

A black and white photograph of a person in tactical gear, including a vest and cargo pants, holding a kettlebell in their right hand. The person is standing on a dark, textured surface, possibly a gym floor. The background is dark and out of focus.

TOP 5 SHTF MOVES

**(Exercises to
Survive Anything)**

TACTICAL ATHLETE

**EX SPECIAL FORCES
GREG DOYLE**

TACTICAL ATHLETE

BY GREG DOYLE

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people are
harder to kill
than weak
people, and
more useful in
general."**

**-Mark
Rippetoe**

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ATHLETE

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WHAT IS A "TACTICAL" ATHLETE?

"If you only had 5 moves you could pick to be in the best shape to survive anything, what would they be?"

This is what I asked a bunch of SF Operators, and their answers are what makes up this undisclosed guide.

See, as a Special Forces soldier, you have to maximize your time, so your workouts **MUST** be efficient.

There's no time for BS exercises in our workouts, just the moves that are needed to keep a soldier strong, fast and lethal.

We prioritize raw performance, not aesthetics. Can you lift and carry an injured teammate, can you do a pullup with 50lbs of gear and kit on?

Can you sprint from cover to another building under while under fire?

These skills may sound specific to a military engagement, but they are the foundations of strength and conditioning for someone who wants to survive ANY SHTF situation.

But now I have a question for YOU...

Could you carry an injured family member or friend several hundred yards right now?

Could you lift several hundred pounds off of yourself or another person in a natural disaster?

Could you lift others to safety, either pulling them up or pushing them up to a window?

What about sprinting away from a riotous mob of people?

If you know you need to be in better shape, you already know the answer to those questions.

And in this guide, you'll see the no BS, real world SHTF exercises, how to do them, and also the additional exercises that will add raw practical strength and conditioning if done together.

So stop wasting time in the gym or trying to figure out what exercises are actually worth doing. You now have all the answers you need to get military grade fit.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

From an early age, Greg (like any good American) hoped that a "Red Dawn" type event would happen in his small town.

Alas, it never did, so he went on to become a Strength & Conditioning Coach after studying Exercise Science at the University of Delaware.

After years of coaching, Greg decided he needed to do something more, and decided to join the U.S. Army, where he then served as a Special Forces soldier for half a decade.

After an injury caused him to be separated from the military, Greg got back to strength coaching, this time, with the knowledge of what keeps the most elite military operators in the world strong and lethal.

His goal is to help Americans get fit, strong and physically prepared for anything.



THE TOP 5 MOVES

Next let's jump into the top 5 moves for when SHTF, what they are, how to do them, and more importantly why they were chosen.

Few people truly understand how important fitness is to their survival. Those who do, can be found in American Special Operations military units.

So I interviewed them.

What we talked about were the most critical capabilities that someone would need if they wanted to be able to be the most well rounded "athlete", able to survive and thrive in any situation.

It was agreed that a "tactical athlete" would need the following capabilities:

- Strength,
- Speed/ power,
- Ability to move bodyweight,
- Ability to carry things, or do work,
- Endurance.

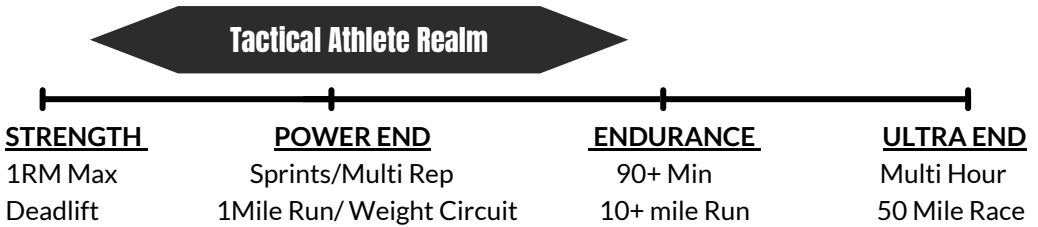
We threw out what wasn't needed and only kept critical moves. Finally we narrowed down the remaining exercises to the top 5 moves that would cover all aspects of fitness:

Top 5 moves for SHTF/ Survival Situations:

1. Zercher Squat (Strength -Lower/Full Body)
2. Overhead Press (Strength - Upper Body)
3. Sprints (Speed/Power)
4. Pullup (Bodyweight Work)
5. Farmer Carry (Ability to do work)

THE TOP 5 MOVES

Fitness can be seen as a spectrum, and for a tactical athlete, you have to be good at everything in order to be prepared for anything.



"READY STATE CONDITIONING"

This means that you won't be winning the World's Strongest Man competition, or placing 1st in an ultra marathon, but you will be capable of running 5-10 miles, while **also** capable of deadlifting 2x your bodyweight. Or putting serious weight up over your head.

If you can lift heavy but can't run more than a mile, you're wrong. If you can run a few hours but can't lift a barbell off the floor, you are equally as wrong, and a liability. Identify your weaknesses and correct them.

You will work to build a base of "Ready State Conditioning", which is a solid foundation of fitness from Strength to Endurance. Once, and only once you've reached this level can you move on to more advanced training plans.

While it may not sound sexy, a defining trait of a Special Ops unit is that they master the basics. This is what truly sets them apart. They don't just do the regular everyday skills, they master them.

An Overhead Press, or sprints might not sound super "advanced" but if you could OH Press your bodyweight while running a sub 3 minute 800m sprint, you're probably in pretty damn good shape, more so than 90% of America.



#1- ZERCHER

WHAT: STRENGTH

The Zercher squat is one of those weird old lifts that builds practical raw strength from head to toe. It is a squat variation, where the bar lies in your arms instead of on your back.

There was a lot of debate as to whether the Zercher or Deadlift would take the top spot for the Strength category, but if you could only do one to prepare for SHTF situations, the Zerch comes out on top.

WHY:

Because the Zercher lands somewhere between the deadlift and back squat in terms of movement and muscle recruitment, the Zercher offers benefits of both, while getting it done with only one move.

Zerchers strengthen the quads, glutes, abdominals, lats, upper back and biceps, all while being able to keep a more upright posture compared to conventional squats.

For the tactical or power/ strength athlete, the Zercher is ideal, as it trains the movement pattern of lifting and carrying heavy loads, a real world ability that is needed when SHTF. (Think lifting and carrying someone/something.)



HOW TO: ZERCHER SQUAT

You'll start by scooping the bar into the elbow area, resting not actually in the elbow, but more on your forearm. Pull your hands into your chest in order to keep the bar from rolling out and putting unnecessary stress on the biceps tendons.

Your feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width, (think Back Squat foot position).

With an upright neutral spine position, squat down until the bar rests on the thighs, then using your hips, stand back up, driving through the hips and feet.

If you're unable to maintain a flat back (neutral spine) you are going too heavy.

Initially, this will be an uncomfortable lift. (Just keep your hands pulled tight into your chest.)

It gets easier with time, start lighter in weight and work your way up.

STANDARD

- 2x BW = ELITE
- 1.5 BW = STRONG
- 1x BW = LIFT MORE



#2 - OVERHEAD PRESS

WHAT: STRENGTH (UPPER BODY)

The Overhead Press is just like it sounds, pressing a weighted bar over your head.

Once considered the gold standard of strength, the Overhead Press has fallen in popularity to the more known Bench Press, but when it comes to practical real world application, the OH Press wins the battle of upper body strength.

WHY:

If you're wondering why the Bench Press isn't listed here as the king of presses, it's because rarely in most situations will you find yourself lying on your back needing to press. Realistically, you'll be in a standing or upright position and need to generate strength and power throughout the whole body.

To do an Overhead Press, you'll use every major muscle group, from your feet up to your hands, including the hips and core, to your lats, shoulders, and triceps. Serious stabilizing and pressing strength is the result. (Not to mention strong and thick shoulders)

For these reasons, the Overhead Press was chosen for its real world capabilities especially if you had to pick only one upper body pressing movement.



HOW TO: OVERHEAD PRESS

Grip the barbell so that while holding the bar at your chest/collar bone area, your forearms are pretty much vertical.

Your feet should be in a comfortable squat stance position. (Shoulder width to slightly wider than shoulder width.) Legs are locked out, there is no help from the legs on this move.

While bracing your glutes and core, drive the bar up straight so that the bar ends up directly above the shoulders.

If you looked at yourself from the side, your hands would be directly above the shoulders, and in line with them. Practice with just the bar, then start adding weight, jumping up by 5 or 10 lbs to your desired weight.

STANDARD

- $1.15 \times \text{BW}$ = ELITE
- $.8 \times \text{BW}$ = STRONG
- $.5 \text{ BW}$ = LIFT MORE



#3 - SPRINTS

WHAT: POWER & SPEED

Simply put, it's running fast.

Sprinting is a power move that allows you to move QUICKLY from one point to another. Let's be honest, when asked to describe an athletic person, you'd most likely say "fast, and powerful." Being slow is never a virtue.

WHY?

Sprinting is efficient. You'll build speed and power while training the cardiovascular system, and building your endurance. Meaning you can move faster, and do more work for longer periods of time.

Sprints will leave you faster, with stronger and more powerful legs as well. When we talk about moves that train real world abilities, Sprints can't be ignored.

In addition to becoming an athletic beast, you'll also burn more fat. Several studies show that sprinting, compared to jogging style cardio, boosts fat burning by over 90%.



HOW TO: SPRINT

This one is simple. Simply run as hard and as fast as you can for a set amount of time/distance.

Use your arms to swing and generate power through your core as you run.

Before going 100% speed, run a few warmup sprints.

For Example: If you plan on doing 100-meter sprints, warm up with 3 sprints beforehand, one at 50%, one at 75% and one at 80-90% speeds.

Ramp up your speed until you feel you're ready to go all out. You should be holding nothing back during each sprint.

Cool down with a slower 400-800m run.

STANDARD

- GOOD =
 - 100m - 15 sec or less
 - 400m - 1:15 or less
 - 800m - 3:00 or less



#4 - PULLUPS

WHAT: BODYWEIGHT WORK/ MUSCULAR ENDURANCE

The ability to pull up your own bodyweight on a bar.

While this is an essential skill and important for surviving any SHTF situations, it is also a baseline ability that you should be able to do, just as a human.

WHY:

Pullups are an upper body strength building move, and the more that you do them, the more you'll add a solid base of strength and endurance.

After several interviews about the critical exercises listed in this book, one Special Operator said "The more pullups someone can do, generally the more fit they are, overall."

A simple yet crucial physical ability, most people in the US today lack the upper body strength to do even one pullup, let alone 10.

It's not hard to imagine a scenario where you might need to lift yourself up in order to save your own life. Now imagine you are wearing a plate carrier or backpack.

Could you still do it?



HOW TO: THE PULLUP

Jump up to a bar with palms facing away, hands shoulder to slightly wider than shoulder width apart.

While making sure your body isn't swinging, use your biceps and lats to pull your body up so that your head gets above the bar and your chest touches the bar.

Lower yourself down and repeat.

If you can do over 15-20 pullups, start doing weighted pullups with 10-40lbs added weight. (Can use plate carrier, or hold a dumbbell with your legs.)

If you cannot do one pullup, start building up strength with seated cable rows, lat pull down machine or bent over rows. Build strength until you can do a pull up.

STANDARD

- 20+ Reps = ELITE
- 15 - 20 Reps = STRONG
- 10 -14 Reps = GOOD
- 9 or Less Reps = TRAIN MORE



#5 - FARMER'S CARRY

WHAT: WORK ABILITY/MUSCULAR ENDURANCE

A Farmer's Carry is when you pick up weights, and just walk. **Simple, but not easy.**

WHY:

This devastatingly simple yet extremely effective move will strengthen your ENTIRE body (think Traps, forearms, core, and legs), improve your grip strength, and burn serious calories, leaving you breathing like you just ran a 100m sprint.

The Farmer's Carry is a critical move included in the top 5 tactical moves because it mimics the movement and abilities needed to do actual work in a SHTF scenario.

Can you carry a litter with your wounded buddy or family member several hundred yards or miles? How about carrying water, ammo, or other critical supplies?

Going heavy will build serious strength, get you breathing hard, and help shed fat, all while translating into real world survivability.

While many exercises are for show, this one will build the real-life powerhouse strength you'll need to be an absolute beast when the time comes.



HOW TO: FARMER'S CARRY

Start with a weight of 50% of your bodyweight

EX: If you weight 180, start with 45lb dumbbells

The Farmer's Carry can be done with a trap bar, dumbbells, or kettlebells. Maintain proper posture while walking, head up, looking straight ahead, shoulders back and chest out.

If you are unable to maintain an upright posture, you're probably going too heavy.

If you think, "Man this is kinda easy" then you're going too light.

Because this exercise can be done in so many ways, it's harder to have a set standard, but you should always be striving to walk further and carry more weight.

STANDARD

- BASELINE
 - 50% BW - 60s
- STRONG
 - 100%BW - 60s

THE EXTRAS



It doesn't end at just 5 moves.

While we just listed the TOP 5 moves that you'd need to train in order to survive, these are only the top 5 of a much longer list of critical exercises.

If you only worked on the top 5 moves that you just read, you'd get faster, stronger, leaner and overall more athletic.

But in order to become your true full-on beastmode survival self, you'll need to do a little more. That's why I had to include the other moves that didn't make the top of the list but **were still ON the list.**

These were the moves that were universally agreed upon but just didn't make the Top 5, ignore them at your own detriment.

They will not only add to your fitness base but will supercharge your results and make you more capable, more lethal, and more "killproof" when SHTF.

Now let's check them out...

THE EXTRAS

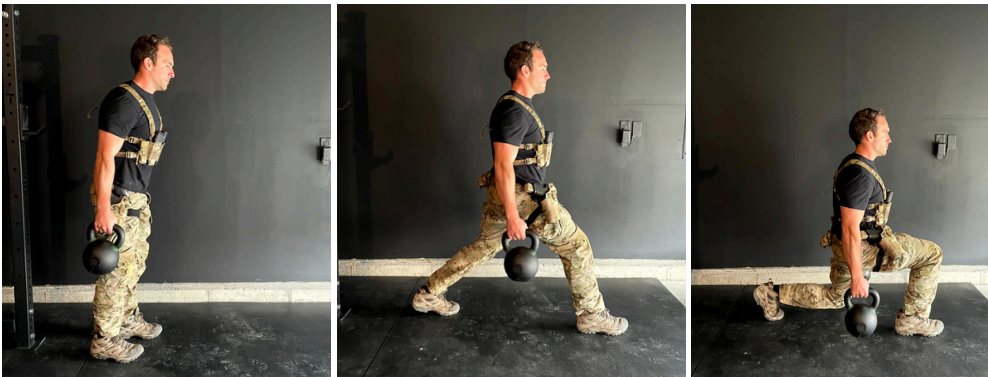
PUSH UP

One of the most iconic exercises, builds upper body strength and endurance. These can be done anywhere, and you can always add weight for an additional challenge.



LUNGES

There is nothing like a set of heavy walking lunges to train the entire body and get your heart pounding. A true full body, real world strength & conditioning move to build He-Man grip strength and help bulletproof the knees while fixing any strength imbalances between the legs.



DEMONSTRATIONS OF ALL OF THESE EXERCISES ARE AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE

THE EXTRAS

DEADLIFT

The king of raw strength, this compound movement will add serious full-body strength and pack on muscle from head to toe. It should be included in all serious training programs.



TURKISH GET UP

This move builds head to toe structural strength while improving stability and mobility in the hips and shoulder joints. Being a more technical lift, you'll need to start with light weights until you feel comfortable with the movement. Building up to a heavy weight will get you crazy strong.



DEMONSTRATIONS OF ALL OF THESE EXERCISES ARE AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE

THE EXTRAS

LONG RUN - 5-10 MILES

Longer runs train the respiratory system and build non-stop endurance while strengthening ligaments and tendons in a way that sprints just don't. Include weekly.



RUCK - 1-3 HOURS

There's a reason many special force units use rucks as part of their screening process. It's tough, it sucks, and it will weed out the weak.

Because you'll need to move distances with life saving/ sustaining supplies, rucking is essential in SHTF scenarios. Ruck once a month to stay honest, and prepared for anything. Start with 35lbs, build up your time on your feet.



DEMONSTRATIONS OF ALL OF THESE EXERCISES ARE AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE

RECOVERY

When you lift heavier weights and run faster or longer, you're damaging and trashing your muscles.

Your body builds back muscle fibers stronger and more powerful, releasing the needed hormones like HGH and Testosterone in response to this beat down.

If you don't recover properly, those damaged muscles don't get rebuilt bigger and better. You won't see results and eventually you'll give up. Start focusing on recovery as much as you do training and you'll get the most out of any training program.

SLEEP

Probably the most important aspect of recovery, since the majority of the muscle repair you'll need happens at night.

Aim to get 8-10 hours of sleep. It's not badass to be sleep deprived, the more sleep you get, the more results you'll see.

NUTRITION

Your body needs quality fuel for workouts, and for repairing muscles after hard training.

Aim for a mix of protein, carbs and fat from whole food sources. Think eggs, beef, fruit and vegetables. Avoid alcohol, vegetable oils, and any processed foods.

For weight gain, you need a serious amount of calories, and the easiest way to get them is to drink them, think protein shakes with a lot of milk.

For fatloss, consider fasting, and avoid all liquid calories, especially alcohol. It will shut down fat metabolism.

FOAM ROLLING/TISSUE WORK

Massage and foam rolling work helps increase blood flow and therefore recovery of targeted muscles.

DAILY SUNLIGHT

Vitamin D will boost the immune system and shown to increase testosterone.

HOT/COLD THERAPY

Suanas and cold water therapy has been shown to increase blood flow, decrease inflammation, and speed up muscle recovery.

Nutrition

No training plan would be complete without talking about nutrition as well. While this subject could be another book, I'm going to go over the most critical parts that you'll need to succeed.

WHOLE FOODS & PROTEIN: THE BASE

While there are a million different diets out there, you can keep it simple by getting a mix of whole unprocessed foods at each meal. Animal products like meats, cheese, eggs and milk provide the highest quality protein you can get. And protein will be critical for your diet while training hard.

You're going to want to aim for 30-50g of protein per meal in order to aid in muscle repair. I often eat more than a dozen eggs a day in different forms, as well as beef and cheese. (It's a myth that eating eggs or saturated fats increase your blood cholesterol levels).

FATLOSS

If you're looking to get leaner, nutrition is key. You'll want to keep most meals to lean protein sources, and limit the amount of carbs. You'll also want to avoid drinking any calories, stick to water, tea and coffee. Avoid alcohol (it shuts down fat metabolism) and consider Intermittent Fasting.

If you want to get leaner, watch nutrition more carefully, add more fasting and add more cardio/sprints throughout the week.

Track your bodyfat percent, not just your weight while your goal is fatloss.

Do these things and you'll lean out in no time.

Nutrition

MASS GAIN

If you're trying to add on weight, you'll need upwards of 3000-5000 calories a day. If you're not eating that much, a good way to get calories is the Mark Rippetoe approach of drinking a gallon of whole milk a day, on top of your normal meals. It works. I did this once and gained 33 lbs in 30 days.

Lift heavy and more, and eat more. You will gain muscle.

FOODS TO AVOID

Things that can derail your progress include:

- foods with soy in them,
- vegetable oils (canola, soybean, rapeseed, sunflower seed) *Use coconut oil, grassfed butter, and olive oil instead
- processed foods (usually high in vegetable oils)
- low protein foods
- tap water (atrazine is real, literally turns male frogs into female frogs) (I use reverse osmosis filters like AquaTru)
- Alcohol (has an estrogen like effect on men, also limits fat metabolism)

SUPPLEMENTS

There are a million supplements out there. I recommend:

- **WHEY protein powder**- do not eat soy protein, CHECK THE LABELS. Soy is cheap so they use it in everything.
- **Creatine**- One of the most studied supplements out there. Great for training and brain health.
- **Magnesium**- Most people are deficient in this mineral and it helps promote sleep and relaxation.
- **Vitamin D**- shown to boost testosterone, immune system and increase penis size. Nice.



THE WORLD NEEDS MORE STRONG MEN.

WANT MORE?

You now know the exact moves needed to create a killproof version of yourself.

Yes, these moves are simple, but don't equate that with being easy, lifting a 2x bodyweight zercher is simple, but not easy.

That's the beauty of it though, just put in the work, don't overthink it. Lift one day, do sprints the next, lift again the next day, run a 5 miler the next.

Try and do more and faster each week and you'll be stronger, faster, and tougher than ever.

That being said, if you like the idea of a structured workout plan with weekly check ins and support, you can always head over to the YouTube channel and join the OPERATOR level of the Youtube membership:

[Click to Join OPERATOR Level](#)

In there, I'm uploading weekly Full Spectrum Operator Workouts, Nutrition plans, and you'll get members only coaching calls.

Regardless, Train hard, recover and eat whole foods. Become the strength that America needs.