

Shoulder Special Tests – Quick Reference Guide

Test Name	Purpose	How to Perform	Positive Sign
Neer Impingement Test	Detects shoulder impingement	Passively flex the patient's shoulder while stabilizing the scapula	Pain at the acromioclavicular joint
Hawkins-Kennedy Test	Identifies subacromial impingement	Flex the shoulder and elbow to 90°, then internally rotate the forearm	Pain at the acromioclavicular joint
Apprehension Test	Assesses anterior shoulder instability	Abduct and externally rotate the shoulder slowly	Apprehension or fear of dislocation
Speed's Test	Evaluates biceps tendon pathology	Resist shoulder flexion with elbow extended and forearm supinated	Pain at the biceps tendon
Empty Can Test (Jobe's)	Checks supraspinatus integrity	Arm elevated to 90° in scapular plane, then slowly resist downward pressure	Pain or weakness
Lift-off Test	Tests subscapularis function	Hand behind back, lift hand away from body	Instability or weakness
Sulcus Sign	Indicates inferior glenohumeral instability	Push arm downward while patient relaxed	Visible sulcus or gap under acromion
O'Brien's Test	Detects SLAP lesions	Arm flexed to 90°, adducted 10–15°, then slowly resist downward force with thumb	Pain with the resist downward force with thumb