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**TRAINING  
EQUIPMENT**

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# 3 Reasons not to use Lifting Straps

We all have certain training accessories that we use to help us through our workouts. It could be a belt, elbow sleeves or a set of knee wraps that we rely upon to further our gains. Probably the most commonly used training accessory, next to the belt, would be lifting straps. I've seen people use these things for every lift you can imagine when the fact of the matter is, they were designed to help you with pulling type exercises. There's really no need to use them for anything else and I'm going to propose in this article that there's really no need to use them at all. Here's why.

## **Lose the Mind/Muscle Connection**

One of the most important things a bodybuilder has to keep in mind when training is the mind/muscle connection they are trying to establish when using resistance to initiate hypertrophy. The basis for this connection, when training the upper body, begins with the hands. You have to be able to "feel" the weight you are moving to fire up the motor neurons and send the appropriate signals to the muscle(s) being trained. If you consistently strap up every time you grasp something you are about to lift, then you never really get the chance to feel what you are lifting and firmly establish that mind/muscle connection.

## **Weakens Grip Strength**

Weak grip strength has implications for not only training in the gym but for everyday life tasks as well. Using straps every time you lift only further weakens your grip by never allowing the muscles of the hand and forearm to strengthen.

You also severely limit your chances of building impressive forearms and many of the people I know who do possess big, veiny forearms have never used a pair of lifting straps in their life. If you just can't finish off your heavy sets without your straps on because your grip will give away, then my suggestion to you would be to go without the straps for every set you complete until you get to your heavy sets. Then, try one heavy set without the straps and then finish off the rest of your heavy sets with them. You'll be giving your grip strength some work while still hitting the target muscles the way you want.

## **Becomes a Crutch**

There are lots of people out there in the gyms training hard and heavy everyday who can't do so until they have these certain supports in place. I know some people who won't even step out onto the gym floor without their belt on and I also know people who won't go near a weight unless they have their straps on. They see it as a disadvantage without these supports. In my mind, these people have allowed these training accessories to become a crutch for them versus a training support. Unless you have some sort of injury that these accessories help support, there's really no need for them. Try a workout without your straps just to see what you are really capable of achieving; my bet is that you will be surprised.

The only time I would consider the use of a strap to be necessary would be when I'm lacing up my [Super Shift Bodybuilding Shoes](#). The level of support it provides is incredible and the stylish look of it with its removable ankle straps is impeccable as well. Aside from that, try lifting without your straps, build up your forearm size and grip strength and focus on the mind/muscle connection.

P.S. I'm one of those people who always uses his straps now and absolutely love what they provide for me, but I went years and years without ever using them first.

# What does your Gym Apparel say about You?

How you present yourself at the gym says a lot about who you are. From the hat you wear to the sayings on your shirts to the Heydays on your feet; what you display shows who you are and how you approach the training sessions ahead. Ever wonder what the message is that you're putting out there to the rest of the gym goes around you? Check out the following common gym looks to see where your apparel fits and what it says about you.

**\*editor's note:** this is for entertainment purposes only

## Baggy Sweats

If your go to outfit for the gym is the baggiest hoodie you can find coupled with pants that resemble a parachute, then you are either self-conscious of your current physique or you are hiding something great from your competitors. You may also just like the freedom of movement that baggy clothes allow or you've just lost a bunch of weight and haven't purchased a new wardrobe yet. It could also just be that you like wearing baggy clothes and that in itself is good enough for me.

## Tighter than Tight

So you like to show off do ya? Well, I guess I can't blame you. If you've worked long and hard to attain a physique that most could only imagine possessing, then why not show it off. If you feel the need to wear clothes that hug every single curve and crevice and tuck nicely into all of your muscular insertions, then you are with supreme confidence. If you lack musculature yet still wear extra medium shirts, then you are beyond extreme confidence and possess a sense of self-contentment that we all wish we had.

## The 90's

Zubaz pants, cut up sweaters, work boots and a pair of sunglasses topped off with a fanny pack is everything a bodybuilder ever wanted to look like in the 90's. Believe it or not, some are still stuck in this time warp and resemble something straight out of the pages of Flex from 1995. If this sounds like you or someone you know, let them be. The 90's is the greatest era in bodybuilding history so let them live in their own type of Heyday.

## Sponsored

Getting sponsored by a company within the fitness and bodybuilding industry is the ultimate goal for almost everyone with any type of desire to make their way through this crazy world. If you are lucky enough to snag a sponsor, you better show your gratitude by plastering your body with every single article of clothing your sponsor sends you. Hats, t-shirts, sweaters, wrist bands and maybe even a sticker or two. Wear the gear and wear it proudly. The people lucky enough to get sponsored should never be looked down upon for advertising for their respective company. It comes with the territory and all it should tell anyone else is that they are being respectful and showing support for someone who has decided to show support for them.

## Current

The last look you may see in your gym is that of those who do their best to stay current with the clothing trends happening in the industry. **Training apparel** such as the items found on the Heyday Website coupled with a sweet pair of bodybuilding shoes like the Prime Trainers is exactly what you should be striving to wear if you want to be current. Those who like to stay current just like to stay as fresh as possible and use it to their advantage; when you look good you feel good and when you feel good you train hard.

What you decide to wear is completely up to you and what someone else thinks of your look or says about what you are wearing is irrelevant. Go with what makes you happy and if it keeps you in your Heyday, I say why not!

# 4 Sure-fire Signs you have a Great Pair of Bodybuilding Shoes

What you wear on your feet can determine the overall functionality of your structure and the performance it is capable of enduring. You may have heard the saying, "You can't build a house without a solid foundation" and quite literally, you can't build a solid physique without a strong base of support. That support starts at the ground and your anchors to the ground come by way of the bodybuilding shoes you choose to wear. There's a significant difference in the shoes that are available to you and how well they support your performance. You aren't going for a run when you hit the weights, so why wear running shoes? You aren't shooting hoops in the squat rack, so why wear basketball shoes? You get my point here. If you want to be able to train as effectively as possible, here is the criteria you should be looking for when deciding upon which bodybuilding shoe is right for you and your goals.

## **The Sole**

When it comes to a great pair of bodybuilding shoes, it all starts with the sole. You want a sole that reflects your natural stance and supports your gait. Along with that, you need a surface to place your feet on that will maintain its integrity even in the midst of the toughest set of squats or dead lifts that you could imagine. Your best bet here is to go with a completely flat sole so that the chances of a slide or a roll of the foot within the shoe itself is eliminated and your ability to drive up from any part of your foot is completely supported. A flat sole will do this for you; anything else and you're looking for trouble.

## **Ankle Support**

Due to the ballistic, explosive and aggressive nature of many of the ground base lifts you are going to perform in your training programs, it is imperative that you provide yourself with additional support at the ground level. To maintain proper positioning and to avoid any mishaps prior to the lift even taking off, you should make sure that your ankles are fully supported and in line with the rest of your lower limb and foot. The best way to go about this is to wear a high top bodybuilding shoe that not only laces up past the ankle but also has a support strap that can be fixed in a tightened position to support the structure of the high top design itself. With those two design points in place, there's no way you'll have a weak link in your kinetic chain because of ankle instability.

## **Durability**

Shoes need to last and be durable enough to make it through the hardest workouts time and time again. We work hard for our money and when we decide to spend it on something we know is going to enhance our efforts in the gym, we want it to last and we want to know that we got a quality product in exchange for our dough. Whether you decide to go with leather, or mesh or a combination of both, it has to stand the test of time and it has to last until you decide to buy a new pair; not because you have to but simply because you're looking to add to your collection.

## **Style**

Most people want their shoe games on point which means whatever they lace up has to be fresh, with clean lines and stand out from what everyone else is wearing. A great pair of bodybuilding shoes not only meets the needs of the gym but also the needs of the street. You want to be able to go from the squat rack, to the stepmill and then off to the movies in the same pair of shoes. How many companies out there can claim this?

Only one, I can tell you that! The key is to look good at all times and if your bodybuilding shoes can carry you all throughout the day, regardless of the situation, then my friend you have found yourself a great pair of bodybuilding shoes. Just remember, you're not just a bodybuilder when you're in the gym, you're a bodybuilder everywhere you go so be sure to dress accordingly.

If what I have just described to you sounds like something that is too good to be true when it comes to a bodybuilding shoe, then you have been misled and misguided all of this time. My initial reaction is that you simply haven't found or heard about the best bodybuilding shoe company on the planet in Heyday Footwear. With designs such as the **Super Shift**, **The Max** and the **Tactical Trainer**, you can literally check off each of the 4 criteria mentioned above with every single design that Heyday Footwear makes. So don't wait any longer to order your first pair of Heydays and start being the bodybuilder you always wanted to be while wearing the best bodybuilding shoes that money can buy.

# How Bodybuilding Shoes can improve Exercise Biomechanics

Our body moves in kinetic synergy. Each and every part of our structure is connected and affected by every movement that occurs. To move as an efficient and effective whole body structure, we have to ensure that all parts are supported and strengthened symmetrically so that no one part weakens behind the rest. The nature of our kinetic movements lies within our biomechanics, and how our bones, muscles, tendons and ligaments help propel us towards our intended destination. This movement generally occurs first at our feet. You may have heard in the training world that strength and power is generated from the ground up. This is very true and what's occurring at the ground level with respect to overall biomechanics is extremely important. Here are two examples of how foot placement can affect the biomechanic movement patterns in these commonly used lifts.

## **Squats**

Squatting is generally considered one of the best overall exercises for lower body development and also one of the most dangerous of all lifts if done incorrectly. There is so much posture awareness that occurs when performing a squat that an entire article could be written just on that. But for our purposes here today, we are going to look specifically at what your feet should be doing. After you have lifted the barbell and have stepped back away from the rack, your first goal is to firmly plant your feet into the floor. After that has been established, your only thought with regards to your feet should be to shift the majority of your balance to your heels and then drive through your heels as you ascend through the rep keeping the pressure on the back portion of your feet. This will ensure you maintain perfect upright posture throughout to avoid any curvature of the spine which would then interfere with the proper biomechanics of this lift which then could lead to injury.

## Dead Lifts

Aside from the squat, the dead lift is easily the next most difficult lift to perform and perfect. It's not as easy as just picking weight up off the floor to a full standing position. If it were, you wouldn't see so many lower back injuries commonly associated with this movement. Where people go wrong on this lift, is failing to properly engage their feet by utilizing the correct stance. To ensure you are setting yourself up for the best biomechanical advantage possible in the dead lift, you have to start at your feet. What you want to do is firmly plant your feet into the floor and keep them flat as you grip the bar and lower into the beginning phase of this exercise. Once you begin to pull the bar up and off the floor, you need to shift the pressure on your feet from a whole foot stance to one of inversion. By inverting your feet, you keep your knees from traveling in towards the midline of your body, which weakens your lower body structure by asking the smaller muscles of the quads to work (vastusmedialis, vastusintermedius) versus the larger ones (vastuslateralis, rectus femoris). If this happens, your kinetic chain will be compromised and other muscles, such as the ones in your lower back, will be recruited too soon thereby creating an environment conducive to injury. You don't want that to happen, so make sure you pay attention to the positioning of your feet.

The easiest way to ensure your feet are doing what they are supposed to be doing in these lifts is to wear the appropriate footwear that have been designed to complement the biomechanical actions associated with training. Any of Heyday Footwear's selection will do this for you; my personal favorite for the above mentioned lifts just happen to be the **Tactical Trainers**. They support the exact foot positioning that I'm striving for in these lifts and are able to withstand the force generated within these lifts so that my feet maintain the proper positioning throughout; and you can't ask for any more than that.

Keep it heavy and keep it Heyday my friends.

# Top 5 Daily Bodybuilding Essentials

You can spot a bodybuilder from a mile away. Sure, you'll be able to see the size and overall musculature of a bodybuilder quite easily, but to the trained eye you'll see much more than that. Each and every day in the life of a bodybuilder is filled with precisely timed events and each of those events requires certain elements to be on hand when needed. For this reason, there are a number of daily essentials required for bodybuilding success that must get toted around everywhere we go. The following are what I would consider to be the top 5 bodybuilding essentials that you will never see a bodybuilder leave home without.

## **Gym Bag**

The key to being able to carry around all that you need is a good gym bag. It needs to be big enough to fit all of your gym gear, extra clothing and food as well as any supplements you may need during your day. Extra pouches and departments within the gym bag are also necessary to carry other items such as your gym pass, wallet and keys and a good over the shoulder strap is of the utmost importance especially if you need to walk around for any sort of distance.

## **Shaker Cups**

You can't slam down a protein shake or some pre-workout without your shaker cups. And chances are, if you're spending the day away from where you live, multiple shaker cups are going to be stuffed into your gym bag. Make sure the top is on tight so no spillage occurs (I'm sure many of you out there can relate to this) and also make sure to take them out of your gym bag and clean them at the end of the day. Otherwise, an unwanted stench will be coming from your bag and I'm sure you can all relate to that one as well.

## Tupperware

Aside from training, food is the next most important aspect of a bodybuilder's day and you should never go any more than two to three hours without eating. This is why packing food in tupperware containers or any other type of container is a common occurrence for a bodybuilder. Just make sure that you do your best to keep your food cool so that it doesn't spoil and then spoil the rest of your day.

## Headphones

Sometimes you just need to escape reality to be able to get yourself into a mindset conducive to killing it in the gym. There's no better way to do that than music. Once you have your play lists set up on your device, all you have to do is plug in and block out the rest of the world. Whether you decide to thrash your way, sing your way, hustle your way or grind your way through a workout, a good set of noise cancelling headphones is must.

## Bodybuilding Shoes

To take your bodybuilding game to the next level, you need to have on the right gear and it all starts with your shoes. If your shoe game is on point, then everything else will follow in step (pun intended). If you want to be the best then you have to have the best on your feet and that only comes by way of Heyday Footwear. All of the choices you have from Heyday are excellent and second to none. Try a pair of the [Super Shift Bodybuilding Shoes](#) for starters and then go from there. You won't be disappointed and it won't be long before you're ordering another pair of Heydays; trust me on this.

There are certain things in life that you just can't live without and there are certain things in a bodybuilder's life that can't be left at home. Make sure you always have everything you need to continuously improve with each hour that passes and be sure to make Heyday Footwear an essential part of your journey.

# What Are The Best Weight Lifting Shoes for Squats & Deadlifts?

Weight lifting is a cheap sport. You usually don't need gym accessories like bar pads, gloves, straps or expensive clothing. Once you got your Power Rack, bar & weights, you're ready to go. But there's 1 important gym equipment accessory that people tend to overlook. Shoes. This post will teach you everything about which shoes you should wear and NOT wear for weight lifting, and why.

## **Wrong Shoes: Running Shoes**

The air & gel filling is great for reducing impact shock from running. But bad for lifting. Running shoes will limit your strength & prevent good lifting technique. Unstable. Soles are squishy so you can't predict their behavior on each rep. This makes it harder to control your technique and lift properly. Power Loss. The soles absorb the force generated against the floor instead of directing it towards moving the weight. You lose strength. Dangerous. Higher risk of injury, especially with heavier weights, since the soles make it hard to balance yourself and are less stable.

## **Benefits of Good Lifting Shoes**

Good lifting shoes have incompressible soles. They must be non slippery, have excellent support and fit snug. Benefits: More Stability. Better traction against the floor and improved balance under the bar because the soles are hard. More Strength. Your heels will sense the pressure of the weight better, which will make your legs contract harder. Better Technique. Good lifting shoes will fix many technique issues. You'll sit back better, your heels will stop coming off the floor, ... More Safety. Better balance, better technique, ... All of it decreases the risks of injury during lifting.

## Best Shoes for Squats

Depends on how you Squat. But the sole should always be incompressible for maximal stability, power transfer & technique.

### Low Bar Squats

More leaning forward, less depth. Heyday Footwear Super Shift gym sneakers are the best shoes for Low Bar Squats. Recommended by Helle Trevino.

### Olympic & Front Squats

Torso is more upright, more depth. Shoes with heels make it easier to go deep. Examples: Heyday Footwear Prime Trainer and Super Trainer feature a 10mm elevated heel.

**Heyday Footwear Super Shift gym sneakers** have thin, flat & incompressible sole. Your feet are close to the floor. You'll feel your feet better during lifts: more stability & control. The design of the sneaker allows you to push your feet to the outside on Squats which helps keeping your knees out and activating your glutes.

# Bodybuilding Shoes: Quality Footwear Equals Quality Training Performance

Strength and support go hand in hand and being able to fully enhance the integrity of your structure is what's needed to establish a strong base. We've come a long way in our abilities to accomplish this and even though those photos of Arnold training barefoot at the Mecca triggered a legion of fans to do the same, there's really no need to do so anymore. The technology that can be found in the footwear that we have available to us now, for training purposes, will provide a far greater advantage to us when compared to the barefoot alternative. And no company has been able to replicate that firm grip to the floor feeling better than Heyday Footwear. The quality, the precision craft work in their design, the understanding of ergonomic function and all of the bad ass styles, colors and options that you get with these bodybuilding shoes, will not only set you apart from everyone else but significantly improve the quality of your training performance as well.

Here are 5 exercises that will improve tremendously when you lace up with the right pair of Heyday Footwear bodybuilding shoes.

## **Squats**

Suggested footwear: [Summer Camo Tactical Trainers](#)

Reasons: The additional height to the high top design of all Heyday Footwear bodybuilding shoes that can be found on the Summer Camo Tactical Trainers will provide the lifter with better ankle support when driving up and out of the hole. Second to that, being able to properly secure yourself to the floor when stepping back and out of the squat rack is extremely important prior to engaging in the lift. The flat sole design of this model lends itself very well to that and allows the trainer to properly plant their feet securely to the floor regardless of how much weight is being lifted.

## Dead Lifts

Suggested footwear: [Tactical Trainer Bodybuilding Shoe](#)

Reasons: True to their design, the Tactical Trainer Bodybuilding Shoe is tough, rugged, hardcore and meant to be utilized for the most difficult of lifts. The dead lift is the most difficult lift which is why this model is the perfect fit for this exercise. Whether you lace up to the top for added ankle support or you leave your ankle free to move and rely more upon the flat sole design to keep you firmly secured to the floor, this bodybuilding shoe is exactly what you need when entering into the realm of hardcore.

## Walking Lunges

Suggested footwear: [Super Shift Bodybuilding Shoe](#)

Reasons: Nothing ends a leg day session like a few sets of walking lunges either in the gym or out in the parking lot. To do these, you need support and mobility which is why my choice of footwear for executing this exercise with quality and precision, is the Super Shift Bodybuilding Shoe. The flat sole design will keep your foot from rolling side to side while you walk and the adjustable strap will keep your mid foot locked down so that each step you take feels exactly the same.

## Calf Raises

Suggested footwear: [The Max](#)

Reasons: When you train your calves you have to hit them from all angles and with heavy loads. You also need to be able to feel the calves working and establish a really good mind to muscle connection. This is why The Max Bodybuilding Shoe is such a great choice for this exercise. Due to their light weight, custom fit and flat sole design, it's almost like you are barefoot which is great when working on eliminating all other factors to really feel the muscle stretch and contract.

## Cardio

Suggested Footwear: [The Super Freak](#)

Reasons: You can't get away from the fact that if you want to be a bodybuilder then you are going to have to perform your cardio. Hours upon hours of cardio will take up a significant amount of time within your week so you are going to need quality footwear on your feet to minimize any discomfort that is commonly associated with cardio training. Look no further than The Super Freak. These are light weight in design, are made up of tough yet breathable mesh and have a cushioned sole that flexes with your feet when performing any type of dynamic movement. Couple all of this with the fact that they come in so many different looks, you would be remiss if you didn't have a pair in your collection.

There's no sense in doing anything if you're not going to do it right and quality will always prevail over quantity every single time. Fortunately for you, with Heyday Footwear's bodybuilding shoes, you can have both quality and quantity and never have to worry again about what shoes to wear when trying to improve the quality of your own training performance.