

about the
AUTHOR

Kyle Brown is a health and fitness expert whose portfolio includes everything from leading workshops for Fortune 500 companies and publishing nutrition articles in top ranked fitness journals, to training celebrity clientele—from pro athletes to CEOs to multiplatinum recording artists. Kyle's unique approach to health and fitness emphasizes nutrition and supplementation as the foundation for optimal wellness. After playing water polo for Indiana University, as well as in London, Kyle became involved in bodybuilding and fitness for sport specific training. Kyle is the creator and Chief Operating Officer for FIT 365—Complete Nutritional Shake (www.fit365.com).

The Bulgarian Bag: Extreme Training for the Next Fitness Generation

Personal Trainers and athletes alike are always searching for new fitness tools to incorporate into our training regimen—either to elevate our fitness training or our clients' conditioning to the next level. Ideally, we search for fitness tools that are versatile; meaning that we can utilize these tools in multiple ways for both upper body and lower body training as well as for different results. The Bulgarian Bag is a perfect tool for developing muscular endurance as well as for increased power and strength.

The Bulgarian Training Bag is made with toughened leather and stuffed with wool and sand. It comes in 5 sizes, ranging from 11 to 50 pounds (figure 1). The bag's shape allows for both upper and lower body training while emphasizing grip strength. The three different types of handles allow athletes to execute a variety of exercises by using different grips.

According to Bulgarian bag expert Steve Nave, "The Bulgarian bag is a fitness tool of the next generation." Being a movement based piece of equipment, Nave states, "it incorporates all primal movement patterns that mimic natural movements. What makes the bag unique is that it's one of only a few exercise tools that cover all planes of movement under load (figure 2). It's a functional training tool that creates power and neurological integration." (1)

While the Bulgarian Bag is a new tool, it has already been validated by Olympic caliber athletes. However, it needs to become part of your training program not a replacement. Many products are marketed as the only fitness tool you need to get results. Yet incorporating Bulgarian Bag training into your existing resistance training program can help you overcome plateaus and elevate your fitness to the next level.



Figure 1. Bulgarian Training Bags

Sample Bulgarian Bag Workout

Perform the Bulgarian Bag exercises in the following 30 to 45 second series without rest for optimal results:

15 spins right and left followed by 15 power snatches followed by 10 arm throws right and left. Rest then repeat the set.

Spin

Grab the bag by the main handle with the label facing away from you and your feet roughly wider than shoulder width apart. Spin or rotate the bag up and around your head in a dynamic fashion at a rapid pace with your arms slightly bent (must use momentum and speed to perform correctly).

Power Snatch

Set feet wide enough to fit bag between legs. In an explosive manor, pull the bag up and overhead and have it slightly tap the back of your shoulders as you explosively pull the bag back overhead and go through your legs. Keep your back flat as you decelerate the bag and repeat movement.



Figure 2. Bulgarian Training Bag Movement

Arm Throw (Wood Chop) With a Side Lunge

Grab the bag by main handles like you have a sack of potatoes over your right shoulder, ensuring your palms are together. Side lunge to your right with the weight dispersed on your right leg. Pull the bag off your shoulder and swing it in front of you and side lunge left decelerating the bag as your arms straighten. Once straight, accelerate the bag in a powerful fashion back to starting position. Repeat on left side. ■

References

1. Nave, Steve. www.bulgariantrainingbags.com Personal Interview. 04 May 2009.



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