

# ACCOMMODATION

Everyone should know what accommodation is. Accommodation causes your performance to stagnate or decrease. Zatsiorsky stated that the response of a biological object to a given constant stimulus decreases over time.

For example, a football team will practice for hours and hours, but when game time arrives, there are off-sides, holding, missed tackles, and fumbles. Why? Could it be they practice the game too much and not the parts of the game that cause the difficulties on game day?

How can a high school basketball player like LeBron James be the number 1 pick in the NBA? Is it because they have forgotten the fundamentals of basketball and merely play the game as a whole? Now a junior high school player from Indianapolis is projected to be the top NBA pick after graduation next year. How? Are they concerned only with the entertainment value of the game and nothing else? Perhaps.

Is that why we can't win Olympic gold with superstar millionaires?

The U.S. Olympic lifters have a technique day. Why? The last world record by a male U.S. lifter was in 1969, Joe Dube. Olympic lifters, like ballplayers, repeat the same activities over and over, only to stagnate after a short time. I had to mention Olympic lifters so I can receive my fair share of hate email. I always have the door open at Westside for them, but only Glen Pendley has made the trip.

Of course, all of us can experience becoming stale. How can we train the squat without experiencing accommodation? At Westside we box squat, but we change the box height occasionally or use a soft box (hassock) instead. Most of us change the width of our stance during the same workout or point the feet at different angles. Everyone carries the bar at the same place on the back. We instinctively do this to take advantage of our best leverage. This is, in itself, good. However what about the muscles you avoid training by doing this? How can they be trained?

Using different bars can train neglected areas. We use a 3-week pendulum wave, going from 50% to 60% in 3 weeks, then returning to 50%, etc.

A Safety Squat bar may be used for 3 weeks. A second loading maybe done with a cambered bar for the next 3 weeks. Then perhaps a straight bar or even a Manta Ray can be used for a wave.

To reduce accommodation to a greater extent, one must include methods to accommodate resistance. This is done by including chains, bands, or weight releasers amount of bands and chains added to the barbell weight. A combination of bands, chains, or weight releasers with different amounts of each must be used as well.

Another proven method of changing the amount of work being done is to change the length of the rest time between sets. This is reflected by the intensity zone being used. Speed strength rest intervals can vary from 30 to 90 seconds between sets. For circa-max weights the rest can be 60 seconds to 2 minutes and 30 seconds. This max depends on your GPP.

For bench pressing, the same procedure is used. For dynamic benching, one can use chains, bands, weight releasers, or a combination of the three. Instead of the regular bench press for speed work one can floor press. This breaks up the eccentric/concentric chain. A different method is to do speed work by lowering the bar to power rack pins, relax the muscles on the pins, and then press up. The type of bar used can also disrupt the process of accommodation. You can use a fat bar, a Buffalo bar, or a MacDonald bar with a 5-inch or 3-inch camber.

Every time you change something and master its performance, you become a better lifter or athlete.

The deadlift can be trained by doing box deadlifts off a 2- or 4- inch box, or you can do rack pulls varying from having the plates 2 inches off the floor to having the bar set at knee height or slightly higher. It is important to do 'both sumo and conventional styles. The deadlift can be done with Jump-Stretch bands over the bar. A doubled mini-band adds 220 pounds at the top and about 100 pounds at the floor level. A monster mini-band will add 280 pounds at the top and 125 at the start. For more top-end tension, a single light band adds 100 pounds mostly at lock-out.

The lightened method is also used frequently at Westside. This is done by suspending the bar in strong bands 5 feet off the floor. This reduces the bar weight by 135 pounds at the floor level. At lock-out the entire bar weight originates from the bands. This creates a different type of speed of resistance. Don't forget good mornings of different types.

Finally, let's look at the Olympic lifts. We know because of accommodation that it is not advised to use standard exercises for a long cycle. The loading system must change as well. We have found that a 3-week wave works best.

A note to college coaches: a full clean & jerk is two lifts: a front squat and the jerk. If one simply tries to increase the C/J, it is only a matter of time before failure strikes. A lifter may be quick to jump under the bar, but may not be able to recover from the squat. The front squat must be pushed up, not by front squatting, but by doing special exercises for the front squat. For example, back squat off a low box with a full 2-second relaxed pause or front squat off a box with a long relaxed pause. Use a variety of bars, e.g., Buffalo bar, 14-inch-cambered bar, Safety Squat bar, in addition to the Reverse Hyper machine, pull-throughs, 45-degree hypers, heavy glute/ham raises, inverse curls, belt squats, weighted sled pulls, and pistol squats. Use bands and chains, plus weight releasers. For pulling, use at least two grips for cleans and snatches. Stand on a 2-inch platform for power-cleans and power-snatches. Do straight-leg power-cleans and power-snatches. Use kettle bells with one or both hands. Do functional isometric pulls adjusted with bands. This is just a small list.

It must be said that in the beginning proper form should be taught early in the training of novices. Then more exercises for strength are added to the training. This is the conjugate method, where special exercises will correct technical flaws. Most of the exercises I have talked about are close in form to the classical lifts.

The training volume must greatly differ from workout to workout. This means total volume as well as intensity zone. Ben Tabachnik, inventor of the track parachute, said, "to never adapt to training is to adapt to training." And this is our philosophy also. There are 35 men who have totaled 2400 or more. At Westside we have 25 members and five of them total over 2400. They have accomplished this by not falling into the trap of accommodation. You must plan for specificity, which means whatever will raise a particular lift. It seldom is possible to just do this lift. I believe that is why power-lifters are the most successful of all weight sports. Just think for a minute how many special training devices powerlifters use for each lift. There must be 20 for each. For this, I applaud all my powerlifting friends all around the world.