

BLACK IRON CROSSFIT

HANDSTANDS

PROGRESSIONS:

A STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO BEING UPSIDE DOWN



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Hand Placement

Hand placement and positioning is an extremely important part of your handstand performance. The proper placement with your hands will set you up for success in all that you do with your handstands.

There are two main differences in your hand placement much like comparing your deadlift stance with your squat stance. One is going to be narrow with the finger tips straight forward to increase balance and stability. The other is going to be slightly wider with the finger tips turned out to open your shoulders up for any pressing movements.

Here is what you are looking for on each set up:

Handstand Holds and Balancing

- Shoulder width apart
- Finger tips spread out wide and facing forward

Handstand Pressing and Negatives

- Just outside the shoulders
- Finger tips spread out wide and turned slightly out about 30-45 degrees as needed



Hand Placement: Holds

First let's look at the proper technique for all of your holds and balancing.



Hand Placement: Holds

The first picture here is a good example of your handstand hold positioning. We are looking to create the largest base possible to increase the surface area around your hand. The larger the surface area the more balance you will have. You can see when the fingers are together the surface area and your connection to the floor is much smaller in comparison.



Hand Placement: Pressing

When we begin pressing the majority of the hand placement stays the same as far as the shape goes. Finger tips wide, the hand is open and engaged with the floor, but now since we are pressing we widen up the placement. Much like the squat stance we go a little wider to give us more room for the movement itself, and we can also turn the hands out about 30-45 degrees. This may reduce pressure on the wrist, but is not always necessary.



Here is an example of the pressing width, WITHOUT the turn out.



Hand Placement: Pressing

Here is an example of the pressing width, WITH the turn out.



Again, both of the options are good. It is up to you which you are more comfortable with. Try them both out and see what differences you feel.

Now that we have our hand placement figured out, it's time to start moving. Step one is our pike walk.



Pike Walks

The pike walk is a great place to start working on your handstands. It allows you to comfortably get upside down without the fear of falling. This is a great tool to build that confidence and later to help you warm-up for your handstand movements.

1. Setup

- a. Lay on the floor, face down, with your feet together and your hands on the floor directly under your shoulders, using the handstand hold placement

2. Execution

- a. From the top of your plank position push the hips high and back and press your head between your arms, keeping the arms and legs straight
- b. Walk the hands towards the feet and continue to drive the hips up until you are making a v-shape with your body
- c. Once you are in that position press your toes into the floor and get your heels as far from the ground as possible so you are on the tips of your toes.
- d. Hold for 10-15 seconds before walking the hands back out and lay down to rest between reps.

3. Progressions

- a. Try putting your feet on a box to increase the load on the shoulders for more of a challenge once you get comfortable

(See the pictures on the next page)



Pike Walks (cont.)



Pike Walks (cont.)



Wall Walks

The wall walk is the next step in your progressions to build a better handstand. This is another great tool to build confidence and later to help you warm-up for your handstand movements.

1. Setup

- a. With your feet against the wall lay on the floor, face down, feet together and your hands directly under your shoulders.

2. Execution

- a. Press to the top of your plank position reach one leg up at a time and press yourself into the wall
- b. Walk the hands towards the wall and continue to walk the feet up the wall as your get your hands closer
- c. Stop when you feel challenged, 45 degrees is a good start and eventually working your way all the way up
- d. Hold for 10-15 seconds before walking the hands back out and lay down to rest between reps.

(See the pictures on the next page)



Wall Walks (cont.)



Wall Walks (cont.)



Headstand

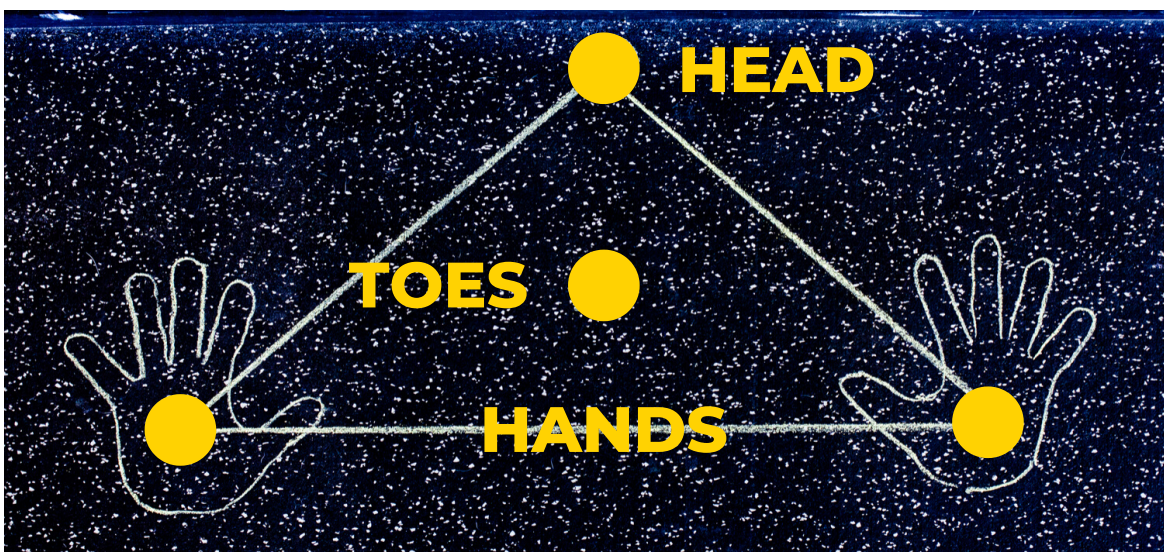
The headstand is the next step in your progressions to build a better handstand. Here we will get entirely upside down with our weight evenly distributed across our head and hands. We will try to create a tripod for balance and support

1.Setup

- a. Use a mat or towel to soften the floor beneath your head
- b. Place the hands shoulder width apart with a open and balanced palm
- c. Place the crown of your head on the mat in front of your finger tips to create a triangle with those three points of contact

2.Execution

- a. Kick your legs up against a wall before slowly bringing your feet off the wall and directly over the middle of your tripod (see diagram below)
- b. Find your balance and hold.



Headstand (cont.)

You can see that a balanced headstand is not straight up and down, but it is at a slight angle with the toes directly above the middle of the tripod.



Handstand Kick-ups

Now that we have gotten a little more comfortable upside down it is time to go all in and get that handstand. The handstand itself is much more accessible than it seems, and it does not take as much strength as you'd think. Once you lock your arms and go for it, it is more about position and proper stacking than it is actual strength.

1. Setup

- a. Start by setting up away from the wall an equal distance to your height
 - i. If you are 6 foot, you should be about 6 feet away from the wall before you kick-up.
- b. Reach your arms high and stack the elbows and shoulders before you start
- c. Step one leg forward, about half way to the wall as you lean towards the floor
- d. Place your hands shoulder width apart (since we are holding, go outside the shoulders if you are pressing)
- e. With your back leg long, lean your weight into your hands and get both feet together against the wall
 - i. You have to do this quickly. Keep the core tight and never stop pressing your arms into the floor
 - ii. As long as you are stacked you will hold just fine. Trust your position
- f. Let your head come through your arms to a neutral position



Handstand Kick-ups (cont.)



Handstand Kick-ups (cont.)



Handstand Kick-ups (cont.)



Handstand Holds

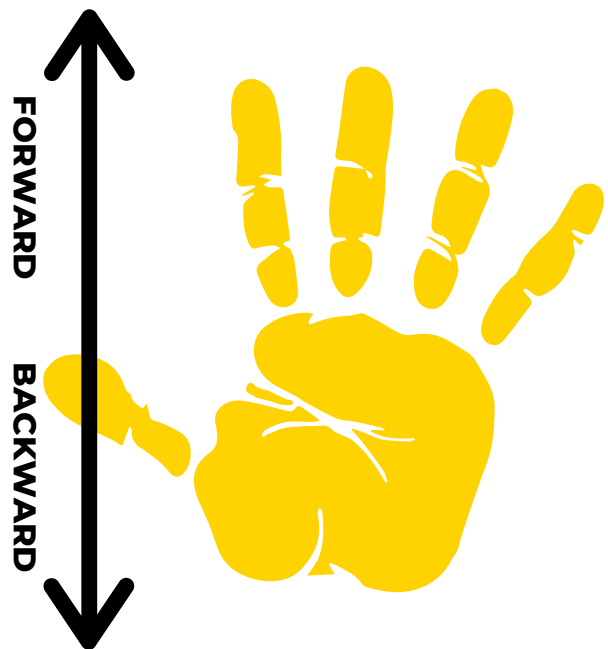
Now that you have your kick-up it's time to start working on your holds and balances.

Start by working on holds against the wall. Stay here until you can accumulate at least a minute or more. Start with 10 to 15 seconds and work your way up.

When you are ready, start working on balancing off of the wall. Do this by kicking up against the wall and use only your hands and wrist to pull you off the wall by driving your finger tips into the ground.



Falling forward drive the finger tips down



Falling backward drive the palm down



Handstand Negatives

The next step in your handstand progressions is to start working on negatives, from the top of your handstand down to your headstand tripod.

1. Setup

- a. Kick up into a handstand in your pressing setup, hands just outside the shoulders with the hands turned slightly out

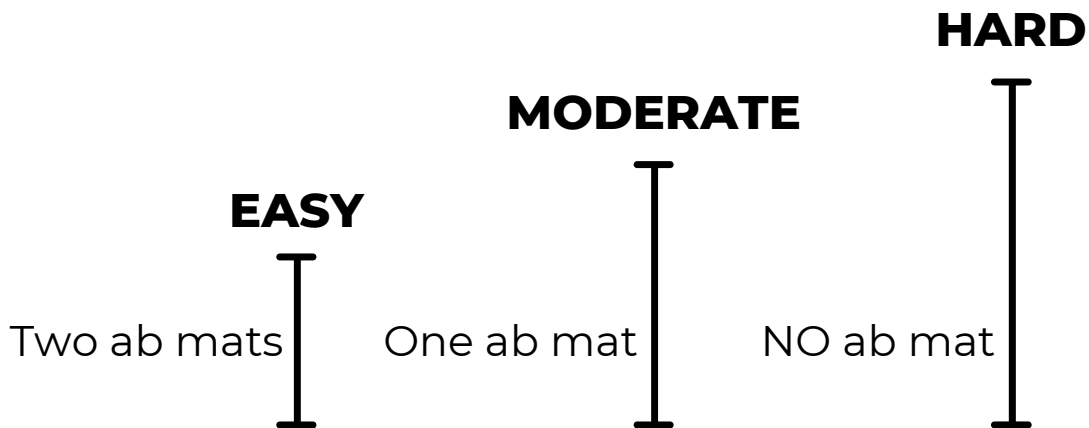
2. Keeping the elbows in, lower yourself down to a good headstand, find your balance off the wall and hold before coming down

- a. Use an ab mat if you are not comfortable lowering all the way down with good control



Handstand Negatives

Add ab mats to decrease the over all range of motion and increase the control until you are ready to go all the way down.



Strict HSPU

Once you build up to a solid negative with a full range of motion you are ready to start working on your presses. It is always recommended that you start by build the strength in the strict handstand push-up before introducing the kip.

1.Setup

- a. Make sure you are in a pressing position with the hands
- b. Start at the top of your handstand

2.Execution

- a. Lower down into your headstand tripod but keep the heels against the wall for support
- b. Engage the glutes and core before you press
- c. Keep the elbows in and drive the head through as you press straight up
- d. Finish in the same handstand you started in

(See the pictures on the next page)



Strict HSPU (cont.)

Make sure the start and the finish look the same. You want that good quality handstand on both ends. In the press allow your head to travel towards the wall at the top of the tri-pod like we did in our headstand. Then when you press, let the head come back in line with the hands and shoulders.



Strict HSPU (cont.)

You can also do the same movement in a pike on the floor or on a box to decrease the pressing load if you are unable to do this from a full handstand just yet.



Kipping HSPU

The final progression in your handstand journey is adding the kip to the handstand push-up. You should only add the kip in to increase your work capacity and speed with the movement. We should not introduce the kip as a way to get our very first rep. Strict before kipping is always the safest route.

1. Setup

- a. Start in the top of your handstand with the pressing setup with your hands just outside the shoulders
- b. Lower down to your headstand but keep the heels on the wall
- c. Now there are two styles of your knee tuck
 - i. The first being the stronger but slower option is the one you will see on the next page
 - ii. Here tuck the knees to the chest and allow the pelvis to tuck with in giving our hips more room to open meaning more power in the extension
 - iii. With the feet together kick the toes straight up and towards the wall and lock the hips in before you initiate the press itself

(See the pictures on the next page)



Kipping HSPU

Since we have already spent some time explaining both the handstand and the headstand we will only show the bottom of our tuck/kip. The piece that people miss the most here is the hip and glute activation. Without locking the glutes in after the kick you will lose most of your power in the kip and in the press. Just like in the strict HSPU make sure you press the head through the arms ending in one line with the shoulders.



Handstand WODs and Drills

- Intervals
 - EMOM for 10 minutes
 - Pick set you can complete most of the way through and repeat this WOD until you complete all 10 minutes
 - Then increase by 1 rep and try it again
 - EXAMPLE
 - EMOM for 10 minute
 - 3-Strict Handstand Push-up
 - Overall volume 30 reps
- For time (as fast as possible)
 - 30-Kipping HSPUs
 - Complete in as few sets as possible
 - This is a great place for Kipping HSPUs
- AMRAP (as many reps as possible)
 - AMRAP in 3 minutes of
 - Handstand Push-up
 - Kipping or Strict
- Tabata (or) Reverse Tabata
 - Handstand Holds
 - Can also be done in a pike position or with the feet elevated on a box to increase the load



Reach out

HOW CAN WE HELP?

Let us know how we can help and be on the look out for more content coming soon!

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