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BELWEST FOXES SOCCER CLUB INC.

“SPORTS-SPECIFIC CORE TRAINING ”

CONTACT SPORTS

Contact team sports require high levels of speed and agility combined with strength to fend off opponents in contact situations and the ability to deliver controlled power from unbalanced body positions.

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CONTACT SPORTS

Contact team sports require high levels of speed and agility combined with strength to fend off opponents in contact situations and the ability to deliver controlled power from unbalanced body positions.

Good core stability and mobility play an important role in helping you cope with the demands of twisting, turning, and changing direction – often at high speed – that are common in contact sports. Core stability and strength provide a stable platform from which to bring a ball under control, and help generate controlled power in passes and shots from unstable body positions and when under pressure from opponents. Core strength also helps you to resist the impact of contact with opponents and limits the risk of injury.



Core stability improves your overall balance

Core flexion can help with speed and kicking power

SPORTS SUCH AS...

- Football
- Handball
- Dodgeball
- Field hockey

CORE-STRENGTH TRAINING FOR CONTACT SPORTS

All contact sports require excellent cardiovascular fitness and a range of complex movements. Training should involve a combination of interval training to improve

cardiovascular fitness and strength-training circuits to develop muscular power. The latter should focus on the muscles specific to your sport.

PREPARATION

Good warm-up and cool-down procedures on match days, and a training programme that offers preparation for games, are essential. Warm-ups should include dynamic stretches and cardiovascular work, such as shuttle runs, to raise your body temperature.



■ **Isometric**
Isometric exercises such as mountain

climbers (pp.118) help build your core stability. This provides a solid platform for coping with multi-directional movements, controlling shots and passes, and fending off opponents.



■ **Rotation**
Rotational exercises such as pulley lifts

(pp.146-47) improve your rotational power. This increases the power of your kicks and passes, and stabilizes your body against torsional movements in contact.



■ **Flexion**
Flexion exercises such as

partner ball swaps (pp.108-09) help you to generate greater hip strength and mobility, improving your control and power when you are passing or shooting.

VISUAL EXERCISE DIRECTORY

ACTIVATION EXERCISES



Active Pelvic Floor
 Wp. 56-57



Pillow Squeeze
 Wp. 58



Heel Slide
 Wp. 59



Knee Fold
 Wp. 60-61



Star
 Wp. 68



Back Extension
 Wp. 69



Superman
 Wp. 70-71



FOUNDATION EXERCISES



Abdominal Crunch
 Wp. 72-73



Leg Circle
 Wp. 74



Side Bend
 Wp. 81



Heel Reach
 Wp. 82



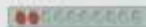
Roman Chair Side Bend
 Wp. 83



Side-lying Leg Lift
 Wp. 84-85



Oblique Reach
 Wp. 86-87



Swim
 Wp. 94



Super-slow Bicycle
 Wp. 95



Sprinter Sit-up
 Wp. 96



Horizontal Balance
 Wp. 97



Bridge
 Wp. 98-99





Toe Tap
 30p 62-63



Prone Abdominal Hollowing 30p 64



Dart
 30p 65



Oyster
 30p 66



Prone Leg Lift
 30p 67



Reverse Curl
 30p 75



Dorsal Raise
 30p 76-77



Sit-up
 30p 78



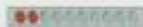
Oblique Crunch
 30p 79



Side-lying Lateral Crunch
 30p 80



Hip Roll
 30p 88-89



Roll-back
 30p 90



Roll-up
 30p 91



V Leg-raise
 30p 92



V Sit-up
 30p 93



Double-leg Lower and Lift 30p 100-01



Plank
 30p 102-03



Side Plank
 30p 104-05



Single-leg Extension and Stretch 30p 106



Double-leg Extension and Stretch 30p 107



INTERMEDIATE EXERCISES



Partner Ball Swap

»pp.108-09



Hanging Knee-up

»pp.110-11



Windmill

»pp.110-11



Good Morning

»pp.112-13



Roman Chair Back Extension

»pp.112-13



Medicine Ball Reverse Throw

»p.121



Exercise Ball Back Extension

»p.122



Medicine Ball Bridge

»p.123



Wall Side Throw

»pp.124-25



Suspended Single-arm Core Rotation

»p.126



Exercise Ball Roll-out

»pp.130-33



Suspended Crunch

»p.134



Suspended Oblique Crunch

»p.135



Medicine Ball Chop

»p.136



Lawnmower

»p.137



Pulley Chop

»pp.144-45



Pulley Lift

»pp.146-47



Single-leg, Single-arm Cable Press

»pp.148-49



Hanging Toe Tuck

»p.150



Sandbag Shouldering

»p.151



Plank Plate Push

»pp.152-53





O-bar
Rotation
pp.114-15



Standing
Plate Twist pp.116



Kettlebell Round-body
Swing pp.117



Mountain Climber
pp.118



Russian Twist
pp.119



Medicine
Ball Slam
pp.120



Suspended Pendulum
pp.121



Long-arm Bridge
Pull-over pp.122



Kettlebell
Swing
pp.123



Exercise Ball Knee
Tuck pp.130



Core Board
Rotation pp.131



**ADVANCED
EXERCISES**



GHD Sit-up
pp.138



Pike
pp.139



Stick Crunch
pp.140-41



Exercise Ball Jackknife
pp.142



GHD Back Extension
pp.143



Stepped
Plank Walk
pp.154-55



Turkish Get-up with
Kettlebell
pp.156-57



Exercise Ball Hip
Rotation Kick
pp.158-59



Slide Board Wiper
pp.160-61



Raised Pike Dumbbell
Hand-walk pp.162-63



Wall Walk
pp.164-65



CORE MOVEMENT DIRECTORY

As you begin to train your core muscles using the exercises in this section, it is important to think of each in terms of their core movement, as well as their level difficulty. This is a key part of understanding how your core muscles work together, and to achieving the best results in your training. Using a balanced combination of movements will help you to gain excellent overall strength, stability, and mobility, while reducing the likelihood of muscular imbalance and injury.

The Core Exercise Matrix on the next few pages is designed to offer quick, user-friendly reference to help you locate the exercises in the book according to their core movement, along with details of the number of progressions they have.

The six core movements are ordered in the same way that they appear in the key at the start of the book (pp.9): Isometric; Flexion; Extension; Side Flexion; Rotation; and Complex; the individual exercises are then ordered presented according to their level of difficulty and page order. It is important to note that while Isometric exercises come first and there are more of them than for the other movements, this does not mean that they are more important. Balance is the key when you are training your core and you should always endeavour to combine as many core movements as you can.

USING THE MATRIX

The chart on the following pages groups exercises in the main section of this chapter (pp.56-165) according to their Target Movement, ranking them in order of Difficulty Level, and listing the number of progressions for each. You can use this information in conjunction with the Design Your Own programmes (pp.186-89) if you are looking for exercises of a specific movement and level, the Sports-Specific chapter (pp.192-215) if you are intending to train specific core movements for your chosen sport, or simply as a general reference to help with your training. It is important to remember that you should always train using a selection of exercises from a balanced range of core movements.

CORE EXERCISE MATRIX



ISOMETRIC For Soccer EXERCISES

EXERCISE	LEVEL	PROGRESSIONS	PAGE
Active Pelvic Floor	1	2	56-57
Pillow Squeeze	1	2	58
Heel Slide	1	-	59
Knee Fold	1	1	60-61
Toe Tap	1	4	62-63
Prone Abdominal Hollowing	1	-	64
Oyster	1	-	66
Prone Leg Lift	1	-	67
Star	1	-	68
Superman	1	4	70-71



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Leg Circle	2	1	74	Core Board Rotation	7	1	131
Side-lying Leg Lift	2	1	84-85	Single-leg, Single-arm Cable Press	9	-	148-49
Swim	3	-	94	Plank Plate Push	10	-	152-53
Horizontal Balance	4	1	97	Stepped Plank Walk	10	-	154-55
Bridge	4	5	98-99	 <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; text-align: center;"> <p style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">FLEXION For EXERCISES Soccer</p> </div>			
Double-leg Lower and Lift	4	3	100-01				
				EXERCISE	LEVEL	PROGRESSIONS	PAGE
Plank	4	6	102-03	Abdominal Crunch	2	6	72-73
Side Plank	4	3	104-05	Reverse Curl	2	2	75
Kettlebell Round-body Swing	5	-	117	Sit-up	2	1	78
Moutain Climber	5	-	118	Roll-back	2	-	90
Long-arm Bridge Pull-over	7	1	128	Roll-up	3	-	91
Kettlebell Swing	7	-	129	V Leg-raise	3	-	92
Exercise Ball Knee Tuck	7	-	130	V Leg Sit-up	3	-	93

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Sprinter Sit-up	3	–	96	Back Extension	1	–	69
Single-leg Extension and Stretch	4	–	106	Dorsal Raise	2	2	76-77
Double-leg Extension and Stretch	4	1	107	Good Morning	5	–	112-13
Partner Ball Swap	5	1	108-09	Roman Chair Back Extension	5	–	112-13
Hanging Knee-up	5	1	110-11	Medicine Ball Reverse Throw	6	–	121
Medicine Ball Slam	6	–	120	Exercise Ball Back Extension	6	–	122
GHD Sit-up	8	–	138	GHD Back Extension	8	–	143
Pike	8	–	139	 <p style="text-align: center;">SIDE-FLEXION EXERCISES <i>For Soccer</i></p>			
Stick Crunch	8	–	140-41				
Exercise Ball Jack-knife	8	–	142	EXERCISE	LEVEL	PROGRESSIONS	PAGE
Hanging Toe Tuck	10	–	150	Side-lying Lateral Crunch	2	–	80
 <p style="text-align: center;">EXTENSION For EXERCISES <i>Soccer</i></p>				Side Bend	2	–	81
				Heel Reach	2	–	82
			Roman Chair Side Bend	2	–	83	
			EXERCISE	LEVEL	PROGRESSIONS	PAGE	
Dart	1	1	65	Windmill	5	–	110-11

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 ROTATION <i>For Soccer</i> EXERCISES				 COMPLEX EXERCISES			
EXERCISE	LEVEL	PROGRESSIONS	PAGE	EXERCISE	LEVEL	PROGRESSIONS	PAGE
Oblique Crunch	2	1	79	Suspended Pendulum	7	–	127
Oblique Reach	2	4	86–87	Exercise Ball Roll-out	7	1	132–33
Hip Roll	2	3	88–89	Suspended Crunch	7	1	134
Super-slow Bicycle	3	–	95	Suspended Oblique Crunch	7	–	135
O-bar Rotation	5	–	114–15	Medicine Ball Chop	7	–	136
Standing Plate Twist	5	–	116	Lawnmower	7	–	137
Russian Twist	6	–	119	Sandbag Shouldering	10	–	151
Medicine Ball Bridge	6	–	123	Turkish Get-up with Kettlebell	10	–	156–57
Wall Side Throw	6	2	124–25	Exercise Ball Hip Rotation Kick	10	2	158–59
Suspended Single-arm Core Rotation	6	–	126	Slide Board Wiper	10	–	160–61
Pulley Chop	9	3	144–45	Raised Pike Dumbbell Hand-walk	10	3	162–63
Pulley Lift	9	3	146–47	Wall Walk	10	–	164–65

MOBILIZATION

Mobility stretches are a key part of any exercise routine, helping you to get the best results and reducing your risk of injury. They lengthen and loosen your muscles, increasing your range of

movement and flexibility, and reducing stiffness and pressure on your discs, ligaments, and facet joints. When performing the movements, relax your body, and breathe deeply and rhythmically.

THORACIC ROLLER

In this exercise, the foam roller acts as a hinge to help improve the range of motion in your middle and upper

back. It is a good movement to mobilize the muscles of your neck and back.



1 Sit with your heels planted on the floor and the roller beneath the middle of your back. Lie back onto the roller so that it is just below your shoulder blades. Clasp your hands together and tightly cradle your head.



2 With your chin tucked in, slide up and down the roller, from your neck down to the level of your lowest ribs, but do not go too low into your lumbar spine. Repeat the exercise for at least 30 seconds.

LAT ROLLER

This exercise helps to loosen up the large muscles of your middle and upper back, reducing tightness, tension, and muscular pain.



Lie on your right side with the roller positioned beneath your armpit, and place your hands behind your head for stability. Use your back muscles to roll down from your armpit to the base of your shoulder blade. Roll back up and repeat for at least 30 seconds, then switch sides.

GLUTE/PIRIFORMIS ROLLER

This exercise loosens up the gluteals at the outside of your buttocks and the piriformis towards the middle of them.



Sit on the foam roller with your right buttock and cross your right leg over your left leg. Rolling backwards and forwards, work on the outside of your buttock before shifting your weight to the middle of your buttock. Repeat for at least 30 seconds before switching sides.

LUMBAR ROLLER

In this exercise, the foam roller works the muscles of your lumbar spine, helping to mobilize your lower back. A strong lower back is essential for

all sports, from running to weightlifting, and is important for anyone who spends a lot of time working at a desk.



1 Sit with your heels planted on the floor and the roller positioned beneath your lower back. Place your hands on either side of your head and cradle it lightly, without putting any strain on your neck.

2 Keeping your head stable, slowly and carefully slide up and down on the roller, from the bottom of your ribcage to the top of your pelvis. Repeat for at least 30 seconds.

TFL/ITB ROLLER

This exercise loosens your iliotibial band (ITB), the band of muscular tissue on the outside of your upper leg, and helps general mobility in your glutes and

hip muscles. It also loosens your tensor fasciae lata (TFL), a muscle in the thigh that is utilized in sports from hurdling to horse riding.



1 Lie on your right side with the roller positioned beneath the outside of your thigh, just below your hip. Propping yourself up on your right forearm, with your left hand on your hip, cross your left leg over the right, placing your left foot flat on the floor for support.

2 Using your right forearm, gently push your body over the roller so that the outside of your right thigh slides up and down the roller, as far as your knee. Slide back the opposite way to your hip. Repeat for at least 30 seconds, then swap sides.

NECK ROTATION

This very simple movement can help ease neck aches. After a little practice, you should be able to

rotate your neck through at least 70 degrees to each side without feeling 'pulls' or hearing cracking sounds.



1 Look straight ahead, keeping your spine in a neutral position. Keep the upper body relaxed and your arms loose by your sides.

2 Move your head slowly towards your right shoulder, without straining. Turn it as far as is comfortable and hold for a few seconds.

3 Move your head back through the starting position towards your left shoulder, without straining. Return to the start position.

NECK EXTENSION AND FLEXION

This simple dynamic stretch, which can be carried out standing or seated, will help prevent general neck

stiffness and is useful for sports in which head position and movement are important.



1 Stand upright with your arms by your sides in a relaxed posture. Look straight ahead and keep your spine in a neutral position.

2 Extend your neck as far as is comfortable by slowly raising your chin so you are looking directly upwards. Hold for a few seconds.

3 Flex your neck by letting your head drop forwards without straining. Hold for a few seconds and return to the start position.

NECK SIDE FLEXION

This is a useful mobility stretch for the muscles of your shoulders and neck, helping to ease tightness and tension.

It is also good for mobilizing your spine, and so for improving your posture.



1 Stand upright, holding your body in a relaxed posture, with your shoulders loose and your eyes looking straight ahead.



2 Tilt your head so that your right ear moves towards your right shoulder as far as is comfortable. Hold for a few seconds.



3 Flex your neck in the opposite direction as far as you can go. Hold for a few seconds and return to the start position.

SHOULDER ROTATION

This exercise provides an excellent way of freeing up the muscles and ligaments around your shoulder joints, and

of warming your trapezius muscles. This is particularly important before beginning a resistance training session.



1 Let your arms hang loose by your sides and relax your shoulders. Keep your head level and your spine in a neutral position.



2 Rotate your shoulders forwards and up, raising them slowly towards your ears.



3 Hold the position for a few seconds, then reverse the movement backwards.

TORSO ROTATION

This exercise is a useful rotational dynamic stretch for mobilizing your core muscles. Be sure that you keep your hips stationary throughout.



- 1 Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your elbows raised to each side.



- 2 Keeping your hips straight and aligned, rotate your upper body with a smooth motion to your right.



- 3 Pause at the edge of the movement, then rotate back through the start position, keeping your movement fluid, not jerky.



- 4 Continue the movement to your left side, keeping your hips and your elbows raised to each side. Pause at the edge of the movement, then rotate to the start position.

TORSO SIDE FLEXION

This is a great mobilizing stretch for the muscles of your obliques and upper back. To get the full benefit of the movement, elongate both sides of your torso as you reach up, and avoid leaning forwards.



- 1 Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Reach up with your left hand, palm up, keeping your elbows soft.



- 2 Keeping your back straight and your core engaged, stretch your left hand up and over your head, reaching down towards your right foot with your right hand. Hold briefly, then release to return to the start position. Repeat as required, before switching arms.

LYING TRUNK ROTATION

This exercise helps to improve the rotational mobility of your upper-back muscles and your thoracic spine, while also stretching the muscles of your chest.



1 Lie on your left side with your hips, knees, and feet stacked one above the other, and your hips and knees bent at right angles. Extend your arms straight in front of you, pressing your palms together.



3 Breathing out, rotate your upper body to face the ceiling, keeping your hips stacked and your right arm extended.



5 Breathing out, reach back towards the ceiling with your right arm, while rotating your torso back towards the start position slowly and under control.



2 Keeping your knees and feet together and your hips stacked, breathe in, brace your abdomen, and reach upwards and back with your right hand, while keeping your left arm straight and resting on the floor.



4 Continue the movement until you are as far back as possible, with your chest facing upwards and your hips still stacked. Hold the movement briefly, keeping your shoulders stable and level. Breathe in.



6 Continue the movement towards the start position and touch the palms of your hands together. Repeat the movement as required, then switch sides.

LYING WAIST TWIST

This exercise increases the mobility of the joints and muscles in your lower and upper back. Perform the same number of repetitions on both sides of your body.



1 Placing a folded towel under your head for extra support, lie on your back with your body relaxed and your arms loose but extended at a 90-degree angle from your upper body. Keep your legs and feet together.



2 Keeping your upper body flat against the mat, bend your left leg at the knee and bring it across your body, using your right hand to increase the stretch, and allowing your right leg to turn and bend in the same direction.



3 Hold the stretch for a few seconds, return to the start position, and switch sides.

CAT AND CAMEL

A great muscle-releasing exercise, this stretch helps to lubricate your spine and get your spinal discs moving. It is one of the best exercises you can do as part of a general warm-up.



1 Kneel on all fours with your hands flat on the floor and in line with your shoulders, your fingers pointing forwards, and your knees below your hips.



2 Round your back upwards and pull in your stomach, letting your head drop down as you do so. Hold the stretch for a few seconds at the top of the movement.



3 In one fluid movement, raise your buttocks and curve your spine downwards while lifting your head so that you are looking straight ahead. Hold the stretch for a few seconds, then return to the start position.

THREADING THE NEEDLE

This dynamic stretch is good for mobilizing the spine and improving your spinal flexibility while warming up the muscles of your shoulders and lower back.



- 1 Kneel on all fours with your back flat and your neck in a relaxed position. Position your arms directly under your shoulders, and bend your hips and knees at right angles, keeping your feet together.



- 2 Supporting your weight with your right hand, reach under and across your chest with your left hand, turning your head to look to the right.



- 3 Hold the stretch for a few seconds then reverse the movement to the start position. Repeat as required and switch sides.

HIP FLEXOR STRETCH

This stretch is an excellent movement for your hip flexors, which may be particularly tight if you spend a lot of time sitting down. Good hip mobility is vital for balance and posture.



- 2 Lean forward, putting your weight on your left leg. Feel the stretch in your right thigh, and hold briefly at the edge of the movement.

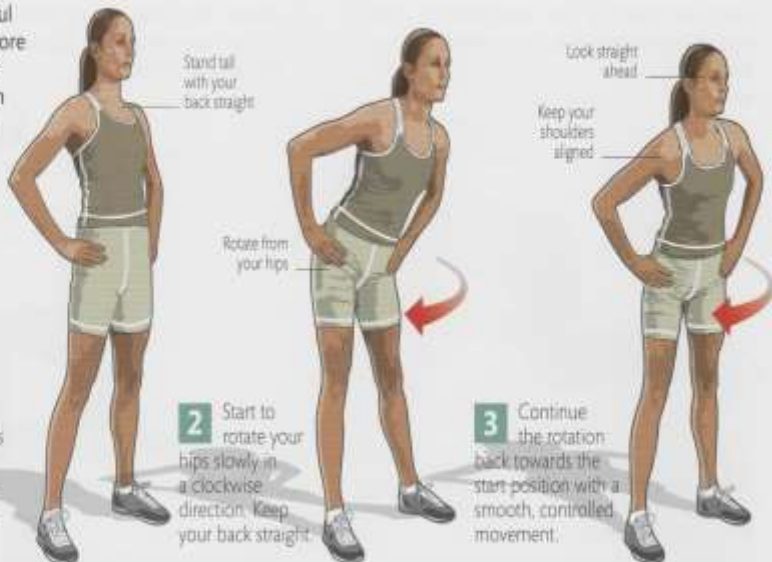


- 3 Release and reverse the movement back to the start position. Repeat the stretch with your right leg.



HIP CIRCLE

This rotational dynamic stretch offers a useful warm-up for your core muscles. In contrast to the torso rotation (pp.48) you should keep your upper body stationary while rotating your hips.



1 Stand upright with your hands on your hips, your legs straight, and feet shoulder-width apart.

2 Start to rotate your hips slowly in a clockwise direction. Keep your back straight.

3 Continue the rotation back towards the start position with a smooth, controlled movement.

CHILD'S POSE

This movement gently mobilizes your spine and hips while also working your shoulders and upper back. If you find the exercise uncomfortable, you can place a

rolled-up towel between the back of your thighs and calves. To increase the stretch, reach your hands in front of you as far as you can.



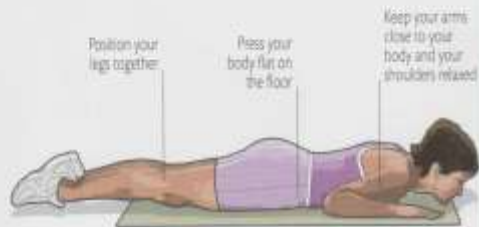
1 Kneel on all fours with your hands in line with your shoulders, your fingers pointing forwards, and your knees directly below your hips. Keep your back and neck straight.



2 Keeping your hands in position, slowly lower yourself down onto your heels until your forehead touches the mat. Extend your hands in front of you as far as is comfortable.

COBRA EXTENSION

This simple exercise is designed to stretch and strengthen your lower back muscles and improve your spinal flexibility. You should aim to perform the movement with a slow, fluid motion, keeping your neck and shoulders relaxed throughout.



- 1 Lie face down on a mat with your hands flat on the floor and roughly level with your chin. Extend your feet, keeping your legs together. Breathe in.



- 2 Pressing your hips against the mat and breathing out, lift your torso upwards slowly, using your arms for support. Raise your head and shoulders as high as you can, keeping your lower back relaxed.



- 3 Pause briefly at the top of the movement, then lower your torso back to the start position with a smooth, controlled movement, and using your arms for support.

SCORPION STRETCH

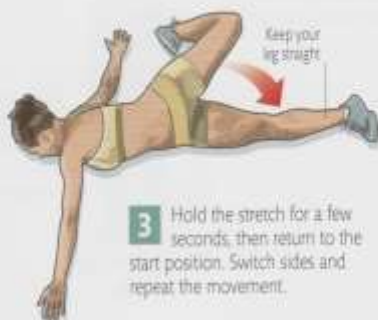
This is an excellent all-body stretch that improves your spinal flexibility. The movement can take some practice, but good technique is key, so focus on achieving the correct position rather than trying to push the stretch too far.



- 1 Lie face down on a mat with your knees in line and your arms stretched out to your sides, at right angles to your body.



- 2 Keeping your hands flat on the floor, raise your left hip off the floor, and bring your left foot up towards your right hand, twisting your lower back and bending your left knee as you do so.



- 3 Hold the stretch for a few seconds, then return to the start position. Switch sides and repeat the movement.

BACK ROLL

This dynamic stretch is an excellent way of mobilizing the muscles of your spine, lower back, and buttocks. Aim to perform the movement

with a slow, controlled movement, and use a mat to cushion your spine as you roll. Be careful not to place strain on your neck.



1 Sit upright on a mat with your knees drawn up to your chest and your feet lifted off the floor. Engage your core, grip your ankles, and relax your neck, keeping your head facing forwards.



2 Gently roll backwards until your shoulder blades are resting on the floor, with your knees tucked up to your chest. Keep your core engaged and be careful not to roll onto your neck.



3 Hold the stretch for a few seconds, then reverse the movement with a smooth, controlled motion, rolling forwards to return to the start position.

SKIER

This excellent mobilizing stretch works your spine and shoulder joints in one fluid movement. It also encourages your upper and lower body to function as a unit. The exercise requires good co-ordination and range of motion, so it may take some practice to perfect.



1 Stand with your legs hip-width apart and your arms raised above your head, shoulder-width apart and slightly bent. Engage your core.

2 Bending your knees and dropping your buttocks back into a half squat, swing your upper body down and forwards, keeping your arms straight, your core engaged, and your back in a neutral position.



TARGET MOVEMENT ICONS



ISOMETRIC

Isometric strength is the ability to hold your body in a fixed position or resist an external force, such as when you are carrying a heavy weight.



SIDE FLEXION

This movement involves bending from side to side from your waist or reaching overhead to either your left or your right.



FLEXION

Flexion involves bending forwards - for example, when you are picking something off the ground, or moving to sit or stand from a lying position.



ROTATION

Rotation involves turning movements from your waist, such as twisting to look over your shoulder.



EXTENSION

Extension involves bending your back to stand from a bent-over position, or arching your back to stretch up to reach something.



COMPLEX

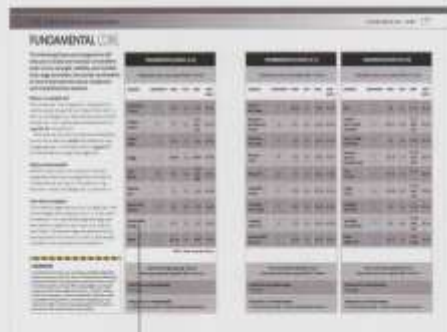
Complex movements involve a combination of one or more of the other five movements listed in this table.

CORE-TRAINING PROGRAMMES

This chapter offers five easy-to-navigate three-part programmes to help you get the most out of your core training (xpp.174-85). There are also two handy tables to help you to create your own workouts (xpp.186-89), and a final programme you can use as a test or a fun challenge you can include in your training.

SPORTS-SPECIFIC CORE-TRAINING

This section profiles a comprehensive range of sports according to their principle core movements, with example exercises that may help to improve your performance. The table at the start of the chapter (xpp.195-97) offers a user-friendly reference to help you understand the key movements of your chosen sport.



THREE-STAGE PROGRAMMES

Each of the easy-to-use programmes offer three levels of difficulty to help you progress in a safe and structured way and get the very best results from your training regimen.



SPORTS-SPECIFIC CORE MOVEMENTS

Information on the core movements for each group of sports helps you to gain a better understanding of how to train for your chosen activity.