The Barbell, King of The Weight Room

Part I

The Power of the Barbell

By Rich Ruffing

Not everyone has access to a gym loaded with equipment. And not everyone has a decent home gym with any equipment. But if you do have access to a barbell, and maybe even some weight to throw on that barbell, you may have enough equipment to get in a pretty decent workout.

This article is going to give you three different workouts that you would be able to perform on your own, without a spotter, without a bench and without a power rack. It’s just you and the barbell. Now these are workouts that are not recommended that you perform all the time. They are change of pace workouts, workouts to use if you’re pressed for time or workouts to use if it’s just you and the barbell.

Barbell Circuit Conditioning

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Some people prefer to get on the treadmill and move at a snail’s pace for 20-30 minutes for conditioning purposes. I prefer to use some type of interval training or bodyweight or high rep resistance training for conditioning purposes. During the following workout, the barbell is never going to leave your hands. So at the same time you’re shedding bodyfat, you’ll be building up your grip strength.

A1) BB Curl x 10
A2) BB Romanian Deadlift x 10
A3) BB Row x 10
A4) BB Front Squat x 10
A5) BB Overhead Press x 10
A6) BB Split Squat x 10 each leg
A7) BB Back Squat x 20
A8) BB Push up x max (place the barbell on the floor and rep out as many push ups as possible with your hands on the bar)
Rest for 2-3 minutes and repeat the circuit 2-3 times. The load on the barbell should correspond to your weakest exercise. For instance, if you’re not able to do more than 95 lbs for 10 reps for the barbell curl, this is the weight to be used the entire circuit.

**Barbell “LandMine” Workout**

Here, you’re going to turn the barbell in to a homemade version of the LandMine unit. Find a corner and pin the barbell into the corner. All your exercises are going to be performed in that corner. This workout is going to be a total body workout. Here you may need to change the weight from exercise to exercise.
A) BB Corner Squat 5 x 8-10 reps

B1) BB Single Arm Corner Row  4 x 10-12 reps
B2) BB Single Arm Corner Press  4 x 8-10 reps
BB Russian Twist 2-3 x 8-10 reps each way

Barbell Hypertrophy Workout

This workout is a high volume workout, consisting of mostly compound exercises and designed for those looking to pack on some muscle mass.

Workout A
A1) BB Deadlift 6 x 8-10 reps
A2) BB Floor Press 6 x 8-10 reps
B1) BB Curl 3 x 10-12 reps
B2) BB Split Squat 3 x 10-12 reps each leg

Workout B
A1) BB Zercher Squat 6 x 8-10 reps
A2) BB Row 6 x 8-10 reps
B1) BB French Press 3 x 10-12 reps
B2) BB Single Leg Romanian Deadlift 3 x 10-12 reps each leg

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Rotate between Workouts A & B, allowing at least one day of rest between workouts and no more than 3 total workouts each week. For instance, perform Workout A on Monday, Workout B on Wednesday, Workout A on Friday and then the following week start with Workout B.

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**BARBELL ONLY WORKOUT**

*By: Josh Proch, CSCS*

The workout that follows is designed to be done with only a barbell and as many weight plates as needed. You will not need any racks, benches, stability balls, bosu ball, or anything else just yourself and the barbell.
Each of the following three workouts will take you about 45 minutes to complete. I have set up the workouts in Days 1 & 2 according to movement patterns in order to eliminate muscle imbalances.

Day 3 is designed as a total body circuit in order to increase the intensity and provide a cardiovascular effect, while still training to build muscle. All three of the workouts are designed as a four week program and each workout will be done once per week with one day of rest in between.

I recommend doing it Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, but if you prefer to do Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday that is fine as well. Just get it done!

The Warm-Up

I strongly believe in warming-up before exercising and do not allow any of my clients to just jump in and start lifting heavy weight. That is only a good way to hurt yourself, plus if your muscles are warmed-up you will be able to lift heavier weight which will result in bigger gains.

Ok enough said, do the following warm-up before each workout:

- BB Floor Press 1 x 10
- BB Squat 1 x 10
- BB Bent-Over Row 1 x 10
- BB RDL 1 x 10
- BB Shoulder Press 1 x 10
- BB Lunge Around the World 2x

*Perform all exercises one after the other with no rest and use only an empty barbell.

*Focus on perfect form and feeling the movement.
Day 1

BB Front Squat*
BB Floor Press**
BB Bent-Over Row
BB Overhead Tricep Extension

*I prefer the front squat over the back squat when you are unable to use a rack.

This way is safer and more effective. By using a front squat you are able to clean the weight up and then squat it from there and if you need to drop it you can.

If you were to do a back squat you would have to put less weight on the bar in order to lift it up and onto your shoulders and then you may not be able to get the bar off of your shoulders. The front squat is safer and will be just as effective.

The front squat will also force your abdominal muscles to work harder, than in a back squat.

** You may need a spotter.

Day 2

BB Deadlift
BB Standing Shoulder Press
BB Pullover
BB Bicep Curl

Sets, Reps, and Rest for Days 1 & 2

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You will be doing 3 sets of all exercises, but the reps will vary.

Week 1 = 6,6,5 reps

Week 2 = 5,5,4 reps

Week 3 = 4,4,3 reps

Week 4 = 3,3,2 reps

You will use these rep ranges for all exercises in Days 1 & 2 except for Overhead Tricep Extensions and BB Bicep Curls. For these two exercises, you will do 3 sets of 8 reps. In between each set take a 45 second break before starting your next set.

Day 3

BB Hang Clean
BB T-Bar Row*
BB Split Squat
BB Lying Single Arm Press
BB Upright Row

*Use a two handed grip.

Day 3 will be a circuit. Load the bar with an appropriate amount of weight that you can lift for each exercise. And then go from one exercise to the next without changing the weight.

You will be doing 8 reps for each exercise. After you have finished the five exercises, rest for 1 minute and then repeat. Do this circuit for a total of three
times. This day is designed as a stamina and endurance day and will provide a pretty good cardiovascular workout as well as a weight workout.

**Abdominals**

The following abdominal and lower back exercises are to be done after each workout for 1 set and 25 reps each.

BB Good Mornings
BB Floor Wipers
BB Roll Outs
BB Core Rotations

**About the Author**

Josh Proch is a strength & conditioning coach and co-owner of Pro Fitness Plus of New Castle, Inc. He has trained athletes of all ages as well as helped clients achieve their fitness and weight loss goals. Josh graduated from Slippery Rock University with a Bachelor’s degree in Exercise Science. He is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist through the National Strength and Conditioning Association. He is also a NSCA Fly Solo Mentor and an active member of the National Strength and Conditioning Association. For more information go to [http://prochperformancetraining.blogspot.com](http://prochperformancetraining.blogspot.com) and check to find more articles, workouts, and fitness information. Josh can be contacted at [prochperformancetraining@gmail.com](mailto:prochperformancetraining@gmail.com) for questions and interviews.