

USA Powerlifting Rules Meeting / Referee Briefing
2019 Changes Highlighted

Welcome

- welcoming of lifters to the event
- introduction of referees

Squat

- grip: all four fingers gripping the bar (thumbless grip is allowed)
- position the bar on the shoulders, lift the bar, and step out of racks (spotters may assist)
- stand upright with knees locked, in control/motionless, and ready
 - though not required, some lifters make eye contact or nod to chief referee when ready
- will be told to “REPLACE” the bar if not in the correct starting position after 5 seconds
- lift begins with “SQUAT” command along with downward movement of chief referee’s arm
- descend until the top surface of the leg at the hip joint is lower than top of knee (see picture in USAPL rulebook)
- ascend until in the finished position - upright, knees locked, in control
- lift ends with “RACK” command along with backward movement of chief referee’s arm
- stay with/under the bar if the lift is missed - do not walk away from (or dump) the bar
- causes for failure:
 - not going deep enough
 - double bouncing at bottom of lift; downward movement of bar (“whole of the bar”) during ascent (bar may stop)
 - foot movement (rocking between ball and heel okay); cannot leave “footprint”
 - dumping the bar (may be cause for disqualification from meet)
 - not upright and/or knees not locked at beginning and/or completion of lift
 - beating the start or rack command
 - contact of elbows/upper arms with legs, contact of bar with rack, or contact with spotter in a way that aids the lifter

Bench Press

- can receive lift-off from the staff member designated for lift-offs (or take it out on own)
 - USA Powerlifting policy prohibits personal coaches (or any non-staff member) from lifting off to lifters
- foot blocks may be used (should have been indicated with rack height submission)
- hands must grip the bar (thumbs around) no wider than 81cm between index fingers
- hold bar over chest with arms fully extended (straight arms and elbows locked), in control/motionless, and ready
- feet must be flat on floor; head, shoulders, and butt on bench for the entire lift
- will be told to “REPLACE” the bar if not in the correct starting position after 5 seconds
- lift begins with “START” command along with downward movement of chief referee’s arm
- bring bar down to chest or stomach region (bar may not touch the belt)
- when bar is motionless, “PRESS” command will be given along with upward movement of chief referee’s arm
- press bar back up to full extension of the arms, elbows locked, in control
- lift ends with “RACK” command along with backward movement of chief referee’s arm
- causes for failure:
 - heaving/sinking the bar into the chest after getting press command
 - downward movement of bar (“whole of the bar”) during ascent (bar may stop)
 - lifting of the feet (feet may slide/move but sole of foot must be flat on floor); foot contact with bench or its supports
 - lifting the butt or head off bench; lateral movement of hands on bar
 - elbows not locked at completion (bar may be pressed and locked unevenly)
 - beating the start, press, or rack command
 - bar makes contact with belt; bar does not contact chest or stomach region
 - contact of bar with rack or contact with spotter in a way that aids the lifter

Deadlift

- grip bar with any grip (alternating, hook, overhand)
- lifter begins whenever he/she is ready after bar has been loaded (no start command is given)
- stand up with the bar until the body is upright, knees locked, shoulders back, in control
 - prior to attempt, lifters can move the bar (e.g., roll, shake, etc.) but only one genuine attempt to lift the bar is allowed
- lift ends with “DOWN” command along with downward movement of the chief referee’s arm
- bar must be returned to platform under control, hands gripping bar
- causes for failure:
 - knees not locked and/or shoulders not back at the completion of the lift
 - downward movement of the bar (“whole of the bar”) during the ascent (bar may stop)
 - hitching, ramping, or supporting the bar on the thighs (edging up thighs is okay)
 - dropping the bar (before or after getting the “down” command); includes bar slipping out of hand on the way down
 - foot movement (rocking between ball and heel in same “footprint” is allowed); after down command movement is OK
 - lowering the bar before receiving down command

Miscellaneous

- rounds system is used; pay attention to progress of meet and plan accordingly
- flight A lifters have until 3 minutes before lifting starts (or 3 lifters before later flights [B, C, etc.] start) to change openers once
- lifter may not mount platform until bar called ready/loaded; may only adjust belt on platform (other adjustments off platform)
- ammonia (if used) and/or slapping/striking of lifters (for arousal purposes) must occur out of view of the audience
- lifter has 60 seconds from announcement “bar ready/loaded” to begin lift
 - lift begins: “SQUAT” command (SQ), “START” command (BP), beginning of pull (DL)
- clock only stops in specific instances (e.g., misload or other mistake made by the meet staff)
- once the lift has begun (command given), the lift must commence (no resetting, re-racking, etc.)
- lifter must leave platform within 30 seconds of completion of lift; after lift, tell scorer’s table if rack heights need to be changed
- lifter must submit next attempt within 60 seconds of completion of lift (attempts cannot be changed after they are submitted)
 - if not, next attempt is automatically the same weight if previous attempt was missed or 2.5kg more if attempt made
 - in full meets, 3rd attempt DL may be changed twice; in BP-only meets, 3rd attempt BP may be changed twice
- all attempts must be in 2.5kg increments (including state record attempts); must be 5lb increments in pound-based meets
 - American record attempts may be in increments lower than 2.5kg; can go as low as 0.5kg (e.g., 0.5, 1.0, 1.5, 2.0kg)
 - American records can only be set at state championship meets and higher (e.g., regionals, nationals, etc.)
 - tell scorer’s table if attempting American record so appropriate referees are present for attempt
 - see meet director after meet to fill out any necessary paperwork and ask if drug testing is required
- at meets without a jury, lifter may quickly and politely ask referee (immediately after lift in question) why red light was given
- at meets with a jury present, lifter or coach must go to the jury with any questions/requests (immediately after lift in question)
- all apparel/equipment that could potentially be worn must be approved at equipment check
- thumb loops must be off when wearing wrist wraps
- **all lifters must wear a shirt under their singlet for all lifts (including men during the DL)**
- shin length socks must be worn during deadlift; socks cannot touch knee sleeves and knee sleeves cannot touch singlet
- standard briefs (no “legs”) **or boxer briefs (with “legs”)** must be worn on the platform and during weigh-in
 - boxer shorts, compression shorts, and bike shorts are not allowed
- baby powder and chalk may be used; keep the warmup and staging areas as clean as possible
- medical tape (2 layers) may only be worn on the thumbs (anything else must be approved); kinesio- or KT tape not allowed
- no profanity (includes lifters, coaches, handlers); do not crowd or congregate in the lifter on-deck area
- **10-minute break will occur during the transition from SQ to BP and during the transition from BP to DL**
- lifters should not leave venue until all drug test notifications are made (notifications usually made before conclusion of awards)
 - failure to test (regardless of reason) results in drug test failure; check with meet director if needing to leave early
- coaches, handlers, etc. must complete and submit online liability waiver to be allowed in warmup room or lifter areas

Created by Joe Warpeha, USA Powerlifting Technical Committee Chairman (last edited: January 1, 2019)