



PAUL CONNOR HEALTH & FITNESS

THE FOUR NON-NEGOTIABLE
EXERCISES EVERYONE SHOULD
INCLUDE IN THEIR WORKOUT TO
REACH THEIR BODIES GENETIC
POTENTIAL

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ABOUT THE PAUL CONNOR HEALTH AND FITNESS WAY:

Become the very best version of yourself you possibly can.

The Paul Connor approach to your health, fitness and happiness comes from looking at your life as a whole, and this is where I differ from the industry norm, often of suffering and restriction based over a short period of time.

Unless you are a professional athlete or movie star that needs to make weight for a competition or film, I want you to be in the best condition you can, for every day you have left on this earth.

YOUR GOALS:

There are no 'before and after' photographs of clients on my wall because there is no 'after' – simply a continuation of progress. You are on a journey to get better every day and Paul Connor Health and Fitness will help you realise that the only limits you place on your success are your own beliefs.

I appreciate that we all have our own lives and enjoyments so you will find that nothing is banned and nothing is regimented. 80% of people fail to see results with their exercise programmes and in my vast experience I realise it is largely due to lifestyles being turned on their heads, meaning a strict regime only has a limited time before it inevitably collapses.

My approach therefore, is to make small manageable adjustments and allow you to realise that what you are choosing isn't punishment and misery, through physical activity and good nutrition, but a happy choice that you will want to continue for the long term.

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INTRODUCTION

There are so many different exercises to choose from, and so many fitness experts, overloading us with their latest spin on them, in order to sell their way of exercising. However, there are four main lifting exercises that reign supreme. If you neglect them you simply will not reach your potential in terms of muscle tone, strength and performance.

The four key exercises are the squat, the deadlift, the bench press and the military press. There are actually training programmes out there which contain nothing but these 4 key lifts, and for certain if you can master these moves and improve your performance of them over time, you will build the body that you want, it's as simple as that!

Many people will train these moves, however in order to lift "heavy" they will neglect their technique and end up not only limiting their potential, but also risking injury by putting large amounts of strain on joints, tendons and ligaments. There is so much more risk than if they were moving less weight through a full range of motion, gradually strengthening muscles and supporting tissues.

I always recommend to anyone, even if they know how to do these 4 key exercises, to come and have a one off session to focus on their form. If you lift with a strict attention to form, and a full range of motion, you will enjoy the full development of your muscles, steady strength gains, and no unnecessary injuries or pains.

These 4 exercises are hard when performed correctly. A full "ass to grass" squat is brutal when compared to a squat bar loaded with weight that only allows a little half repetition. These exercises will change your body, but form will always be key.

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THE SQUAT

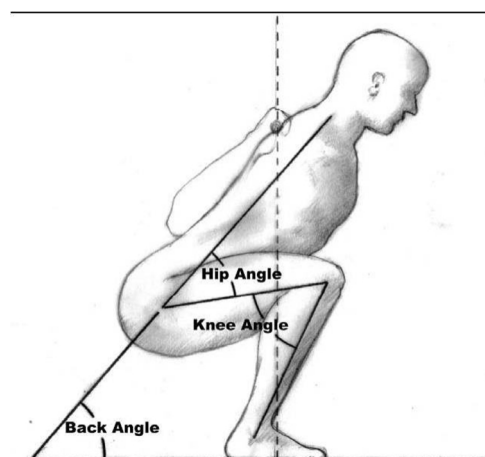
Many people think that getting great legs consists of pounding the pavements or the treadmill for hours. Alternatively there are the people who are all about loading up the leg press with every plate in the gym to grind out a few quarter reps grunting with apparent pain. Well the great news is, that when you master the squat you will always be the winner with a great lower body.

The squat strengthens every muscle in your legs, and, as long as you use proper squat form, the squat does NOT put your back or knees at risk of injury.

"Squats when performed correctly and with appropriate supervision, are not only safe, but may be a significant deterrent to knee injuries." (The National Strength and Conditioning Association)

Ideally always use a squat rack and not a Smith machine, and if you can use shoes with flat soles, or weightlifting shoes with a slight heel elevation, it is much easier to sit back on your heels and engage the hamstrings and glutes to their best effect.

The bottom of the back squat is the point where your hips are back and slightly lower than your kneecaps. Your knees are just a little forward of the toes and the back should always be straight, but not arched. Your knees should be at an angle that places the bar over the middle of the foot.



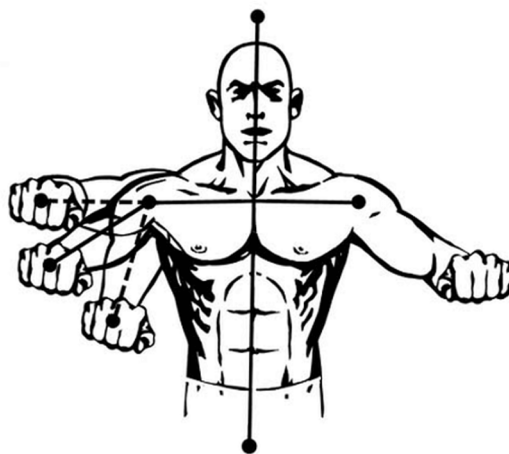
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THE BENCH PRESS

The bench press has always been a popular exercise for men, and is increasing in popularity with women too now. It is an impressive compound exercise which means you get more bang for your buck as it works several muscle groups and raises your heart rate in addition to firming up your chest, arms and back. With ladies it will not increase or decrease breast size, only diet will do this. However it can help with firming the cleavage and giving balance to the upper body, and helping pump muscle into the saggy loose bingo wings area.

The primary muscles that are worked in a bench press are the triceps brachii and pectoralis major with the front deltoids, traps & back as secondary muscles used in this exercise. If you don't know what you are doing on the bench press, and try to lift heavier than you are ready for with poor form, it is really easy to hurt your shoulders, which can really take along time to heal and rehabilitate. So as with before and the back squat, form is so important, and a real gradual weight increase once your technique is nailed.

Make sure that you are bringing the weight down in a controlled manor, keeping everything tight, then let it touch your chest and drive it up. As you lower the weight, really focus on the push that you will do to drive the weight back up. Start off with a medium grip for this exercise as when you narrow the grip on the bar, the triceps have to do more of the work



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THE DEADLIFT

The deadlift is the ultimate full-body workout and it really is one of my favourite go-to exercises. The deadlift trains just about every muscle group in the body: leg muscles, glutes, the entire back, core and arm muscles. No one will argue that the deadlift is effective, but many fear it due to its bad reputation for causing back injury.

There is significant research done to actually prove, that when done correctly, the deadlift is the most effective way to train the paraspinal muscles, which run down both sides of your spine, and play a major role in the prevention of back injuries. It is once again all about nailing technique to get the most results from these four key exercises.

The Sumo deadlift uses a wide leg stance to shorten the range of motion and force on the lower back. It can also feel more comfortable in the hips and can be easier to learn. It trains quads, glutes, hamstrings, some lower back, and even some adductors

The Hex deadlift is a great way to learn to deadlift as it does not require much hip and ankle mobility and puts less stress on the spine. The trap bar works the glutes, the lower back, the quads, the hamstrings, the trapezius, the abdominal muscles and the forearms.

The Romanian deadlift targets the glutes and hamstring and minimises the involvement of the quads and hip muscles.

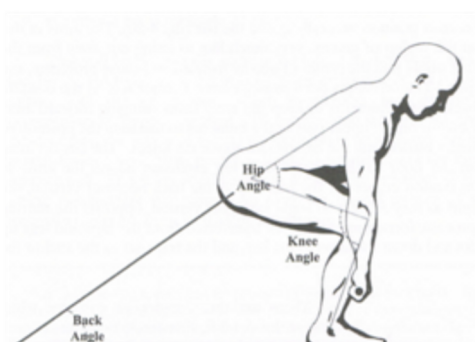
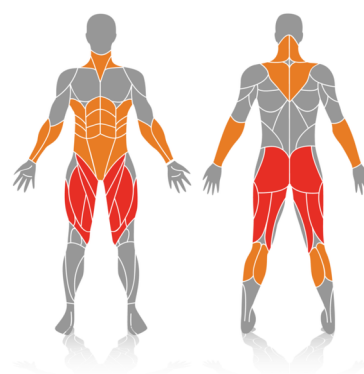


Figure 4-21. The three reference angles: knee angle, hip angle, back angle.

MUSCLE WORKED



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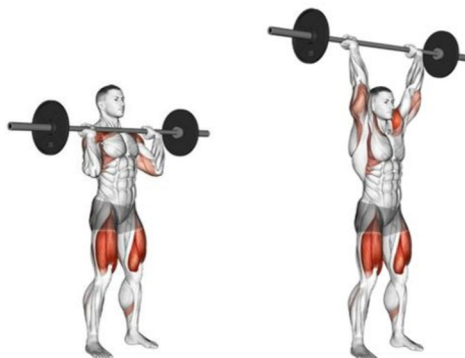
THE MILITARY PRESS

The Military press is the best all-round shoulder exercise that you can perform. It is very simple and easy to learn, which allows for the safe lifting of heavy weights. The exercise can be performed standing or seated. The standing variation does require more core and lower back strength to maintain balance, however heavy deadlifting and squatting every week builds more than enough of both of these.

The Military press targets the deltoid muscles in the shoulders as well as the triceps. Additionally, it works the core and legs, which the lifter uses to help balance the weight. If you're a man, you need full, round shoulders that frame your chest and look proportional to your biceps and chest. If you're a woman, this means sculpted, lean shoulders that make your arms look more defined and your waist look smaller.

Your shoulders have three major muscles known as deltoids, the anterior, posterior and the medial. It is really important to develop all three heads of this muscle group, because if one is smaller it looks quite obvious. It is the medial and posterior which need the most work, as the anterior deltoids get worked pretty hard on the bench press. The Military press is great for hitting the medials and posteriors.

Grip the bar slightly wider than you would to bench press and always place the bar over your wrists and not your fingers. Your back should be in a neutral position and stay there throughout the lift.



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CONCLUSION:

Becoming the best version of yourself requires consistency and a long term approach. If you stick to exercising 3 or 4 times a week for the next year, you will be amazed at how your body shape and mind set will change. The more muscle that you build, the quicker your metabolism will become, and the more you can "get away with" the odd pizza or boozy night out.

Building muscle and strength doesn't require constantly challenging your muscles with new and exotic exercises. It only requires that you make progress with a relatively small amount of exercises, that challenge each muscle group to the maximum, and enable you to safely overload your muscles over time.

MY PROMISE:

I am always here to help anyone to master new techniques and new workouts. If you just need a single session to gain some confidence, if you are a woman and you are new to lifting weights, or a man who doesn't have the confidence to deadlift and squat, I can really help with nailing form in a short space of time. If you are local, come in for a free chat, and we can look together at ways to incorporate changes into your life.

My goal is to encourage anyone to incorporate exercise into their weekly routines for the long term. I am not, and will never be about the quick fix. I help to build confidence, lifestyles, and long term health. I will never promise to make you beach ready in six weeks, and I do not apologise for that. I promise to commit to you and your health goals, if you are prepared to commit to yourself for a long enough time, to form new habits and learn your new way of living.

Paul Connor.