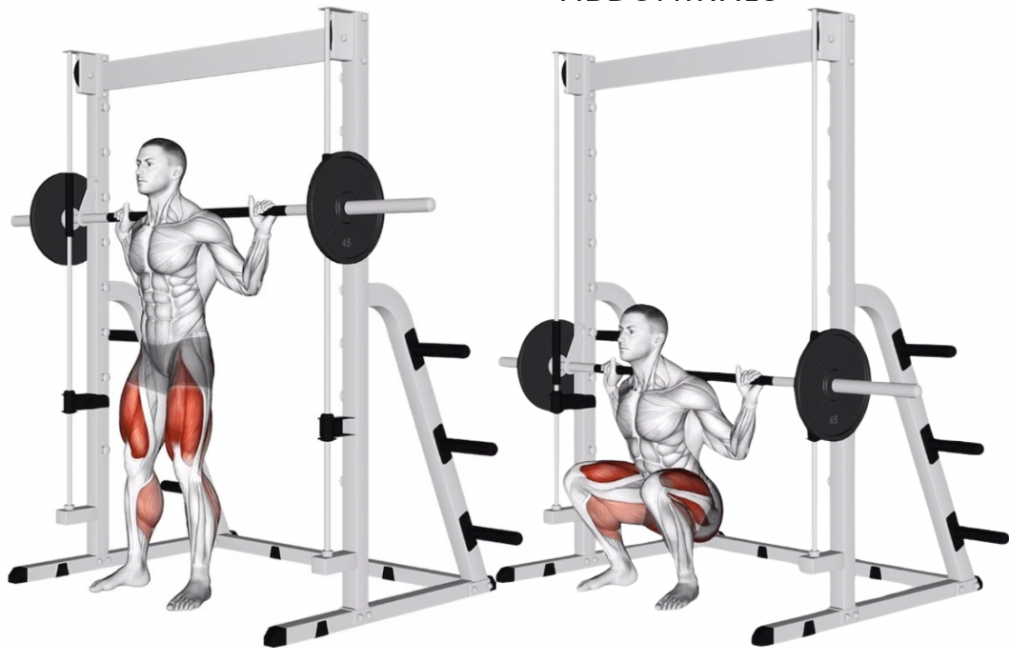


HOW TO PERFORM A SMITH MACHINE SQUAT

MUSCLES WORKED

GLUTES, QUADRICEPS, HIP ADDUCTORS,
LOWER BACK MUSCLES
ALSO WORKS HAMSTRINGS, CALVES,
ABDOMINALS



Step One: Setup the Smith Machine

Before you start squatting, you'll want to be sure that the Smith machine is ready. This begins with the bar.

Your Smith bar should be level with shoulders, not your neck.

The best position would be for your barbell to be located on your upper traps and rear delt when standing.

So, it'll have to be set a little lower than that. That way you can lift it without needing to come up on your tip toes.

You'll also need to be sure that the safety bar is set at knee level. The safety catch being at this level gives you enough room to work with and remain safe.

After that, you can load the bar with plates. But again, start light.

Step Two: Starting Position

Get under the bar. The bar should be resting on your traps and rear delts (back of shoulders), not your neck.

Position your hands at about shoulder width on the bar. You can adjust a little to find what's comfortable for you.

Now, step your feet forward a little (approximately 3-6 inches forward from a normal squat stance).

Your feet will be out in front of your knees with your legs straight. However, you can adjust this a little to find what position is best for you.

Remember, start with an empty bar to find your foot placement.

The goal is to keep your knees behind your toes when squatting and your back more upright (no rounding of the low back). Your knees and toes will be just about aligned at the bottom of the squat.

As with a regular squat, your feet can be hip to shoulder width apart, and your toes can be straight forward or slightly pointed outward. Having your toes flared out may offer you a better range of motion.

The best stance is the one that is comfortable for you and that you can feel your quads really working. Everyone is built a little different.

Your elbows should be aligned with your torso but pointed back a bit.

Now, unhooking the bar will require you to lift up a little and rotate your wrists back. Make sure the hooks are out of the way (they will stay unhooked so long as you don't rotate your wrists forward).

Once the bar is unhooked, it's time to inhale and descend.

Step Three: The Descent

As you descend, you'll want to push your hips back a little as you perform knee flexion (bend at the knees).

Keep your chest up, shoulder blades retracted, and your head facing forward. This will ensure safety of your spine.

As for how low you should go, ideally you want to have your bum about in line with your calves at the bottom, so a little past parallel. This will give you great stretching tension in your quads (and glutes), which is an essential aspect of building muscle and strength.

The only exception is if you lack the mobility, in which case, go as low as you can and work on hip and ankle mobility in the meantime.

There is a happy medium between too little range of motion and too much, so don't go TOO low. Again, a little past parallel is ideal, but parallel (thighs parallel with the floor) is also fine.

Your knees should be about in line with your toes.

Feet flat on the ground.

No arch in your back.

Step Four: The Ascent

Exhale and drive up from the heels of your feet.

Do not forget to keep your spine straight, your elbows pointed, and your core engaged during this.

At the top, your hips will come to neutral, but your knees will not fully lock out. Meaning, keep a slight bend in your knee when standing.

Then, repeat.

Best Rep Range:

Depending on your goal, you may want to focus on strength, hypertrophy or endurance.

Strength: 3-8 reps

Hypertrophy: 6-12 reps

Endurance: 12-15+ reps

Reps mean nothing without consideration for load.

Let's just say that the load should challenge you in the given rep range. Meaning you are coming close to failure (i.e. 1-3 reps left in the tank).