

# How to get "Super Strong" for Wrestling!

## Part 1: In-season Strength Training

By Steve Preston MSEd



**W**restling is a sport that requires above average strength levels. In order to be a Champion, you need to keep the strength that you've built up in the off-season and keep it through a full season of dual meets, tournaments, and constant "cutting weight." This isn't easy to do... unless you know how to do it! The skills that you learn through countless hours of practice make or break you. The strength and conditioning allow you to perform the moves. Learn exactly how to get stronger for wrestling.

**With all things equal, the STRONGER wrestler WINS every time!**

The following tips will help you develop your wrestling strength and keep it throughout the season!

**1. Drink Meal Replacement Shakes**  
Meal replacement shakes were originally developed for cancer patients. They were consumed because they were pre-digested, and "nutrient dense." They are loaded with vitamins and minerals, high protein blend, and just enough carbohydrates to keep up energy levels. These are perfect for

wrestlers who are dropping weight to move down to a lower weight class. They are low in calories, yet have the nutritional values that are so important to maintain or build strength. Try to consume 2 or 3 per day if you're cutting weight.

**2. DO NOT STARVE YOURSELF**  
Wrestlers are notorious for cutting weight by not eating, then dehydrating. Let me explain what happens to your body when you decide to do this in order to make weight each week. When you take in too few calories to maintain your body weight, the body goes into a defense mechanism. Sure, the scale will show that you are indeed losing weight. But the body determines that it is being starved, and as a means to protect itself from starving, it will hold onto body fat, and start breaking down muscle tissue for energy. You will wind up losing SOME body fat, plus muscle and water. So you make weight, but you're not as strong due to less muscle on your body. If you have to make weight, plan ahead, and try to lose body fat, not muscle.

**3. Train Your Wrestling Muscles**  
When creating a workout program for

wrestling you must first consider the muscles that you use in wrestling in order of importance. These are the glutes, hips and low back (the posterior chain muscles), then the quadriceps, chest, shoulders, arms, hands, and neck. I recommend that you perform a full body strength routine. You still want to work the entire body thoroughly, but prioritize the wrestling muscles first.

### 4. Strength Train Every 4-5 Days During The Wrestling Season

Your goal during the season is to at least keep up your strength levels, with the best case scenario being strength gains as the season progresses. In order to accomplish this you want to strength train frequently enough, but not so much that you're constantly breaking your body down. For the in-season, try to hit a full body workout on a schedule like this: Week 1 – Monday and Friday; Week 2 – Wednesday. Then repeat. This means that one week you perform two full body strength workouts, and the next week you perform one full body strength workout. Alternate these weeks throughout the wrestling season.

### 5. Progressive Resistance

Remember to always strive to do at least one more repetition or the same amount of repetitions with a little more weight as often as possible. Your muscles quickly adapt, and you need to force them to become stronger. Strive for a 5% strength gain on each exercise per month. If you're really cutting a lot of weight this season, you may not be able to gain strength because the body needs a surplus of calories from food in order to feed the muscle. At least, try to maintain your strength by keeping the same weight on each exercise throughout the season.

*Steve Preston is a Sports Performance Specialist in Virginia Beach, Virginia. He is the owner of Sports Strength, a company devoted to providing sports specific strength training information to athletes. For more information on Consultations with Steve, go to [www.sports-strength.com](http://www.sports-strength.com) or call 757-646-2644. For a FREE course called "7 Secrets Of Training Champion Wrestlers" go to [www.sports-strength.com/wrestling.html](http://www.sports-strength.com/wrestling.html).*

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