

ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE



TRAINING CENTER

WE WILL HELP YOU BECOME A BETTER ATHLETE!

5 Things Every Athlete's Training Should Include

1. **Dynamic Warmup:** Stretching has its place, but not as a warmup to your workout. Your warmup should be *movement-based* – focusing on mobility and range-of-motion – with a gradual increase in intensity. We favor exercises like kettlebell swings, medicine ball throws, calf raises, hip thrusts, straddle lifts, and shoulder circuits - starting at a 25% intensity level and working toward about 60-70%.
2. **Core-Centric Training:** When I refer to your “core,” I am referring to your *trunk* - the area that runs from your shoulders through your hips (not just your abs). Since strength and power are generated “from the inside out,” improving **Core Strength and Stability** is important to athletic performance. An athlete's core is involved in almost every action. Core muscles are responsible for stabilizing the spine and pelvis as well as generating and transferring energy from the center of the body to its extremities. Basically, it doesn't matter how strong your extremities are if you don't have a strong core – strong arms won't compensate for a weak core. The core is an important element of athletic performance because it helps athletes start a motion in their legs and carries it through to their arms with the most efficient transfer of energy. Developing **Core Strength** and stability enables athletes to maximize their power output and perform complex athletic movements that require coordination, balance, and technical skills. Additionally, focusing on core strength can help athletes stabilize other weak areas to reduce the risk of injury. **Core Stability** enables athletes to control their body position, generate optimum power, and transfer force along the kinetic chain.
3. **Agonist-Antagonist Paired Sets:** In laymen's terms, working opposing muscle groups by alternating between “pushing” and “pulling” exercises (it's the “pulling” exercises that are often neglected). This “push-pull” strategy is beneficial because it improves strength development, joint stability, musculoskeletal balance, and helps to reduce injury risk. An example of this strategy is pairing exercises like the bench press and bent-over row. Agonist-Antagonist Paired Sets are a great way to maintain an aggressive workout tempo, improve workout *efficiency*, and reduce training time, while not compromising workout *quality*.

We provide motivated athletes with a simple, customized training plan to help them improve performance and reduce injury risk.

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- 4. Contrast Training:** One of the goals of athletic performance training should be to increase the athletes' work capacity while improving (reducing) their recovery time. Contrast Training is a highly effective method for improving many physical attributes involved in athletic performance, including strength, power, speed and agility – if implemented properly. Contrast training involves performing a set of a heavy resistance exercise, immediately followed by a set of a biomechanically similar power exercise (for example, a barbell back squat, immediately followed by a squat jump). The benefits of contrast training include: Effective in producing results; Highly efficient; Allows for high work density; Time effective; Allows athletes to complete fewer training sessions in order to yield the same or greater results; May have implications for injury prevention.
- 5. Plyometrics:** If you want to run faster and jump higher, you should be incorporating plyometrics into your workout. Plyometric training involves exercises that enable a muscle to reach maximum strength in as short a time as possible, using something called the Stretch-Shortening Cycle (SSC). SSC is basically an eccentric (lengthening) muscle movement rapidly followed by a concentric (shortening) contraction. Examples of plyometric exercises are box jumps, depth/drop jumps, hurdle jumps, and even jumping rope. Virtually all athletes can benefit from improvements in – and development of – explosive muscular force. Plyometric training has a positive effect on neuromuscular performance, increasing explosive performance, and – subsequently - athletic performance.
- 6. BONUS:** There's a lot of discussion about athletes and "sport-specific" training. It's largely a fallacy, as it relates to athletes Strength and Conditioning. For example, baseball players' sport-specific training involves throwing, catching, and hitting. For basketball players, it's ball-handling, passing, and shooting. Our belief is that **an athlete's training should reflect and support the demands and movement patterns of their sport(s)**. All of our athletes have a customized training plan, based on a number of factors (chronological age, physical maturity, training experience, etc.). About two-thirds of our athletes' workouts are fairly similar (in terms of exercise selection) - regardless of sport - because they can virtually all benefit from the same, core-centric exercises. One-third of an athlete's workout will be more individualized, based on the demands and movement patterns of their sport(s).

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