

MASTER THE DUMBBELL RDL IN 5 EASY STEPS



Master The Dumbbell RDL in 5 Easy Steps – Improve Hamstrings & Glutes With These 10 Variations

<https://www.missionjacked.com/dumbbell-rdl.html>

Exercise under the spotlight. Master form & execution to improve your hamstrings and gluteus and then try my top 10 db RDL variations.

What Is A Dumbbell RDL?

The dumbbell RDL is to the lower body what the Incline Dumbbell Press is to the upper body. A powerful member of the deadlift family, it's better known as the Romanian Deadlift and can be done with a barbell or a pair of dumbbells. For the benefit of this information, we'll focus exclusively on the dumbbell version of this exercise.

My name is Psymon H., architect of the Mission Jacked movement, creator of the BIG-UP Home Training System, and the man making his name from improving physiques and growing natural muscle with minimal equipment.

In this RDL master class, we'll look at the benefits of RDLs and what makes them different from conventional deadlifts. Next, I'll give you the perfect Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift form guide so you can get the best out of the exercise. Last but not least, I'll share 10 awesome Dumbbell RDL variations for you to try out. This will be the only RDL guide you'll ever need, so bookmark this page and let's get started.

What Are The Benefits of RDLs and What Muscles Do Dumbbell RDLs Work?

The Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift is a formidable opponent when it comes to strengthening the posterior chain. Strengthening your posterior chain will have great rollover effects on improving strength in major compound movements.

Digging a little deeper, Dumbbell RDLs work the four muscles that make up the Hamstrings: the semitendinosus, the semimembranosus, and the two muscles that make up the biceps femoris.

Due to the flexed knee angle and the knees remaining slightly unlocked throughout the movement, this exercise explicitly targets the Hamstrings better than most exercises, especially if you focus on loading the hamstrings during the lowering portion of the movement.

As RDLs is also a hip-hinging movement, it does a great job at directing large amounts of the stimulus to the Gluteus muscles, more so when you concentrate on contracting the Gluteus muscle at the top of the movement.

The dumbbell version of the RDL is especially invaluable to lifters who struggle with the flexibility or range of motion that the barbell version requires.

While the Erector Spinae or the lower back also gets a look while doing an RDL, it shouldn't feel like the most worked muscles after completion of a set. Feeling an overload in the lower back can be due to bad form where not enough of the work has been directed to the Hamstrings and Gluteus. This often comes from lowering too far at the bottom of the movement.

As you must maintain a flat back and rigid torso throughout the range of motion, the muscles in your upper and middle back will also take some of the load to help resist spinal flexion. The trapezius muscles are there to help keep the shoulders and torso from rounding.

What is the Difference between RDL and Deadlifts?

While both target similar muscles, there are a few things that make the exercises different from each other

- The deadlifts target the Quad area more while the RDL focuses on the Glutes and hamstrings.
- The deadlift starts on the ground whereas the dumbbell RDL starts in the standing position; this means that the RDL starts with the downward eccentric range of motion, while the deadlift starts with the upward concentric range of motion.
- With the RDL, you pull from the hips. With the deadlift, you push off the floor with your knees.
- When it comes to shoulder positioning, the shoulders are much more forward in the RDL than they are in the deadlift.

RDL Form Guide: Proper Dumbbell RDL Form

For Pictures <https://www.missionjacked.com/dumbbell-rdl.html>

Items Needed: One pair of dumbbells

Cue 1: Pick up the dumbbells and use a pronated grip. If the dumbbells are heavy, place them safely on top of a bench first so you can lift them without having to go all the way to the ground to pick them up. Have the dumbbells resting on your outer thighs.

Cue 2: Slightly bend at the knees and keep them in this position throughout the entire movement. Have your body weight over your heels.

Cue 3: Keep your chest high, back flat and tense core, hamstrings, and gluteus muscles. Focus on feeling the ground underneath you. Engage your Lats so they help keep the dumbbells on your thighs and stop your lower back from rounding.

Cue 4: With bent knees, hinge at the hips as far as possible by pushing your butt back until the dumbbells are about level with the top of your shins. This will allow you to activate your hamstrings and glutes more.

Cue 5: Squeeze your gluteus to drive your hips up and forward to the top of the movement without extending your knees.

Sets and Reps:

If you are a novice lifter, start with 3 sets of 10 repetitions once per week. If you are an intermediate to an advanced lifter with a few good years of training under your belt, you can do anything from 3-5

working sets in varying rep ranges, aiming for 1-2 repetitions in reserve on each working set. Much will depend on your workout split and ability to recover between workouts.

What Are Some Dumbbell RDL Mistakes?

1: Locking your knees throughout the entire movement. Always have the knees bent so you can hinge without putting unwanted stress on your lower back.

2: Not keeping the dumbbells resting on your thighs; doing this will encourage your back to round while losing the maximum engagement of the Gluteus muscles.

3: Going too far down. To ensure that this doesn't turn into a deadlift, you want to concentrate on hinging at the hips and pushing your butt back with the dumbbells ending just below the knees.

Now you've mastered the exercise, check out these 10 different variations.

Variation 1: Dumbbell RDL With Band: (For Pictures) <https://www.missionjacked.com/dumbbell-rdl.html>

The addition of the band will give you more tension as you reach the top of the movement.

Items Needed: Pair of dumbbells and light to medium size resistance band.

Setup: lay your band on the floor and place a dumbbell on either end of the band. Step on the band with a shoulder-width-apart stance and make sure that the band is securely under the balls of your feet. Grab a dumbbell and the end of the band in each hand. Keeping a flat back, ease yourself into the standing position with your knees slightly bent.

Cue 1: Have your body weight over your heels and the dumbbells resting on your outer Quads. Lift your chest and tense your core, Hamstrings, gluteus and engage your Lats.

Cue 2: With bent knees, hinge at the hips as far as possible by pushing your butt back until the dumbbells are about level with the top of your shins. You should feel a little slack in the band at this point.

Cue 3: Squeeze your glutes to drive your hips up and forward to the top of the movement without extending your knees.

Variation 2: Contralateral Dumbbell RDL: : (For Pictures) <https://www.missionjacked.com/dumbbell-rdl.html>

Doing your RDL in a single leg staggered stance with cross-body-loading will force you to use additional stabilizing muscles while challenging the opposing hamstring and Gluteus to do all of the work.

Items Needed: One dumbbell.

Cue 1: Stand square on, in a staggered stance. Stay on the toes of your back leg through the entire movement. Place the dumbbell in front of your back leg using a pronated grip and bend your knees.

Cue 2: Keep your chest high, tense your core working Hamstring and Gluteus (front leg)

Cue 3: Hinge at the hip by pushing your Butt back as far as you can go. At this point, the dumbbell should just be a little lower than your knee. Use the free arm as a balance tool to help you stay square on.

Cue 4: Squeeze your glutes to drive your hips up and forward to the top of the movement without extending your knees. Repeat for an equal amount of repetitions on the other leg.

Variation 3: Contralateral Dumbbell RDL Version 2: : (For Pictures)

<https://www.missionjacked.com/dumbbell-rdl.html>

Balance is key with this variation. Once you nail the balance, good things will happen

Items Needed: One dumbbell.

Cue 1: Stand square on, in a staggered stance. Stay on the toes of your back leg through the entire movement. Place the dumbbell in front of your back leg using a pronated grip and bend your knees.

Cue 2: Keep your chest high, tense your core working Hamstring and Gluteus (front leg)

Cue 3: As you slowly hinge over at the hips, let your back foot come off the floor until your leg is directly behind you and the dumbbell is about level with the standing knee in front. Try to stay square on and don't let the dumbbell force you to fall to one side. Make sure to have the front knee slightly bent throughout the entire movement.

Cue 4: Slowly return to the start position with the toes of your back leg resting lightly on the floor behind you. Repeat for an equal amount of repetitions on the other leg.

Variation 4: Sliding Contralateral Dumbbell RDL: : (For Pictures)

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While this variant places huge amounts of stress on your working Hamstring and Gluteus, be careful your form doesn't break down as you slide back.

Items Needed: One Slider, Bath towel or paper plate, and one dumbbell.

Setup: Stand with feet just about shoulder-width apart with the slider firmly under the toes of your right leg. Place the dumbbell on the same side as the slider, ensuring that it is just in front of the Quad muscle.

Cue 1: Keep your chest high; tense your core working Hamstring and Gluteus (front leg). Maintain a slight bend in both knees

Cue 2: As you slowly hinge over at the hips, push down and back on the slider until the dumbbell is just below the knee on the front leg. Try to stay square on and ensure you have the front knee slightly bent.

Cue 3: Press down on the slider and squeeze your glutes to drive your hips up and forward to the top of the movement without extending your front knee.

Variation 5: Curtsy Dumbbell RDL: : (For Pictures) <https://www.missionjacked.com/dumbbell-rdl.html>

Choose this variant when you want to turn your RDLs up a notch.

Items Needed: One pair of dumbbells

The Set-Up: With a dumbbell in each hand, stand with one foot in front of the other. Turn the front foot out at about a 45-degree angle. Get on the toes of your back leg and bend both knees.

Cue 1: Slightly bend at the knees and keep them in this position throughout the entire movement.

Cue 2: Keep your chest high, back flat and tense core, hamstring, and Glute muscles of your front leg. Focus on feeling the ground underneath you. Engage your Lats so they help keep the dumbbells on your thighs and stop your lower back from rounding.

Cue 4: With bent knees, hinge at the hips as far as possible by pushing your butt back until the dumbbells are about level with the top of your front shin.

Cue 5: Squeeze your glutes to drive your hips up and forward to the top of the movement without extending your knees. Repeat the process for the other leg.

Variation 6: Sumo Stance Dumbbell RDL : (For Pictures) <https://www.missionjacked.com/dumbbell-rdl.html>

This is a perfect alternative for the Dumbbell Sumo Deadlift and zeros in on the Hamstrings and Gluteus with venom.

Setup: Stand with dumbbells in hand with a wider than shoulder-width stance and feet turned out at a 45-degree angle.

Cue 1: Have the dumbbells resting on your inner Quads with a pronated grip.

Cue 2: Keep your chest high, tense your core, hamstrings, and glutes and engage your Lats.

Cue 3: Transfer your body weight to your heels and slightly bend your knees.

Cue 4: Slowly hinge at the hips by pushing your Butt back as far as possible. The dumbbells should be level or just below our Knees.

Cue 5: Squeeze your glutes to drive your hips up and forward to the top of the movement without extending your knees.

Advanced RDL Workout:

The great thing about the dumbbell RDL is that you can combine it with other exercises to make a time-saving In-set Superset.

In-Set Supersets are intensity techniques used to push the training boundaries. Usually, the In-Set Superset is done by alternating between two different exercises for the same muscle group within one set.

For example: using chest, you would perform one repetition of an Incline Dumbbell Press followed by one repetition of an Incline fly. You would alternate between the two exercises until you have completed the set.

We're going to do things slightly differently with our RDLs by pitching them together with a few different compound exercises to up the intensity. The following exercise combinations are perfect time-savers especially if you do full-body workout splits and want to hammer additional muscle groups in one go.

This style of training is not recommended for novice and early intermediate lifters. After I show you four RDL In-Set Supersets, I'll share exactly how to perform each exercise dual.

Variation 7: Dumbbell RDL Into Shrug: : (For Pictures) <https://www.missionjacked.com/dumbbell-rdl.html>

This is a great combo for involving more of the upper trap muscles along with the other muscles that get stimulated during a set of RDLs.

Cue 1: Pick up the dumbbells and use a pronated grip. If the dumbbells are heavy, place them safely on top of a bench first so you can lift them without having to go all the way to the ground to pick them up. Have the dumbbells resting on your outer thighs.

Cue 2: Slightly bend at the knees and keep them in this position throughout the entire movement. Have your body weight over your heels.

Cue 3: Keep your chest high, back flat and tense core, hamstrings, and Glute muscles. Focus on feeling the ground underneath you. Engage your Lats so they help keep the dumbbells on your thighs and stop your lower back from rounding.

Cue 4: With bent knees, hinge at the hips as far as possible by pushing your butt back until the dumbbells are about level with the top of your shins. This will allow you to activate your hamstrings and glutes more.

Cue 5: Squeeze your glutes to drive your hips up and forward to the top of the movement without extending your knees.

Cue 6: Shrug the dumbbells as high as you can and hold them briefly before lowering the dumbbells to the start position.

Cue 7: Alternate between the two exercises movements until your set is complete.

Variation 8: Dumbbell RDL into Squat : (For Pictures) <https://www.missionjacked.com/dumbbell-rdl.html>

This terrific exercise combo works well for either lower body designated workouts or full-body sessions because you have a high and focused blanket coverage on the Quads, Hamstrings, and Glutes.

Cue 1: Pick up the dumbbells and use a pronated grip. If the dumbbells are heavy, place them safely on top of a bench first so you can lift them without having to go all the way to the ground to pick them up. Have the dumbbells resting on your outer thighs.

Cue 2: Slightly bend at the knees and keep them in this position throughout the entire movement. Have your body weight over your heels.

Cue 3: Keep your chest high, back flat and tense core, hamstrings, and Glute muscles. Focus on feeling the ground underneath you. Engage your Lats so they help keep the dumbbells on your thighs and stop your lower back from rounding.

Cue 4: With bent knees, hinge at the hips as far as possible by pushing your butt back until the dumbbells are about level with the top of your shins. This will allow you to activate your hamstrings and glutes more.

Cue 5: Squeeze your glutes to drive your hips up and forward to the top of the movement without extending your knees.

Cue 6: Bring the dumbbells to your side while keeping your upper body as rigid as possible. Proceed into a Dumbbell Squat until your Quads are at a 90-degree angle to the floor.

Cue 7: Briefly hold at the bottom before powering your way back to the top of the movement.

Cue 8: Make sure you have a slight bend in your knees before returning to the Dumbbell RDL portion of the exercise.

Variation 9: Dumbbell RDL into Bent Over Row: : (For Pictures)
<https://www.missionjacked.com/dumbbell-rdl.html>

An awesome doubleheader that will throw extra stress on the Lats as well as do everything a good Dumbbell RDL should do.

Cue 1: Pick up the dumbbells and use a pronated grip. If the dumbbells are heavy, place them safely on top of a bench first so you can lift them without having to go all the way to the ground to pick them up. Have the dumbbells resting on your outer thighs.

Cue 2: Slightly bend at the knees and keep them in this position throughout the entire movement. Have your body weight over your heels.

Cue 3: Keep your chest high, back flat and tense core, hamstrings, and Glute muscles. Focus on feeling the ground underneath you. Engage your Lats so they help keep the dumbbells on your thighs and stop your lower back from rounding.

Cue 4: With bent knees, hinge at the hips as far as possible by pushing your butt back until the dumbbells are about level with the top of your shins. This will allow you to activate your hamstrings and glutes more.

Cue 5: In This position, row the dumbbells into your hips. Hold briefly before returning the dumbbells to the outstretched position.

Cue 6: Squeeze your glutes to drive your hips up and forward to the top of the movement without extending your knees.

Variation 10: Curtsy Dumbbell RDL Into Curtsy Squat : (For Pictures)

<https://www.missionjacked.com/dumbbell-rdl.html>

This In-Set Superset will need all of your grit and determination to complete with good form.

The Set-Up: With a dumbbell in each hand, stand with one foot in front of the other. Turn the front foot out at about a 45-degree angle. Get on the toes of your back leg and bend both knees.

Cue 1: Slightly bend at the knees and keep them in this position throughout the entire movement.

Cue 2: Keep your chest high, back flat and tense core, hamstring, and Glute muscles of your front leg. Focus on feeling the ground underneath you. Engage your Lats so they help keep the dumbbells on your thighs and stop your lower back from rounding.

Cue 4: With bent knees, hinge at the hips as far as possible by pushing your butt back until the dumbbells are about level with the top of your front shin.

Cue 5: Squeeze your glutes to drive your hips up and forward to the top of the movement without extending your knees.

Cue 6: Slowly lower yourself down into a full curtsy making sure to let your knee track out to the side. Once your front Quad is at a 90-degree angle to the floor, hold briefly before returning to the top. Repeat the process for the other leg once the desired repetitions have been completed.

In-Set Superset Sets and Reps:

For these In-Set Supersets choose 1-2 exercises and start with 2 sets of 16 repetitions, meaning that you will alternate between the two exercises until you have completed 8 repetitions of each exercise totaling 16 repetitions. If you're used to working with reps in reserve (RIR), shoot for 2 reps in reserve on each working set. Here's a great way to implement reps in reserve using dumbbell RDLs

- On the completion of set one, if you feel you had 3 or more reps in reserve (RIR), you will add weight for set two.
- On the completion of set one, if you had 1 or fewer reps in reserve, you will take weight away for your second set.
- If after consideration you have 2 repetitions left in reserve, keep the same weight for the second set.

Dumbbell RDL Also Known As:

1: RDL

2: RDLs

3: Dumbbell RDLs

4: Romanian Deadlift db

5: Romanian Deadlifts db

6: Dumbbell Romanian Deadlifts

7: Single Leg RDL

8: RDL Single Leg

9: Dumbbell Single Leg RDL

10: 1 Leg db RDL

11: 1 Leg db RDLs

If you found this Dumbbell RDL Master Class helpful, I would be grateful if you would share this page by using the social media share buttons at the top or bottom of the page or link to this article.

For Pictures and Cues Go to <https://www.missionjacked.com/dumbbell-rdl.html>