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*America's Healthiest Couple*

**If You're Gonna Do It,  
Do It Right**

By Dan & Jennifer Polimino



"Why are you so tough on people about their weight-lifting form?" one of our clients recently asked. "Because without proper form you might as well go home and stop wasting your time," we replied. Obviously taken aback, our client continued, "Even if my form isn't correct I must be doing something for my muscles!" Something is right, but probably not what he had in mind.

You see, lifting weights with poor form is a terrific way to set yourself up for an injury. And talk

about a waste of time, we estimate that around 80 percent of people use such poor form that they're hardly even stressing the muscles they intended. For example, the lat pulldown is an exercise intended to work a large muscle group in your back called the latissimus dorsi. The lats, as they're known in gym lingo, run down both sides of your back forming that great v-shape taper. But we often see people pulling the bar too far down and actually working their shoulders, forearms and wrists more than their backs. Furthermore, they commonly sway from front to back so much that their lower backs



do a significant percentage of the pulling. Since this exercise wasn't designed for the shoulders, forearms, wrists and lower back, all are primed for injury. And after all that work, they barely stress the muscle group they were initially after, the lats. Ironically, it's usually these same folks that wonder why they never get the results they're looking for.

Part of the problem is not being able to admit they don't know what they're doing. One person told us he learned how to lift weights from a former college roommate that played football. Dan's college roommate was a hairdresser and while Dan picked up a few hair styling tips, would you want him cutting your hair? Definitely not, but why, then, did this guy trust his body to someone who picked up a few weight lifting tips during football practice? If you want to know how to lift weights correctly, talk to a professional.

*Join Dan and Jennifer Polimino, America's Healthiest Couple, right here every Monday for fitness and nutritional advice. Dan and Jennifer are ACSM/ACE certified trainers, authors, and founders of Paradigm Fitness, Inc. and The Great Shape-Up Program. To ask them a question or to find out more about lasting weight loss, visit [GreatShapeUp.com](http://GreatShapeUp.com)*

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