

Superior Squats

The classic barbell back squat develops all the muscles of your lower body

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The classic barbell back squat develops all the muscles of your lower body, making it a must-have move in any workout plan. It develops strength and power in the quadriceps, hamstrings, and glutes, all in one basic movement.

Here, you'll find two upgrades that strengthen the same muscles while also engaging your core. An added bonus: You'll build an athletic body by improving the flexibility and stability of your lats, lower back, hips, and abs. As a result, you'll lift more weight when you return to the traditional back squat. Remember: Focus on staying upright and maintaining a natural arc in your back.

Overhead Squat

This move forces you to control your center of gravity at a much higher point than in a back squat, so you'll strengthen your core. You'll also be able to press more weight overhead (for rock-hard shoulders), since the overhead squat conditions your back to stay straight.

1. Stand holding a bar overhead with an overhand grip, hands wider than shoulder width.
2. Pull your shoulder blades together to keep the bar in line with or behind your ears throughout the move. As you lower your body into a squat, imagine pulling the bar apart and pushing up on it. Pause when your thighs are parallel to the floor, then push yourself back to a standing position. Do two sets of 12 repetitions. Make it harder: Trade the bar for a pair of dumbbells.



Triceps Plate Squat

This full-body exercise combines a squat, press, and triceps extension for a great cardiovascular and muscle-building workout. Perform 12 repetitions with the triceps extension in step 3, followed by 12 without it.

1. Focus on keeping your movements slow and smooth. Grab a weight plate and hold it overhead with your arms straight and your palms facing each other.
2. Keeping your eyes forward and chest up, squat while bringing your arms down in front of you until the weight is beneath your butt and your thighs are parallel to the floor.
3. Reverse the move to position 1. Lower the plate toward your back and raise it overhead again. That's one rep. Make it harder: As you stand back up in each rep, rise onto your toes.

