

per week. Isn't it fascinating that they are both strong and not under the care of an orthopedic surgeon?

There is simply no other exercise, and certainly no machine, that produces the level of central nervous system activity, improved balance and coordination, skeletal loading and bone density, muscular stimulation and growth, connective tissue stress and strength, psychological demand and toughness, and overall systemic conditioning as the correctly performed full squat. In the absence of an injury that prevents their being performed at all, everyone that lifts weights should learn to do them correctly.

Now, let's learn how to teach the movement.

Squat Teaching Order

1. The squat begins at the rack, or the squat stands, whichever is available. The rack height should be set so that the bar in the rack is at about the level of the trainee's sternum, right in the middle. (We will be carrying the bar in the low position, on the posterior delts instead of the traps - more about this later.) Many will perceive this as too low, but explain that it's better to be a little low with the bar out of the rack than to have to tiptoe back into the rack with a heavy weight. Often the empty rack at this position will look low, because the diameter of the bar sitting in the hooks tells the eye a different story about its true height in the rack. When the bar is placed in the rack, the eye will be more comfortable with the setting.

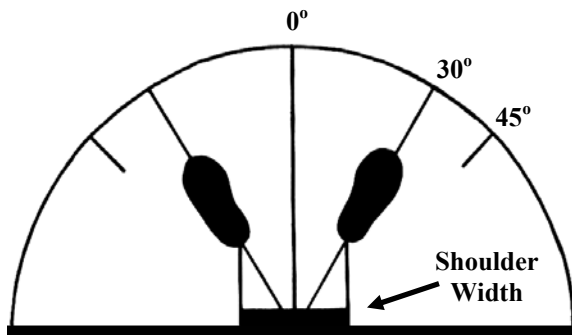


Figure 4. Foot placement should be at 30 degrees with the heels placed at shoulder width.

2. We will use a fairly neutral foot placement, with the heels about shoulder width apart, the toes pointed out at about 30 degrees (figure 4). Excessive width tightens the hips at the bottom, and excessive narrowness prevents adductor stretch and causes the quads to jam against the belly in heavier trainees, both of which prevent proper depth. (Most trainees seem to self-select too narrow a stance, possibly due to the evil influences of muscle magazines. All these influences must be purged, lest every workout turn into a bicep-fest.)

This is also a good time to familiarize the trainee with where on the foot his weight is carried. Have him lift his heels - his weight is now on his toes. Then have him pick his toes up off the platform - his weight is now on his heels. These will be useful things later.

3. Now comes the crucial part of teaching the movement. We are going to place the trainee in the position he will be in at the bottom of a correct squat.

