

Competition Format

Here's how a competition will work:

1. You must attempt a single rep of each of three lift types, taken in the order:
 - Back Squat
 - Bench Press
 - Deadlift
2. Entry is open to all members - guys and girls of all ages. However, since the aim is to try to lift the best weight you can for a single rep, you're strongly advised to have had some experience at these lifts in the gym and know the basics of good, safe technique.

Talk to a trainer or myself if you're in any doubt about your level of experience and/or your lifting form. For safety reasons you'll be required to have spotters for your squat and bench.
3. The competition will be held over several days but *you must do all your lifts on the same day in one session.*

This allows you more flexibility to choose when you want to lift so that more people can take part than if we set a fixed time and date for all. The disadvantage is that the people helping with the competition have to give up more time.

Please arrange beforehand with a member of the gym staff when you want to do your lifts - to make sure a referee will be available to watch your lifts.
4. The referee will call each of your attempts a "Good lift!" or "No lift!" depending on whether you followed the rules.

People new to lifting will be given some leniency but make sure you know the rules to avoid unnecessary 'no lifts'!
5. You can have up to three attempts at each lift type (i.e. up to nine altogether) and you must get at least one successful squat, bench and deadlift.

Missing all your attempts for a lift type is called "bombing" and you receive no total score for the entire competition!
6. For each lift type *you cannot choose to lift less than your previous attempt.* Only your heaviest successful attempt at each lift type counts toward your total score.

For example, if your first squat was a 'No Lift' at 80kg, you can choose 80kg (or more!) for your next squat but you can't choose to try 75kg. Obviously if your first attempt was a 'Good Lift' you'd aim to improve on it with your second.

Choose your weights wisely! A good guide for first-timers is to choose a weight for your first attempt that you're confident you can lift for three reps. Remember, missing your first attempt puts you at risk of bombing!
7. Warming up for a lift with lighter weights prior to your attempts is safety smart and will make your heavier lifts easier. Once you've warmed up for a lift, out of consideration for the referee, spotters and other gym users, please try to take no more than about 10 minutes between each attempt.

Registering

Register at the gym to enter an upcoming powerlifting competition.

We'll be using this web site to record the competition lifts, so you'll also need to have your name loaded on here by the referee or you can opt to register *and activate* a full user account beforehand for yourself. (This will allow you to continue posting your lifts on here, track your progress and rank them against other users. This is open to anyone - not just gym members.) Go to 'Login' on the menu at the top-right of this page, select 'Register' and follow the instructions.

Clothing & Gear

The preferred clothing for competitions is non-baggy shorts and a tee-shirt or singlet. Please tuck your shirt or singlet in when you lift so the ref can clearly see whether or not your lifts are good. For the same reason additional bulky clothing such as jackets, baggy shorts, tracksuit pants or trousers will not be allowed during your lifts. Shoes with solid soles (i.e. not cushioned) provide a safer, more stable base in which to do your squats and deadlifts. The typical springy-heeled cross trainer shoe is NOT recommended for these lifts. You'll also be allowed to remove your shoes for better stability and 'feel' during these two lifts.

Headwear is not normally allowed in lifting competitions but if you must

You may also use a lifting belt and/or wrist wraps for additional support. Knee wraps won't be allowed for squats, nor will lifting straps, gloves or similar for deadlifts.

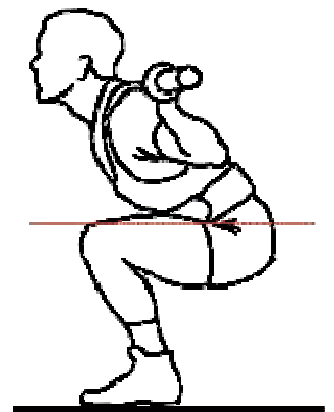
Weigh-In

When you're ready to do your competition lifts you'll need to meet with the referee, who will weigh you in and ask you to nominate a weight for your first squat. The ref will ask you for your web site user name, check that your account has been activated and then you're ready to go. You can warm up for your squat before or after you weigh in. Wear only the clothes you'll be lifting in for your weigh-in but without your shoes, lifting belt, wrist wraps etc.

Obviously it pays to wait at least 45min or so after eating a meal before you commence warming up and lifting.

Rules for the Back Squat

1. Unrack the bar without assistance and stand steady with the bar across your shoulders, knees locked, waiting for the ref's call.
2. Once the ref is satisfied you're ready he'll call "Squat!". You must not start before the call.
3. In your own time, squat down until the crease formed at the front of your hip is level with or below the height of the top of your knee.
4. Return to the starting position (*knees locked*) and remain steady briefly before re-racking the bar. Assistance can be given to re-rack.
5. Neither end of the bar may descend, even briefly, while you're rising from the bottom position to the lockout position.
6. You must not shift your feet between starting and completing your squat (knees locked to knees locked again).



The diagram on the right shows the minimum acceptable squat depth.

While some people may find the depth rule unnecessarily picky, it's the only fair way to judge depth.

Rules for the Bench Press

1. Lie on the bench with both shoes touching the floor and your buttocks and upper back in contact with the bench. You may arch your back if you wish.
2. Unrack the bar (assistance can be given) and set it above your chest, ready to start, with your elbows locked, waiting for the ref's call.
3. Once the ref is satisfied you're ready he'll call "Start!". You must not start before the call.
4. In your own time, lower the bar to briefly *touch the chest*.
5. Press the bar back to the starting position (*elbows locked*) and remain steady briefly before re-racking the bar. Assistance can be given to re-rack.
6. Between starting and completing your press (elbows locked to elbows locked again) *both shoes must remain in contact with the floor and your buttocks and upper back in contact with the bench*.

7. Neither end of the bar may descend, even briefly, while it's being pressed from your chest to lockout.
8. The bar must touch your chest lightly. You're not allowed to bounce it off your chest or sink it into your chest to gain extra spring from your rib cage!

Rules for the Deadlift

1. Grip the bar on the floor in front of you with both hands.
2. Lift the bar steadily, extending your body until you're standing upright and steady with your *knees locked, hips open, shoulders back, your back extended* (it doesn't need to be hyper-extended!) and wait for the ref's call.
3. Neither end of the bar may descend, even briefly, while it's being lifted.
4. The bar may contact your shins/knees/thighs during the lift but not in a way that may possibly give assistance. Hitching, jerking or sinking the bar into your thighs is not permitted.
5. Once the ref is satisfied he'll call "Down!".
6. Following the call (not before!) lower the bar, holding it with both hands until it's returned to the floor.

Note: The rules mean that at the top of the lift you must not be bent even slightly forward at the hips. Likewise, the shoulders must not be hunched forward and your lower back must be arched slightly, not rounded. If you're unclear on what's required ask the referee to demonstrate.

Scoring

Assuming you don't bomb (fail all your attempts at one of the three lifts) you'll come away with six scores!

- Best squat
- Best bench
- Best deadlift
- Total of best squat, bench & deadlift
- [Wilks score](#) - which makes allowance for body weight and gender
- Age-adjusted score - which applies a coefficient to the Wilks score if you're under 24 or over 40 ([Foster's coefficients](#) for those under 24, [Revised McCulloch's](#) for the over 40's)

The formulas used to calculate these are the ones commonly used in powerlifting.

Your results will be available for all to see on the web site as soon as you've completed your lifting!

Any Questions?

Any further information or help with training, lifting tips, etc. just ask one of the gym staff or me.

Powerlifting is a rapidly growing sport in New Zealand - with a particularly strong female representation. At a recent competition in Wellington there were almost 80 lifters! If, after competing in a gym competition, you find you enjoyed the experience and think you'd like to know more, grab me and have a talk so I can point you in the right direction! If you don't know me, I'm the old, balding guy with the beard, ever trying hard to keep up with the younger bros.

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