



GOLD MEDAL BODIES

Ultimate Guide to Beginner
Parallette Training

GMB Ultimate Guide to Beginner Parallette Training

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations and welcome to the

Gold Medal Bodies

Ultimate Guide to Beginner Parallette Training!

Parallettes, or p-bars for short, are a wonderful little piece of training equipment that can be used anywhere for a tremendous upper body and core workout.

If you have space to lie down, you have the space for a p-bar workout!

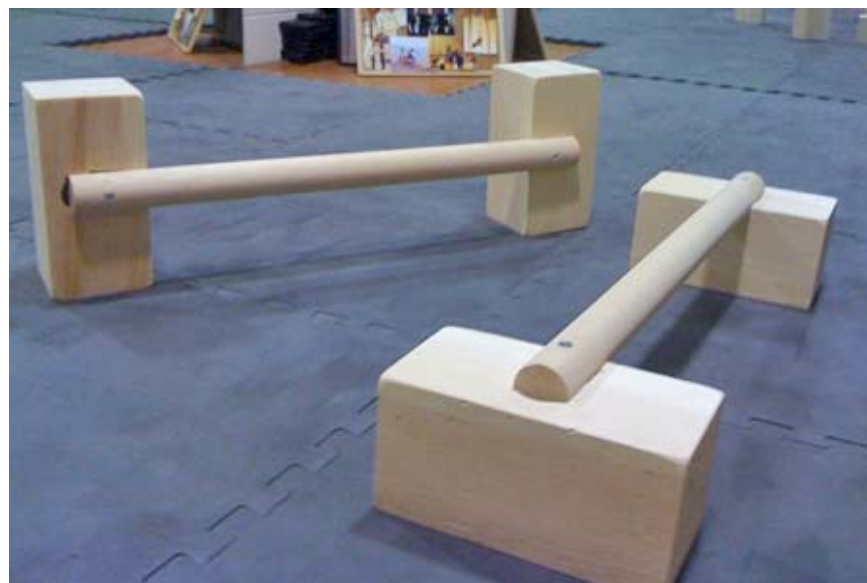
We've written this guide to show you that p-bars are more than just 'longer push up bars.'

The emphasis of parallette training is on the pushing muscles of your upper body, but because of the height of the p-bars, your abdominals and low back will also get a tremendous stimulation from the leverage and swinging movements.

There are a few resources online that show the variety of movements and exercises that can be done on the p-bars, and they're great.

But they fall short of showing the potential of the equipment beyond a handful of different exercises. That's where this Ultimate Guide to Beginner Parallette Training comes in, we're here to help you get started from scratch to a pretty cool mini flow routine.

These gymnastic style movements have helped competitive gymnasts build incredible amounts of strength and muscle, and now this training is made available and, perhaps more importantly, accessible to you.



The GMB Method

[Gold Medal Bodies centers on training using gymnastic style exercises for total body practical strength.](#) However, *this doesn't mean that you'll be training to be a gymnast.*

There's a difference.

Gymnasts work very hard, for hours at a time, to excel at particular skills for competition. Training four to six hours a day, six days a week is not reasonable for most of us! Luckily, we don't have to do that to get the benefits from similar exercises.

We've pared down the number of exercises to the ones that will give you the most "bang for your buck".

Also, as mentioned before, GMB training is more than simply increasing reps and sets of the same exercises. A big part of gymnastic training is the accumulation of more difficult skills.

Think of some crazy move you've seen at high level gymnastic meets, if it made you go "Whoa!" then it probably needs a lot of strength and power to perform.

And beyond even that, the highest levels of skill involve linking movements together into a routine. The beauty and skill of these routines are the main reason we think this type of training is so damn cool.

Our programs take you step by step from basic exercise to a flow routine, and on the way builds muscle and confidence.

It's a good thing.



FUNDAMENTAL TIPS

Using apparatus such as the parallettes requires a few special considerations versus just placing your hands on the floor or even gripping a regular exercise machine.

Here are some essential details that will help you get started the right way on the p-bars.

Grip

Place the parallettes in the middle of your palm in natural groove where you may feel pressure, but no pain.

Begin by placing your thumb straight along the p-bars and lightly wrapping your fingers around it. It may take a bit of time to get used to the pressure of your bodyweight on the parallettes, we recommend placing the p-bars closer to the heel of your hand and perhaps angling the bars out a bit. These small adjustments help the majority of people having issues with pressure sensitivity.

Arm Alignment

The general alignment should be a straight line from your middle finger through the middle of your wrist to point of

the elbow to the center of your shoulder. Essentially you need to “stack your blocks” correctly - both for the safety of your joints, and also for optimal performance.

Being off line can place undue strain on the joints and is a waste of muscular energy, energy that should be used for the exercise at hand. Keep your elbow pits facing forward, and don't allow your wrists to fall inward or outward.

Center of Gravity Awareness

Another important detail to consider is knowing where the mass of your body is in relation to a vertical line made by your shoulders and arms. For example, when you are holding yourself upright on the p-bars, do you know where your body should be in relationship of that straight line? How much of your body is in front of that line, and how much is behind it? This awareness helps you to attain the correct position, and what you need to do to get there.

An example is the L-sit, it is much more difficult and requires greater strength to keep your hips in front of your hands. If you feel your L-sit is strong, progress it further by getting your hips forward.

THE PROGRAM

[All of our programs feature a warm-up, main program, and restorative movements to reduce tension.](#) Even though this is just a “mini-program,” we include each component here because they are essential parts of our philosophy of training.

If you are going to add leg training while doing this program, we suggest doing that on a separate day.

Parallette training can be more intense than you bargain for, and you’ll need a break between sessions to adequately recover and grow.

The Warm-Up

These movements were designed to prepare the appropriate joints and muscles for this workout.

Don’t shortchange yourself by not performing a good warm-up! It’s worth the time, a properly warmed up body means a stronger performance during the workout.

Do these for five repetitions in each direction.

Shoulder Circles

- ★ Chest up
- ★ Look straight ahead

Neck Side to Side

- ★ Rotate around your nose

Arm Cross

- ★ Start slowly and gradually increase speed

Wrist Preparation

- ★ Fingers forward and fingers backward
- ★ Keep hands flat on the ground

Elbow Circles

- ★ Hands flat on the ground
- ★ Work the entire circle

Shoulder Shrugs

- ★ On all fours, elbows locked straight

Cat/Lion

- ★ On all fours
- ★ Breathe in as you arch up (cat), breathe out as you arch down (lion)

Shake it Out

- ★ Relaxed rapid shakes

Plank Hold

- ★ Keep shoulders over hands
- ★ Hollow body position
- ★ Squeeze butt and legs

Hold for 5 seconds for 5 repetitions.

Push Up

- ★ A - From knees
- ★ B - Full Push Up
 - Shoulders over hands, don't shrug shoulders
 - Keep elbows in, not flared
 - Hollow body position

Choose whichever is appropriate for you (A or B). Do 5 sets of 5 repetitions.

Dip

- ★ Keep elbows in, not flared
- ★ Keep chest up and out
- ★ Bring hips forward to increase difficulty

Do 5 sets of 5 repetitions.

The Exercises

The following group of exercises are a great introduction to working on the parallettes and will give you a good idea of what a complete p-bar training program should provide.

Jump Through

- ★ From Plank to the beginning of the Dip position
- ★ Tuck your knees into your chest tightly
- ★ Keep your head steady and shoulders in same position

Do 5 sets of 5 repetitions.

Full Swing

- ★ Arms locked out
- ★ Shoulders stay in same position
- ★ Tuck knees in tightly to the chest

Do 5 sets of 5 repetitions.

Tuck or L-Sit

- ★ Chest up high
- ★ Push down strongly in the p-bars
- ★ Work one leg at a time in the beginning

Hold 5 seconds for 5 repetitions. Work up to it as needed. If you can only do 3 sets of 5 reps/seconds, do that and gradually work up to the full 5 sets.

The Mini-Flow

We have two versions of the mini-flow for you here. One easier, and one harder. We suggest starting with the easier version and if it's a piece of cake, feel free to go on to the harder one.

Flow A

- ★ Plank Hold
- ★ Push-Up from Knees
- ★ Jump Through
- ★ Dip
- ★ Tuck Hold
- ★ Return to Plank

Flow B

- ★ Plank Hold
- ★ Push-Up
- ★ Full Swing
- ★ Dip
- ★ L-Sit
- ★ Return to Plank

No set repetitions here, just have fun!

The Cool-Down

More than just winding down after a hard workout, a good cool-down relieves the built up tension and stress from the main workout.

We call these restorative movements because they help to loosen the stiffness after training and helps you to recover and improve for the next session.

Wrist Stretch

- ★ Push the back of your hand towards your forearm
- ★ Start with elbow high and drop it down

Lounge Chair

- ★ Keep chest up
- ★ Work on pulling elbows together

L-Arm Stretch

- ★ Keep shoulders square to the ground
- ★ Elbow across the middle of your chest

Training Schedule

Perform this workout 3 times a week. Make sure to allow at least one day between training sessions for recovery.

Do this for 3 to 4 weeks and you'll know why p-bar training is so great!

TROUBLESHOOTING

Focus on Proper Form

A lot of issues can be traced back to less than stellar technique. Remember, it doesn't pay to break form just to get a few more reps, especially in this style of training.

The movements have to be precise so that you can get the most out of each exercise and allow you to progress to the next. It may make it easier to be a little loose with your form, but it certainly won't help you in the long run.

Don't Skip Ahead

Resist the urge to skip certain exercises or variations just because it seems easy.

Each exercise is meant to build up to the next and skipping one often leads to problems. Just as in keeping proper form, following the correct progression will get you the best (and fastest) results.

Listen To Your Body

Listen to your body, and rest more or do less if that's what you feel you need.

This is the concept of **Auto-Regulation**.

Simply put, some days are going to be better than others. And some days a lot worse than others! Learn to recognize when you should back off and when the "two steps forward, one step back" rule applies.

(We go into a lot more depth on this topic in [our complete programs](#).)

This isn't a license to slack off, but a well timed decrease in training can pay good dividends.

OUTRODUCTION

This beginner's guide to parallette training was designed to give you a taste of how truly productive p-bar training is for strength in your upper body and core.

Obviously, there's a lot we *didn't* cover, but these basics will serve you well when you're ready to move on to a more complete program.

The exercises and flow routine will likely stimulate and affect your body in a much different way than other types of training. You'll be building stronger arms, chest, and shoulders as well as noticeably increasing your abdominal strength.

We're always available to answer any questions you have about working with parallettes. In fact, we've already answered many of the most common ones on our blog: [click here to see all of our p-bar-related articles and videos](#).

P-bars are a lot of fun, so don't be surprised when you get hooked. Our [Parallettes One program](#) is ready and waiting to take your pressing and inverted skills to the next level.

Have fun!



Thank you. We hope to see you soon!

The GMB Team

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