



The
Ultimate Guide to
**WEIGHT
TRAINING**
for
FOOTBALL

fourth edition



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Part I



**Football
Specific
Training**

If you have any questions regarding sports weight training, please email trainer@sportsworkout.com.

INTRODUCTION

Football is a sport of strength; it is a sport of speed; and it is a sport of power. It is a unique sport because to be competitive, size and strength are equally, if not more, important than skill. A player could have outstanding technique, perfect fundamentals, and the best positive mental attitude imaginable, but if he is a 135 lb. middle linebacker playing in a game where the average body weight on the field is 215 lbs., he will get squashed. Weight training is an essential part of football. Without it, a player will be pancaked, stuffed, run over, outrun, out jumped, and out played.

Regardless of your position, football requires strength, speed, power, quickness, agility, flexibility, balance, muscular endurance, and stamina, each of which can be enhanced through a proper football-specific weight-training program. This book focuses on how to develop your body in every area that is most important to the sport. It also provides you with daily football-specific programs designed for the off-season, preseason, and in-season to maximize your potential. The goal of the yearlong routine is to have you peaking with strength and power right at the onset of the season.

Requirements needed to be a good football player are skill and technique and strength and power. If you are looking to increase your fundamentals, work with your coach. If you are looking to increase your physical abilities, follow the programs provided in this book. An important note must be made clear. Weight training will not directly improve your football skills.

It will make your entire body stronger and more powerful, enhancing every aspect of your game, decreasing your vulnerability to injury, and increasing your muscular endurance. If you train properly, you will experience all of these benefits without sacrificing your technique on the field.

In fact, proper weight training can enhance your technique by improving your flexibility and increasing your range of motion.

Improper Training Training improperly is costly for two reasons. It increases your risk of injury, and it can also set you further away from your goals. The goal of strength training for football is not to build stiff, tight muscles; it is to improve your football-playing potential by increasing your speed, quickness, power, flexibility, muscular endurance, and balance. You want to build your muscles and improve flexibility in areas that are specifically used during your performance on the field.

Major Benefits from Weight Training Weight training for any sport provides you with two general benefits. It helps to enhance your athletic performance and it helps to prevent and reduce injuries. Weight training also plays a major role in injury rehabilitation. Muscles that are well trained have been shown to recover faster from injuries, which will help keep you away from chronic pains. Football is an outdoor sport and players are at the mercy of Mother Nature, who can be very unpleasant at times. Unfortunately, cold and wet weather elevate the risk of many injuries including sprains and pulled muscles. With stronger muscles supporting your bones, tendons, and ligaments, you will be much less injury prone in all aspects of your life.

Common Football Injuries Because football is a contact sport by its very definition, football players have a higher risk of injuries. Some of the most common injuries experienced by football players are knee injuries and hamstring pulls. They can occur in all sorts of activities including tackling, running, and blocking. Hamstring, knee, ACL and MCL injuries can be devastating to a player and to his team, making lower body training critical. Although weight training cannot eliminate the risk of such injuries, it can help protect a player from such occurrences. Training the muscles surrounding the knee is a good way to prevent these injuries. Performing both leg-extend-

ing (thighs) and leg-contracting (hamstring) exercises on the same day through their entire range of motion both strengthens and increases the flexibility in the knee and hamstring.

Injuries in the shoulder and elbow are also somewhat common for football players, especially quarterbacks. These injuries negatively affect every aspect of a player's game, whether throwing, catching, blocking, or tackling, making it necessary to take all injury-reducing precautions. Always stretch before lifting and playing, and be sure to weight train properly. The programs provided in this book are designed to train these and other areas of the body to help minimize chances of getting injured. The programs have quarterbacks strengthening both the internal and external rotators of their rotator cuffs to help maintain injury-free shoulders. The programs also require everyone to perform both arm-extending (triceps) exercises and arm-contracting (biceps) exercises through their entire range of motion during the same training session to reduce the chances of elbow injuries, increasing both the strength and flexibility in the elbow joint.

Practice Makes Perfect While weight training for football, it is crucial to continue practicing your skills. Your neurotransmitters will need to adapt to your newfound strength so you can convert it into power and explosion on the field. If you are a linemen, you must continuously practice staying low in the shoots, and you must continue to practice your techniques. Quarterbacks must always practice throwing on off days from the gym. Receivers and running backs need to practice running routes and making cuts. It is mandatory that everyone continues to run and practice, practice, practice throughout the off-season.

Quickness vs. Speed The programs provided in this book are designed to enhance both speed and quickness, with more emphasis placed on quickness. In most aspects of football, quickness and acceleration are more important than overall speed. Skill players need to be quicker than their opponents. If a receiver is quicker than a defensive back, the back will be in for a very long day with little success. Linemen also need to be quicker than their opponents in order to be successful. Both defensive and offensive linemen must explode up, stay low, and get position under the pads of their opponent to control them and the pace of the game.

Overall speed is also important; however, the longest runs made during the course of a game usually last no more than a few seconds. Although quickness may be