The Tire Flip
Simple, Yet Brutally Effective!

The first time I went tire flipping was a blast! I mean, listen to me already, I’m talking about flipping tires as if it were some bad ass white water rafting trip with my buddies. I’m still working on getting a tractor tire stored in my garage, I’m getting closer every day, trust me 😊

Until that day, this is what I do (and this is what you can do as well!): I take an occasional trip to a tire yard in my town. They have tractor tires piled 25 feet high! I drop off a dozen bagels and the guys happily bring down 2 or 3 tires for me to flip for a half hour. A serious precaution though: get your biceps strong as all heck before tire flipping (at least before HEAVY tire flipping). My biceps and forearms were sore for 3 or 4 days after my initial visit to the tire yard. Plus, the last thing you want to do it tear a bicep!

I received an e mail from a strength coach who asked me what I felt was the best exercise for overall strength & power. I must say the tire flip ranks amongst the best! You can use a lighter tire for flipping which will focus more on the power aspect, or, choose a heavier tire to focus more on strength. Use them both and be thoroughly warmed up before you get started. I do 5 – 6 minutes of BW calisthenics and some mobility for the shoulders & hips as well. Before I discuss sets & reps let’s dive into technique.
Begin the exercise as if you were about to perform a dead lift. Drive with the legs and hips as quickly as possible. As your legs begin to come near full extension quickly lift a knee under the tire and switch your grip from underhand to overhand so you can push the tire forward forcefully. A lighter tire may not require the knee lift, and the exercise will look similar to a power clean with the lighter tires (think speed!).

The starting point of the tire flip
Getting my knee under the tire and still driving forward! Don’t stop driving!

Hands have switched from underhand to overhand and now it’s time to push the tire over explosively! Get ready to do another rep!
Do not neglect this explosive push as it helps promote power in the upper body when you push forward explosively.

I perform the sets and reps in a few different ways here:

- Time under tension: perform as many reps possible in a specific time period (i.e. flip as many as possible in 30 seconds) Time under tension might be even less depending on the goals you have or the sport / job you participate in
- Standard set – rep protocol: 4 or 5 sets of 5 – 10 reps per set
- Partner Alternating reps: I go, You go – continue until a certain time period ends or until you complete a specific number of reps
- Flipping for distance: cover a specific distance and then record your time – try and beat old records on a regular basis
- Race against partner: tow tires of equal weight, race against your partner for reps or distance! NOTHING brings out the best in your workout like some friendly competition!

Check out what Coach LaBelle of Ct. did once he got his hands on the Ancient Training Methods DVD……
It looks painful but these kids love it! Ha ha

I GUARANTEE they will love the results as well!

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I can’t say enough good things about tire flipping, and I can only say one bad thing, or at least some cautionary advice! Strengthen your posterior chain big time and your biceps before using heavy tires. It’s better to start with lighter tires to improve GPP before going heavy!
If you’re as lucky as Josh Henkin and some of our other writers and readers, post some pics of your tire and old school garage so we can see how you outfit your home gym! We want to see how you’re doing and what you’re doing!

Zach Even – Esh is a Strength & Performance Coach located in NJ. To learn more about how to incorporate tires into your program visit www.UndergroundStrengthCoach.com