



Bench Press Seminar

Presented by Cruz Fondriest ft. Eian Birtcher

The Set Up

The start of the press begins with your body position in relation to the bench.

- **The term “Get comfortable being uncomfortable,” rings true here. If you are comfortable laying on the bench, then you are not prepped or engaged to handle heavy weight.**
- **You must create a step by step process, creating tightness throughout the body, and to ensure body positioning is consistent each time you lift to ensure consistency in training and each press.**

Head to Toe Setup

***Step 1: Push head into the bench setting up on my traps high (This allows space to depress scapula)**

***Step 2: Scapular retraction**

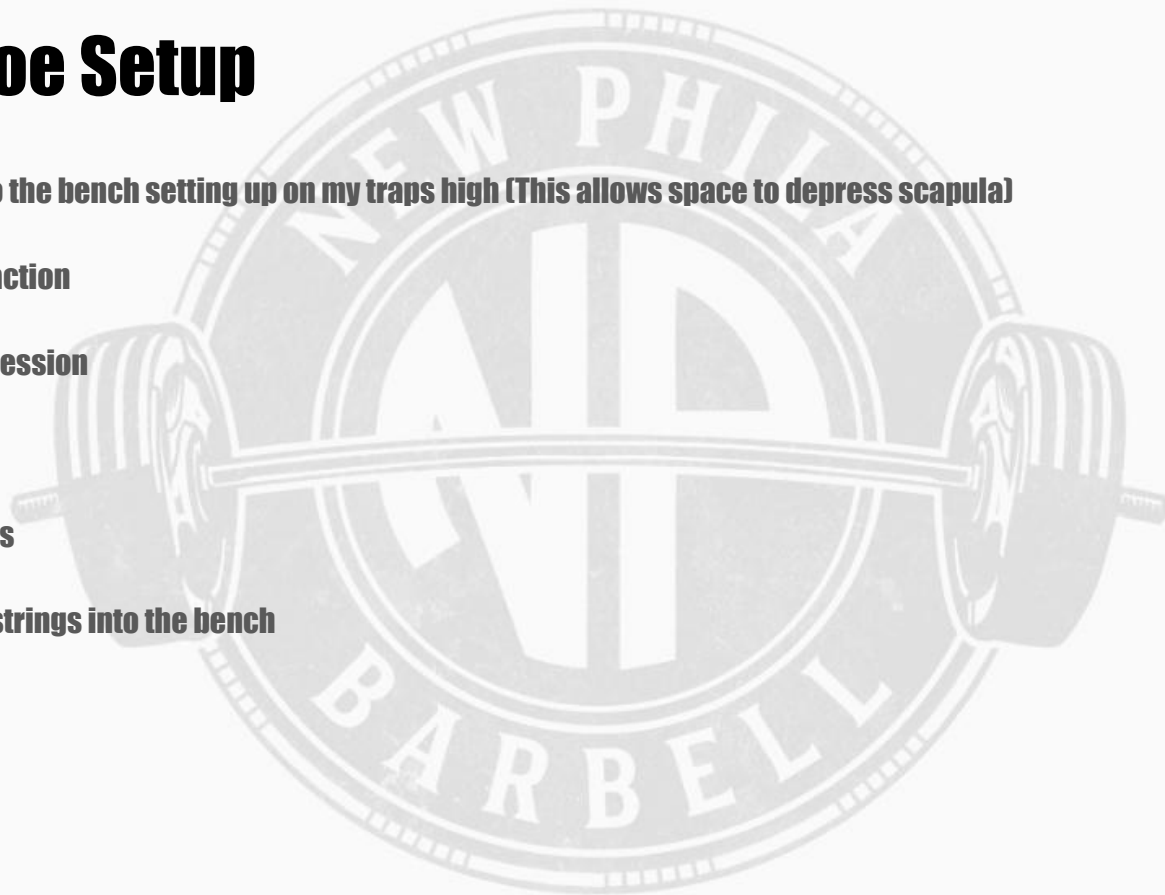
***Step 3: Scapular depression**

***Step 4: Low back arch**

***Step 5: Squeeze glutes**

***Step 6: Squeeze hamstrings into the bench**

***Step 7: Tuck feet**



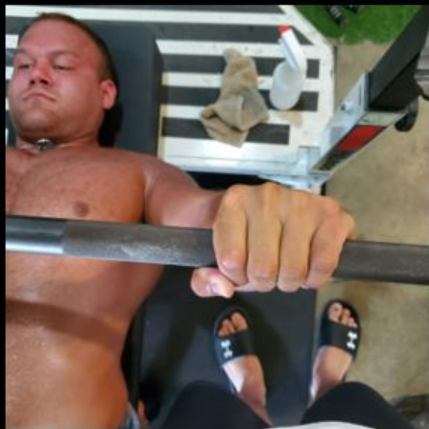
Function of the Scapula

Scapular Retraction



Scapular Depression



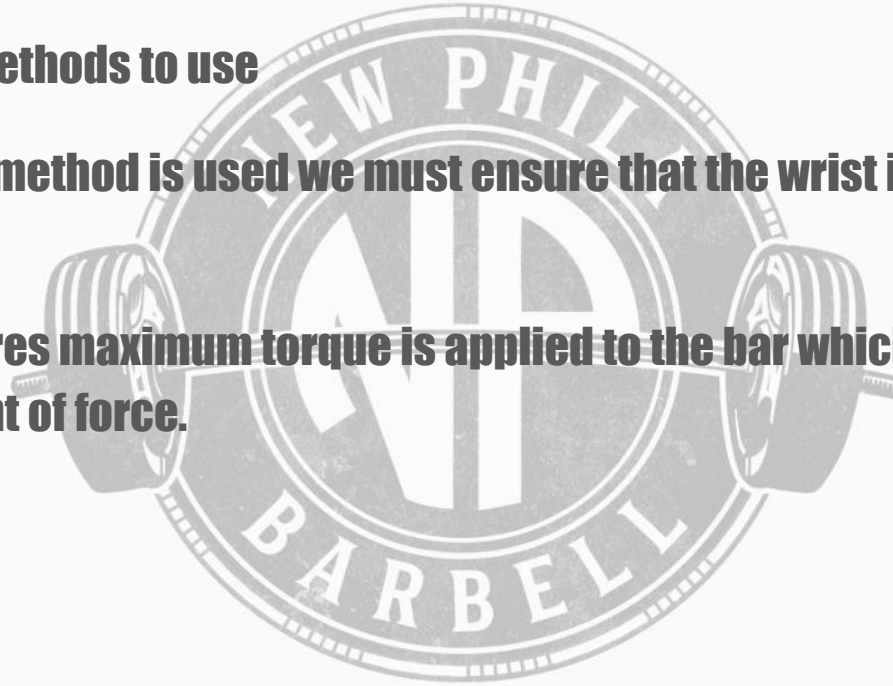


Gripping the Bar

***There are multiple methods to use**

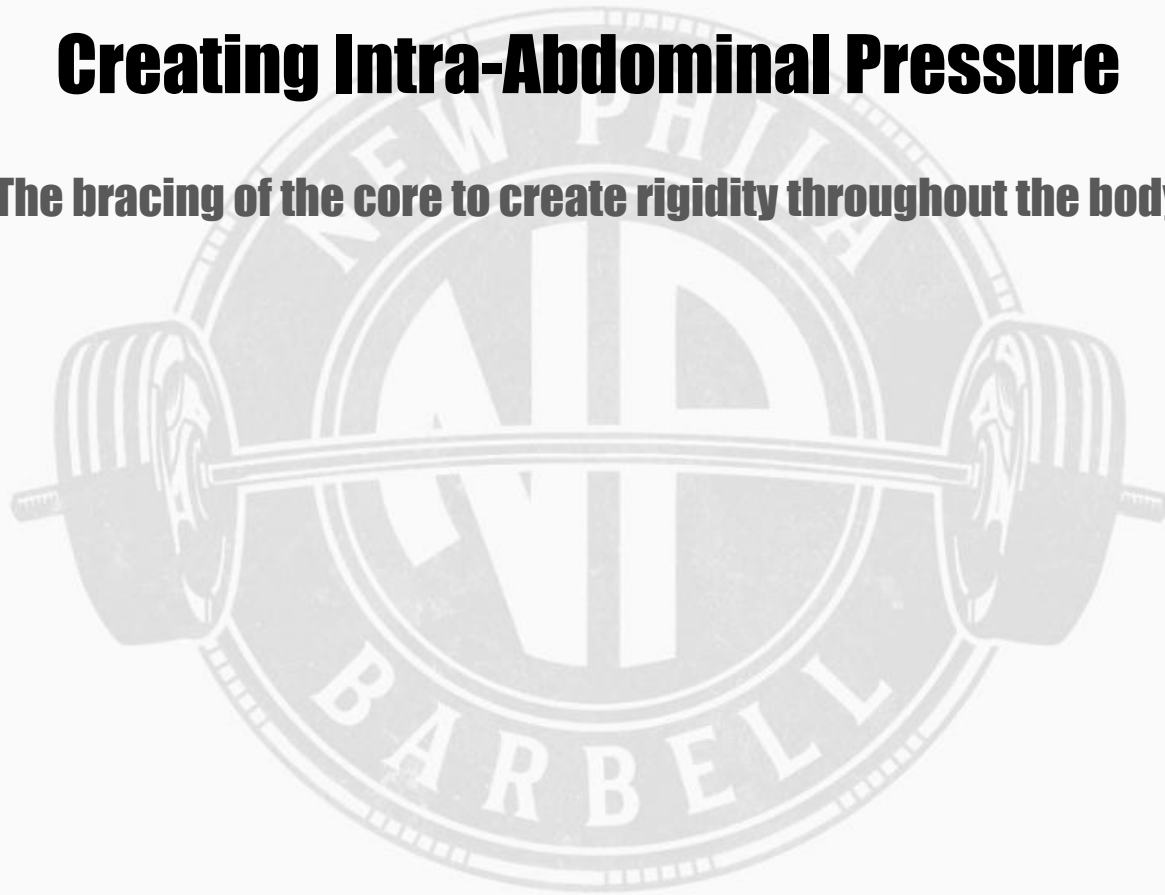
***However, whichever method is used we must ensure that the wrist is aligned with the elbow.**

***This alignment ensures maximum torque is applied to the bar which in turn allows you to apply maximal amount of force.**



Creating Intra-Abdominal Pressure

The bracing of the core to create rigidity throughout the body



Spreading the Bar

***After the intra abdominal pressure and grip are locked in, you can begin the decent by pulling the bar apart or spreading the bar, (pushing pinkies into the bar) while simultaneously meeting the bar with your chest, keeping upper back, glutes, and feet all in contact.**

***Once the bar and chest meet, you must continue to apply pressure, (keeping tension) do not let the bar sink. Sinking creates a loss in position and in force.**

***After the pause you will begin by pressing yourself away from the bar, not the bar away from you, using this mental trick allows the lifter to keep the upper back tension required to complete the lift and not create a gap in force displacement. Also pressing in a straight line the shortest distance possible (another tip for maximizing force).**

***Locking out is the final piece. As you push yourself into the bench, you will spread the bar apart the same as when you descended. This will aid in locking the triceps out, finishing the press.**

Weak Points and Leverages



Weakness in the Bottom Portion/Off the Chest

***This can be caused by several issues in the initial set up or lack of strength in the initial muscles that are recruited in the beginning of the press: rear delts, back, and chest.**

***Exercises used to build muscles in these areas:**

***Barbell rows**

***Seated rows (specific for bench)**

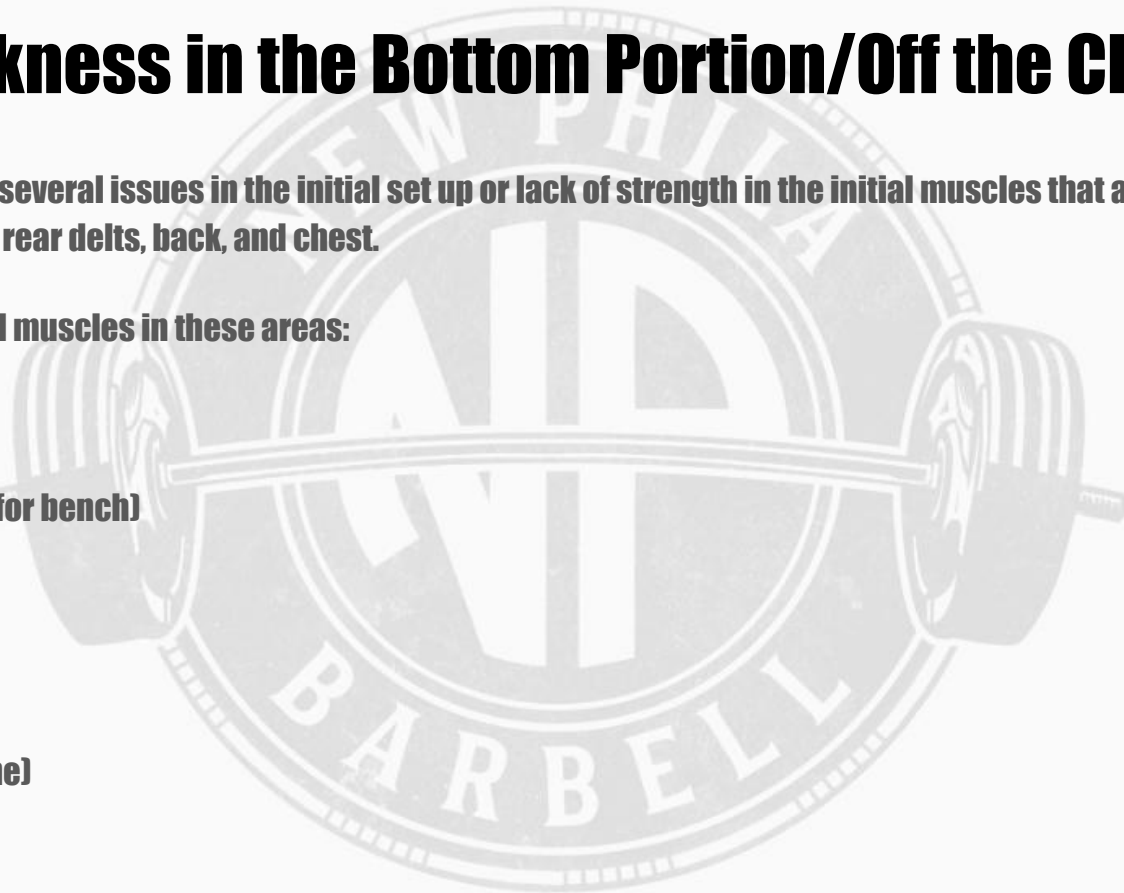
***Rear delt raises**

***Face pulls**

***Dumbbell press (incline)**

***Incline barbell press**

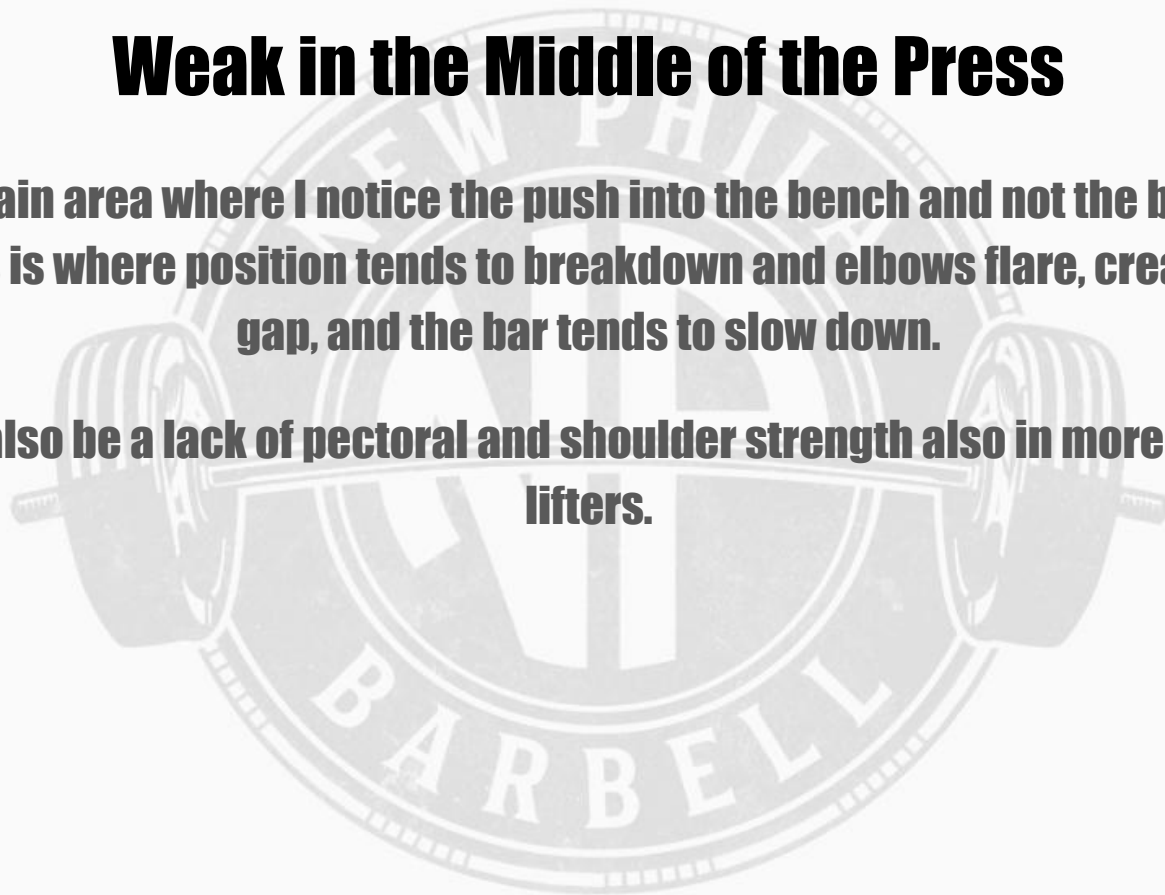
***Stability is the key issue I notice with lifters that fail at the bottom of the bench.**



Weak in the Middle of the Press

***This is the main area where I notice the push into the bench and not the bar away come into play. This is where position tends to breakdown and elbows flare, creates that force gap, and the bar tends to slow down.**

***This could also be a lack of pectoral and shoulder strength also in more experienced lifters.**



Weak in the Top of the Press- Lockout

***Spreading the bar will be key to creating that strong lockout. However, this is a position where I do believe assistance with triceps plays a huge role in creating a strong lockout.**

***Exercises used to get a strong lockout:**

***Triceps dumbbell rollbacks**

***JM press**

***Triceps extension**

***Skull crushers**

***Close grip bench**

***And just more bench volume**

Conclusion

The bench press is simplistic in nature, however, there are a lot of things to consider when it comes to performing this movement as effective as possible. Anyone can bench, but very few can do it effectively. Start applying some of these techniques and start adding lbs to your press.

