

Stability Ball: Core, Strength, Flexibility

A great way to workout at home or in
the office with very little equipment
but excellent results.

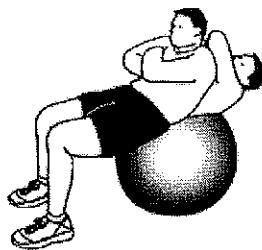
Picking the Right Ball

- Most exercises, such as lower back exercises, balance workouts, stretches and weight work should be done with the recommended size/height stability ball.
- 5 feet to 5 feet 8 inches: 55-centimeter ball
- 5 feet 9 inches to 6 feet 3 inches: 65-centimeter ball
- 6 feet 4 inches to 6 feet 9 inches: 75-centimeter
- 6 feet 10 inches or taller: 85-centimeter ball.
- To increase the intensity of certain exercises, you can use a smaller ball. For example: when doing ab crunches or holding a plank pose.
- If you plan to use a ball for cardio exercises or for strength exercises that require additional weight, such as dumbbells or barbells, select a ball that is especially designed for these purposes.

Stability Ball Crunch

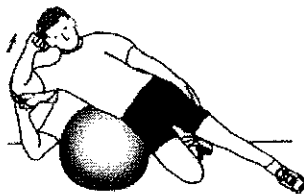
- Start by sitting on the exercise ball as if you were sitting on a chair. Slowly lean back and walk your feet forward until the ball is positioned on your lower back region and you are looking toward the ceiling. Your thighs should be parallel to the floor.
- Cross your hands on your chest and keep your head in a neutral position looking forward (toward the ceiling). Your chin should not touch your chest at any point during this exercise.
- Raise your torso by contracting your abdominals to perform the crunch.
- Hold for a count, squeeze your abdominals, and return to starting position.

Note: You can add further resistance by holding weights in your arms as you perform this exercise.



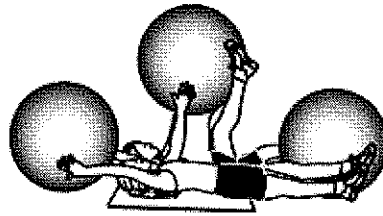
Oblique Stability Ball Crunch

- Begin by kneeling down on one knee beside the exercise ball with the knee that is on the floor next to the fitness ball.
- Carefully lie sideways over the stability ball.
- Your bottom arm (arm closest to the ball) should be bent with your hand behind your head and
- Your top arm (arm farthest from the ball) can either be in the same position (hand behind head) or lying on your side. Having your top hand behind your head makes the exercise more difficult.
- Slowly raise your body upward by lifting your shoulder, pushing your hips into the ball and pulling with your obliques, making sure not to twist your body.
- Squeeze your obliques for a count and then slowly lower yourself back to the starting position.



Crunch, Reach, Pass

- Begin by laying with your back on the floor and facing the ceiling.
- Hold the stability ball with your arms outstretched above your head and ball resting on the floor).
- In a controlled motion, use your abs to perform a sit-up, keeping your arms straight.
- Simultaneously, as you perform the sit up, raise your legs.
- You should "fold" at your abdominal muscles, and your arms and legs should come together at the top of the movement.
- Pass the ball from your hands to your feet, and return to the starting position. The stability ball should be held between your feet.
- Repeat the movement, passing the ball from your legs to your hands and vice versa with each repetition.

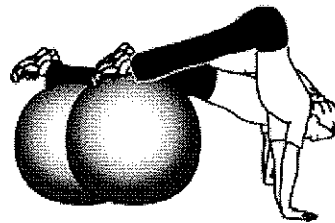
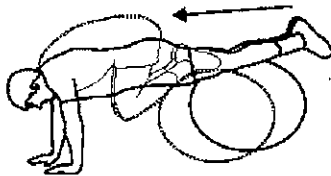


Abdominal Tuck

- Start with your shins on the stability ball with your hands on the floor in a push-up position. The closer the ball is located toward your feet, the more difficult this exercise will become.
- Pull the fitness ball toward your chest by bending your knees and lifting your hips until you are in the tucked position with your knees at your chest.
- Carefully return the exercise ball to the starting position by extending your legs until you are again in the push up pose.

Note: The Pike is more challenging

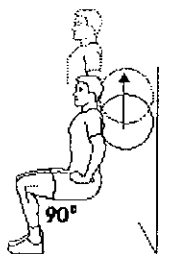
- Start in the same position as the Abdominal Tuck
- Keeping your legs as stiff as possible, use your abs to roll the ball forward, lifting your hips toward the ceiling.
- Hold this position for a three count while flexing your abdominal muscles.
- Slowly return to the beginning position.



Wall Squat

- Begin by placing your stability ball against a wall.
- Lean against the ball, placing it in the small of your back. Your feet should be slightly out in front of you and approximately shoulder width apart.
- Using a controlled motion, lower your self until your thighs are parallel to the floor.
- Slowly return to the standing upright position by pressing your feet into the floor and pushing your body back to upright.

Note: If you just beginning a workout routine, In step 2, lower yourself as far as you are comfortable until your range of motion has increased enough to lower your body until your thighs are parallel to the floor. For an added challenge, you can hold dumbbells in each hand. Using extra weight will help you build muscle and burn fat faster during this stability ball exercise.



Leg Extension

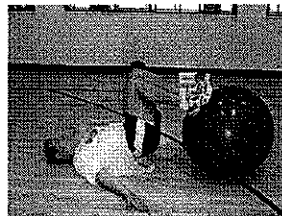
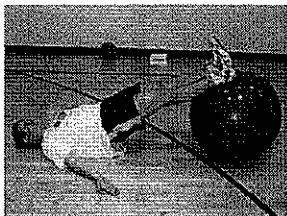
- Sit on the ball with your feet hip width apart.
- Lift one knee one inch and extend your lower leg aiming to get your knee straight. Bend your knee to 90 degrees then lower your foot to the floor.



Leg Curl

- Lay on your back on the floor and legs resting on stability ball. The stability ball will be between your knees and feet.
- The further the stability ball is from your hips the more difficult.
- Raise your hips into the air as you push down into the exercise ball. At the top of the lift your body should be straight. Hold the position.
- Pull the stability ball in towards your glutes keeping your hips off the floor. Bring it in as far as possible and slowly release it back to the start position.

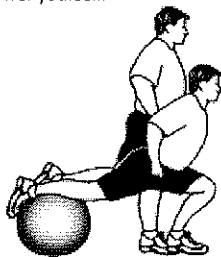
Note: The exercise is more difficult when you maintain your hips off the floor in between each curl but it might be better to begin by resting your hips back to the floor between each rep until you become comfortable with the exercise.



Stationary Lunge

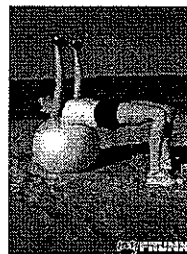
- Start with a large stability ball behind you. Carefully place a leg on the ball. Your shin should be in contact with the top of the ball.
- Place your front leg as far out in front of your back leg as you can. Your front foot should be planted firmly on the floor.
- Lower yourself by slowly bending your front leg until the top of your leg is parallel to the floor. Be sure to keep your back leg firmly on top of the stability ball throughout the movement.
- Finish the repetition by returning to the starting position.
- Repeat the movement, performing the required number of reps. Repeat with the opposite leg on the ball.

Note: In step 2, if you are just beginning, lower yourself as far as you are comfortable until your balance and range of motion have increased. To minimize the chance of injury, try not to allow your knee to drift past your toes as you lower yourself.



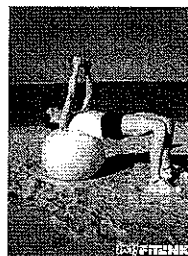
Chest Press

- Sit on the ball with dumbbells in your hands.
- Walk forward one foot at a time maintaining your balance until your back and head are on the ball.
- Press your hips up then press the dumbbells straight over your shoulders with your palms facing the same direction as your toes.
- Pause, then open your elbows to a 90 degree angle keeping your forearms perpendicular to the ceiling and press up.



Chest Fly

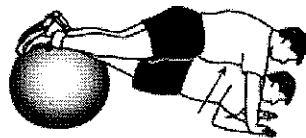
- Sit on the ball holding dumbbells
- Walk forward so that your back and head are resting on the ball.
- Press the weight over your chest with your palms facing each other and elbows slightly bent.
- Fly out, keeping your shoulders, elbows, and wrists in one line as you open your arms until your palms face the ceiling.
- Stop when your elbows are even with your shoulders and return arms to starting position.



Push Up

- Start by positioning yourself in the standard push-up position, with your hands slightly wider than shoulder width.
- Place your feet on top of your exercise ball.
- Slowly lower yourself to the ground until your chest nearly contacts the floor.
- Perform a push-up by pressing yourself from the floor back to the starting position.

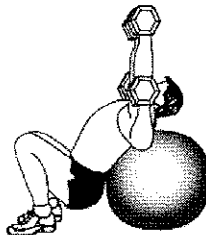
Note: If you are a beginner, place the ball under your thighs in step 2. The closer the ball is placed to your feet, the harder it is to complete the exercise.



Incline Chest

- Begin by squatting down and lying back so that your upper back is in contact with the exercise ball.
- Hold the dumbbells at the top of your chest.
- Press the dumbbells toward the ceiling, finishing with your arms extended. At the top of the move, the dumbbells should come together over your chest.
- Return to the starting in a controlled movement

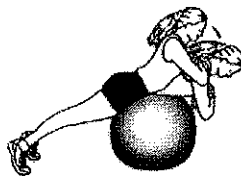
Note: During the press, be sure to concentrate on keeping your wrists and your elbows aligned to avoid losing control of the weight. You should use the assistance of a spotter for this and other stability ball exercises that use weights.



Hyper extension

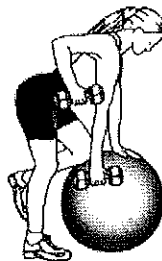
- Begin by kneeling on the floor in front of stability ball and lie face down so that the ball is at your upper abdominal region. Your head should be facing the floor.
- Cross your hands over your chest, and raise your torso approximately six inches.
- Hold for a count, then slowly and under control, lower your torso to the starting position.

Note: The further the ball is placed toward your hips, the harder the exercise is to perform. You can add further resistance by holding weights in your arms as you perform this exercise.



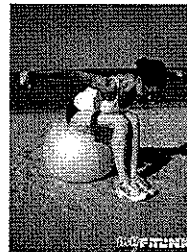
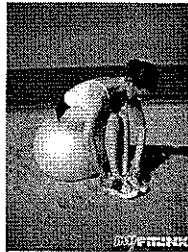
Dumbbell Bent Over Row

- This exercise requires a larger stability ball. Stand facing the ball with your legs shoulder width apart.
- Bend forward at the hips, keeping your back straight and place one hand on the ball in front of you.
- Hold a dumbbell in the opposite hand with your palm facing your body, and allow your arm to hang freely.
- Keep your back roughly parallel to the floor.
- Pull, or "row," the dumbbell up toward your upper body. Be sure to keep your elbow tight to your body.
- squeeze your shoulder blades together at the top of the lift in order to fully contract and emphasize your lats.
- Slowly lower your arm and lower the weight back to the starting position with your arm hanging straight down.



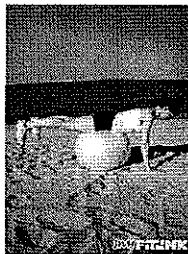
Rear Deltoid Fly

- Select two lightweight dumbbells then sit on the ball with hips slightly forward of the center of the ball.
- Put your feet and knees together, then bend forward from your hips.
- With your palms facing each other and elbows slightly rounded, lift the points of your elbows to the ceiling, squeezing your shoulder blades together.
- Pause, then lower your hands just to the outside of your feet.



Superman

- Start on your knees with the ball in front of you and touching your thighs.
- Place your stomach on the ball and straighten your legs so that the majority of your weight is on the ball.
- Straighten your legs.
- Lift your legs into the air then lift one arm off the floor.
- Find your balance on the top of the ball, then lift your other arm.



Shoulders/Biceps/Triceps

- **Shoulder Press** : Sit on the ball in an upright position as if you were sitting on a chair. Hold two dumbbells next to your ears with your palms facing forward. Press the weights toward the ceiling, keeping your hands and elbows aligned throughout the movement. The weights should come together above your head as your arms are extended upward. Return to the dumbbells to the start position in a slow and under control movement.
- **Bicep Curl**: Sit on the ball in an upright position. Hold two dumbbells in your hands, palms face out. Let your arms hang at your sides. Curl the dumbbell up.
- **Tricep Extension**: Sit on the ball in an upright position. Hold a dumbbell in both hands behind your head. Elbows should face ceiling. Extend at the elbow so that your arms are straight. Then bend at the elbow to get back to starting position.



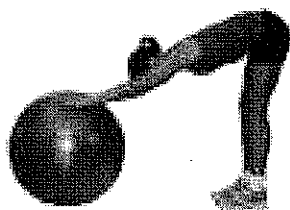
Chest Stretch

- Lie face up on the ball
- Roll down until you back is fully supported.
- Relax your hips and head and let your arms fall out to the sides for a relaxing chest stretch.
- Hold for 3-5 breaths.



Whole Body Stretch

- With legs wide, place hands on ball
- Roll the ball out, pressing your chest towards the floor to stretch the back and hamstrings.
- Hold for 5 breaths.



Back Stretch

- Stand in front of ball and place the side of the right hand on the ball (thumb pointing up).
- Roll the ball towards the left while keeping the hips square.
- Hold for 3-5 breaths and switch to the other side



Back stretch

- This works better with a smaller ball.
- In standing position hug the ball to your chest
- Then bend forward, resting the ball on the thighs while letting your arms hang down towards the floor.
- Relax your body, letting your legs support you, and open up through the back.
- Hold for 3-5 breaths



Inner thigh stretch

- Sit on ball and take the legs out wide.
- Place elbows on the inside of the knees and relax into the stretch
- Using your elbows to gently push the knees out for a deeper stretch.
- Hold for 3-5 breaths



Lunge Stretch

- Place ball under you and get into a lunge position, one leg forward (bent to 90 degrees), back leg straight out and balancing on toe.
- You should be resting on the ball. Bring hands out in front of you or overhead and feel the stretch through the hips.
- Hold for 3-5 breaths and repeat on other leg.

