

Wednesday Thursday Friday

**6 WEEKS To**  
**6 PACK ABS**



**ADVANCED  
ABDOMINAL  
CIRCUIT TRAINING**

**DAVID GRISAFFI**

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# **6 Weeks to 6 Pack Abs**

**Advanced Abdominal Circuit Training**

**By David Grisaffi**



## **A WORD OF CAUTION: DISCLAIMER**

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This book is for reference and informational purposes only and is no way intended as medical counseling or medical advice. The information contained herein should not be used to treat, diagnose, or prevent a disease or medical condition without the advice of a competent medical professional. This book deals with in-depth information on health, fitness, and nutrition. Most of the information applies to everyone in general; however, not everyone has the same body type. We each have different responses to exercise depending on our choice of intensity and diet. Before making any changes in your lifestyle, you should consult with a physician to discover the best solution for your individual body type. The author, writer, editors, and graphic designer shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any damage or injury alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the information contained in this book.

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# Health and Medical Disclaimer

## A Word of Caution

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*6 Weeks to 6-Pack Abs and a Core of Steel* is for informational purposes only and is not intended as medical advice.

The information contained in this document should not be used to treat, diagnose, or prevent medical conditions, injuries, or health problems. The author and publishers of this program recommend that every person seek the advice of a competent medical professional before beginning any exercise or nutrition program.

This report deals with advanced techniques and information about abdominal and core training and exercise. Although some of the information applies to the general population, not everyone has the same fitness level or capacity for exercise and may or may not be prepared for the advanced exercises described in this report.

Use of the information, exercises, and workouts in this document is to be undertaken at the sole discretion and risk of the reader.

Before making any changes in your lifestyle, diet, or exercise program, ***you should consult with a physician.***



# 1 How to Set Up the Perfect Abdominal and Core Conditioning Workout Routine

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You are about to learn some of the most effective and advanced abdominal and core conditioning exercises on the planet. But first you must understand some simple but often overlooked training principles essential for getting the most effective workouts possible. They include the following:

- How to get started on your program
- The need for warming up
- The importance of proper posture and form
- How to exercise safely
- What equipment to use
- What you should wear while training
- How to set up a training schedule
- The best approach to cardio training

## How to Get Started

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This program is a highly advanced abdominal and core routine designed to achieve the maximum possible results in just six weeks. The goals of this program include core strengthening and conditioning while at the same time developing the six-pack appearance of your abdominal muscles. Each workout routine effectively targets every major abdominal muscle as well as the deeper core muscles that provide strength and stability.

This program requires that you train your abdominals and core three days a week, and each day is a completely different workout program, consisting of a four-exercise circuit. Because a total of twelve different exercises are used, this allows every part of your abs and core—top and bottom, inside and outside—to be thoroughly trained, which is one reason why this program is so effective. The exercise variety also helps prevent quick adaptation while keeping the workouts interesting and engaging.

Depending on your current physical condition, you must decide how much exercise is appropriate for your body. Even if you are advanced, I recommend you perform only one circuit on your first workout, then decide if you are prepared for two, and then three circuits. Highly advanced athletes may be able to perform as many as four (the maximum) circuits, but most people should build up to three.

If you're a beginner, or if you have suffered from any type of injury or medical condition—including but not limited to hernia, surgery, lower back pain, or caesarean section—then this program is NOT the best place to start. It is absolutely critical that you have a solid level of muscular strength, control, and stabilization before attempting these routines.

**This program is for intermediate and advanced trainees.** When I prescribe workout programs for beginners, I intentionally design them to include simple abdominal core control and stabilization exercises first, before progressively increasing to the more difficult movements. These introductory level exercises seem easy to some people, but if you are a beginner, it is crucial that you do not attempt advanced routines such as this one without developing the proper foundation first. The basic control and stabilization exercises for beginners can be found in my full-length ebook, *Firm and Flatten Your Abs* at [www.FlattenYourAbs.net](http://www.FlattenYourAbs.net). This advanced program will still be here for you when you are ready.

Keep in mind that the most important factor in getting excellent results from this program is consistency. Even if you're an advanced and highly conditioned athlete with years of training experience, without sticking with the program consistently week after week, you will never develop the beautiful abdominal region that many bodybuilders, athletes, and models possess.

### Always Warm Up

The warm-up is a crucial part of your program because it prepares you for a safer and more effective workout. You should begin all of these abdominal workouts with cardiovascular activity such as using a stationary bike, treadmill, or elliptical machine. This is important to prevent injuries as well as to help maximize the fat-burning process.

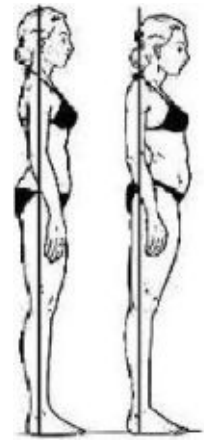
Pay special attention to your spinal column in the warm-up because properly preparing your spine will help reduce soreness and injuries. A simple way to warm up your spinal column is to



sit on a Swiss ball or a chair and swivel your pelvis left and right for 30 seconds, then forward and backward for another 30 seconds.

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## Maintain Proper Posture



Good posture simply means maintaining an ideal anatomical position for movement. If you have poor posture (for example, if your shoulders are rounded and your head protrudes forward), you are at greater risk for orthopedic injuries and reduced muscle recovery. You should be aware of maintaining good posture during everyday life as well as during the performance of your core and abdominal exercises.

Performing your exercises with good posture includes the following points:

While performing any trunk flexion exercise (crunches, and so on), keep your tongue pressed against the roof of your mouth. This may seem odd at first, but it actually provides stability for your head and neck during the performance of your exercises. This postural position also encourages good form and prevents unnecessary wear and tear on the joint structures of your cervical spine.

Always exercise in a neutral posture position (the same as if you were standing up): keep

- your head up, your chest up, your stomach tight, your hips square, and your palms at your side (not facing backward).

## Use Strict Form

*Form* is a buzzword often used in exercise instruction, but it's rarely defined clearly enough. If your form is poor, your results will be poor; moreover, you will be exposing yourself to potential injury. There are three primary components of good form, and you can't say you are truly performing an exercise properly unless you are following all of them.

First, good form means performing the exercise with proper posture, as described previously.

Second, good form means that the speed of each exercise (tempo), is smooth and controlled. A common mistake in abdominal training is to perform the reps in a jerky or rapid fashion. This type of action decreases muscle involvement and instead uses momentum to complete the movement.

Third, good form means that you must do each exercise exactly as described. An exercise performed at a controlled tempo with good posture, but performed incorrectly, is still bad form.

## Exercise Safely

Safety is a crucial consideration while training your abdominals and core. This is true not only for strict form, but also applies to your training environment. If your exercise environment is unsafe, accidents can happen.

If you work out in a gym, always ensure you have plenty of space to move around. The area you work out in should be clean with a non-slip surface. If you have balance problems, use a dowel rod or something to hold onto until you achieve a greater sense of balance. This is especially important if you are an older adult.

Do not exercise if you feel sick, faint, or extremely tired from a long day. Your neurological

system will be impaired, and accidents happen more often under these circumstances. One day you will not hurt you in the long run if you work out consistently the rest of the time, but if you get injured you may not be able to train at all!

If you have long hair, keep it tied back because it can get in the way and cause problems during some of the exercises.

Last but not least, never do exercises you think you may be unable to handle. It's one thing to challenge yourself with progressively more difficult exercises, but it's another thing altogether to let your ego write checks it can't cash by starting with advanced exercises when you're a beginner. If you can't do an exercise with good form, then don't do it at all. Remember, this is an advanced program!

## **Recommended Equipment: The Swiss Ball**

For some of the exercises, a piece of equipment called a Swiss ball (also known as a stability ball or exercise ball), is required. If you do not have one, you should find an alternative exercise. However, I strongly recommend that you train at a facility that has Swiss balls or invest in one of your own. Swiss balls are relatively inexpensive compared to most abdominal equipment.

The ball challenges your neurological system more intensely than any fancy machine ever will. And it's far more versatile because you can use the Swiss ball to train not just your abdominal and core, but other muscles as well. Swiss balls are not only effective, they're also fun to work out on.

Here are a few things to consider before purchasing and using a Swiss ball:

- First and foremost, use and store your Swiss ball in an area clear of debris. Check the floor for objects that could puncture the ball. It goes without saying that if a ball bursts during an exercise, you could get hurt. I also recommend that you clean the ball with a towel before each use in the gym or at home (for sanitary reasons, and so you don't slip off a sweaty ball).
- Second, you should inflate your ball until it is firm. An under-inflated ball is less stable, which inhibits proper exercise performance. Proper inflation of the Swiss ball is necessary to reap the maximum benefits of the exercises. If the ball is too flat, it increases the surface area on the ground and does little to challenge your neurological system and improve balance.
- Third, you must purchase a ball of the correct size for your body. As a general rule, your thighs should be parallel to the floor when you are sitting on the ball. Using a ball that is too small or too large can interfere with your exercise performance and lead to faulty movement patterns.

## **Swiss Ball Selection Chart**

Your Height	Recommended Ball Size
Less than 5' 2"	45 cm
5' 2"–5' 8"	55 cm
5' 9"–6' 2"	65 cm
6' 3"–6' 9"	75 cm

The benefits of using a Swiss ball include improved balance, increased strength, and refined motor performance. In other words, you'll improve your ability to function in real world environments—work, recreation, and sports.

You can even use a Swiss ball at your desk as a chair! To use a ball as a chair, purchase a larger ball than you would use for exercise, and inflate it only until your thighs are parallel to the floor when you are seated. Although the ball will be soft, it will be more comfortable to sit on.

I use the Swiss ball called the Dura Ball Pro™. I recommend this ball above all other balls, especially for all resistance training programs where additional weights are being used because it is much stronger (and therefore safer) than regular Swiss balls.

### **Proper Training Attire**

When it comes to workout attire, simply use common sense. Your exercise clothing should be somewhat loose. Avoid clothes that restrict your movement. Try cotton clothing, as it tends to be cooler than certain synthetic materials.

### **Weight Lifting Belts**

I generally do not recommend using weight lifting belts, particularly during the performance of these abdominal and core exercises. When you use a weight belt, your skin and tissues sense the belt and you tend to push out against it. This is antagonistic to your body's natural feedback loop mechanism. The result is that when the weight belt comes off, your belly tends to hang out.

Your body has a "natural weight lifting belt" already built in! It's called the Transversus Abdominis (TVA) muscle. Your TVA and other associated muscles contract and tighten around your waist just like a weight belt, and by strengthening your TVA and core by doing the right exercises, you will find that you no longer need to depend on lifting belts.

When you are training, focus on drawing in your belly button slightly to activate your TVA and stabilize your core. The exception to the no-belt rule is when you are lifting heavy weight 85% or greater of your one-rep maximum, a weight necessary in programs designed for maximum strength gains.

### **Your Weekly Training Schedule**

For advanced abdominal and core programs such as this one, I recommend a training frequency of at least three and ideally four days per week (approximately every other day). The ideal weekly training schedule for this program is listed below, but if your schedule does not allow training on those exact days, the schedule is somewhat flexible and can be rearranged slightly. However, if you change training days, be sure not to train more than two days in a row.

With this type of scheduling flexibility, it is also easy to arrange your abdominal workouts to coincide with the training for your other muscle groups. You can perform your abdominal routine at the end of your regular weight training sessions or perform the routine in separate sessions, whichever suits your schedule the best.

On non-abdominal training days, it's acceptable to perform cardio training, but it is not necessary to train your abdominals every day. In some cases, daily abdominal training may be called for. For example, when you're a beginner performing low intensity "control drills," less recovery time is necessary because the intensity is so low. When you are performing advanced programs, fewer workouts are required because more recovery time is needed.

## **Order of Exercises**

Depending on how you set up your weekly training schedule, you may perform your core and abdominal exercises in a session by themselves, or you can do them after your regular weight training exercises for the rest of your body. If you are working out other muscle groups in the same session (legs, arms, back, chest, shoulders), always do your core conditioning last. This prevents stabilizer fatigue and possible injury that could occur if you trained your abs and core first in the workout.

## **Avoid Training to "Failure"**

Bodybuilding magazines often discuss the importance of pushing yourself to the point of muscular "failure," where you cannot perform another repetition. This may be appropriate for bodybuilders in some cases; however, bodybuilders who frequently train to failure on strength training exercises usually gain only a little additional benefit, but significantly increase the chances of overtraining or injury.

When training your abdominals and core, you should never train to total failure. You should always remain conscious about form as you begin to get tired toward the end of a set. The reason training to failure is not recommended during abdominal training is because the more fatigued you become, the more your form tends to break down. When your form breaks down on core and abdominal exercises in particular, that's when injuries are most likely to occur, especially injuries to the lower back.

## **Isolation Versus Integration Exercises**

You may notice that some of the exercises in these routines, such as the Dumbbell Clean and Press and Dumbbell 3-D Matrix Raise Circuit, are not "abdominal isolation" exercises and that they heavily involve muscles of the upper body such as the deltoids, trapezius, triceps and shoulders. Exercises such as the Standing Twister and the Dumbbell Clean and Press primarily involve muscles of the lower body such as the quadriceps, gluteals, and hamstrings.

These exercises will not interfere with additional training you do for those muscle groups, nor are they designed to isolate those muscles or to isolate the abdominals or core. Quite to the contrary, your muscles do not work in isolation; your muscles work together as a unit. These exercises have been specifically chosen to strongly stress your core while integrating it with the rest of your body as a unit. They also stimulate the cardiovascular system to help improve conditioning and expedite the calorie-burning and fat loss process.

## **Cardio Training**

You can perform cardio briefly prior to your abdominal workouts as a warm-up, followed by ~~session of 10–25 minutes after your workout.~~ When your goal is fat reduction, I suggest you perform short cardio sessions with a higher frequency (as often as you can). These extra cardio mini sessions will burn additional calories and keep your fat-burning machinery fired up. Remember, fat loss is the key to seeing the abs you are developing with these exercises. Using this course, you could develop very strong, well-conditioned abs, but if your body fat percentage is too high, you will not be able to see the six pack.

## **Cardio Training Progression**

Low body fat is a requirement in order to see your abdominal muscle definition. Cardio training, in conjunction with your diet, will expedite the fat burning process. If you haven't been working out regularly, build up the frequency and duration of your cardio exercises gradually. For example, start with 10 minutes two or three times a week and then add additional minutes to your cardio sessions every two or three weeks until you're performing up to 20–25 minutes of cardio per session comfortably (without getting out of breath). Cardio need not be strenuous at first. In the beginning it should be low impact and easy to perform. You can add additional sessions and increase the intensity level as your fitness level increases.

## **Integrating Training with Nutrition**

When you are training only abs and core in their own workout (as opposed to training abs after training other large muscles groups), I recommend that you perform your workouts on an empty stomach. At most, have a lean protein meal prior to training, but let it digest before working out. This will force your body to get its fuel from fat since your primary source of fuel (carbohydrates) will be minimally available.

## Exercise Terminology

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In the workout program section that follows, three charts outline the workout routines and include information about sets, reps, intensity, tempo, and rest intervals. In the final section you will see the photographs and descriptions of each exercise.

Before you perform your first workout, please read these descriptions carefully so that you will understand the workout charts completely. Then be sure to read all the exercise descriptions and study the photographs so that you understand the proper form for each exercise.

When you include good form on the proper exercises with the proper combinations of exercise order, sets, reps, tempo, rest, and intensity you will be amazed at the results you achieve. All these training variables work together synergistically for optimal results.

In the three routine charts at the end of this chapter, the following terms are used.

**Exercise:** This refers to the name of the abdominal or core movement to be performed in the workout. Each sequence of four exercises was carefully selected, and you should perform each exercise in the order it appears. Each of these exercises is described in chapter 2.

**Intensity:** This is the amount of workload or resistance (weight) you should use. “Bodyweight” indicates that you should perform the exercise with only your body weight (without using added weight).

You can determine the intensity you should use with regard to the amount of weight by the repetition number. If the Intensity column contains a number such as “-2,” this means stop 2 reps before your maximum effort.

**Tempo:** This indicates the speed of your movement during the exercise, and is described with a term such as “Slow,” “Medium,” or “Fast,” or a number such as “3-2-3.”

With a numbered tempo sequence, the first number indicates the first movement of the exercise, the second number indicates the isometric part of the exercise, and the third number indicates the final part of the exercise. For example, a tempo of “3-2-3” simply means you should perform the first movement taking 3 seconds, hold for 2 seconds, and complete the final part of the movement in 3 seconds.

Also, for some exercises, tempo is displayed with terms such as “10-second hold” and “1 second rest.”

**Reps:** (Repetitions) This is the amount of times you perform each exercise through the full range of motion. A group of repetitions is one set. If you can complete more than the prescribed number of reps with no muscle soreness, you can increase the weight by 5% and move to the next, more difficult variation of the exercise. A number with a minus sign (e.g., -2) indicates that you should not perform your maximum number of reps. For instance, a “-2” simply means that you should stop 2 reps short of your maximum number of reps (2 reps short of failure).

**Sets:** A group of repetitions comprises one set. For example, if you perform 15 Swiss Ball Crunches, then rest or move on to another exercise, you have completed one set of crunches. This program calls for one to three sets or circuits of each exercise (four sets maximum for



highly advanced athletes). Begin your program with only one set of each exercise during your first workout. If you can perform all four exercises for the prescribed number of repetitions without difficulty, and if you have no lingering muscle soreness on the next scheduled workout date, then you can increase to two sets. Increase to three sets on your third workout or whenever you can complete all the exercises for the prescribed reps without difficulty and you have no lingering muscle soreness. Remain at three sets (three circuits) for the duration of the program.

**Rest:** (Rest interval) This is the length of time you rest between exercises, indicated in seconds. In the case of traditional straight sets, you would perform a designated number of reps, stop and rest for a designated rest interval, then repeat another set of the same exercise. This routine was designed to be performed as a circuit, which means each exercise is performed one after another with no rest. This is why you will see 0 seconds (no rest) between each exercise. After the fourth and final exercise, you may take a rest period of 90 seconds before repeating the second or third circuit.

**Note:** Performing this routine as a circuit is the most challenging and effective method; however, intermediate level trainees could perform this routine with 30–60 second rest intervals between each exercise.

**Duration:** Some exercises prescribe a duration instead of a number of sets. This means that you are to perform the exercise continually for the length of time prescribed. For example, the Standing Twister exercise prescribes a duration of 30 seconds; time your set to last 30 seconds rather than counting reps.

## Training Days

I recommend you work out four days a week for optimal results. (You can train three days a week on alternate days if you're an intermediate or if you are pressed for time.) On the other days, you can add some fat-burning cardio. If you work out other parts of your body, perform your core and ab routine last, after you have trained your other body parts.

**IMPORTANT:** All of the workouts are not necessarily in consecutive order of A, B, C. This is by design in order to emphasize certain exercises and circuits. Follow the workout exactly as indicated in the following chart:

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Week 1		A	B		C		A
Week 2		B	C		A		B
Week 3		B		A	B		C
Week 4		A		B		C	A
Week 5		C	A		B	C	
Week 6		A		B	C		A

## The 6 Weeks to 6-Pack Abs Advanced Abdominal Circuit Routines

### Routine A

Exercise	Rest	Intensity	Tempo	Repetitions	Sets
DB Clean and Press	0	85% of 1-rep max	Fast	5–7	1–3
Supine Russian Twist on Swiss Ball	0	Bodyweight or with added medicine ball	Moderate to fast	12–15 left/right	1–3
Dumbbell 3-D Matrix	0	70% of 1-rep max	2-0-2	10–12 each	1–3
Standing Wood Chopper	90 sec.	-2	2-0-2	8–12	1–3

### Routine B

Exercise	Rest	Intensity	Tempo	Repetitions	Sets
Hanging Leg Raise Circuit	0	Bodyweight	<i>Check description</i>	<i>Check description</i>	1–3
Prone Crawler	0	Bodyweight	303 left/right	6–8 left/right	1–3
Reverse Hyperextension	0	Bodyweight	2-0-2	8–12	1–3
Prone Russian Twist on Swiss Ball	90 sec.	Bodyweight	Moderate to fast	8–12	1–3

### Routine C

Exercise	Rest	Intensity	Tempo	Repetitions	Sets
Standing Twister with Medicine Ball	0	Bodyweight + medicine ball	Fast	30 seconds	1–3
Prone Pike on Swiss Ball	0	Bodyweight	3-3-3	6–8	1–3
Supine Crawler	0	Bodyweight	3-0-3 left/right	6–8 left/right	1–3
Swiss Ball Crunch	90 sec.	Bodyweight	2-0-2	8–12	1–3



# The Exercises

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## Before You Begin

**Note:** If you are having any difficulty understanding or performing any of these exercises, I recommend you seek out a Corrective Exercise Holistic Kinesiologist, a Certified Personal Trainer (CPT), or Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) to provide you with instruction on correct form.

I am here as your coach and teacher, but since I'm training you through this report instead of a personal trainer at my studio, the photographs and my written words are your only instruction. That's why it's vital that you read through this information carefully at least once before beginning your workouts. This will enable you to maximize your progress in the least amount of time without risking an injury because you failed to understand the finer points of using the program safely.

Most abdominal programs are not based on science, nor are they proven in the real world. However, I have studied exercise physiology for years and have trained hundreds of men and women of all ages and experience levels. The result is a scientific, real-world, tested program that works! It will work for you too, but you must follow these instructions carefully before beginning. Please do not try the exercises without reading these guidelines first.

## Dumbbell Clean and Press

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**Note:** This exercise requires dumbbells.

The Dumbbell Clean and Press is an excellent total body exercise that integrates the entire musculature. When performed properly it is one of the best overall conditioning exercises.

**Position:** Stand with a set of equal-weight dumbbells in front of you. Grasp them both and assume an athletic position.

### **Movement:**

1. Draw your belly button in toward your spine.
2. Slowly pull the dumbbells off the floor until they reach your upper chest.  
Do not bend at the waist to accomplish this exercise; bend at the hips and knees and keep your head in neutral alignment.
3. Push the dumbbells over your head in a press manner.
4. Return to the starting position.
5. Repeat for the prescribed number of reps.

Keep your body in good postural alignment and do not let your pelvis sink or hike up.



## Supine Russian Twist on Swiss Ball



**Note:** This exercise requires a Swiss ball and a medicine ball.

This exercise integrates the core with movement of the upper body, and helps you develop balance. When performed with a medicine ball at high speed, it is a challenging exercise for anyone. It develops the oblique musculature in a functional pattern.

This exercise has a few different levels, so feel free to progress as you can without sacrificing good form. Adjust your body position and keep your belly button drawn in. Use only your outstretched hands to begin, then progress to a faster movement, then to a medicine ball. Always maintain proper form.

**Position:** Lie on your back in a supine position on a Swiss ball. Keep your pelvis up and your glutes tight.

### **Movement:**

1. Draw your belly button in toward your spine.
2. Slowly roll to the left side of the ball and turn your upper body.
3. Return to the starting position.
4. Repeat on the other side.
5. Repeat for the prescribed number of reps.

Keep your body in good postural alignment and do not let your pelvis sink or hike up.

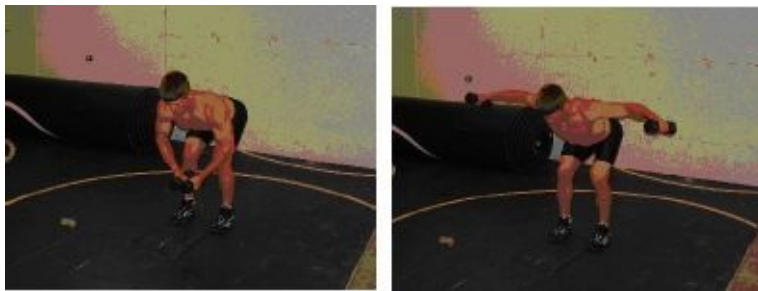
## Dumbbell 3-D Matrix Raise Circuit

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### Position One



### Position Two



### Position Three



This circuit is a great core developer in addition to improving functional movement of the upper body. This exercise circuit is more challenging than you might expect. Do it well, and soon your shoulders will not only look like giant coconuts, but also be strong and functional too.

**Position:** Stand with a set of equal-weight dumbbells in front of you. Grasp them both and assume an athletic position.

### **Movement:**

1. Draw your belly button in toward your spine.
2. Assume position one. Slowly lift the dumbbells out to the side as you would in a side lateral for the prescribed repetitions.
3. Assume position two. In a bent-over position, keep your head in neutral spinal alignment and perform bent-over laterals for the prescribed number of repetitions.
4. Assume position three and perform front laterals for the prescribed number of reps. This completes one circuit.
5. Repeat for the prescribed number of circuits.



Be sure to keep your body in good postural alignment and do not let your pelvis sink or hill  
up.

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## Standing Woodchopper



**Note:** This exercise requires a cable system.

The Standing Woodchopper is an advanced version of the Horizontal Woodchopper. It integrates the core with movement of the upper body, and is one of the best for integrating the oblique musculature into functional movement. There are many levels of this exercise, so feel free to progress as you can without sacrificing good form. Adjust the weight so you can accomplish this exercise with proper form.

**Position:** Stand perpendicular to the weight stack and cable system in an athletic stance. Use the top pulley or, if you are using an adjustable cable system, set the pulley to the top position. Grasp the cable handle with your right hand and place your left hand over your right.

### **Movement:**

1. Draw your belly button in toward your spine.  
Gently rotate your torso and pull the cable handle down and across the front of your chest to a fully extended arm position on the opposite side near your right hip. Do not let your pelvis shift to the left or right.
- 2.
3. Return to the starting position.
4. Repeat for the prescribed number of reps.
5. Repeat for the other side.

Keep your body in good postural alignment and try not to flex forward or sideways.

## Hanging Leg-Raise Circuit

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**Note:** This exercise requires a high horizontal bar.

This circuit is a real “belly burner.” It is a very advanced exercise circuit that will challenge even the strongest and best conditioned person. The hanging leg circuit is an excellent exercise for the lower abdominals and hip flexor muscles. This exercise is demanding, so before continuing with the entire circuit, make sure that you have achieved fully functional low abdominal strength and you can progress through this series without experiencing any low back pain.

This exercise develops your core by integrating the oblique musculature into functional movement. This is a difficult circuit, so take your time to learn it and progress as you are able without jeopardizing good form.

**IMPORTANT!** IF YOU FEEL ANY LOWER BACK PAIN, YOU SHOULD STOP THE EXERCISE IMMEDIATELY.

**Position:** Begin this exercise by hanging from a secure bar with your palms facing forward and your feet shoulder width apart.

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**Movement:**

1. Contract your lower abdominals and hip flexors and pull your feet up until they are level with your nose. Hold for 5– 10 seconds.  
Never let your hips come out of this flexed position, unless you have been instructed to work on hip flexor integration due to a flat back posture.
2. Slowly lower your legs so they are at chest level and hold for 5 seconds.
3. Slowly rotate your legs to the right and hold for 3–5 seconds. Return to center. Repeat to the left and hold for 3–5 seconds.
4. Return to the center position and bend your knees to 45 degrees. Slowly lower them up and down for 10 repetitions.
5. Lower your legs and rest.
6. Repeat for the desired number of circuits.

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