The power shrug is an excellent exercise for teaching beginners the fundamentals of the power clean or snatch. It is a part of the whole movement as well as a useful supplemental platform lift. When used as a supplemental exercise performed immediately after the power clean or snatch, relative intensities of the bar should be greater than those used for the power clean or snatch in order to introduce heavier loads to the body than would normally be performed with these exercises. For specificity to the power snatch, the athlete uses a snatch grip, therefore “teaching” the body to pull a heavier weight for the specific exercise, either power clean or shrug. This exercise assists in developing the power producing capacity of the muscles in the upper back, shoulder, hip and leg regions.
Technique Checklist for the Power Shrug

Before You Begin

☐ Well-marked olympic lift area (platform)
☐ Dry surface for feet (wood), preferably with mats under the weights
☐ Clean area; no loose plates on or around area (platform)
☐ Olympic-style straight bar with revolving sleeves
☐ Evenly loaded weight with collars
☐ Lifting belt may be worn while performing the exercise

The Start

☐ Feet shoulder-width (or jump stance), flat on the floor and toes pointed slightly outward
☐ Shins close to bar
☐ Overhand grip (pronated) slightly wider than shoulder with thumbs around bar and wrist flexed
☐ Arms straight with elbows pointed to the sides
☐ Knees inside arms
☐ Back is flat or slightly arched and rigid
☐ Head facing forward in line with the back (neutral position)
☐ Shoulder blades pulled together and chest held up and high, trapezius muscles stretched
☐ Shoulders over or slightly ahead of the bar

☐ Balance (body weight) is forward on balls of the feet

☐ Inhale before bar leaves the floor or elevated starting positions to ensure a tight torso (do not exhale until after second pull)

**First Pull**

☐ Smooth, slow, easy pull off the floor or from elevated starting position

☐ Partially extend the knees

☐ Hips and shoulders rise at the same rate—angle of the back remains constant

☐ Bar comes up straight (not around legs) and stays close to body

☐ Arms stay straight, shoulders back

☐ Shoulders remain above or slightly in front of bar

☐ Head facing forward or slightly down

☐ Back flat or slightly arched

☐ Knees move back under bar (double knee bend, scoop) at the end of the first pull

☐ Feet remain flat (should be able to wiggle toes)

☐ Balance (body weight) is at mid-foot

☐ Body should be in the power position at the end of the first pull

**Second Pull**

☐ Balance (body weight) is shifted forward on balls of feet

☐ Athlete has reached the power position
☐ The bar brushes against the middle or top of the thigh
☐ Back is straight or slightly arched
☐ Arms straight
☐ Head facing forward
☐ Shoulders stay over or in front of the bar as long as possible
☐ Body pulled close to the bar (curling the wrists helps maintain closeness with the bar)
☐ Shrug trapezius to elevate bar (shoulder lift is forward as well as vertical)
☐ Keep elbows straight (elbows may “give” to the upward bar movement—athlete will not pull the arms)
☐ Athlete should be up on the toes at the top of the lift, legs straight

**Lowering the Bar**

☐ Lower bar under control to top of thighs
☐ Bend at the knees and hips and squat down, bringing bar to the floor or elevated starting positions using the same body position as used when raising the bar
☐ Keep back straight

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