

UNITED STATES STRENGTHLIFTING FEDERATION



ONLINE POWERLIFTING RULES

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GENERAL RULES OF POWERLIFTING

1. The United States Strengthlifting Federation Powerlifting Division recognizes the following lifts:
 - a. Squat
 - b. Bench Press
 - c. Deadlift
2. Competition takes place between lifters in categories as defined by sex, bodyweight and age.
3. Each competitor is allowed three attempts for each lift. The summation of a competitor's best valid attempt for each lift constitutes their Total.
4. The winners of the Adult divisions shall be the lifters with the highest Totals. If two or more lifters achieve the same Total, the lifter that achieved that Total first will be declared the winner.
5. The winners of the Master divisions will be additionally based upon the McCulloch formula.
6. The winners of the Junior divisions will be additionally based upon the Foster Coefficient.
7. Best Lifter Awards will be given to the lifter with the best performance based upon the Wilk's Coefficient (weight assumed based upon weight class). See Wilks Coefficient in the APPENDIX.
8. Divisions:
 - a. Open: Any lifter may opt to compete in the open division
 - b. Women: Congenital females
9. Age classes:
 - a. Adult: 20-39 years old
 - i. Any lifter may opt to lift in the adult division in addition to or instead of their other age class.
 - b. Master: Lifters who turn 40 years or older during the calendar year in which the event is held
 - c. Juniors: Lifters who turn between the ages of 14 and 19 years old during the calendar year in which the event is held. Lifters under the age of 14 may guest lift in a USSF sanctioned event, with a parent or guardian signed waiver form, and pre-approval from the Event Director.
10. Weight classes:
 - a. Open
 - i. Lightweight II: Up to 175.0 lbs
 - ii. Middleweight: 175.01 up to 225.0 lbs
 - iii. Heavyweight II: 225.01 lbs and over

- b. Women
 - i. Lightweight: up to 140.0 lbs
 - ii. Middleweight: 140.01 up to 180.0 lbs
 - iii. Heavyweight: 180.01 lbs and over
11. USSF Membership must be maintained by all lifters. USSF memberships can be obtained here: <https://usstrengthlifting.com/register/ussf-membership/> and are valid for life.

THE POWERLIFTS AND THE RULES OF PERFORMANCE

THE SQUAT

1. The squat is performed from a rack.
2. No more than four spotters will be present for each attempt, positioned to have immediate access to each end of the bar. The use of safety equipment such as spotter arms is highly encouraged.
3. The bar must be removed from the racks and a position assumed on the platform at least 2' from the racks, or a distance sufficiently removed from the racks to ensure the safety of the lifter and the spotters in the event of a miss.
4. The starting position must be upright, with the knees and the hips fully extended, and with the chest up. This position must be obvious and under control before the descent begins.
5. The hips are lowered until the top surfaces of the legs at the hip joint is lower than the knees. The bottom position is identified by (1) the apex of the crease in the singlet formed as the hips are lowered, (2) the surface of the top of the patella, (3) the plane formed by a straight line between the two, and (4) the dipping of the hip end of that plane below horizontal.
6. The lifter must then return to the start position in one continuous upward motion. The lifter must once again demonstrate control of this position.
7. The lifter must then return the bar to the rack without the assistance of the spotters. Once the bar crosses the threshold of the hooks, spotters may assist in guiding the bar safely down into the hooks.

CAUSES FOR DISQUALIFICATION OF THE SQUAT

8. Any change of position of the bar across the shoulders after the start of the lift.
9. Any deliberate contact or any unintentional contact with the rack that would aid a lifter.
10. Failure to achieve a position of the hips lower than the knees.
11. Any downward motion of the center of the bar, as measured between the hands, after upward motion has begun.
12. Any supporting of the body with the arms or elbows against the thighs.
13. Any direct contact of the bar by the spotters, whether necessary or unintentional, at any point after the lifter unracks the bar but before the lifter crosses the threshold of the hooks.

14. Any forward, backward, or lateral step during the squat itself.

THE BENCH PRESS

15. No more than five spotters will be present for each attempt. The lifter may enlist the help of the side and/or center spotters in removing the bar from the rack. The use of safeties such as face savers or spotters is highly encouraged.
16. The lifter takes their position with the back, shoulders and buttocks in contact with the flat surface of the bench. This position must be maintained throughout the entire lift. ~~Feet must remain flat on the floor and not contact the underside of the bench or each other.~~ Feet must remain in contact with the floor. A lifter may opt to utilize flat surfaced plates or blocks not exceeding 30cm in total height in order to achieve firm footing.
17. The bar is gripped with a thumb around, pronated grip, with index fingers covering or between the 81cm marks.
18. The bar is removed from the racks and a position assumed with both arms locked out directly over the shoulders.
19. The bar is lowered to a point on the chest or abdomen, **to a position where the apex of the elbows is below to the center point of the shoulder joints.** (no contact with the belt is allowed). The bar is held obviously motionless before then being pressed in one continuous motion to a position with elbows locked and the bar directly over the shoulders. Once control of this position is demonstrated, the lifter, with assistance from the spotters, returns the bar to the rack.
20. Any athlete who is anatomically unable to fully extend one or both elbows must report and demonstrate the condition before the start of every bench press.

CAUSES FOR DISQUALIFICATION OF THE BENCH PRESS

21. Failure to assume a start position with the arms locked and the bar directly over the shoulders.
22. Any loss of contact of the back, shoulders, or buttocks with the flat surface of the bench.
23. Feet losing contact with the floor. Incidental movement of half the length and width of the foot is permitted.
24. Failure to achieve an obviously motionless position on the chest or abdomen.
25. Heaving, bouncing, or sinking the bar after the bar becomes motionless.
26. Any downward motion of the center of the bar, as measured between the hands, during the upward press.
27. Any pronounced uneven lockout of the arms.
28. Failure to achieve and demonstrate control of a position with the elbows in full extension and the bar directly over the shoulder.
29. Any contact of the lifter's feet with the bench, bench supports, or one another.
30. Any deliberate contact or any unintentional contact with the rack that would aid a lifter.
31. The bar coming in contact with the belt.

32. Failure to lower the apex of the elbows below the center point of both shoulder joints.

THE DEADLIFT

33. The lifting area shall be free of any unnecessary equipment, including deadlift jacks.
34. A single spotter may be present for each attempt. The designated spotter will remain out of the lifting area at the ready in case of a syncopal event or other event that requires the rendering of aid.
35. The lifter assumes a position facing the bar, with the vertical plane of the legs parallel to the bar. The feet must not make contact with the plates.
36. If an athlete is missing two or more fingers on a single hand, they may utilize a lifting strap on that hand only.
37. The bar is pulled in a continuous upward motion until the lifter is standing erect with knees and hips fully extended, the chest up, and the shoulders back. Any bona fide attempt to move the bar counts as the attempt.
38. Once the lockout position is attained and the bar is motionless, the bar is lowered under control with both hands back to the ground.

CAUSES FOR DISQUALIFICATION OF THE DEADLIFT

39. Failure to attain a position standing erect with knees and hips fully extended, the chest up, and the shoulders back.
40. Any downward motion of the center of the bar, as measured between the hands, before lockout.
41. Any release of the bar from the hands before it is lowered to the floor.
42. Any forward, backward or lateral step during the deadlift itself.
43. Any foot contact with the plates.
44. Supporting of the bar on the thighs.

SUBMITTING A VIDEO

45. Lifters may submit up to three attempts for each lift.
46. Lifts must be submitted within the dates set by the competition.
47. Lifts must be submitted within 48 hours of the attempt itself.
48. A lifter's entire body and the bar and weights must be visible throughout the lift from beginning to end.
49. Immediately following a successful attempt, the lifter must visually identify the weight on the bar and the use of any non-standard 45lb bar, in one continuous recording.
50. At the start of the video, before the attempt, the lifter must display the written codeword that is unique to each competition.
51. The quality of the video, use of safety measures, and lifter's costume must allow for proper evaluation of the lift.

52. Upload the video to Instagram, Youtube, or Vimeo. The video must be made public.

LIFTING COSTUME AND PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

LIFTING COSTUME

1. The lifting costume should be sufficiently contrasting and tight as to allow proper evaluation of the lift.
2. The lifting costume must not be supportive in nature.
3. Long hair that would interfere with determining the bar's placement on the back during the squat shall be restrained or tied back.
4. The use of illegal supportive garments may result in disqualification from the event either currently or retroactively.
5. Shoes are not required but encouraged.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

6. All personal equipment must be worn on the outside of the lifting costume.
7. A belt may be worn during all three lifts. It may be of any type, provided that it does not exceed four inches in width at any point along its length.
8. Rubberized knee sleeves not exceeding 30cm in length or 7mm in thickness may be worn. Only one knee sleeve per knee may be worn. The knee sleeve must be non-adjustable and non-fastening.
9. Wrist wraps of a single ply, not to exceed 1m in length and 8cm in width may be worn.
10. Rubberized elbow sleeves not exceeding 30cm in length and 7mm in thickness may be worn. The elbow sleeves must be non-adjustable and non-fastening.
11. Thin shin guards that do not impede the upward motion of the bar may be worn.
12. No foreign substances of any type except chalk may be used on either the equipment or the lifter's personal equipment. No rosin, spray sticky, or any other substance designed to enhance the friction of hands against the bar or shoes against floor may be used.
13. Bandages may be worn for medical necessity. Up to two layers of medical tape may be worn around the fingers. All personal equipment is subject to review and approval. The use of illegal equipment may result in disqualification from the event either currently or retroactively.

LIFTING AREA AND EQUIPMENT

14. The bar shall be 27-**32mm** in diameter and have two machined circumferential markings measuring 40.5cm from center.
15. A bar weighing less than 45lbs and measuring less than 27mm in diameter may be used on the bench press, for any bench press attempt less than 45lbs.
16. The plates must be marked in either lb or kg denominations. Plates may be made from any material. The diameter of the largest plate must not exceed 450mm.

17. When loading the barbell, the heaviest discs are loaded first.
18. Collars are not required but highly recommended.
19. The squat rack shall be of sturdy construction. A squat rack with swing arms (aka “monolift”) is permitted to be used so long as the swing arms remain stationary.
20. The bench shall be of sturdy construction and allow for a full range of motion without contact with the bench or its uprights.

ORDER OF COMPETITION

REGISTRATION

1. Early bird pricing for registration will be available until one week prior to the start of the competition.
2. Standard pricing will be available until the competition officially begins 0001 am Pacific Standard Time.
3. Late entry pricing will be available until three days before competition close.
4. Emails regarding the competition will be sent out upon registration, one week prior to the start, and the night before the start.
5. An email arriving the night before the start of competition will contain the necessary codeword.

CONDUCT OF THE COMPETITION

6. At 0001 AM Pacific Standard Time competitors may begin submitting official attempts via lifting cast.
7. Competitors may submit any number of lifts (max of 3) at a time and may submit the squat, bench press, or deadlift in any order.
8. It is recommended that competitors submit one lift at a time per each movement to allow for errors to be identified by our judges and corrected for subsequent lifts.
9. In the event of an incorrectly reported weight or an insufficiently demonstrated weight, the weight will be corrected to the obvious and visible weight.
10. Once submitted, the head judge will evaluate the lift and return a Good Lift, No-Lift, or Under Review within 24 hours.
11. If the lift is placed Under Review, an additional 24 hours is allowed to determine if the lift meets the standards of competition. Lifts that go Under Review are marked as No Good and moved to a separate document until reviewed. This document will be made available to all competitors. If the lift is determined Good Lift, the status will be updated in lifting cast.
12. If a competitor fails an attempt or receives a No Lift, any weight may be selected for the next attempt, including a lighter weight.
13. A failure to complete a successful attempt in any of the three lifts eliminates the athlete from the competition.

14. Any disrespectful, aggressive, or disruptive behavior is grounds for disqualification from the competition.
15. At 11:59PM Pacific Standard Time on the ending date of competition all submissions must be in. Any submissions beyond this time will be rejected.
16. There are no weigh-ins or weight outs for online competitions. Weight class is based on honor system and verified with visual identification. A USSF judge may require a live video verification of weight at any point during the competition. Competitors lifting outside of their registered weight class will be disqualified. Select the weight class of your heaviest weight during any of your attempts.

RESULTS

17. Results will be announced within 72 hours of completion via online video and include:
 - a. All weight class winners.
 - b. Overall winners.
 - c. Hypertrophy recipient.
 - d. Best Squat, Bench Press, and Deadlift for Open and Women classes.

AWARDS

18. Awards may vary between competition but will usually include:
 - a. 1st place prizes for winners of each combination of division, weight class, and age class.
 - b. Prizes for overall Open, Women, Master, and Junior winners.
 - a. Hypertrophy – granted to the lifter who performs the lift with the most heart as solely determined subjectively by the current USSF President.
 - b. Digital awards and achievements to be available for viewing in an athletes unique Digital Trophy Cabinet.
19. Prizes are only guaranteed for Continental U.S. addresses. Substitute digital gift cards may be granted in their place.

OFFICIALS

20. USSF President -The USSF President is responsible for carrying out the competition and assuring it moves smoothly. The USSF President selects the Hypertrophy winner. The USSF president has final approval over all rulings.
21. Head Judge – All lifts will be judged by the head judge for compliance with the USSF ruleset. Lifts that clearly meet or do not meet the standard will be evaluated solely by this judge.
22. Judging Panel – The judging panel will be made up of three judges, separate from the head judge, and will evaluate based upon majority ruling any questionable lifts.

APPENDIX

WILKS COEFFICIENT

- Open Lightweight (Assumed Weight 175lbs): 31.12
- Open Middleweight (Assumed Weight 225lbs): 27.39
- Open Heavyweight (Assumed Weight 275lbs): 25.86
- Women Lightweight (Assumed Weight 140lbs): 48.42
- Women Middleweight (Assumed Weight 180lbs): 41.05
- Women Heavyweight (Assumed Weight 220lbs): 37.79

FOSTER AGE COEFFICIENT

(JUNIORS)	
Age	Coefficient
14	1.23
15	1.18
16	1.13
17	1.08
18	1.06
19	1.04

MCCOLLOCH AGE COEFFICIENT

(MASTERS)					
Age	Coefficient	Age	Coefficient	Age	Coefficient
40	1.000	57	1.268	74	1.795
41	1.010	58	1.291	75	1.835
42	1.020	59	1.315	76	1.876
43	1.031	60	1.340	77	1.918
44	1.043	61	1.366	78	1.961
45	1.055	62	1.393	79	2.005
46	1.068	63	1.421	80	2.050
47	1.082	64	1.450	81	2.096
48	1.097	65	1.480	82	2.143
49	1.113	66	1.511	83	2.190
50	1.130	67	1.543	84	2.238
51	1.147	68	1.576	85	2.287
52	1.165	69	1.610	86	2.337
53	1.184	70	1.645	87	2.388
54	1.204	71	1.681	88	2.440
55	1.225	72	1.718	89	2.494
56	1.246	73	1.756	90	2.549