



Advanced Kettlebell Workouts for Martial Artists, Military Personnel and Athletes

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Over the last couple of years kettlebell training has rapidly increased in popularity for and you've probably seen articles on the basic movements such as the swing and Turkish get up.

In this article I want to go beyond the basics of kettlebell training and show you a couple of more advanced workouts that can be used to push your conditioning to an elite level.

Be warned however that these workouts are very demanding and you should have a basic level of fitness conditioning and relevant skill before trying them.

Advanced workout #1 – Structured density workouts

One of the simplest ways to get a good kettlebell workout is to pick a time interval like 5 or 10 minutes and complete as many reps of a kettlebell ballistic exercise like snatch or clean and jerk as possible in that time. Over progressive workouts the aim is to do more reps in the same time or extend the time.

These workouts are certainly effective but if you really want to push your conditioning try the following workout plan for a few weeks.

Testing - Choose an exercise and perform a 10 minute test, record the reps completed and then divide that number by 10 to get a per minute exercise rate. For example if you can do 160 snatches in 10 minutes your rate is 16 reps a minute.

The program – You'll do your density workouts 3 days a week with the following rep schemes. In each workout when you reach the designated number of reps for that minute stop and rest until the start of the next minute.

Monday – Overload workout – Perform 3 minutes of your chosen exercise at your rep rate + 4 reps. Your aim is to hold this higher rate for a short period of time to build rep speed and anaerobic endurance. Once you complete the first 3 minutes rest for 5 minutes and repeat. Using the example above you'd aim to hold a pace of 20 reps a minute.

Wednesday – Light workout - Perform 4 minutes at your tested rep rate. Rest for 2 minutes and repeat 3 times. This workout should feel moderately difficult but not a complete lung buster.

Friday – Moderate endurance workout – Perform 5 minutes at your rep rate + 2 reps.

In each successive week add 1 minute to ALL intervals. By the end of 4 weeks you'll be handling the same weight for a lot of extra reps and when you retest you'll probably find a 10 – 30% improvement in your score and a significant increase in your fitness!

Advanced workout #2 – Skill Fatigue Workouts

In martial arts, military fitness and sports it's important to learn and practice new skills and in general it's best to practice while you are fresh because you'll learn faster and are less likely to make mistakes. However even though skills are often *learnt* while you are fresh they are mostly *applied* under conditions of fatigue and great stress such as a martial arts fight, combat or sports contest

Therefore I suggest that once you have learnt a skill it's a good idea to practice that skill in a controlled state of fatigue. This happens in sparring or rolling but sometimes these situations aren't intense enough to put you in the red zone and challenge your ability to perform the skills under stress.

This is where kettlebells come in. To challenge your skills in a state of fatigue try the following workout.

Simply set up a circuit in pairs. For the first minute have both partners perform an intense set of kettlebell swings or snatches. In the next minute one partner practices a skill such as a take down or punch combo. In the third minute both partners go back to the kettlebell exercise and in the 4th minute they change over and person 2 practices the skill.

This simple 4 minute block of training can easily be extended by adding more skills and rounds of conditioning or by lengthening the time for each conditioning segment to 2 minutes.

You can also make this more difficult by having students who don't perform the conditioning section act as opponents for trainees. In this way the fatigued trainee is going to be severely challenged by a fresh opponent!

The example above relates to martial artists however the same principle can be applied to sports where there is a skill element. For example in ball sports you can perform intense kettlebell exercises then practice defense or offense drills, ball passing etc. For military personnel try things like shooting drills after intense kettlebell drills, it makes things a lot harder!

Conclusion

These are just a couple of ways that intermediate and advanced trainees can increase the difficulty and effectiveness of their kettlebell training and maximize their conditioning and skills.

If you need an interval timer for these workouts jump on the www.octogen.com.au/traininggear.htm and pick up a gymboss timer!

If you are interested in getting a fully customized diet and exercise plan please contact me at fitness@octogen.com.au or for more articles and fitness training products check out www.octogen.com.au