



Summary of Key Points Made In The USA Weightlifting General Safety Document:

- 1) Despite its enviable safety record, most accidental injuries that do occur in the sport of Olympic-style weightlifting result from preventable causes, such as improper training, poor technique and/or improper use of, or faulty, equipment.
- 2) Assuring safety is the first job of the coach and athlete.
- 3) No training should begin without medical clearance.
- 4) Athletes should not perform an exercise under significant load unless they have sufficient flexibility to perform that exercise correctly (have an adequate range of motion to assume correct positions throughout the lift).
- 5) Learning proper technique is essential from day one for purposes of safety and having a successful weightlifting career.
- 6) The almost exclusive focus of early training should be on developing correct technique, and this focus is maintained for months, if not years.
- 7) Only the standard/opposing grip or, hook grip should be used in weightlifting – never the “thumbless” grip.
- 8) Learn to maintain the “universal” posture of weightlifting throughout every lift.
- 9) Learn to miss correctly from the first workout.
- 10) Use spotters when squatting, or performing any exercise that requires the barbell to be returned to the shoulders, behind the neck, after the completion of a lift.
- 11) Generally keep repetitions to three or less on technical exercises (e.g., snatches or cleans) and five or less when performing strength exercises (e.g., squats) and never continue repetitions if form is breaking down.
- 12) Beginners should train, especially on the technical exercises, with very light loads (often just a stick).
- 13) Lifters, most especially beginners, should not train alone or exceed the planned exercises/weights.
- 14) Lifting while hurt is not what the champions do or should do – pain is a warning that needs be addressed.
- 15) Lifting platforms should be completely flat (no ridges, bumps or gaps to could interfere with sliding the feet), level, but not slippery, so that the athlete has a solid footing in any foot placement position.
- 16) Platforms should be at approximately 8x8 feet square, or larger, and have approximately a two foot clear perimeter around them (e.g., no racks on boxes).
- 17) Nothing should be on the lifting platform other than the lifter and barbell loaded to the weight being lifted.
- 18) Bars should be straight, rotate smoothly and have the same plate load on each side of the bar.
- 19) Lifting straps should never encircle the bar more than once and should not be used for cleans.
- 20) Clothing should be close fitting but non-restrictive.
- 21) Weightlifting shoes should be used – proper shoes are: supportive, enclose full foot, have an approximately 1” heel, flexible and lightweight, and do not have any nubs/spikes that could impair foot sliding, yet they provide not slip footing when in contact with the platform.