



Front Rack Mobility Guide

ERIE SHORE ATHLETICS | ELBOWS AND WRISTS

A solid front rack needs four things at once: wrists that extend, forearms that supinate, elbows that flex fully and lift, and enough lat, triceps and upper-back length to keep the elbows up. Do this 10 to 12 minute protocol every day and most members will feel the bar rest on their shoulders instead of in their hands.

HOW TO USE IT

- Do the drills before class. Do the post work after class or in the evening.
- Aim for a firm stretch, never sharp pain, pinching or tingling.
- Move slowly and breathe. Hold the end range, don't bounce.
- Consistency beats intensity: daily short sessions work better than one long one a week.

Daily protocol at a glance

Run the drills in order before class (about 7 minutes), then finish with the post work (about 6 minutes).

Order	When	Drill	Dose	Targets
1	Before class	Wrist CARs	5 slow circles each way, each wrist	Wrist warm-up
2	Before class	Quadruped wrist rocks	3 hand positions, 10 rocks each	Wrist extension
3	Before class	Prayer stretch	2 x 20 sec	Wrist extension, forearm flexors
4	Before class	Pronation and supination with a hammer or light dumbbell	2 x 10 each way, each arm	Forearm rotation (supination)
5	Before class	PVC front rack elbow lifts	8 slow reps, then 20 sec hold	Elbow height, rack pattern
6	After class	Forearm smash	60 sec each forearm	Forearm flexor and extensor tissue
7	After class	Triceps and lat smash	60 sec each side	Elbow-up position
8	After class	Kneeling	2 x 30 to 45	Overhead and

Order	When	Drill	Dose	Targets
		bench triceps and lat stretch	sec	rack elbow position
9	After class	Thoracic extension over a roller	8 reps, 3 sec at the end	Upper-back extension
10	After class	Empty bar front rack hold	3 x 20 to 30 sec	Putting it all together

Wrist drills

The goal is more comfortable wrist extension under load, so the bar can sit on the shoulders with the hand relaxed.

1. Wrist CARs (controlled articular rotations)

- Make a loose fist and draw the biggest slow circle you can with the knuckles, keeping the forearm still.
- 5 circles each direction, each wrist.
- Cue: smooth and slow, no clicking through the end range.

2. Quadruped wrist rocks

- On hands and knees, rock the shoulders forward and back over the hands while keeping the palms flat.
- Do 10 slow rocks in each of 3 hand positions: fingers forward, fingers pointing out to the sides, fingers pointing back toward the knees.
- Hold the end of each rock for 2 seconds. Spread the fingers and press the knuckles into the floor.
- Regression: put the hands on a bench or box to lower the load. Progression: rock further and add the fingers-back position last.

3. Prayer stretch

- Press the palms together in front of the chest, then lower the hands toward the waist while keeping the palms touching.
- Hold 20 seconds, rest, repeat once. Keep the elbows out wide and the shoulders relaxed.

Elbow and forearm drills

These open up forearm rotation and teach the elbows to stay high with the bar on the shoulders.

4. Pronation and supination with a hammer or light dumbbell

- Sit with the forearm on your thigh or a bench, wrist off the edge, holding a hammer or a 5 to 10 lb dumbbell by one end.
- Slowly rotate the palm up, then palm down, through the full range.
- 2 sets of 10 each way, each arm. Keep the elbow still and the movement slow.

5. PVC front rack elbow lifts

- Set a PVC pipe or empty bar on the shoulders in a front rack with a relaxed grip, two or three fingers under the bar.
- Start with the elbows low, then lift them slowly until they point forward and up, keeping the chest tall and the ribs down.
- 8 slow reps, then hold the top position for 20 seconds.
- Cue: the bar rides on the shoulders and collarbones, not in the hands. If the bar rolls into the fingertips, lift the elbows higher.

Post work

Do these after class or in the evening, when the tissue is warm. Together they free up the forearms, triceps, lats and upper back that hold the elbows down.

6. Forearm smash

- Use a lacrosse ball or a barbell on a bench. Roll the forearm, palm up and then palm

down, from the wrist crease to the elbow.

- 60 seconds each forearm. Pause on tender spots and gently flex and extend the wrist for 5 to 10 reps.

7. Triceps and lat smash

- Lie on a foam roller or lacrosse ball. Roll the back of the upper arm, then the side of the ribcage under the armpit.
- 60 seconds each side. Breathe and pause on tender spots rather than grinding.

8. Kneeling bench triceps and lat stretch

- Kneel in front of a bench with the elbows on top and palms together or holding a PVC pipe. Sit the hips back and let the chest sink toward the floor.
- 2 x 30 to 45 seconds. Keep the ribs down and breathe into the stretch.

9. Thoracic extension over a roller

- Lie with the roller across the upper back, hands behind the head, hips on the floor. Extend over the roller one segment at a time.
- 8 reps with a 3 second hold at the end of each. Move the roller up or down the upper back between sets.

10. Empty bar front rack hold

- Set an empty bar in a front rack with the elbows high. Hold with a relaxed grip.
- 3 x 20 to 30 seconds. Rest 30 seconds between holds and stay tall.
- Progress by adding light weight or by holding the rack in a bottom front squat position.

Progress checks and safety

Re-test once a week with the same bar or PVC, and note the date so you can see the change.

- **Rack test:** hold an empty bar in a front rack with the elbows pointing forward and up, torso upright, and two fingers under the bar. Pass = the bar stays on the shoulders for 30 seconds without the elbows dropping.
- **Squat test:** perform 5 bodyweight or empty-bar front squats. Pass = the elbows stay high and the bar doesn't roll forward into the hands.

- **Wrist check:** in the quadruped rock with fingers forward, note how far the shoulders travel past the hands before the heels of the hands lift or the wrist pinches.

SAFETY

- Sharp pain, pinching, numbness or tingling means stop. Back off the range and ask a coach.
- Mild stretch sensations that fade within a minute or two are normal.
- Pain at the elbow or wrist that lasts more than two weeks, or that wakes you at night, should be checked by a healthcare provider.
- Not sure how a drill should feel? Ask a coach at ESA to watch your first few reps.