



Combining Barbell and Kettlebell Training

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Introduction

In response to a few questions I've had recently from clients I've written this short article on combining barbell and kettlebell training and to illustrate the point I've borrowed an example program from one of my online clients.

Barbell Vs Kettlebell – Why can't we all just get along?

One thing I've noticed over the last few years is that within the fitness industry there are certain people that for one reason or another have latched onto a single training method and who can't be enticed to try anything new.

Sometimes the reason for this fanaticism is purely monetary (the person sells product A or has built their reputation and marketing on knocking everything else as dangerous etc). Sometimes after years of failure with various training methods the person has found something that works for them and becomes an evangelist for that method.

That's fine for those people but they can be a pain in the ass for the more broad minded trainer since their fanaticism muddies the waters for people new to training and it becomes the job of the trainer to straighten the whole mess out!

A classic case in point is the Kettlebell Vs Barbell debate. If you take a step back and look outside the fitness industry you don't hear builders arguing about hammer Vs screwdriver or chefs arguing about oven Vs fry pan. The reason of course is that it's quite possible to have different tools for different jobs and really it's the application of the tool that makes the biggest difference.

A lot of people I talk to seem reluctant to mix kettlebell and barbell training even if they have experience with both.

I simply believe that as a trainer you should have the biggest tool box available and then mix and match those tools to get the job done. Barbell, kettlebell, bands, chains, strongman gear, bodyweight drills, stretching, foam rollers, massage etc can all be combined seamlessly to achieve any goal that falls within the realm of athletic development.

So here are some different ways to combine Kettlebells and barbells followed by an example program. The program is not something to get too hung up on as it's simply ONE example of the application of some of these principles.

Kettlebell + Barbell Programs

Option 1 – For general health and fitness you can cycle 2-4 weeks of kettlebell training with 2-4 weeks of barbell training.

Option 2 – Along the same lines you may choose to do 2-4 workouts a week at a gym with predominantly barbell training but then alternate those workouts with kettlebell training at home.

Option 3 – Mix Kettlebell and barbell exercises in every training session. Use barbells for the big lifts like squat and deadlift and then “fill in the gaps” with kettlebell core work and conditioning.

When putting together programs remember that you have to watch the overall volume of training. If you try to add 5 kettlebell exercises to 5 barbell exercises each session you'll end up overtraining. Don't be afraid to completely drop some exercises for a cycle and then sub them back in the next month!

As you'll see the sample program below contains a mix of barbell strength work, kettlebell core and strength work, kettlebell ballistic conditioning as well as some circuits and runs.

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

Week 1
5/4/2009
Monday
Session 1

1. Deep squat 03553



Rest			Moderate																
Reps		5 x	5	reps															
% of 1 Rep Max			80	%RM															
5/4/2009 Mon																			

2. Kettlebell press 05587



Rest			Moderate																
Reps		5 x	5	reps															
Load - kg																			
5/4/2009 Mon																			

3. Kettlebell stand up 05629



Rest			Moderate																
Reps		5 x	5	reps															
Load - kg																			
5/4/2009 Mon																			

Run 4 x 400m with 2:00 rests

Tuesday
Session 1

Complete maximum rounds in 20:00 of the following

1 Round =

- [Pull up 04396](#) x 5
- [Push up 04773](#) x 10
- [Deep squat 01212](#) x 15

Wednesday
Session 1

1. Deadlift 03565



Rest			Moderate																
Reps		5 x	5	reps															
% of 1 Rep Max			80	%RM															
5/6/2009 Wed																			

2. Bench press 00341



Rest			Moderate																
Reps		5 x	5	reps															
% of 1 Rep Max			80	%RM															
5/6/2009 Wed																			

3. Kettlebell snatch 05714



Rest	1 min		Moderate																
Reps		8 x	10	reps															
Load - kg																			
5/6/2009 Wed																			

10 reps each arm

Disclaimer: No express warranty is given as to the accuracy or completeness of this information. It is not a substitute for, any advice, diagnosis or treatment provided by a fitness or medical professional. You acknowledge that performing incorrectly prescribed exercises or activities may pose a risk to your health. You are solely responsible for all acts or omissions, whether negligent or otherwise, undertaken in connection with this information.

Friday
Session 1

1. Deep squat 03553



increase weight each set

Rest			Moderate															
Reps		5 x	5	reps														
% of 1 Rep Max			80	%RM														
5/8/2009 Fri																		

2. Kettlebell press 05587



Rest			Moderate															
Reps		5 x	5	reps														
Load - kg																		
5/8/2009 Fri																		

3. Kettlebell stand up 05629



Rest			Moderate															
Reps		5 x	5	reps														
Load - kg																		
5/8/2009 Fri																		

5 rounds of

- 10 [Burpees 01391](#)
- 20 [Kettlebell swing 05710](#) - 15kg dumbbell
- 30 [Sit up 04869](#)

Saturday
Session 1

Run 5km

2. Bench press 00341



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Rest			Moderate												
Reps		5 x	5	reps											
% of 1 Rep Max			80	%RM											
5/15/2009 Fri															

3. Kettlebell snatch 05714



10 reps each arm															
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Rest	1 min		Moderate												
Reps		10 x	12	reps											
Load - kg															
5/15/2009 Fri															

Saturday
Session 1

Run 4km