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THE BEGINNERS GUIDE TO KETTLEBELL TRAINING

WHERE DO I START?

This modern era is crazy, it seems that not a day goes by without a new exercise or fitness trend being revealed.

Not something I remember growing up in the 80's. My mum did the Jane Fonda aerobics DVD and my dad went to the gym.

I don't remember there being so many gimmicks back then as there is now.

When it comes to Kettlebell training, we are definitely not talking about a fitness trend, they have been around for 100's of years and trusted by some of the best for the incredible results they can generate.

Nobody actually knows where they came from, some people believe they originated in ancient Greece, where it is understood that people used weights with handles.

Another school of thought believe the germination of KB's began in Scotland where villagers would use old church bells or cast iron kettles filled with anything, from water to lead shot.

Other groups argue KB's began in Russia and other 'Eastern Bloc' countries, where in recent times, it has developed into a competitive sport in its own right.



Where the ambiguity seems to end is that, in all countries, it appears that people would swing, throw, press or juggle the kettlebells as a form of both exercise and enjoyment. These 'drills' were then passed down throughout the generations.

It is reasonably well accepted by all parties that it is in Russia and the other Eastern Bloc countries where KB's were adopted predominantly to develop both physical culture and sport.

In these countries, kettlebells have been used for many years, in partnership with the more traditional Olympic lifts, in developing the following attributes to enhance their training programmes:

- Power
- Muscular Endurance
- Muscular Strength
- Injury Prevention

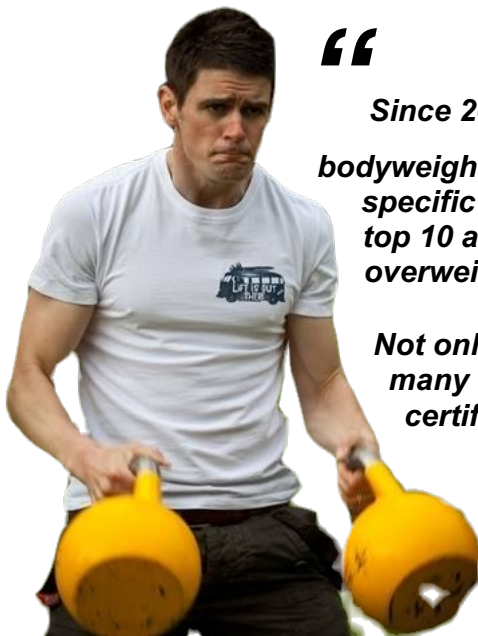
- Aerobic Endurance
- Functionality
- Flexibility
- Motor Skills

Kettlebells are used by the Russian secret service as a tool to test new recruits.

There are plenty of books about kettlebell training floating about, some good and some that would give you nightmares.

I felt there was something missing, a guide that really starts at the beginning.

I want to take you by the hand and walk you through exactly how to start on your kettlebell journey and reap the rewards without all the confusion or downsides of injury.



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Since 2007 I have trained with Kettlebells and my own bodyweight to keep myself in peak condition and to prepare for specific obstacle race events and have finished in numerous top 10 age group category positions. Not bad for a former overweight guy

Not only this I have coached 100's of clients and prepared many of my clients for obstacle race events, kettlebell certifications and competitions.

I want to share my experience and knowledge with a wider audience and teach you how to get the basics right as well as progress you the right way.

This beginners guide has been written for you...

I created the Kettlebell Academy to teach men and women (primarily over 30's) who have none, little or very limited knowledge of kettlebells.

I want you to get the best start to your kettlebell journey so that you don't do things completely wrong like many people do.

This beginners guide will give you the confidence to start kettlebell training on your own.

What are kettlebells?

A kettlebell is essentially a bowling ball with a handle big enough to slide your hand through.

The origins of the kettlebell are a little vague, but they can be traced back hundreds of years. Some say ancient Greece, others the highlands of Scotland.

What has been established is that weights with handles were often used during fitness challenges for both carrying and throwing events and it's believed that the kettlebell simply evolved from here.

Later the Kettlebell was adopted by the Soviet forces for training their soldiers and then finally gained popularity in the west.

Today you can find kettlebells in most gyms and in all shapes, sizes and colours.



The Benefits of Kettlebell Training

There are numerous benefits as to why you should be using kettlebells, far too many to mention.

So i'll cover a few for you here. The rest i'm sure you'll find out soon enough.

1. Workout Anywhere

You don't need a gym membership, tons of space or anything other than one kettlebell in order to get all the health and fitness results you need.

Kettlebells are small and compact so they can be taken anywhere.

You can get your heart racing like you have just run the 100 metres without even moving your feet.

In fact, you should never require a space larger than 6 feet square for any kettlebell workout.

2. Fantastic for Fat Loss

Kettlebell workouts when designed correctly use multi joint movements incorporating over 600 muscles at a time.

The more muscles you use the more energy that is required and therefore the more fat and carbs you burn.

Kettlebell workouts can also be so intense that they disrupt your homeostasis evoking an afterburn effect that can continue to burn calories for up to 24 hours after your workout. Bonus!

3. Inexpensive

For most beginners one kettlebell is all you require to get started and that kettlebell being made of solid metal will last you a lifetime.

You don't need any special footwear; in fact, many people exercise without shoes at all. Don't worry you won't drop the kettlebell on your foot!

Also due to the way kettlebells are swung around the momentum actually increases the weight of the kettlebell so a small weight can become a larger weight when used correctly.

One kettlebell can be used to push you to your limits with more advanced exercises or made very manageable with more beginner-based movements.

4. Quick Workouts

Kettlebell workouts when designed correctly are intense. The exercises can be made to flow from one movement to the next without having to change weights or rearrange your grip.

The flow of exercises enables you to keep your heart rate elevated and muscles constantly engaged.

Due to the intensity of the full body exercises and the dynamic nature of kettlebells good workouts should not last more than 15 – 30 minutes.

5. Sculpt a Lean Body Shape

Kettlebell training burns fat and increases muscle tone fast.

Most of the exercises are multi-joint (compound) movements that link the bottom half of the body with the top half via the core muscles. Great for your abs!

The body recruits 100's of muscles in order to control and maintain balance of the kettlebell.

The muscles time under tension is high resulting in fast muscle development throughout the body.

6. Supercharged Cardio

You will be surprised at how cardiovascular kettlebell training can be.

Just by performing the kettlebell swing for 30 seconds can feel like you have just sprinted 100 metres without even moving your feet.

If you suffer from bad knees, then exercises like the kettlebell swing can give you an amazing cardiovascular workout without damaging your knees whilst at the same time strengthening your body from head to toe.

7. Great for Joints

When used correctly a kettlebell improves your joint stability as well as the joints mobility too.

When you swing a kettlebell, the weight tries to pull the joints apart and it is your stabilising muscles that maintain the closure of the joint.

Strong development of stabilising muscles ensure you have a stronger foundation for your larger muscles to operate from enabling less injury and an increase in strength.

Kettlebells also force longer ranges of movement opening up your joints and increasing mobility and thus better movement freedom.

8. Fun & Addictive

Most of all, kettlebells are fun to use.

The more fun something is the more we want to do it and that's a win win for exercise.

Kettlebell training will teach you exciting new skills, unseen exercises and a great feeling of achievement as you master new movements.

Your body will change, and you will become addicted.

I know people who have taken their kettlebells on holiday with them, personalised them by painting them, named them and had withdrawals from them after only a matter of days.

As soon as I started using kettlebells, they transformed the way I trained and even today I'm still learning new methods in order to progress my training further.

So fun, addictive and plenty of scope for progression.



Another reason to train with kettlebells is the fact that you will get the benefits of strength training, cardiovascular fitness and flexibility all in one workout, and it is incredibly metabolically demanding which makes it unbeatable as a fat burner. Where else can you get all this in one from training?

kettlebells deliver the perfect combination of strength and endurance, cardiovascular fitness, explosive agility, stamina and fat loss.

What to look out for

Just like everything in life there is a logical progression to exercising with kettlebells.

Kettlebells put a large strain on the body and although this is one of the main reasons why they are so effective it can also be the reason why you can get injured very quickly.

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It is very important that you progress slowly when kettlebell training and allow time for your muscles, ligaments and tendons to adapt to the new stimulus.

When it comes to kettlebell training its all practice, practice practice.

Kettlebells also involve a lot of eccentric movements meaning that you are lowering a weight under tension.

Eccentric movements cause greater degrees of muscle soreness after your workouts so be prepared.

Ultimately it is better to train less and more often in the beginning than going in 'all guns blazing' and then being side-lined with an injury that prevents any kind of exercise at all.

If you struggle with simple bodyweight exercises like Squats, Lunges, Planks etc. then you should master these first before progressing onto kettlebells.

Buying your first kettlebell



OK, so you have decided that kettlebell training is for you and you would like to give it a go. You are going to need to purchase your first kettlebell or use the one's down your local gym.

There are so many shapes and sizes to choose from where should you start?

Let's start with the correct weight:

In Russia they use a measurement called Poods so traditionally kettlebells are measured in Poods, 1 Pood is approx. 16kgs.

– **15lbs / 8kg** – Starter weight for all women.

– **25lbs / 12kg** – Starter weight for most men unless you have plenty of weight-lifting experience. Women will quickly progress to this weight for Two Handed exercises.

– **35lbs / 16kg** (1 Pood) – Men will progress to this weight quickly for two handed exercises. Many more advanced women will use this weight frequently for two handed exercises.

– **50lbs / 24kg** (1.5 Pood) – More advanced men will use this weight frequently for two handed exercises or as a working weight for competitions.

Most women will begin with an **15lbs/8kg** and most men a **25lbs/12kg or 35lbs/16kg** depending on weight training experience.

You will come to realise that you can perform many exercises with both two hands or one. So, you can make a kettlebell feel much heavier by using one hand or much lighter by using two.

Don't be put off by the weight of the kettlebell.

Many women get very nervous when handed a 15lbs/8kg kettlebell because it feels very heavy at first.

You will soon realise that when used correctly 100's of muscles are helping you and 15lbs/8kg is actually not as bad as you first think.

Types of Kettlebell

There are 2 types of kettlebell, Competition and regular.

Competition Kettlebells

As the name suggests competition kettlebells are used during kettlebell competitions where certain exercises are repeated for certain amounts of time.

Competition kettlebells are all the same size even when the weight varies, this enables consistency for holding and movement regardless of weight.

Regular Kettlebells (cast iron)

Regular kettlebells have more of a looping handle that enables you to hold them with either one or two hands, great for beginners.

You will also find that the weight changes in size depending on its weight, so a 15lbs/8kg kettlebell is much smaller than a 35lbs/16kg kettlebell.

Types to avoid

The popularity of kettlebell training has invited many manufacturers to come up with some weird and wonderful kettlebell shapes and sizes, but you should beware.

Here are 7 things to look out for:

#1 – Vinyl or Plastic Covered – very slippery and uncontrollable when damp or wet through perspiration

#2 – Thick Handles – if you can't wrap your fingers totally around the kettlebell then control is very difficult, and your grip will fail quickly so dangerous

#3 – Large Handle Spacing – if the handle spacing is too large then the kettlebell will lie awkwardly on your forearm and against your chest

#4 – Small Handle Spacing – if the handle spacing is too small then the kettlebell will dig into and bruise your wrist making the kettlebell impossible to use for many of the kettlebell exercises.

#5 – Sharp Edges – badly finished kettlebells can have sharp corners and edges that will cut into your hands, wrists and forearms

#6 – Rounded Body – often the body of the kettlebell is made too rounded and this over time will dig into your forearm and chest with many of the exercises

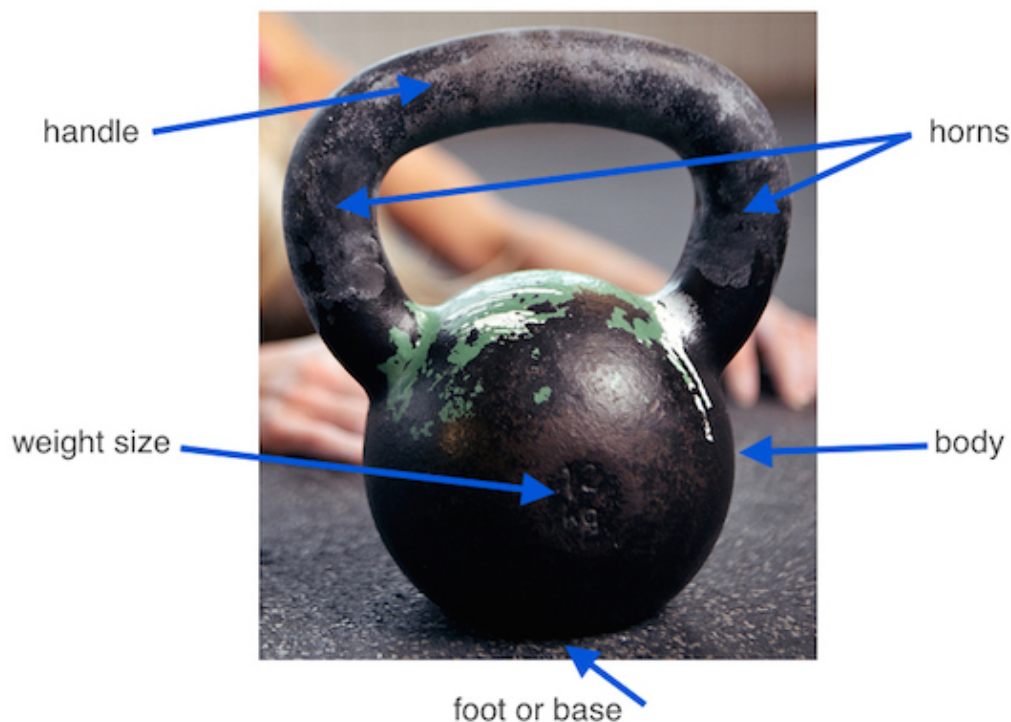
#7 – Foot on bottom – some manufactures, in all their wisdom, have decided to screw on a plastic or rubber foot onto the bottom of the kettlebell to help them stay upright when on the floor. Great for storage but really painful to use for most exercises.

If you are UK based I recommend Wolverson Fitness for Kettlebells:

<https://wolverson-fitness.co.uk/collections/kettlebells>

Parts of a Kettlebell

Here's what a decent looking regular kettlebell should look like along with all the parts so when I make reference to them later you know exactly what I'm talking about:



How many kettlebells do you need?

You will get a lot of mileage from your 1st kettlebell. Even when you have outgrown your kettlebell with two hands you can start all over again with one hand.

Also, as you eventually grow out of your initial kettlebell there will be more advanced exercises where your first kettlebell will still be needed.

If you are serious about kettlebell training, then I recommend the following:

Women – 15lbs/8kg and 25lbs/12kg

Men – 25lb/12kg and 35lbs/16kg (real tough guys just get the 35lbs/16kg)

Preparing for kettlebell training

Before we get started moving, I want to quickly detail a few points on preparation.

Clothing – the last thing you want to do is get your kettlebell caught in your clothing as you are swinging and moving around.

Ensure that your clothing is flexible enough so that you can move freely but not so baggy that it's going to get in the way.

Rings and watches – rings can be a real problem when holding a kettlebell, they can quickly pinch the skin and cause calluses.

They will also get marked and damaged so best to remove these before training. Watches should also be removed because the kettlebell often rests on the wrist.

Shoes or barefoot – the closer you can get your heels to the floor the better so very flat shoes or barefoot is best.

Shoes with a raised heel pushes your weight onto the front of the body and makes it slightly more difficult to activate the correct muscles at the back.

There will be no bouncing around, so you do not need to worry about impact on the bottom of the foot.

Wrist bands – these are optional and with experience you will not wear them but some ladies like to wear sweat bands on their wrists just to give them a little protection from the kettlebell when holding it in the racked position.

I would recommend investing in them initially until you have mastered technique of each exercise, especially cleans & snatches.

Workout space – unlike a lot of exercise activities you will not be moving around too much so a 10 foot (3 metre) clear space is usually enough.

Surprisingly I have very rarely seen anyone drop or let go of a kettlebell, but you may want to ensure that the floor is solid for when you are picking up and putting the kettlebell back down.

Weather permitting, training outside is an excellent option.

Clock or timer – to keep you on track and to help motivate you a timer will keep your workouts and rest periods honest.

You can opt for a gymboss (buy on amazon or download the gymboss app), a clock with a second hand or even a phone timer app. Wristwatches can get damaged so don't use a timer on your wrist.

Frequently asked questions

Do I have to be in shape to use kettlebells?

You don't have to be in shape to benefit from kettlebell training!! It's easy to think kettlebells are some sort of advanced technical equipment, but the fact is that they're a simple tool that can be used for a variety of purposes.

There are routines and programmes that anyone can try on their first attempt, but there are also expert level routines that push their body beyond their limits.

One of the greatest benefits of kettlebells is how versatile they are.

You can do a simple beginners programme that focuses on weight loss, strength building and cardiovascular improvement.

Something that my KEBOfit 365 Academy does well >>

<https://www.kebofit.com/kebofit-365>

A simple swing can be learned in minutes or you can use a kettlebell as an additional weight for squats & lunges.

Just because you've seen pro's juggling and throwing kettlebells around doesn't mean they have to be used that way.

There are thousands of variations that range from beginner to advanced and nothing gets you in better shape than a kettlebell.

Will Kettlebells make women bulky?

Many just wish to get 'toned' aka leaner and more defined without developing arms that rival that of a body builder. However, saying that developing arms as big as the incredible hulk is extremely difficult for both men and women and nobody will get hulky bulky overnight.

Gaining large muscles requires some serious discipline and a massive diet and it can often take years before results are achieved.

For women it's even more difficult because of less testosterone and other physical differences

Kettlebells can do many amazing things including help you lose weight, build lean muscle and strength.

However, kettlebells won't just give you instant or bulky legs. So, for the worried women out there, stop worrying girlfriend, it just ain't happening!!

Are kettlebells too technical?

Kettlebells are not technical for beginners at all. Kettlebells are an intuitive piece of equipment that can be used almost instantly.

You'll want to learn the moves properly, and it's beneficial to take it slow the first day you start training with them.

In fact, you'll find that kettlebells are safer and less technical than the more brutal workouts that include barbells and many other heavy pieces of kit.

Kettlebells are simple items that can be used in endless ways and you'll pick up the techniques in no time with consistent practice.

Enter my KEBOfit 365 Academy

For years I've wanted to reach out and coach more people how to use kettlebells and bodyweight safely & effectively.

As a dad & coach, kettlebell & bodyweight training allows me to workout at home without the need of a gym and still progress and see results.

As, I've mentioned above a workout can take 20-30 minutes giving me more time with my family and to work on my business.

Not only this it enables me to go on holiday and just pick up a kettlebell and workout (yes, I do workout on holiday, something has to soak up the booze and naughty stuff right?)

Which is why I'm excited to be able to reach out worldwide to help as many people not only workout with their own bodyweight & kettlebells from home, but to lose weight, have more energy and feel more confident about themselves again.

KEBOfit 365 caters for all levels, from those with training experience who just wants workouts on the go and a community around them to those just starting their health & fitness journey and are looking to lose weight, create sustainable eating habits and learn how to effectively workout with their own bodyweight & kettlebells

For more details about my KEBOfit 365 Academy go here >

<https://www.kebofit.com/kebofit-365>

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