

# Squat Stand vs. Squat Rack vs. Power Rack: Which is Best for You?

Squats and bench presses are two of the classic exercises found in most workout programs regardless of your goals or experience.

If you want to start working out at home, you'll need a rack to support a barbell so you can perform different variations of squats and presses.

Let's take a look at the differences between a squat stand vs. squat rack vs. power rack, and which you should choose based on three key factors.

### What is a Squat Stand?

A squat stand is as basic as it gets. A wide base of durable metal or aluminum extends upward on either side. Each tower has holes drilled into it every couple of inches, allowing you to lock into place a set of brackets to hold your barbell.

### Advantages of a Squat Stand

**Price Point:** Given its basic setup and construction, the squat stand will be the most budget friendly option for those who are building a home gym.

**Space Saver:** If you're working with limited space, the squat stand allows you to perform your workout without worrying about scrapping the ceiling or taking up the entire room.

**Enough for Fundamentals:** The squat stand is perfect for learning the basics of weightlifting. Whether you're performing a squat, bench press, or shoulder press, the squat stand can handle enough weight while you improve your form and execution.

### Disadvantages of a Squat Stand

**Weight Limit:** Some squat stands have a lower weight limit than your typical squat rack. Make sure that if you buy a squat stand, you choose one with a weight limit of no less than 1,000 pounds.

**Spotter Required:** Unlike the power rack, the squat stand doesn't offer much in the way of assistance should the barbell slip. Keep a spotter nearby.

What is a Squat Rack?

At first glance, you might not be able to see much of a difference with the squat rack vs. squat stand. Look a little closer and you'll see that a squat rack or half rack tends to have a wider base.

It's also a bit more customizable, providing you with an opportunity to upgrade with rack accessories.

Finally, a squat rack usually has one or two top bars running across the front and back for extra support. You can also use these bars for pull-ups.

Advantages of a Squat Rack

**More Options for Exercise:** If you use Olympic weightlifting exercises like in a CrossFit workout, then you'll want a squat rack. A power rack, while safer, can limit your range of motion on exercises like the overhead squat.

**Extra Support:** Given the wider base and extra bars, the squat rack or half rack provides an extra layer of support. This is important if you are using heavier weight loads.

**Budget-Friendly:** While not usually as inexpensive as a squat stand, a squat rack is still a budget friendly option for home gyms.

Disadvantages of a Squat Rack

**Spotter Required:** Just like the squat stand, the squat rack doesn't have long brackets to catch a falling barbell. To ensure your safety, you'll need a spotter during your workouts.

**Weight Limit:** Squat racks *should* have a higher weight limit than a squat stand but check before you buy. Same rule applies: choose one with a weight limit of no less than 1,000 pounds.

What is a Power Rack?

A power rack, also called a full rack or squat cage, is exactly what it sounds like: a set of metal bars that completely surround the athlete during an exercise.

The bars form the widest foundation of the three pieces of equipment, allowing you to go after those personal bests without worry.

Most importantly, the power rack has a set of horizontal bars that can be adjusted based on your height. These are catch bars. Should a barbell slip and fall, these catch bars will prevent the barbell from crashing into you. Can't do much for your ego though.

## Advantages of a Power Rack

**Safety:** Hands down, the power rack is the safest option on this list. With its wide base, catch bars, and high weight limit, the power rack eliminates the need for a spotter.

**Weight Limit:** As mentioned above, the power rack has a weight limit that is beyond what most professional athletes can lift.

## Disadvantages of a Power Rack

**A Lot of Room Required:** The size of a power rack is a double-edged sword: it's great for safety but requires a lot of room.

**Price Point:** All that extra metal and bars add up. A power rack is going to hit your wallet harder than a squat stand or squat rack.

**Might Interfere with Overhead Exercises:** Depending on how tall of a power rack you purchase, you might not be able to perform overhead exercises like the overhead squat.

## Squat Stand vs. Squat Rack vs. Power Rack: Which Should You Choose?

It all comes down to three major factors: budget, space, and goals.

If you're new to weightlifting with a limited budget and minimal space in your home, we would recommend a squat stand.

Have you been lifting for a while but you have a bit more cash to spend on a quality home gym? We would say go with an upgradable squat stand or a squat rack.

Are you a serious lifter who is more interested in a life-long investment than saving a few bucks? Go with a power rack.