# Gold Medal Bodies

# Parallette Construction Guide

# Introduction

Parallettes have long been a favorite of the home fitness crowd because they are easy to make and fun to use. They also allow you to do things you probably wouldn’t be able to do on the floor.

P-bars also a staple of gymnastics gyms, which is where we got the idea to build a course around them as part of the Gold Medal Bodies curriculum.

If you type ‘parallettes’ into Google image search, you’ll see a variety of designs. Some look nicer than others. Some are cheap and easy to build. Some are probably not very safe at all. There are DIY versions and professional-grade sets for sale.

To help cut down on option confusion, we’ve included two versions here: a classic, simple set; and a new design that’s a little more complicated.

Of course (sorry - we gotta say it…), you’re totally responsible for your own safety, and we can’t be held accountable for any injuries sustained during your parallette training as a result of poor technique or construction. Or as a result of anything else either. If you want us to be responsible for you, get in touch and ask about private sessions.

We’re providing these instructions in good faith because we want to remove as many obstacles that might hold you back from using (and let’s be honest - buying) P1 as we can. Also because P-bars are cool, and everyone should have a set.

On the next few pages, you’ll see descriptions and rough instructions for building two different styles of parallettes. There’s a very good chance that you, or somebody you know, will be able to build at least one of the two without difficulty.

Have fun.

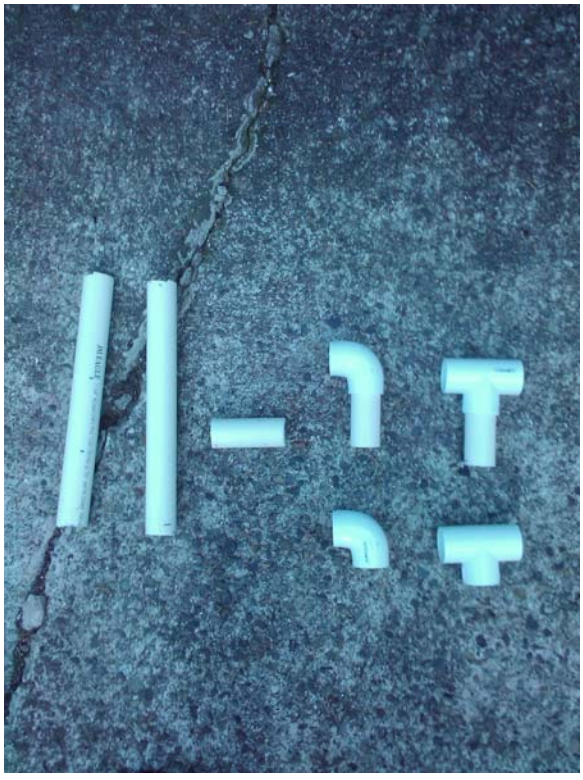
# Version 1 : Hyundai

Jarlo Ilano

I had previously made wood parallettes from scrap 4 x 4's and wooden dowels a couple of years ago, when I started some basic handstand work. However with Coach Hurst's more sophisticated exercise routines, I needed a better set of p-bars to work on.

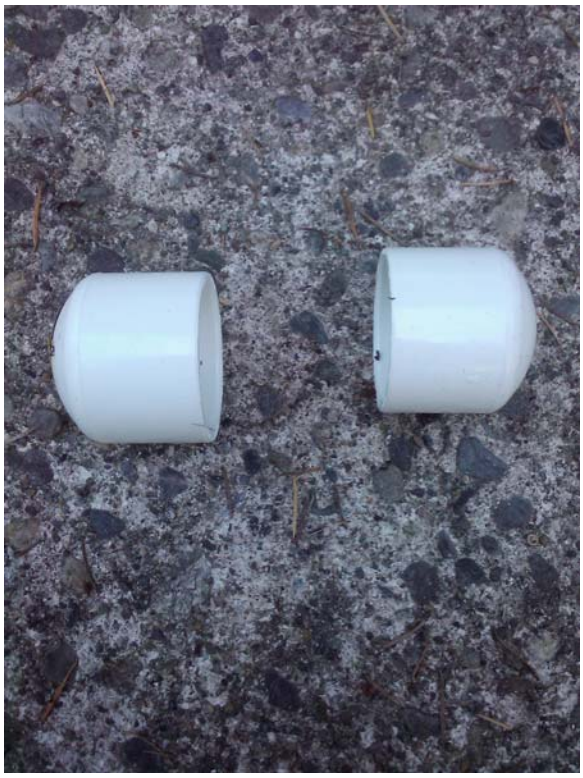
The following assembly instructions are for the standard PVC parallettes that have been made by many people for their own training over the last several years.

## The Materials



For one pair of parallettes, you'll need:

- About 12 feet of PVC pipe (I used 1 1/4" diameter)
- 4 T joints
- 4 Elbow joints
- 8 caps
- PVC glue/cement (optional)



## The Assembly

1. Measure out 6 to 8 inches of pipe for the handle portion. You'll need two of these.
2. Measure out 4 to 6 inches of pipe for the support portions. You'll need four of these.
3. Measure out 5 to 8 inches of pipe for the bracing portions. You'll need 8 of these.

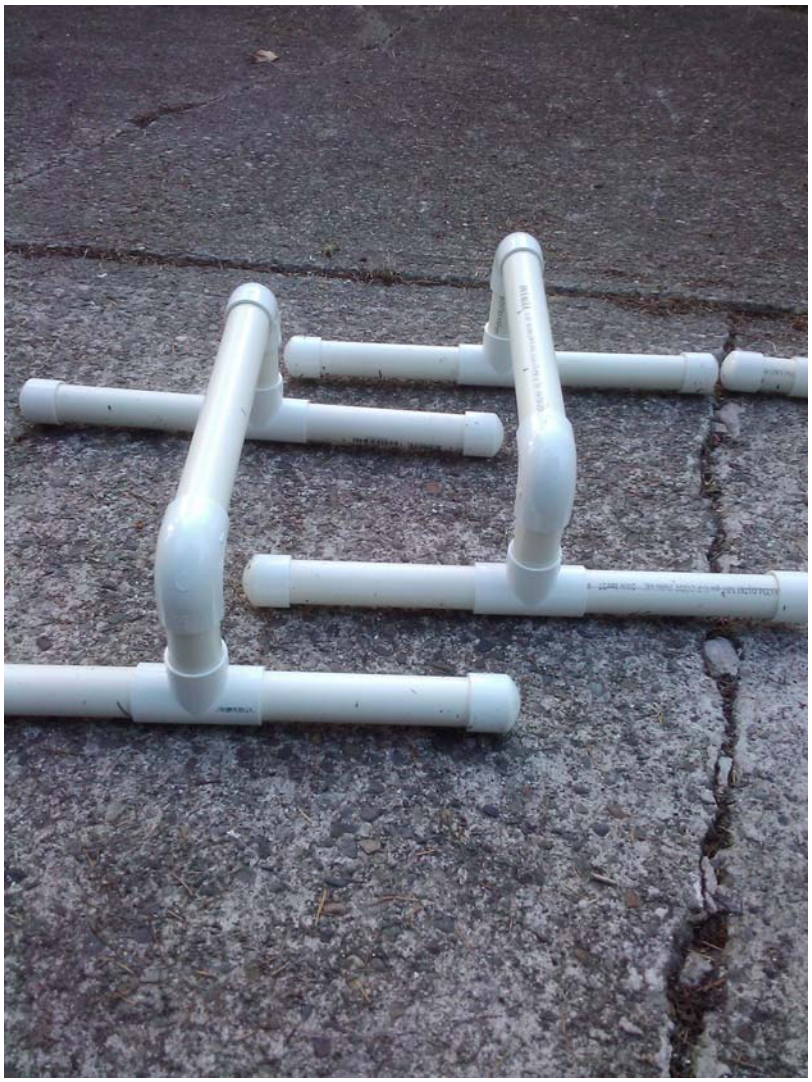
In the video, you'll see I'm using a reciprocating saw to cut the PVC, you could easily use a handsaw, but if you've got power tools, so much the better. ARR! ARR!

If you are using glue, prep the pieces a couple at time before you piece them together.

Attach the elbow joints to the end of your handles, and then the support portions to the other end of the elbow joint. The T joint goes on the other side of the support portion, and then you attach the bracing pipes and finally the end caps.

You can use a mallet/hammer to pound these in well. I just banged them on the ground! ARR! ARR! ARR!

And voila, you have your shiny new, sturdy (and quite cheap) PVC parallettes.



You'll notice in the measurements I gave a range to choose from. This is because you can use varying heights of the support portions to create different parallette sizes. With this you can progressively use lower parallettes to make the exercises in our program more difficult. You'll see that you will need much more core and arm strength in certain exercises with lower height parallettes.

# Version 2 : Cadillac

Andy Fossett

Damn, do I ever hate ugly junk like that plastic jive Jarlo just handed you. Yeah, it'll get the job done, but it'll also end up getting tossed in the basement next time company comes over, and your P-bars (and your p-bar training) will be *out of site, out of mind* until the next time you're looking for a place to hide some birthday presents.

When we started talking about doing a parallette course, I looked around online to get a sense of what people were using to train on. And most people are training with crap.

There are also some nice, professionally manufactured models available from around $100 and up.

What I'm about to show you actually cost about that much, but the result, to me, was worth it. My P-bars are comfortable to train with, beautiful to look at, and are actually a conversation piece when people come over to the house and notice them (which makes for an excellent excuse to show off).

Since this is a little more involved project than the PVC version, I'm not going to be terribly specific with all the details. I figure anyone who can handle building these already has some DIY experience and access to some nice tools.

## The Materials

I build my P-bars out of wood and copper pipe fittings. Basically, it turns out that 1⅝” copper pipe has an inner diameter of exactly 1½”. Pretty handy.

Here’s what I used:

- 4 feet of 1.5” wooden dowel. Make sure you measure this, because hardware stores aren’t always precise.
- 4 feet of 2x6 wooden plank.
- 4 feet of 1⅝” copper pipe. This is enough for several height adjustments.
- 4 1⅝” copper ‘T’ joints. I played with the thought of using elbow joints (because they are about half the cost), but returned to the ‘T’. Though they set me back about $17 a piece, they are structurally more sound than an elbow.
- 4 1⅝” copper couplings.
- 4 brass screws.
- Epoxy.

You’re also going to need some tools to do this right. In addition to the standards, I used a few things that you might not have sitting around. Check it out:

- Drill press with 1⅝” forstner bit. (You could use any number of other things to get the job done, but I wanted to make it easy on myself, so I used the right tools for the job.)
- Pipe cutter. (Hacksaw or bandsaw will get it done too.)

## The Assembly

Putting this thing together wasn't really all that tough. I knew my design was solid (after spending a week stewing over various details and thinking about how the finished apparatus would be used, e.g., where it would bare weight, etc.).

1. Cut the dowel and sand around the ends.
2. Cut the 2x6 pieces for the base. Round the edges with a router.
3. Measure and drill guide holes centered about 3″ from the ends of the bases. With the drill press and forstner bit, open those holes up 1″ deep.
4. Cut four pieces of pipe 3″ long. Insert into the holes you just drilled into the bases and secure with epoxy.
5. Cut eight 1″ pieces of pipe and epoxy into the ends of the 'T' joints. While you're at it, drill and countersink holes through the tops of the joints. You'll screw into these to secure the dowels.
6. Place the 'T's on the pipe epoxied into the bases. Run the dowel through the 'T's and screw into place.
7. The above will put your base at 5″ to 6″ off the ground. Figure out the starting height you'd like to use and then subtract the 5. Cut four pieces of pipe that length for your adjustment poles.
8. Raise your P-bars by inserting the poles and couplings between the bases and bars.

See the video for more details and don't be afraid to experiment with your own design and building skills.

# Outroduction

Now that you know how to make your own set of parallettes, at minimal cost, there is no excuse not to start on the Parallettes One program.

We know you'll enjoy having a set of P-bars for you own, and hope that making your own will enrich the process for you.

Of course, not everyone is going to be able or even want to make parallettes. There are several models on the market that will de everything you need. Just check the website for our recommendations.

Finally, it's totally cliche, but it got that way for a reason: measure twice, cut once (and don't cut your thumb off).