



Resistance Training Exercises for Youth Players



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<https://learning.gaa.ie/ResistanceTraining>

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Please read the following disclaimer prior to proceeding and/or instructing your session with any training using the exercises detailed in this Resistance Training Exercises for Youth Players Manual

The GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association) confirms that all exercises in this manual have been designed by experienced strength and conditioning practitioners and advise that guidance should be provided by a qualified fitness professional or physical education teacher prior to the exercises being used in any exercise programme/sessions.

As with any physical activity, exercise and fitness activities involve a risk of injury and participation is done at your own risk and by voluntarily participating in the exercise programme you are assume all risk of injury.

If you choose not to take advice or disregard any advice given, you do so voluntarily and accept liability for all resulting injuries and damage. By participation in the exercise programme you are declaring yourself to be physically sound and suffering from no condition, impairment, disease or infirmity or other illness. The GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association) always recommends that you consult with a general practitioner before beginning any exercise programme.

You, on behalf of yourself, your personal representative and your heirs, herby agree to release, waive, discharge, hold harmless, defend and indemnify the GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association) and its agents, officers and employees form any and all claims, actions or losses for bodily injury, property damage, wrongful death or otherwise which may arise out of your involvement and participation in the Resistance Training Exercises for Youth Players as set out in this manual.

We live in an age when people are bombarded - and sometimes bewildered - with a constant array of messages, in relation to an increasing number of subjects from an ever-expanding variety of sources. Against this backdrop, it can often be difficult to see the wood from the trees even if it involves well-intentioned messaging around Wellbeing.

In this context, the importance of exercise can never be underestimated because “exercise is the best medicine”. There is an increasing volume of Research, which testifies to the fact that “60 Minutes of Moderate To Vigorous Physical Activity Per Day” is a key requirement in this regard and the ultimate antidote to a whole array of health-related problems, which are usually the by-product of a sedentary lifestyle.

The impact of exercise is optimised when it is underpinned by a level of fitness, which derives from Resistance Training. This booklet sets out - in an easy to use manner - the 5 Key Movements and 5 Desirable Movements - along with a series of Progressions and Regressions - that can be undertaken with a minimum of equipment and fuss by people who are not actively involved in formal sport.

For those who are, they have the added advantage - and benefit - of being able to incorporate these movements into Warm-Up Routines thereby reducing the risk of injury.

While changing behaviour is never easy, I believe that this booklet will play a very important role in ensuring that best practice resistance training is the norm and that this will backbone a generation who fully commit to the benefits of 60 minutes of Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity.

Somebody once said that the “future is not something that happens in that it is more a case of making things happen”. If so, let this be the future by making it happen now.



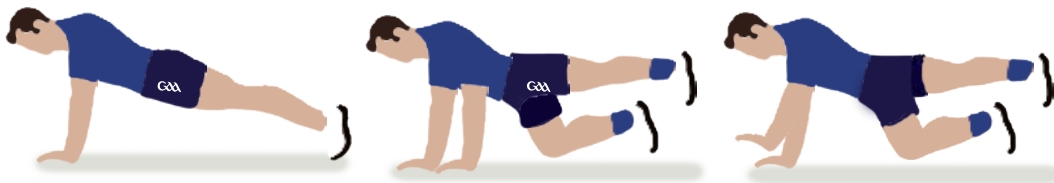
Pat Daly
GAA Director of Games Development & Research

1. Mini Band March



- Begin in athletic position with band around knees
- March forward with 10 deliberate steps
- March backwards with 10 deliberate steps
- March to the left with 10 deliberate steps
- March to the right with 10 deliberate steps

2. Bear Crawl



- Start in crawling position
- Keep knees as close to the ground as possible without touching
- Keep abs braced throughout as you move slowly forward
- Imagine there is a glass of water on your back that you can't spill

3. Hip Bridge



- Lay on back, feet hip width apart
- Push through hips and heels
- Hold at top for 2-3 seconds

4. Side Plank



- Lay on side with elbow directly under shoulder
- Raise hips so body is in straight line
- Hold for 10-15 seconds

5. Hip Opener



- Step forward with left foot
- Drop left elbow towards left knee
- Push left knee away from hips
- Drop elbow towards ankle
- Hold for 3-5 seconds

6. Lying Reach Around



- Begin lying on side with knees bent in front of hips
- Hands together in front of face
- Raise top hand around in a circle as far as it can go
- Rotate head by watching top hand throughout movement

7. Single Leg RDL



- Stand tall on right leg with left leg raised
- Slight bend in standing leg
- Push left heel back while slowly leaning forward
- Keep going until heel and head make a straight line that is parallel to the floor
- Return to starting position

1. Mini Band March



- Begin in athletic position with band around knees
- March forward with 10 deliberate steps
- March backwards with 10 deliberate steps
- March to the left with 10 deliberate steps
- March to the right with 10 deliberate steps

2. Front Plank



- Rest on forearms with elbows directly under shoulders
- Straight line from heels to head
- Keep tummy and glutes braced
- Breathe normally throughout

3. Single Leg Bridge



- Lie on back with knees bent and 1 leg raised
- Raise hips by pushing through glute and heel
- Pause at top for 2 seconds

4. Bird Dog



- Begin with hand on ground under shoulder and knees under hips
- Keep abs braced and breathe normally
- Raise right leg and left arm until they run in a straight line
- Repeat on opposite side

5. Hip Stretch



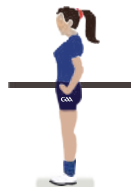
- Begin with right knee and left foot on the ground
- Straight line from right knee through hip up to head
- Squeeze right glute until you feel a stretch at front of right hip
- Hold for 3-5 seconds

6. Kneeling Reach Around



- Begin with hands and knees on ground
- Place right hand behind right ear
- Maintain tightness throughout abs while raising right elbow towards the sky
- Return to beginning position

7. Leg Swing



- Stand tall on right leg
- Use a partner or hurl for balance
- Swing left leg forwards and backwards while remaining tall
- Keep leg moving in straight line
- Maintain full control of swinging leg throughout

5

Key

Movements



Resistance training is a form of strength training. It is important to help strengthen muscles & joints but also to help you become resilient to forces such as those experienced on the field. This resilience helps to prevent muscle and joint injury during games as best as possible.

The “5 Key Movements” outlined in the following pages are exercises that have been chosen as the basic foundation for whole body strength development in youth athletes. They are the squat, hip hinge, plank, push up and inverted row. These exercises incorporate lower body, core and upper body movements.

Within the 5 Key Movements there are exercises outlined with both progressions and regressions. Begin with the middle exercise, if you find this too difficult to complete with good quality movement then you move to the regression exercise. If you move well through the exercise then you can move to the progression exercise. For example, start with the Goblet Squat, if you cannot move with quality through this movement, move to the body weight squat first and build up your movement capacity and strength before then progressing to the Goblet Squat. If you are comfortable with the Goblet Squat, moving with good quality and ease, progress to the Split Squat exercise.

Within each exercise there are also three stages of development or progress. Begin with the sets and reps outlined in the “start” box, after a couple of weeks progress to the sets and reps outlined in the “move to” box and finally progress to the sets and reps in the “aim” box. Everyone will move between “start”, “move to” and “aim” at different rates. Don’t rush progress. Quality movement over number of sets and reps is the ultimate aim.

Regression



Body Weight



Body Weight



Shorter Time



From Knees



Bent Knees

Baseline



Goblet Squat



Hinge w/Band



Plank



Push-Up



Inverted Row

Progression



Split Squat



Single Leg RDL



Dynamic Arm/Leg

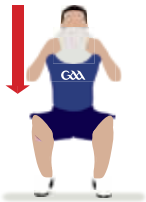


Pause at Bottom



Pause at Top

GOBLET SQUAT



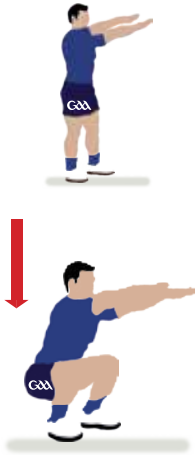
1. Weight at chest level, feet hip-width apart, keep feet flat on ground
2. Ankle, knee & hip in alignment, neutral spine
3. Slowly sit back and down, bending hips, knees & ankles, keeping chest & head up
4. Go as low as you can keeping feet flat, try get hips below knees
6. Knees pushed out all the time – can use elbows to push knees out when down low
7. Return to standing position

START:
2 x 8-10 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 10-12 reps

AIM:
3 x 12-15 reps or
increased weight

GOBLET SQUAT Regression = Body Weight Squat



1. Feet hip-width apart. Ankle, knee & hip in alignment, neutral spine, keep feet flat on ground
2. Slowly sit back and down, bending hips, knees & ankles, keeping chest & head up
3. Go as low as you can keeping feet flat, try get hips below knees. If heels go up try widening your stance. Torso parallel to shin.
4. Knees pushed out – can use elbows to push out when you're down low
5. Return to standing position

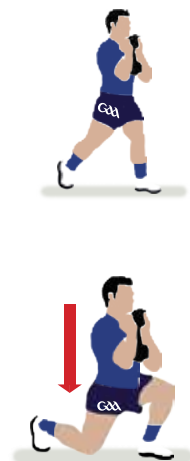
START:
2 x 8-10 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 10-12 reps

AIM:
3 x 12-15 reps

GOBLET SQUAT Progression = Split Squat

1. Weight at chest level
2. Feet in staggered stance at shoulder width
3. Slowly sit back down by lowering hips and bending front knee. Front knee above ankle, back knee below hips
4. Chest & head up throughout movement. Torso parallel to shin
5. Return to standing position



START:
2 x 8-10 reps e/s

MOVE TO:
3 x 10-12 reps e/s

AIM:
3 x 12-15 reps e/s or
increase weight

HINGE WITH BAND



1. Stand tall on band, feet shoulder width apart, band over shoulders & behind neck
2. Slight bend in knees
3. Slowly push hips backward by hinging at hips, keep spine straight & tighten stomach
4. Go as far as you can control through hamstrings and lower back
5. Hold for a moment, 1-2 seconds
6. Slowly return to starting position

START:
2 x 6-8 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 8-10 reps

AIM:
3 x 12-15 reps

HINGE WITH BAND Regression = Body Weight Hip Hinge



1. Stand tall, feet shoulder width apart, hands behind head
2. Slight bend in knees
3. Slowly push hips backward by hinging at hips
4. Go as far as you can control through hamstrings and lower back
5. Hold for a moment, 1-2 seconds
6. Slowly stand back to starting position

START:
2 x 8-10 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 10-12 reps

AIM:
3 x 12-15 reps

HINGE WITH BAND Progression = Single Leg RDL

1. Stand tall on one leg, other leg slightly in the air
2. Slight bend in knee
3. Lean forward, moving through hips, pushing heel of non-standing leg backwards, keep spine straight & tighten stomach
4. Keep going until your heel and head make a straight line that is parallel to floor. Keep standing knee, foot and ankle in straight line
5. Hips remain neutral with rear toe pointing to ground
6. Slowly return to starting position



START:
2 x 4-6 reps e/s

MOVE TO:
3 x 6-8 reps e/s

AIM:
3 x 8-10 reps e/s

PLANK



1. Rest on forearms parallel to floor, elbows directly under shoulders, shoulder blades back and down, hands apart
2. Straight line from ankles/heels to knee, hip, shoulder and top of head, keeping back flat
3. Keep glutes squeezed and abs braced to prevent bum from sticking up, or back sagging in middle
4. Maintain normal breathing throughout exercise

START:
2 x 30-40 secs

MOVE TO:
3 x 40-60 secs

AIM:
3 x 60+ secs

PLANK Regression = Shorter Time



1. Rest on forearms parallel to floor, elbows directly under shoulders, shoulder blades back and down, hands apart
2. Straight line from heels to top of head, keeping back flat
3. Keep glutes squeezed and abs braced to prevent bum from sticking up, or back sagging in middle
4. Maintain normal breathing throughout exercise

START:
2 x 20-30 secs

MOVE TO:
3 x 30-40 secs

AIM:
3 x 40+ secs

PLANK Progression = Dynamic Arm/Leg

1. Plank position outlined above
2. When stable, raise one arm or one leg
3. If stable with one arm/leg, raise opposite arm/leg
4. Hold position, then switch to opposite arm/leg
5. Try to keep bum from sticking up, or back sagging in the middle



START:
2 x 30-40 secs

MOVE TO:
3 x 40-60 secs

AIM:
3 x 60+ secs

PUSH UP



1. Straight line ankle, knee, hip, shoulder and head throughout. Hands directly beneath shoulders, shoulder blades back and down, back flat
2. Lower body by bending at elbows – entire body moving as one
3. Elbows tucked close to body - should make a 45 degree angle when viewed from above
4. Go as low as you can, aiming to get chest to brush the floor
5. Keep core engaged, push back up into starting position, back flat throughout

START:
2 x 6-8 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 10-15 reps

AIM:
3 x 16+ reps

PUSH UP Regression = From Knees



1. Straight line of ankle, knee, hip, shoulder and head throughout. Hands directly beneath shoulders, shoulder blades back and down, back flat
2. Knees bent, feet in air behind
3. Lower body, bending at elbows, back flat throughout
4. Elbows tucked close to body, avoid sticking bum in the air
5. Go as low as you can, aiming to get chest to brush the floor
6. Keep core engaged, push back up into starting position, back flat throughout

START:
2 x 8-12 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 10-16 reps

AIM:
3 x 16+ reps

PUSH UP Progression = Pause at Bottom

1. Complete phases 1-4 outlined for the push up (other side of card)
5. At bottom pause and hold this position for 3-5 seconds
6. Keep core engaged, push back up into starting position, back flat throughout



3-5 second pause

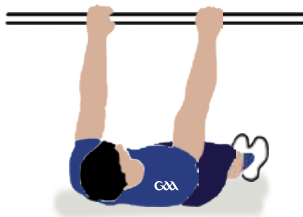
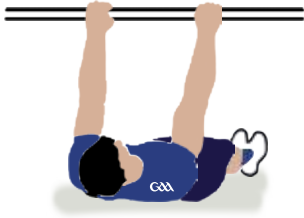


START:
2 x 10-12 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 12-16 reps

AIM:
3 x 16+ reps

INVERTED ROW



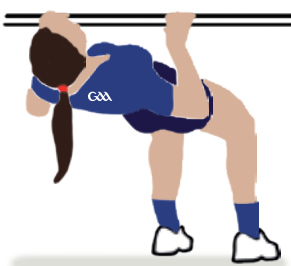
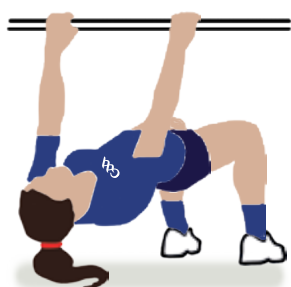
1. Slightly wider than shoulder width grip, hanging underneath, hands directly under shoulders, arms fully extended, heels on ground, legs fully extended
2. Straight line – head, shoulder, hips, knees & ankles/heels
3. Bending at elbow, pull chest to bar, legs remain straight – begin pulling with upper back, not arms
4. Hold at top when chest touches bar/ broom
5. Keep core engaged, slowly return to starting position

START:
2 x 6-8 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 8-10 reps

AIM:
3 x 10-15 reps

INVERTED ROW *Regression = Bent Knees*



START:
2 x 6-8 reps

1. Slightly wider than shoulder width grip, hanging underneath, hands directly under shoulders, arms fully extended, heels on ground with knees bent
2. Straight line – head, shoulder, hips, knees & ankles/heels
3. Complete steps 3-5 outlined for the inverted row (other side of card)

MOVE TO:
3 x 8-10 reps

AIM:
3 x 10-15 reps

INVERTED ROW *Progression = Pause at Top*

1. Complete phases 1-3 outlined for the inverted row (other side of card)
4. At top pause and hold position for 3-5 seconds
5. Keep core engaged, slowly return to starting position



START:
2 x 6-8 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 8-10 reps

AIM:
3 x 10-15 reps

5

**Desirable
Movements**

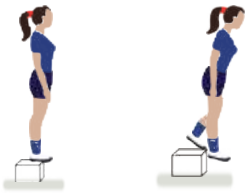


The “5 Desirable Movements” outlined in the following pages are exercises that have been chosen as more advanced movements for further strength and some power development in youth athletes. They are the jump and land, med ball throw and catch, side plank, single leg bridge and the lateral hop and land. These exercises were included to add extra stress to the joints that regularly need to apply and take force on the GAA field as well as beginning to introduce some power-based exercises for upper and lower body.

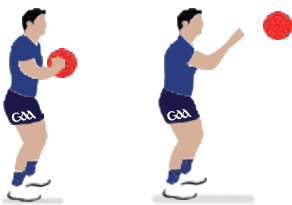
Similar to the 5 Key Movements, the 5 Desirable Movements incorporate exercises that are outlined with both progressions and regressions. Begin with the middle exercise, if you find this too difficult to complete with good quality movement then you move to the regression exercise. If you move well through the exercise, then you can move to the progression exercise. For example, start with the Jump & Land, if you cannot move with quality through this movement and take the forces applied safely, move to the drop to land first and build up your movement capacity and strength before then progressing to the Jump & Land. If you are comfortable with the Jump & Land, moving with good quality and ease, progress to the Hop & Land exercise.

Within each exercise there are also three stages of development or progress. Begin with the sets and reps outlined in the “start” box, after a couple of weeks progress to the sets and reps outlined in the “move to” box and finally progress to the sets and reps in the “aim” box. Everyone will move between “start”, “move to” and “aim” at different rates. Don’t rush progress. Quality movement over number of sets and reps is the ultimate aim.

Regression



Drop to Land



Med Ball Throw



Shorter Time



2 Leg Iso Hold



Split Squat

Baseline



Jump & Land



Med Ball Throw & Catch



Side Plank



Single Leg Bridge



Lunge

Progression



Hop & Land



Single Arm Throw



Leg Raised



1 Leg Iso Hold



Side Lunge

JUMP & LAND



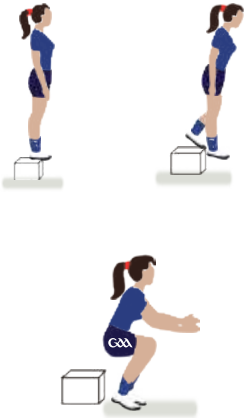
1. Stand tall, feet hip-width apart
2. Bend hips, knees and ankles as you swing arms directly behind you
3. Explosively jump off ground as high as possible, straightening whole body
4. Land softly on balls of feet with knees bent and directly over feet (avoid knees buckling in), keep chest lifted as you jump

START:
2 x 4 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 3-5 reps

AIM:
3 x 5-6 reps

JUMP & LAND Regression = Drop to Land



1. Stand tall on box/height (30-100cm), feet hip width apart
2. Hang one foot out over front edge of box (practice both right & left foot)
3. With lead foot, drop from box to floor landing on both feet
4. Land softly on balls of feet with knees bent and directly over feet (avoid knees buckling in), keep chest lifted as you drop to land

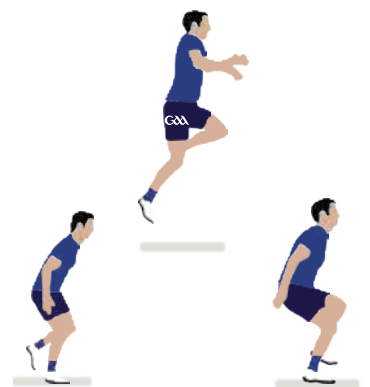
START:
2 x 3 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 3-5 reps

AIM:
3 x 5-6 reps

JUMP & LAND Progression = SL Hop & Land

1. Stand tall on one foot (practice both right & left foot)
2. Bend knee and shift hips back
3. Explosively jump off ground in a forward motion as high as possible
4. Land softly on balls of feet with knee bent and directly over feet (avoid knee buckling in), try to land in one motion while sticking the land with little or no wobble
5. Make sure to keep chest lifted as you jump



START:
2 x 3 reps e/s

MOVE TO:
3 x 3-5 reps e/s

AIM:
3 x 5-6 reps e/s

MED BALL THROW & CATCH



1. Stand tall, feet shoulderwidth apart, slight bend in knees
2. Med ball in two hands at chest height
3. Back straight & core engaged, throw med ball to partners chest, finish with extended arms
4. Partner catches and in similar form returns throw to chest

* Can advance to seated throw and catch with partner – again keep back straight and core engaged

START:
2 x 5-8 reps/
lighter med ball

MOVE TO:
3 x 6-10 reps

AIM:
3 x 8-12 reps/
heavier med ball

MED BALL THROW & CATCH Regression = Med Ball Throw



1. Stand tall, feet shoulder-width apart, slight bend in knees
2. Med ball in two hands at chest height
3. Back straight & core engaged, throw med ball to wall/open space as far as possible, finish with extended arms

* Can advance to seated throw – again keep back straight and core engaged

START:
2 x 5-8 reps/
lighter med ball

MOVE TO:
3 x 6-10 reps

AIM:
3 x 8-12 reps/
heavier med ball

MED BALL THROW & CATCH Progression = Single Arm Throw

1. Stand tall, feet shoulder-width apart, slight bend in knees
2. Med ball in one hand at chest height (practice both right & left)
3. Back straight & core engaged, throw med ball to wall/open space as far as possible, finish with an extended arm

* Can advance to seated throw – again keep back straight and core engaged

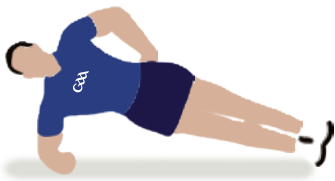


START:
2 x 5-8 reps e/s
lighter med ball

MOVE TO:
3 x 6-10 reps e/s

AIM:
3 x 8-12 reps e/s
heavier med ball

SIDE PLANK



1. Start on side, feet together, elbow directly under shoulder, balancing on side of foot
2. Straight line from ankle, knee, hip, shoulder and head, shoulder blades back and down
3. Hold position by squeezing glutes and bracing abs
4. Repeat on opposite side

START:
2 x 20-40 secs e/s

MOVE TO:
3 x 40-60 secs e/s

AIM:
3 x 60+ secs e/s

SIDE PLANK *Regression = Shorter Time*



1. Start on side, feet together, elbow directly under shoulder, balancing on side of foot
2. Straight line from ankle, knee, hip, shoulder and head, shoulder blades back and down
3. Hold position by squeezing glutes and bracing abs
4. Repeat on opposite side

START:
2 x 15-30 secs e/s

MOVE TO:
3 x 25-50 secs e/s

AIM:
3 x 40+ secs e/s

SIDE PLANK *Progression = Leg Raised*

1. Start on side, feet together, elbow directly under shoulder, balancing on side of foot
2. Straight line from ankle, knee, hip, shoulder and head, shoulder blades back and down
3. Raise top leg at hip in straight position without bending knee
4. Hold position by squeezing glutes and bracing abs
5. Repeat on opposite side

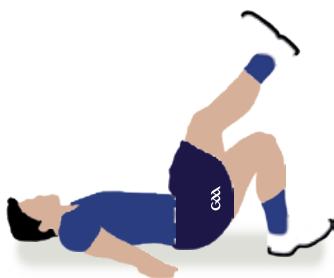
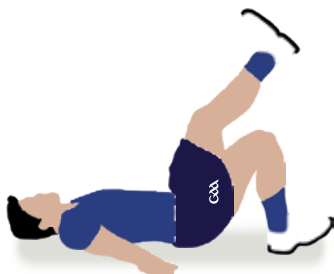


START:
2 x 20-40 secs e/s

MOVE TO:
3 x 40-60 secs e/s

AIM:
3 x 60+ secs e/s

SINGLE LEG BRIDGE



1. Lie on back, arms out to side, knees bent, heels flat on floor
2. Straight line knee, hip, shoulder & head. Raise one leg into air – hip flexion
3. With one leg raised, raise hips by squeezing glutes & bracing abs
4. Hold at top with hips balanced
5. Slowly lower hips back to floor, keeping leg raised
6. Maintain normal breathing throughout

START:
2 x 4-6 reps e/s

MOVE TO:
3 x 6-8 reps e/s

AIM:
3 x 8-12 reps e/s

SINGLE LEG BRIDGE Regression = 2 Leg Iso Hold



10 second hold

1. Lie on back, arms out to side, knees bent, heels flat on floor
2. Straight line knee, hip, shoulder & head. Raise hips by squeezing glutes & bracing abs. Hips remain balanced
3. Hold at top for approx. 10 seconds
4. Slowly lower hips back to floor, maintaining normal breathing

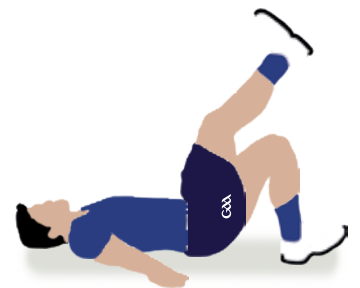
START:
2 x 5-8 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 6-10 reps

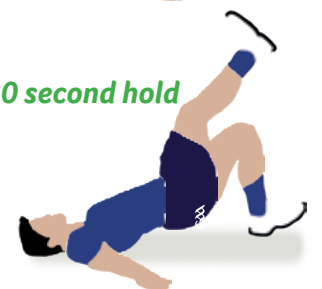
AIM:
3 x 8-12 reps

SINGLE LEG BRIDGE Progression = 1 Leg Iso Hold

1. Lie on back, arms out to side, knees bent, heels flat on the floor
2. Raise one leg into the air
3. Straight line knee, hip, shoulder & head. With one leg raised, raise hips by squeezing glutes & bracing abs
4. Hold at top for approx. 10 seconds
5. Slowly lower hips back to floor, keeping leg raised
6. Maintain normal breathing throughout



10 second hold



START:
2 x 5-8 reps

MOVE TO:
3 x 6-10 reps

AIM:
3 x 8-12 reps

LUNGE



1. Begin in neutral stance with feet hip width apart, knees and hips aligned
2. Step forward with 1 leg
3. Shoulders remain above hips throughout
4. Front knee above ankle & not extended beyond toes
5. Back knee below hips. Neutral spine
6. Front foot stays firmly planted
7. Can hold weight in hands (dumbbells)

START:
2 x 6 reps e/s

MOVE TO:
3 x 6-8 reps e/s

AIM:
3 x 10-12 reps e/s

LUNGE Regression = Split Squat



1. Weight at chest level
2. Feet in staggered stance at hip-width
3. Sit back down by lowering hips and bending front knee. Front knee above ankle, back knee below hip
4. Chest up throughout movement
5. Return to tall position

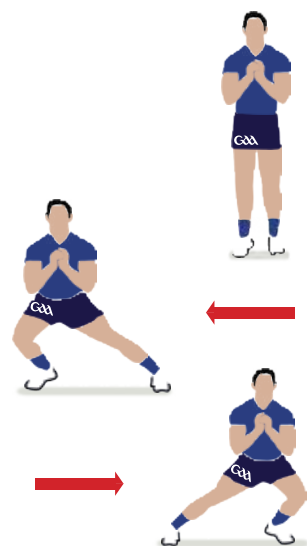
START:
2 x 8-10 reps e/s

MOVE TO:
3 x 10-12 reps e/s

AIM:
3 x 12-15 reps e/s

LUNGE Progression = Side Lunge

1. Feet shoulder width apart, hips & knees slightly bent, head and chest up
2. Take a slow step to right side, keeping toes pointed forward & staying low. Left leg is straight, driving weight to the right, bending knee and hip into a side lunge
3. Head and chest up throughout
4. Pause at bottom for a moment, 1-2 seconds, returning to standing position
5. Repeat on opposite side & continue to repeat each leg for specified reps



START:
2 x 6 reps e/s

MOVE TO:
3 x 6-10 reps e/s

AIM:
3 x 10-15 reps e/s
or can add weight

