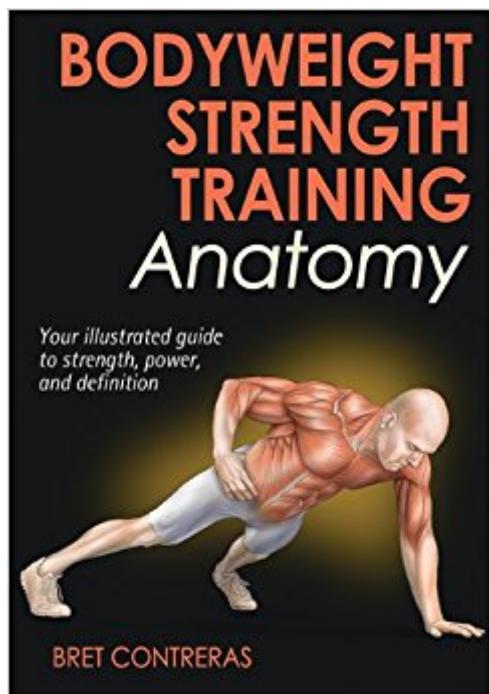


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# Bodyweight Strength Training Anatomy



## Synopsis

Increase strength, build mass, burn fat, and define your muscles. With full-color anatomical illustrations, step-by-step instructions, and training advice, *Bodyweight Strength Training Anatomy* is the authoritative resource for sculpting your physique without free weights, machines, or expensive equipment. Targeting all muscle zones and primary muscle regions—arms, chest, shoulders, back, core, thighs, glutes, and calves—*Bodyweight Strength Training Anatomy* presents 156 of the most effective bodyweight exercises that can be performed anytime, anywhere. With expert advice from renowned strength trainer Bret Contreras, you'll learn how to modify, combine, and sequence exercises to ramp up your routine and avoid plateaus. In depth yet practical, *Bodyweight Strength Training Anatomy* takes you inside every exercise through stunning anatomical artwork that reveals primary muscles worked along with the relevant surrounding structures, including bones, ligaments, and tendons. Whether you are just beginning your quest for a better body or simply seeking a proven approach for training at home, on the road, or on the go, *Bodyweight Strength Training Anatomy* is a one-of-a-kind resource that you'll refer to again and again.

## Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Human Kinetics; 1 edition (September 6, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1450429297

ISBN-13: 978-1450429290

Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 7 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 257 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #17,965 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #27 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Coaching > Training & Conditioning #27 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Exercise & Fitness > Weight Training #130 in Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Anatomy

## Customer Reviews

Side-to-Side Push-Up View larger View larger Human Kinetics The Premier Publisher for Sports & Fitness Science-based programs Authoritative advice Full-color images Popular anatomy series has sold over 3.1 million copies Bodyweight Strength Training

Anatomy by Bret Contreras, PhD, MS, CSCS Increase strength, build mass, burn fat and define your muscles With full-color anatomical illustrations, step-by-step instructions, and training advice, Bodyweight Strength Training Anatomy by Bret Contreras is the authoritative resource for sculpting your physique without free weights, machines, or expensive equipment.

Features 156 of the Most Effective Bodyweight Exercises that can be Performed Anytime, Anywhere [View larger](#)

Wall handstand push-up [View larger](#) Bent-leg sit-up [View larger](#) Shoulder-elevated hip thrust [View larger](#) Three-point bench dip [View larger](#)

Best-selling anatomy guide to bodyweight exercise If you want to learn the science and art of bodyweight training, there is no better resource. Brad Schoenfeld, MSc, CSCS, CSPS. [View larger](#)

"Bret Contreras is hands down one of the top fitness professionals. If you want to learn the science and art of bodyweight training, there is no better resource than Bret's book, Bodyweight Strength Training Anatomy." Brad Schoenfeld, MSc, CSCS, CSPS-- Author of The M.A.X. Muscle Plan  
"Bret Contreras is extremely knowledgeable about biomechanics, and Bodyweight Strength Training Anatomy is a tremendous resource for anyone wanting a better understanding of performing bodyweight exercises." Joe Dowdell, CSCS-- Founder and Owner of Peak Performance, New York City

Bret Contreras, PhD, MS, CSCS, has become known in the strength and conditioning industry as the Glute Guy because of his expertise in helping clients develop strong, shapely glutes. In 2015 he earned his PhD in sport science from the Auckland University of Technology in New Zealand, where he studied under biomechanics expert John Cronin. Contreras has conducted numerous electromyography experiments in his research. As the former owner of Lifts Studio in Scottsdale, Arizona, Contreras worked closely with hundreds of clients ranging from sedentary people to elite athletes, and he invented a glute-strengthening machine called the Hip Thruster. He currently trains figure competitors, writes programs for clients from all over the world, and consults for various professional sport teams. He is the author of the bestselling book Bodyweight Strength Training Anatomy (Human Kinetics, 2014) and coauthor of Strong Curves (Victory Belt, 2013). Contreras is a distinguished lecturer in strength and conditioning, presenting at many conferences throughout

the United States, including those hosted by the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA). He is editor in chief of the NCSA's Personal Training Quarterly and cofounder of Strength & Conditioning Research Review. He is a peer-reviewed author and regular contributor to well-known industry publications including Men's Health, Men's Fitness, Oxygen, and MuscleMag. Oxygen magazine voted him the Glute Expert in their 2010 glutes edition. Contreras maintains the Strength of Evidence Podcast, where he discusses important topics in strength and conditioning.

This is a review of 3 bodyweight exercise books (paperback editions): "Your Body Is Your Barbell" by BJ Gaddour, "You Are Your Own Gym" by Mark Lauren and "Bodyweight Strength Training Anatomy" by Bret Contreras. These reviews are coming from my perspective of a 44 year old man who decided I needed to lose some weight and just get in a little bit better overall shape. After doing my research I decided to focus on bodyweight exercises for their simplicity, efficiency and effectiveness. Bodyweight exercises require minimal equipment, allow you to work many muscles at once (compound exercises), and use motions that are natural body movements unlike a lot of gym machines. All 3 of these books contain basic information on exercises, exercise plans and how to make each exercise easier or more difficult. The ability to change the difficulty level of each exercise (progressions or regressions) will fine tune an exercise to your current particular ability and allow you to keep challenging your body. Examples of bodyweight exercises can also be found on YouTube for further clarification. Of these 3 books I think that "Your Body Is Your Barbell" by BJ Gaddour (let's refer to it as 'Barbell' for short) is the clear standout. If you are brand new to exercising or just want a solid foundation of the basics this is the book to get. 'Barbell' is a complete \*program\* clearly organized and aimed at raw beginners but contains enough to still challenge intermediate athletes. The superior organization and explanations are no doubt due to the resources of Men's Health magazine which has been writing about these types of exercises for quite a while. Its purpose is not to overwhelm the reader with all the different bodyweight exercises you can do, but to only focus on the minimum exercises that give the best overall results in the shortest amount of time. It explains the benefits of bodyweight training in a very clear and convincing manner, has a short easy-to-understand section on simple nutrition, and gives good clear information about general fitness. It has excellent photographs of exercises, a readable format and precise guidelines and instructions for what a beginner needs to do and focuses on only 8 basic bodyweight exercises to learn (you ultimately only need to choose 4). The 8 exercises are broken down into 4 movement categories (2 exercises per category that you can pick from). The 4

movement categories are upper body (pushing or pulling) and lower body (hip dominant or knee dominant). The 2 upper body \*pushing\* exercises are the pushup and handstand pushup, the 2 upper body \*pulling\* exercises are the row and the pullup. The 2 lower body hip dominant exercises are the hip hinge and the hip thrust, the 2 lower body knee dominant exercises are the deep squat and the single-leg squat. Each of the 8 exercises has its own chapter with 5 different difficulty levels, each with additional progressions and regressions to suit your current ability. The different levels of exercises start with complete beginners, who may be considerably overweight and never exercised a day in their life, to more difficult levels that in some cases might only be completed by Olympic athletes. Clearly the emphasis of the book is on complete beginners to intermediates who want maximum benefits with the shortest amount of time invested. The next book is "You Are Your Own Gym" by Mark Lauren (let's call it 'Gym' for short). The book begins with some background on the author's military training and his success in restructuring military exercise training routines that produced better results in much less time than traditional methods. He has an interesting section on the superiority of strength training to cardiovascular training and the nutrition chapter is very well written. There is some other good general information on strength training before introducing the exercise portion of the book. The exercises are organized by regions of the body and include descriptions, photos and variations (progressions and regressions) to suit your current physical conditioning. There are several exercise plans included based on your general level of fitness, from very basic to elite athletes. There are only a few photos of each exercise by necessity and the exercise plans require beginners to learn multiple different exercises instead of mastering a few and working in small progressions to increase difficulty. Unfortunately there is little guidance as to which exercises you should learn first and which will give you the most benefit for your time and effort. The third book is "Bodyweight Strength Training Anatomy" by Bret Contreras (let's call it 'Anatomy' for short). This book is a collection of bodyweight exercises organized by muscle region (arms, chest, back, glutes, etc.). Each exercise is beautifully illustrated to show the specific muscles involved. The muscles of each exercise are colored differently to indicate whether they are used primarily or secondarily in the exercise. The book includes muscle regions that the other two books leave out, such as the neck, and does a decent job of indicating many different exercises for a particular region, with variations that are easier or harder. Notes on the particular exercises are helpful as is the general descriptions of each muscle region. The book includes some brief general information aimed at beginners but this book is really for intermediate and advanced users. It seems to be more about bodybuilding than overall general fitness. 'Anatomy' has the same problem as the previous book 'Gym' in that it offers too many options and the suggested workout routines do not focus on

general compound exercises but rather require mastering a wide variety of movements. This book is still a useful reference for people that already have a basic knowledge of bodyweight training and are perhaps looking for new techniques or specific information about what exercises target which exact muscles. In my opinion, beginners need a clear, simple path to follow and "Your Body Is Your Barbell" by BJ Gaddour offers exactly what I needed and nothing which I didn't need to get in the best overall physical shape with a minimum investment of time and money.

Progressive Calisthenics or Body Weight Strength Training should be the foundation of anyone's knowledge of fitness. Knowing how our bodies function and being able to manipulate leverage to increase and decrease resistance is in my opinion fundamentals to proper training. This is a great book to add to your arsenal of body weight exercises and biomechanics. Taylor Clouse - Nutrition Expert

Bret Contreras has produced an amazing addition to the rapidly growing body of literature on body weight strength and athletic training. Bret has included data on muscles involved in each of the exercises he describes. This is data I have not seen in anywhere close to this detail and accuracy elsewhere. Scattered throughout the book are golden nuggets of wisdom on body weight training, and training in general. These are all of the most common sense and readily applicable nature. Warnings as to over use and over training are gently inserted, not to scare, but to keep the user of this book on the right path. There is a brief section on nutrition that makes sense (eat natural foods, leaning protein heavy, but include vegetables and fruits, balancing with a few carbs. That's it). Bret does not push Paleo, either the original or Rob Wolff's version, but clearly approaches that concept. First Bret introduces us to the concept of bodyweight training. Then he takes the parts of the body and details several exercises in each. In each of these sections, the exercise is rated as to difficulty, well described with diagrams depicting the muscles and bones and postures involved in most of them, , and then discussed in terms of the motions and sports that utilize that activity. The body sections Bret discusses are very inclusive: Arms, Neck and Shoulders, Chest, Core, Back, Thighs, Glutes, Calves. Mention is made of the grip in appropriate places. Then a chapter on whole body exercises is included. Bret finishes with a chapter called "Planning your Program" discussing Individualization, Autoregulation, Strength Balance, Training Goals, Training Variables, Putting it all Together, and Training for Fat Loss. Each chapter is clearly and simply written. Necessary words are defined right in the text. If one masters all the words Bret defines and uses, one would have a good understanding of basic anatomy of the human body. Bret has pruned the details of human

anatomy down to the essentials and makes the essentials clear. There is not fluff in this book. Bret Contreras has both a Masters degree and the CSCS certification. He has owned a strength gym in Scottsdale AZ. Bret is, according to his bio in the book, a sought after speaker. He is a peer-reviewed author and contributor to many industry publications. Currently, he is in New Zealand studying biomechanics, pursuing a PhD in sport science. In spite of all this, this book is not pedantic, but well and clearly written. Bret has chosen an excellent menu of exercises in each anatomic area. But to keep the size of the book manageable, he has left many good exercises out. The user of this book would benefit from just doing the Exercises Bret includes. But I would recommend augmenting the lists with the encyclopedic texts "Men's Health Big Book of Exercises" and "Men's Health Power Training" by Robert dos Remedios. This book is a reference book that should be on the shelves of every bodyweight enthusiast, and trainer. I initially bought the Kindle Version. But once, I realized the importance and uniqueness of this book, I ordered the paperback version for my library.

I love the anatomical diagrams for each exercise discussed as well as the "exercise notes" for each recommended exercise. This is THE most detailed and extensive collection of body weight exercises in the entire universe. This is a wise investment for travelers ("road warriors") such as myself.

Very informative! I've worked out for almost all my life, and after reading this book, I was shocked to how improper my form and movements were. Just the little tips and advice in each chapter was extremely helpful and was easy to understand. I highly recommend this book to anyone who wants a great way to build and strengthen muscle, and to fine tune your workouts to make your physique more proportionate with just your bodyweight.

Great resource, but a bit basic. Covers the fundamentals well. Some of the suggestions for advanced variations are fairly large jumps in level of effort. All the ... Anatomy books are great, if you already have a knowledge of programming. Otherwise they are only so helpful for those looking to begin working out, or developing their own training routine. Also not crazy about the author's suggestion of using tables or desks for bicep curls or inverted rows, but if there are no other options, you do what you gotta do.

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