

Go into any gym and ask 5 people to do push ups and you'll see 5 different movements, they're all push ups, sort of, but they're different. So what's the problem? Well like so many things in training, there are many ways to do things and usually most of them are better than no training at all BUT some of them are more effective, less likely to hurt you and more useful.

At StrongBox we are sticklers for correct form, NOT because we are stubborn and resistant to change and arrogant but because we research these things all the time and some methods work better, simple as that. Another factor is consistency - if we have an agreed movement standard then we can measure what we do and compare it with our history to chart our progress

The push up is an incredible movement - it's a design classic - an exercise that is so simple, elegant and effective it can't be improved upon. No technology or training tool can improve this essential functional movement. We should honour it like a rare painting and pay it homage by completing it with as close to perfect form as we possibly can.

**How to do a push up the StrongBox way** - when we describe a push up to people we often use the pushing a car analogy. If you ask someone to push against a wall or push a car they 9 times out of 10 will position their hands and wrists underneath their shoulders and their elbows tight to the body. It would seem to be an instinctive pattern but when we ask people to perform a push they, very often, position their hands wide and begin the movement by splaying their elbows out to the side.

SET UP - Image C **Not A** - hands underneath shoulders, core tight with no sagging at the waist. Image A shows a relaxed core with hips sagging down



BOTTOM POSITION - Image B - Shoulders in front of wrists and elbows and arms tight to the body. Core remains tight and no sagging at the waist. **The chest touches the floor** - this is the full and desirable range of motion (ROM)

TOP POSITION - push up with the arms retaining tension in the core to return to position in Image C

**Range of motion and why it matters** - There are a few reasons but here are two - if you consider the push up as a functional "real life" movement also known as "getting up off the floor" then clearly this should be a basic human life skill. In our training therefore we should train from the floor to the full extension of the arm. The other reason is more technical - most trainers consider the full range of motion in any movement as beneficial because it trains all the muscles in the movement to their full extent resulting in better muscle balance, joint stability, proper activation of the working muscles.

**Scaling the movement** - Of course not everyone can do a full push like the illustration above so we need alternatives. When we scale what we want to do is try and get the exact same mechanism but reduce the load or intensity. So the scale of choice for the push up is to do the incline the movement on a raised object or even against the wall. Everything else remains the same. Same start and finish position and same ROM. The higher the object the more load goes on the feet and less through the arms. This is a much more effective scale the the more common knees on the floor which doesn't allow you to work your core, glutes and chest in the same way. That said if the knees on the floor is what you want to do then it's better than not doing it but try to keep that core active and as you improve try and do the full push up on the way down and the knee push up on the way up.



Any questions then you know where we are! [info@strongboxqatar.com](mailto:info@strongboxqatar.com)