

# Keystone Abilities: What are they and do you have them?

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# Keystone Abilities. What are they and do you have them?

Keystone Abilities are derived from the biological term “Keystone Species“. These are plant/animal species that have a disproportionate effect on their environment. In other words, their presence (even in very small numbers) have a **big** effect on *everything* else around them. So if these Keystone Species are ok, then the surrounding environment is almost certainly ok too.

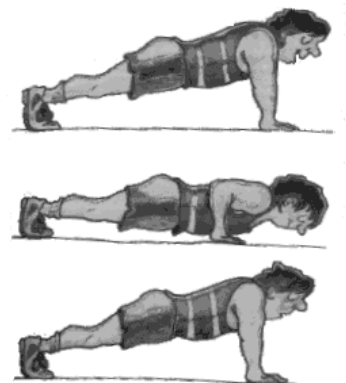


Example of a Keystone Species - the Grey Wolf

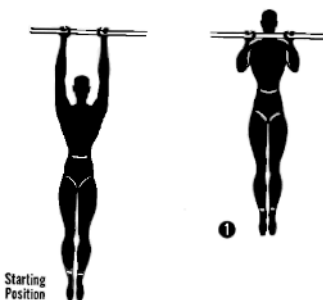
We have “**Keystone Abilities**“. These are abilities that have a disproportionate effect on our health/fitness/performance. Our ability to do them means that many other aspects of our bodies (CV fitness, strength, coordination, flexibility etc) are ok. And by simply learning to do them well, everything else will improve also.

An example of a Keystone Ability (for both males *and* females) is the full pressup. If you can do them comfortably, then chances are:

- you're not obese
- you have enough upper body strength
- you have good arm strength
- you have enough core/abdominal strength
- you can coordinate your body as a whole and it can work as a single unit



So instead of wasting your time and effort working separately on your weight, triceps, shoulders, chest, abdominals, quadriceps and coordination with silly isolation exercises....just practice your press ups and everything else will fall into place!



Another example of a Keystone Ability is the full pull up. The ability to do these means:

- you are certainly not obese
- you have good upper body strength
- you have good arm strength

- you have the right attitude

Another example of a Keystone Ability is the full 1 legged squat, or “pistol”. When you can do these:

- you have very good leg strength
- you have good flexibility
- you have good balance
- you have good joints
- you have a fantastic attitude
- you will find most other things in life really easy



An example of an ability that is defiantly *not* a Keystone ability, is the bicep curl. When you can do this, you can:

- sit down on a seat
- bend your elbow
- ummm...is that it?



Of course, different ages/sexes/populations will have different Keystone Abilities. I won't ask my granny to do pull ups for example, but I will ask my Karate students to do plyometric pressups and box jumps.

Work out about half a dozen Keystone Abilities for you and your sport and make them the basis of your training. Put your effort into doing a few of these moves and see almost everything else fall into place.

What are the Keystone Abilities for you and your sport? If you are having trouble finding them out, contact me for help.

