

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).

Kettlebell Swings For Hockey Players

Ice hockey is a full-contact, fast-paced, physical sport that requires the combination of strength, power, explosiveness, flexibility and intense cardio. The kettlebell swing incorporates all of these facets wrapped up into one exercise and should be a foundational component of every ice hockey resistance training protocol.

While kettlebells have recently emerged onto the mainstream fitness scene, kettlebells are actually a century-old Russian exercise tool. The kettlebell swing is a foundational movement with variations including the 2-arm swing, the 1-arm swing, and more.

When playing ice hockey, strength, power, and explosiveness are required for acceleration, speed, and rapid changes in direction. Kettlebell swings develop the posterior chain muscles of the body including the glutes, hamstrings, and back and are phenomenal for core strength and stability. Maintaining a strong core while engaging in ballistic movements is critical for hockey players.

Kettlebell swings are unique in that they are a ballistic exercise where the athlete lifts, accelerates, and then releases the weight. As hockey players need to move at a rapid pace then quickly change directions on a dime, ballistic training mimics this action.

Kettlebell swings provide increased flexibility, which may reduce the risk of certain injuries for hockey players. It also allows hockey players to move with greater dexterity, agility and finesse.

Lastly, not only are hockey players moving at around 20 – 30 miles per hour, but the unique demands of the sport mean that strength endurance is just as crucial as explosive power. When performing high repetitions of kettlebell swings, an athlete’s heart rate will rapidly soar as if they are sprinting down the ice with the puck toward an open goal.

How To Perform a Kettlebell Swing:

Stand up straight with your feet hip-width apart. Place the kettlebell between your feet slightly behind you. Sit back into a semi-squat position and reach back for the kettlebell while you sit back and bend your knees to get into the starting position. Keep your back flat and look straight ahead. Grip strongly onto the kettlebell and rapidly swing the kettlebell backwards between your legs as if you are football center hiking the football to the quarterback. Quickly reverse direction and thrust your hips forward squeezing your glutes as you accelerate the kettlebell straight out in front of you. Let the kettlebell swing back between your legs and repeat. Make sure that you thrust your hips and squeeze your glutes on every repetition to generate power. Also, your arms should be relaxed and you shouldn’t use your shoulders to perform this exercise or feel it in your lower back. ■