

Front Squat

Client: Starting Position

Walk up to the bar and position the feet parallel to each other.

Place the hands on the bar using the “parallel arm position” technique:

- Grasp the bar with a closed, pronated grip slightly wider than shoulder-width.
- Move the body to place the bar evenly on top of the anterior deltoids and clavicles.
- Fully flex the elbows and hyperextend the wrists to position the upper arms parallel to the floor. The back of the hands should be either on top of or just to the outside of the shoulders, right next to where the bar is resting on the deltoids.
- Hold the chest up and out.
- Pull the scapulae toward each other.
- Tilt the head slightly up.
- Once in position, signal the spotters for a liftoff.
- Extend the hips and knees to lift the bar off the rack, and take one or two steps backward.
- Position the feet shoulder-width or wider apart, and even with each other, with the toes slightly pointed outward.
- Keep the elbows lifted up and forward to keep the bar on the shoulders.

Two Spotters: Starting Position

Stand erect at opposite ends of the bar with the feet shoulder-width apart and the knees slightly flexed.

Grasp the end of the bar by cupping the hands together with the palms facing upward.

At the client’s signal, assist with lifting and balancing the bar as it is moved out of the rack.

Release the bar smoothly in unison with the other spotter.

Hold the hands 2 to 3 inches (5 to 8 cm) below the ends of the bar.

Move sideways in unison with the client as the client moves backward.

Once the client is in position, assume a hip-width stance with the knees slightly flexed and the torso erect.

Primary Muscles Trained

Gluteus maximus, quadriceps, hamstrings

Client: Downward Movement Phase

Allow the hips and knees to slowly flex while keeping the torso-to-floor angle relatively constant.

Maintain a position with the back flat, elbows high, and the chest up and out.

Keep the heels on the floor and the knees aligned over the feet.

Continue allowing the hips and knees to flex until one of these three events first occurs (this determines client’s maximum range of motion; the lowest or “bottom” position):

- The thighs are parallel to the floor.
- The trunk begins to round or flex forward.
- The heels rise off the floor.

Two Spotters: Downward Movement Phase

Keep the cupped hands close to—but not touching—the bar as it descends.

Slightly flex the knees, hips, and torso and keep the back flat when following the bar.

Client: Upward Movement Phase

Extend the hips and knees at the same rate to keep the torso-to-floor angle constant.

Maintain a position with the back flat, elbows high, and the chest up and out.

Keep the heels on the floor and the knees aligned over the feet.

Continue extending the hips and knees to reach the starting position.

After the set is completed, step forward and rack the bar.

Two Spotters: Upward Movement Phase

Keep the cupped hands close to—but not touching—the bar as it ascends.

Slightly extend the knees, hips, and torso and keep the back flat when following the bar.

After the set is completed, help the client rack the bar.



Starting position.



Downward and upward movements.

Common Errors

- Allowing the heels to lift off the floor, the torso to flex forward, or the upper back to round during the upward movement phase
- Allowing the knees to move in (via hip adduction) or out (hip abduction) during the movement
- Allowing the arms to relax or the elbows to drop down and backward