

ALL ABOUT BELTS

By Paul Hermis

Do you know that using the proper weight belt can increase your lifts? In this article I am going to discuss the three most commonly used weight belts among athletes and lifters. What each belt should be used for to get the maximum output of your training

The first belt is the double notched 4" power belt used in the sport of power lifting. This is my personal favorite belt to train my lifts in, due to my participation in the sport. This belt is the same width all the way around. Many power belts on the market are twice the thickness of a noncompetitive leather belt. I enjoy using this belt very much when I squat, because of the great support it gives me. In fact this belt should be used by everybody when they squat, because 90% of your support in squatting does not come from your back but from your stomach muscles. This is also why every lifter should do extensive abdominal work to help increase your squat. The stronger and more support your stomach muscles have, the better your squat is going to be. This belt which also comes in a lever version is the only legal belt used in the sanctioned power meets (A.D.F.P.A., U.S.P.F. & A.P.F.), so if you're an aspiring power lifter it is important to train with a power belt since it is the only one you can use for competition. However, this belt is not too effective in the Olympic lifts or in the Dead Lift. Also, I see too many athletes using a 6" non-competitive belt which is tapered in the front to Squat in; this belt does not give the best support for the reasons stated above. Remember use a power belt for a new personal best.

The use of a 6" non-competitive belt, which is 6" wide in the back and tapers down to 2" in the front is a commonly used belt among athletes, lifters and hobbyists. Why? Many feel the six-inch belt automatically is best and gives extra support for the lower back and thus better for the Squat. However, as we have learned this is not necessarily the case. Also, this belt cannot be used for a sanctioned Power or Olympic lifting meet. My advice is: Don't buy or use this belt in training unless it's for personal training only, and/or you really like the feel of it.

Finally I would like to discuss the 4" Olympic lifting belt. This belt is the same size as the power belt but tapers around the front of the body in the buckle area. This belt is also not as thick or as heavy as the power belt. This belt is most effective for training and competing in the Olympic lifts such as the Clean, the Power Clean, the Snatch and the Power Snatch. It enables the lifter to bend down without having the belt dig into his or her stomach and provides sufficient support during the action of the lifts. This belt can also be used most effectively in the Deadlift. Once again due to its design of being tapered in the front to allow for a full bend over. Throwers also use this belt in the events of the hammer, discus and the shot because of its support and allowance of flexibility of the athlete.

It is recommended that coaches order a variety of all three kinds of belts. Then your athletes can choose the best belt for each particular lift and have the proper type belts, if you choose to compete. All three types of belts can be ordered from this BFS catalog on page 21.



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