

# **Introduction to Kettlebells: Week 1**

EDIT 704 (Spring 2011) – Instructor Guide

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## Purpose

The purpose of this instructor guide is to assist the instructor with the delivery of an introduction to kettlebells class to an audience of up to six novices.

## Context

This course is intended to be the first in a series of eight classes on using kettlebells for cardiovascular fitness and weight lifting.

## Assumptions

This guide assumes the following:

- The instructor has experience swinging kettlebells
- The instructor is a certified personal trainer

## Objectives

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Complete a squat using proper form
- Complete double handed kettlebell swings
- Complete single handed kettlebell swings

## Course Requirements

In order to facilitate this course, the instructor needs the following items:

- Exercise studio
- Laptop computer than can play video files (either via iTunes, Windows Media Player, or QuickTime)
- CD with M4V file *Introduction to Kettlebells – Week 1.m4v*
- Computer speakers (*Optional*)
- Up to six 4 kg kettlebells (one for each participant)
- Up to six 8 kg kettlebells (one for each participant)
- Up to six 10 kg kettlebells (one for each participant)
- Up to six 12 kg kettlebells (one for each participant)
- Up to six exercise mats for stretching (one for each participant)
- Up to six exercise towels

## Icons



This icon highlights information that should be communicated to the students.

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This icon highlights notes to the instructor.



### Setup

Before the beginning of class, place one mat for each participant evenly spaced from each other on the floor of the studio. At the end of each mat, place one each of the different weight kettlebells and give the towels to the students as they arrive for class. Also, make as many copies of the reference guide as there are students signed up for the class.

### Course Overview

<i>Part</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Estimated Time</i>
I	Introduction	5 minutes
II	Video	5 minutes
III	How to do a Squat	10 minutes
IV	Introduction to Double-handed Swings	5 minutes
V	Double-handed Swing Practice	5 minutes
VI	Introduction to Single-handed Swings	5 minutes
VII	Single-handed Swing Practice	5 minutes
VIII	Swing Sequences	10 minutes
IX	Stretching	10 minutes

### Part I: Introduction

**5 minutes**



Welcome. In this week's class, we are going to learn a few basic kettlebell swings. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I have been swinging kettle bells for \_\_\_\_\_. Let's go around the room and have you briefly introduce yourself and what state what initially interested you in kettlebells.



Be sure to look each student in the eye at they are introducing themselves.

## Part II: Video

5 minutes



Before we touch the kettlebells, we're going to watch a quick video that demonstrates the swings we are going to learn today.



Show the video (*Introduction to Kettlebells – Week 1.m4v*) that demonstrates double and single-handed kettlebell swings on the laptop.

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## Part III: How to do a Squat

10 minutes



How many of you perform squats regularly?



Note the responses from the students. Less time may be needed for this part if the majority of the students are familiar with squats.



Squats are a foundation movement for kettlebells. Your legs are powerful and to really swing the bells, you have to engage your quads, hamstrings, and glute muscles; you will likely be unable to muscle the bell up using just your upper body. Set your feet just a bit wider than shoulder width apart. Slowly lower yourself as though you are going to sit down. Be sure to keep a flat back. Let me demonstrate.



Demonstrate how to perform a squat several times. At this point, have the students try a few squats. Provide guidance as needed on proper form.

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## Part IV: Introduction to Double-handed Swings

5 minutes



Now that we can do squats, it's time to pick up the bell. Set your feet like you are going to do a squat, lower yourself in the same way, and grasp the top of the bell's handle with both hands. Slowly stand back up. The bell should be hanging between your quads with your elbows lightly resting on your hips.



Demonstrate picking up bell as you are talking the students about how to pick it up. Be sure to point out how your hands are side by side like someone holding a ski tow rope.



Now it's time to swing the bell. Bend your knees slightly as though to squat and then stand up. Squat a little bit deeper and like someone pumping their legs as they swing on a swing set, the bell should start to swing. Continue to lower yourself into a squat—at little bit quicker each time—until the bell is freely swinging. The bell, at its height, should not swing above your shoulders. If it is, you need to use a heavier bell. Notice that the bell is at its height when you are standing and at its lowest when you are in a squat position.



Demonstrate getting a swing started while talking to the students about it. Point out how your hips are snapping forward as you assume a standing position and how this adds additional power to your swing, which eliminates the need to use the upper body to muscle up the weight.



To put the bell down at the end of a set of swings, slow your squats down such that you can gently place the bell on the ground between your feet while in a squat position.



Demonstrate how to put a bell down.

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### **Part V: Double-handed Swing Practice**

**5 minutes**



Now it's time for you to try it. Remember to set your feet first and then pickup the bell. Next, start your squats and try to swing the bell no higher than your shoulders. Start with the lightest bell and move to a heavier bell if needed.



Have the students perform sets of five to ten double-handed swings in a row. Swing a bell yourself until everyone has starting trying. Walk around and provide guidance on form as needed. Encourage the students to perform multiple 5+ swing sets.

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### **Part VI: Introduction to Single-handed Swings**

**5 minutes**



Now that we can do double-handed swings, it's time to try single-handed swings. Let me show you what they look like.



Demonstrate how to perform single-handed swings. Start on whichever side is most comfortable for you. Pass the bell back and forth between hands at its highest point several times and end the swings as before—in a squat position with the bell resting on the floor between your feet.



Did you notice how the bell rotates from when it is at its lowest point (between your quads) and when it's at its highest? When it is at its lowest, the back of your hand is facing outward, while at its height, the bell has rotated such that your thumb is on top.



Show the class the difference in hand positions without holding the bell. Pick up the bell and perform several more single-handed swings.



If you feel like you cannot smoothly pass the bell from one hand to another, hold onto it and try again on the next pass. As a reminder, be sure to snap your hips for additional power and don't be afraid to use a lighter bell. Single-handed swings are harder because you are only using one hand to stabilize the bell.

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### **Part VII: Single-handed Swing Practice**

**5 minutes**



It's your turn. Try a couple of single-handed swings. I will be walking around to check your form, as we do not want you to hurt yourself.



Have the students perform sets of five to ten single-handed swings in a row. Swing a bell yourself until everyone has starting trying. Walk around and provide guidance on form as needed. Encourage the students to perform multiple 5+ swing sets.

### **Part VIII: Swing Sequences**

**10 minutes**



We've learned double and single-handed swings. Before we stretch and call it a night, let's put both of them together. Start with double-handed swings until you have a good rhythm. When you're ready, drop one hand at the low point of the swing. You can continue with just one hand or you can switch back and forth at the top of the swing. Rotate between double and single-handed swings in whichever order you want. Let's give it a shot.



Have the students pair up and practice sequences together. Demonstrate a few sequences yourself as the students get started. Walk around and provide guidance on form as needed. Encourage the students to perform multiple 5+ swing sets and provide feedback to each other on form.

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## Part IX: Stretching

10 minutes



Great job! You have now learned the double-handed and single-handed kettlebell swings. I bet you are really feeling it in your quads, hamstrings, and glutes. Let's stretch those muscles out.



Lead students through stretching exercises for the following muscles:

- Quads
- Hamstrings
- Hips
- Biceps
- Triceps
- Shoulders



I hope that you have gotten a good workout. You may want to stretch again before you go to bed tonight and again tomorrow. Be sure to drink plenty of water over the next 24 hours. Here's a quick reference guide in case you want to try some double and single-handed swings before next week's class.



Hand out the reference guide.



Have a great evening!

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