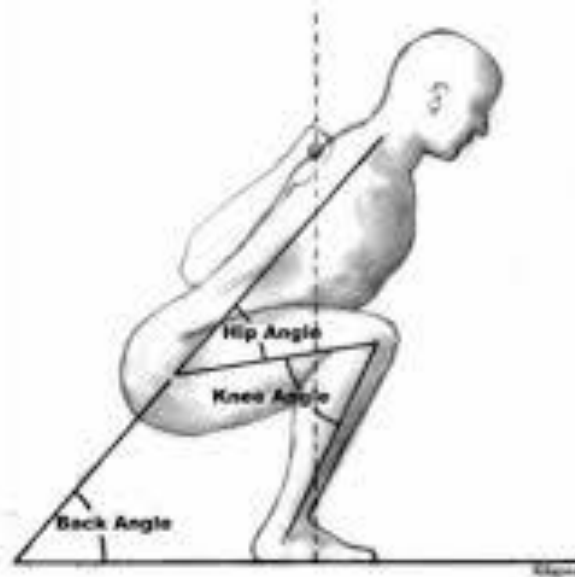


# Squats

## Benefits to Triathletes

- Low bar easier on joints, less flexibility required
- High bar develops more leg strength.

Low Bar



High Bar



# Box Squats

## Why and When to Use

- These can be used for an athlete with less experience, flexibility or with injury.
- Good for beginners learning positions.





# Deadlifts

## Benefits to Triathletes

- Develops strong posterior chain strength
- Develops leg strength
- Hamstrings, back, and core strength
- Pulling strength



# RDL

## Benefits to Triathletes

- Specific to hamstring and back strength.
- Best done 2:1 tempo



# Split Jerks

## Do or not do?

- I don't recommend split jerks for triathletes.
- Could be good for experienced athletes seeking speed and powerful leg drive.



# Lockouts/Rack Deadlift

- Can be useful for athletes looking for good back and hamstring strength that have limitations with full deadlifts.
- Athlete can also handle heavier weight than regular deadlift if seeking more strength with less risk.

# Good Mornings

## Benefits

- Very good for hamstring and lower back strength
- Best done 2:1 Tempo



# Things to Consider Before Starting



# Equipment Needs

- Shoes - Weightlifting shoes or runners with a flat and firm sole. If just doing squats or deadlifts, flat shoes like Chuck Taylors are good.
- Bar - Men 45lbs. Woman 35lbs.
  - Olympic lifts - the bar should spin
  - Deadlifts and squats - a 45lb standard bar is fine (doesn't need to spin).
- Free Weights - Olympic lifts must be done with bumper weights.
- Rack for squats

# Open Chain vs. Closed Chain

There are two kinds of kinetic chain exercises: open and closed.

- In open kinetic chain exercises, the segment furthest away from the body — known as the distal aspect, usually the hand or foot — is free and not fixed to an object.
- In a closed chain exercise, it is fixed, or stationary.

In closed-chain exercise, the foot or hand is in contact with the surface on which you are exercising. In open chain, they are not. A squat or deadlift, for example, where the foot presses against the floor to raise the body, is a closed chain kinetic. In open chain exercises like cleans and snatches, the feet leave the ground in an explosive jumping motion upwards.

Though some prefer using one type of kinetic chain exercise over the other, research indicates that both have uses in pain management and athletic training.



# Reps, Sets and the purpose of them

- Reps and sets should be periodized.
- To build base: 4 x 10, 3 x 15. These both provide volume and base. (4 x 10 means four sets of ten reps. 3 x 15 means three sets of fifteen reps, etc.)
- To build strength: 6 x 5 , 5 x 3, 6 x 2. These build strength and power.

# **Incorporating Olympic Lifts into Triathlon Programs**



# Why and When to use Olympic Lifts

Athletes who need speed and power, open chain: Sprint, ITU, Collegiate

Closed chain can be beneficial for long course athletes needing overall strength, durability, connective tissue strength.

Risk vs. Reward: Is it making them better at swim-bike-run? Lifting should not take away from primary workouts. Injury risk for athletes under high training load, lacking mobility.

Primarily in off-season when training stress is lower on swim-bike-run.

# How to determine what is right for your athlete

- Before starting any program, athletes should be fully assessed for mobility in the correct positions.
- All movements should be done with PVC pipe only until athlete and coach have established good technique and good movement with speed. Weight should never be added ahead of good movement with good speed.
- If the goal is strength but technique or mobility is lacking, choose appropriate exercises for that athlete's ability.

# How to program

- Most common mistake is treating lifting like endurance training. They are NOT the same and coaches need to have a clear understanding on how to program.
- Days per week, reps, sets and load are extremely important. Knowing how to place these sessions in relationship to swim-bike run work is key.
- Minimum 48-72 hours apart. Twice per week. Open-chain likely only one time per week. Best done freshest in the week and in the order of the day.

# Example Program

**Tuesday:** 5 x 3 power cleans

3 x 10 high-bar back squats

6 x 5 RDL (2:1 tempo)

3 x 12 seated rows

core work

**Thursday:**

5 x 8 low-bar back squats to 90 degrees, increasing weight each set

6 x 5 deadlift with trap bar or rack deadlift

3 x 10 light good mornings

3 x 12 light dumbbell pullovers

core work.

# Relationship to Swim/Bike/Run

**Monday:** swim only - recovery

**Tuesday:** A.M. - strength. P.M - opposite energy system.

**Wednesday:** Aerobic-tempo

**Thursday:** A.M. - strength P.M - opposite energy system.

**Friday:** Recovery

**Sat:** Sport-specific strength

**Sun:** Endurance

**Nervous system is highly impacted with strength training.**

# Conclusion

Olympic Lifting can be beneficial for very specific groups of athletes, but should be the “icing on the cake.”

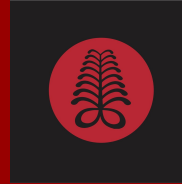
Careful monitoring of athlete fatigue and impact on triathlon training should take priority.

Skill level needed is high and good mobility is required. It's important to determine if an athlete moves well enough to really benefit from this being in their triathlon program.

All athletes should do this under good supervision of a skilled and qualified coach when starting out. All coaches should be able to proficiently do the movements before teaching them.



# THANK YOU!



**MCC Resources**

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