



**PTIQ**  
TRAINS M A R T

# GYM EQUIPMENT GUIDE



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**THE GYM CAN BE AN  
INTIMIDATING PLACE,  
ESPECIALLY IF YOU DON'T  
KNOW WHAT EVERYTHING IS.**

The aim of this guide is to give you the knowledge so that you know what every bar, weight, handle or accessory in the gym is.

*Let's get started...*



# BARBS

First we will look at the different bars you will find in the gym and their uses.

## STANDARD BAR

WEIGHT: 20KGS

If you've ever performed a barbell exercise in a commercial gym, this is probably the bar you are accustomed to. Power bars are the most common type of barbell. They're typically 7 feet long and fairly rigid, though they do bend a bit when heavily loaded.



## OLYMPIC WEIGHTLIFTING BAR

WEIGHT: 20KGS

There are special weightlifting bars designed for the sport of Olympic Weightlifting to enhance performance and reduce injuries. They look just like power bars, but are designed with slight differences due to the dynamic nature of the sport.



## TRAP BAR

WEIGHT: 20KGS

A trap or 'hex' bar is aptly named due to the shape of the bar. This bar is in the shape of a trapezoid or hexagon, which allows you to position yourself in the middle of the bar's centre of gravity for deadlift exercises.



## CAMBERED BAR

WEIGHT: 20KGS

An arched or 'cambered' bar is another option for training your squat that really challenges your posterior muscles, similar to the safety squat bar.

The cambered bar also challenges your stability much more as the weights swing and force you to get much tighter while squatting.

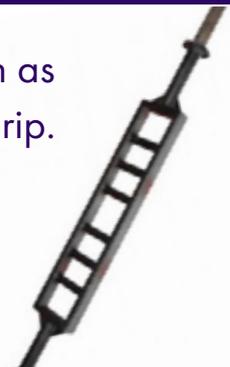
(Don't worry, you won't be asked to use this kind of bar)



## SWISS BAR

WEIGHT: 15KGS

The Swiss bar is used for traditional upper body exercises such as pressing, rowing, curling, or triceps extensions with a neutral grip. The neutral grip makes all these exercises a bit more shoulder friendly and great for anyone with shoulder issues or coming back from rehab.



## SAFETY SQUAT (YOKE) BARS

WEIGHT: 20KGS

The safety squat bar is a specialty bar, which typically has 'arms' that come off the bar outside its neck and is covered with thick padding where the bar rests.

This allows the bar to sit more comfortably on the neck and shoulders and also gives you bars to hold onto. If you lack shoulder mobility or feel pain during a traditional back squat, this is a great option as it is much nicer on the shoulders due to the yoke attached to the front of the bar for you to grab.



## CURL BAR (AKA EZ-BAR)

WEIGHT: 5KGS

The curl bar is designed to allow you to do a more comfortable bicep curl by allowing you to pronate your wrists. They also work well with triceps extension exercises. Since these bars are typically shorter you can find them in a stand or at the preacher curl bench.

Only people who are advanced enough will be asked to use the majority of these bars. You may find yourself doing curls with an EZ bar but the other bars will come into programming much further down the line.



# WEIGHTS

You may come across different types of weights (which are usually called plates) in the gym. Here are some variations and their uses.

## STANDARD PLATES

These are a lot cheaper than Olympic plates and are generally used in home gyms, rarely commercial.

The central hole standard plates are 1 inch, enough for a standard bar, but not enough for the Olympic barbell.



## PLASTIC PLATES

Plastic or rubber weight plates are also known as studio plates and are usually for group exercises and used on floors that can't support a lot of weight. These are wide in diameter, but much lighter than they look, as they are plastic and not steel. The centre hole is much narrower, 30 mm.



# OLYMPIC PLATES

Olympic plates go with Olympic barbells, and they are a standard in the fitness industry.

They have a 2 inches centre hole, and they fit on most bars you can find lying around gyms.



## Competition, Bumper, Training, Technique.

These are all different terms used to describe specific kinds of Olympic weight plates. Essentially, to a casual lifter, there's not much difference. For example, competition plates are carefully weighed, and they have certificates that confirm the exact weight.

Training plates, on the other hand, are not like that, as they have varying depth, and are not as tightly regulated competition plates. Rubber weight plates have a rubberised finish, which makes them much more drop-friendly than bare iron/steel plates.

All in all, for a casual lifter, all that doesn't really matter. Just get the cheapest pair of rubberised bumper plates, and you will be just fine, your muscles don't know the difference, they only know it's hard.





# HANDLES

You'll come across loads of different types of handles in the gym. Here is a breakdown of the them and why and when you'd use them.

## THE STRAIGHT BAR

The straight bar attachment is another that is commonly seen inside most gyms. This attachment runs about 20 inches wide, and the one linked below comes with rubber stoppers on the end.

Sometimes, after a lot of wear and tear, those stoppers fall off, which is occasionally the case in gyms. Straight bar attachments are used for upright rows, curls, straight bar press-downs, horizontal curls, shrugs, etc.



## DOUBLE D HANDLE ATTACHMENT

The double D handle is essentially a 3D V-shaped handle bar. This attachment is typically found on the seated row station. However it can always be unhooked and applied to other exercises: face pulls, standing rows, close-grip lat pulldowns. This isn't the most necessary attachment for a home gym, but it will certainly be used at least once a week.



## CABLE ROPE ATTACHMENT

The rope is the most commonly seen attachment for any cable machine. This rope is almost always black, thickly threaded, and comes with rubber stoppers at each end that serve as handles. Rope attachments are best used for exercises such as tricep press-downs, face pulls, rope curls, and overhead extensions.



## LAT PULLDOWN ATTACHMENT

The lat pulldown attachment runs straight and has a slight downward bend on the end of each side. The bend serves as a natural hand grip, and generally comes with rubber over the handles. These bars will always be found on the lat pulldown machine, however they can be used for other purposes. Such as: wide-grip cable curls, wide-grip tricep press-downs, wide-grip upright rows, wide-grip cable shrugs, wide-grip seated rows.



Essentially, this is the only wide attachment for the cable machines, and for any exercise you feel can be made better by using a wide grip, this is your best friend. Necessary for lat pulldowns, absolutely helpful for the rest.

## TRICEP V BAR

The tricep V bar is just that- a downward shaped V for a bar. It operates well as a stable way to do tricep press-downs, tricep overhead presses, and face pulls. It can also work as a cable curling bar, and a bar for supine cable front rows. This bar is in most gyms, and if you're considering a cable machine at home, it should be in yours too.



## STIRRUP HANDLE

The Stirrup Handle (also called a D handle) cable machine attachment serves as the cable version of a dumbbell. It is basically the only attachment that operates with one hand, and you'll find it in virtually every gym with a cable machine.

This attachment can be used for any exercise done on the cables. It only limits that exercise to being done one hand at a time- which is necessary for some peoples' training regimen. It can be metal or fabric.



# ACCESSORIES/ MISC

These are some other things you might see in the gym or see people bring to the gym with them.

## BARBELL CLAMPS/CLIPS

These are used to keep the plates from sliding off the bar. We want the plates to stay equidistant from the centre of the bar so that it doesn't feel like one side is heavier than the other.



## CHALK

While some people like to use weight lifting gloves, the best way to a firm grip is by using chalk which is the reason why gymnasts and power lifters use chalk.

Chalk is mostly used for power and Olympic lifting exercises, heavy barbell pulling exercises, chins and dips, or dynamic kettle bell exercises. Basically anything that requires a firm grip to maximise your lift.

For your goals chalk isn't necessary.





## WEIGHT LIFTING GLOVES

I'm not a fan of weight lifting gloves AT ALL.

1. You're not going to be lifting heavy enough to warrant them.
2. It doesn't allow your grip to get stronger – yes, even your grip get stronger the more you train.
3. Your hands will toughen up as you lift more weights, if you're tearing the skin on your hands lifting weights you're not gripping the bar hard enough.

If you feel that you can train harder wearing them, go for it. Otherwise they're a waist of money.

## LIFTING STRAPS

They're used to help you hold the weight in your hands. You loop one end around your wrists, and wrap the other end around the barbell or dumbbells (or whatever else), thus basically attaching the weight to your wrists/hands.

Doing so improves your grip on the weight you're holding and helps prevent it from sliding out of your hands.

I like the common sense approach:

**USE THEM ONLY WHEN YOU NEED THEM.**

If you DON'T have grip issues on a certain exercise, don't use straps for that exercise. But if you DO, use them. And if you only have grip issues during certain sets of that exercise, then use them during those sets only, not the others.

So for example, if you're only having problems during the heaviest set (or a few of the heaviest sets) of an exercise but the rest are fine, then only use them during those specific sets. The same goes for if you're only having problems during the later sets of an exercise when hand/wrist fatigue from earlier sets is kicking in. Use straps on those sets only.



# AND THERE YOU HAVE IT.

THAT WILL COVER MOST THINGS YOU'LL SEE  
IN THE GYM.

Now, there's always some latest fad and people will bring random things into the gym but the above are staples that have been and will be around for a long time. So get comfortable with knowing what they are because you might end up using them at some point.

Now you know more than most of the people who are actually using those. Congratulations!

***You're winning!***



**“PTIQ, THE PERSONAL TRAINING SERVICE THAT TEACHES YOU HOW TO TRAIN SMARTER, NOT HARDER.”**

**KEEGAN HIRST**

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