

# RESISTANCE BAND TRAINING GUIDE

## RESISTANCE BAND EXERCISE GUIDE

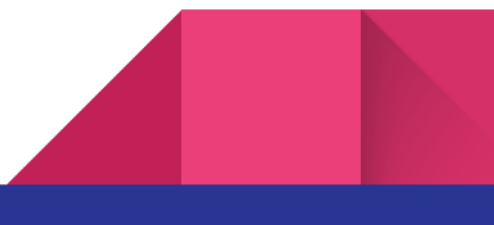
COMPLETE GUIDE TO FULL-BODY STRENGTH & MOBILITY

EBOOK



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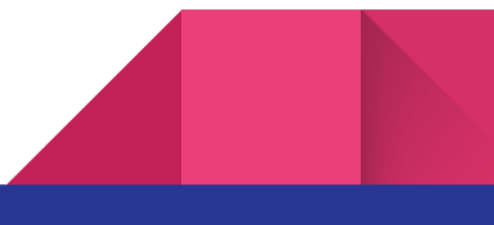
## ARNOLD PRESS

This overhead press variation targets the anterior delt (the front of your shoulder) a bit more than standard overhead presses.

Stand with both feet on a resistance band, hip width apart. Hold the handles in front of your shoulders, with your palms facing toward you. Brace your abdominal muscles (as if you were about to cough) and squeeze your glutes.

Maintaining this posture, press the band handles overhead. As you press, rotate your hands so that your palms face forward at the top of the movement, and move your hands slightly closer together. Your arms should be straight and your biceps should be next to your ears. Reverse the movement to return to the start position.

Make sure you keep your glutes and abs activated throughout this movement to prevent hyperextending your spine, especially when you're using a challenging resistance level.





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## BAND PULL-APART

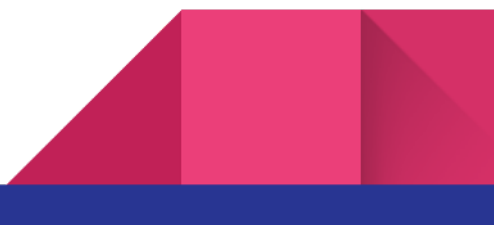
This is an excellent warm-up movement to perform before working on upper body exercises such as push-ups, chest press, and rows. It activates your rear deltoids, which are important to overall shoulder health (and are often neglected in strength training programs).

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your spine neutral (head, torso, and hips in a stacked position). Start with your arms extended straight out in front of you at shoulder height, holding a resistance band with both hands. Your palms should be facing the floor.

Keeping your arms straight, perform a reverse fly motion, bringing your hands out laterally to your sides. Focus on activating your rear delts and upper back, bringing the band to your chest. Hold the contraction briefly, then return to the start position.

Keep your arms parallel to the ground; don't let them drop down during your set.

Move your hands closer together on the band to make this move more difficult, and move them farther away from each other to make the move less challenging.





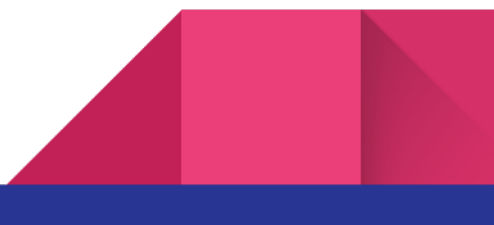
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## BAND-ASSISTED PISTOL SQUATS

Along with other pistol squat progressions such as negative reps (lowering yourself slowly on one leg, then starting again at the top of the movement), suspension trainer pistol squats (holding the handles of a suspension trainer, reducing the working weight), and performing pistol squats while holding on to a stable object for assistance with balance, this exercise can help you learn full, unassisted pistol squats—one of the most challenging lower body strength movements to master.

Loop one end of a pull-up assistance band around a pull-up bar, and the other end around the top of your hamstrings, right under your glutes. Stand on your left leg, with your right foot off the ground. Reach your arms out in front of you.

Squat down on your left leg by bending at the hip and knee, keeping your right leg straight throughout the movement. Try to keep your spine as neutral as possible; a small amount of back rounding is okay (this can be decreased by using a small counterweight held out in front of you, like a light dumbbell or kettlebell). Descend as low as you can while maintaining good form, pause, then press through your left foot to return to standing.





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## BAND-ASSISTED PULL-UPS

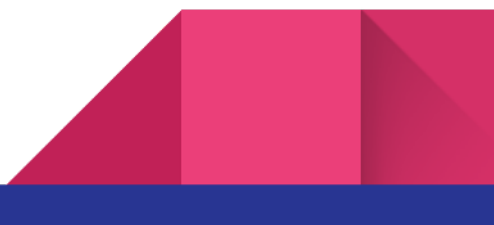
Along with a well-designed training program that also includes other pull-up progressions, the band-assisted pull-up is one of the most effective methods of learning how to do your very first unassisted pull-up.

Keep in mind that you get the most assistance at the bottom of this movement, when the band is most stretched, and the least assistance at the top of the movement. Most people find the bottom of the move most challenging, so make sure you include other pull-up training exercises in your workout plan, such as negative reps (starting at the top of a pull-up and slowly lowering yourself until you're hanging with straight arms), hanging from a bar for up to 30 seconds (full body weight; no band support), and inverted body weight rows (using a suspension trainer or barbell in a squat rack).

Loop a pull-up assist band around a pull-up bar. Hang from the bar with an overhand grip, palms facing away from you, with the resistance band around your feet. Make sure your arms are completely straight, and your shoulders are packed (down and away from your ears).

Brace your core and focus on using your back muscles to pull yourself toward the bar, squeezing your shoulder blades together as you move. Bring your upper chest to the bar, then slowly lower to the start position, making sure to fully extend your arms while keeping your shoulders packed.

Note: there's no graceful way of getting in and out of a pull-up assistance band! Having the band around your feet is ideal, as this mimics the position your body will be in when you're performing full, unassisted pull-ups. If your



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pull-up bar is too low or you're having trouble getting your feet in the band (a partner is helpful here), loop the band around your knees instead.



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## **BAND-RESISTED SPRINTS**

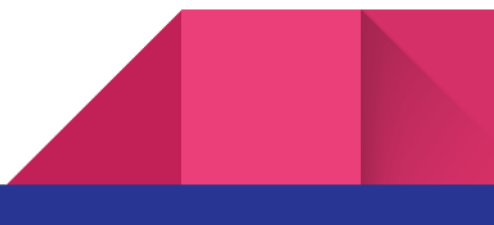
Band-resisted sprints are excellent drills to develop acceleration, speed, and explosive power for sports such as soccer, football, running/sprinting, basketball, and more. They're also excellent for anaerobic conditioning: short-duration, high-intensity activities that skyrocket your heart rate. They make sprinting more difficult, to recruit additional muscle fibers that then translate into better athletic performance. Make sure your muscles are sufficiently warmed up before performing sprints of any kind!

Given their high energy demands, band-resisted sprints are not meant to be performed in high volumes. Keep your sprint distances to within 40 to 50 meters, perform a maximum of five sprints per workout, and make sure you fully recover between each sprint.

Here are three band-resisted sprint variations. The forward sprint will be the fastest movement; backward jogging and lateral shuffles don't involve as much speed.

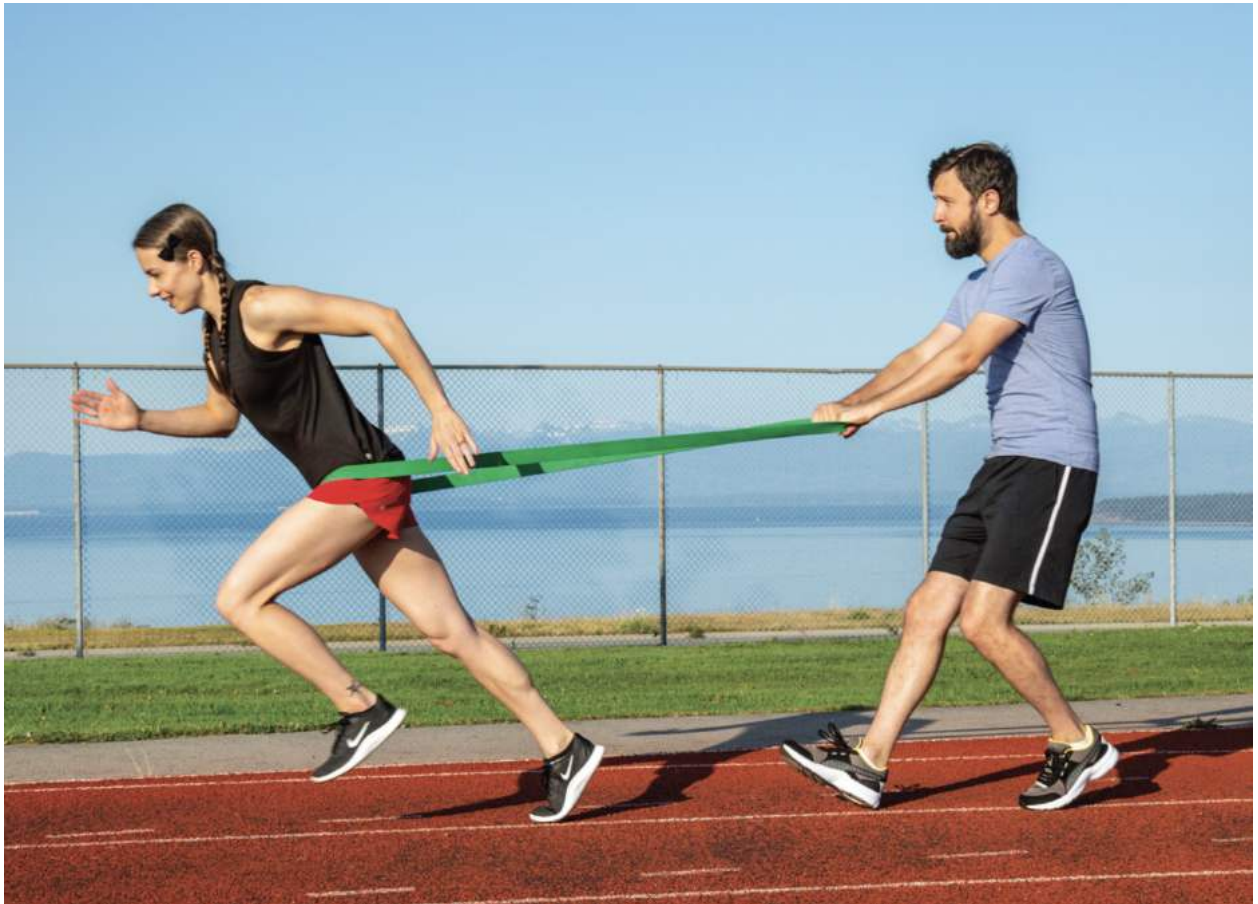
### **BAND-RESISTED FORWARD SPRINTS**

Stand with a pull-up assistance band around your hips, with a training partner behind you holding the other end with both hands. Lean forward slightly, place one foot in front of the other, and, after confirming that your training partner is ready, run as fast as you can for 40 to 0 meters.



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Your training partner will pull back on the band (they can lean back slightly to provide greater resistance), and follow you as you run. Your overall speed should be about 75 percent of your normal sprint speed.



### **BAND-RESISTED BACKWARD JOGGING**

Stand facing your training partner, with a resistance band around your hips and your training partner holding one end of the band. Start with your feet hip width apart, knees bent slightly, back flat, and the resistance band pulled taught.

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Jog backwards for 40 to 50 meters, pumping your arms and staying on your toes throughout.



### **BAND-RESISTED LATERAL SHUFFLE**

Stand to the right of your training partner, with a resistance band around your hips and your training partner holding the other end. Start with your feet hip width apart, knees bent slightly, back flat, and the resistance band pulled taught.

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Keeping your toes pointed forward, jump your right foot to the right, following with your left foot. Your training partner will walk forward, keeping tension on the band. Keep shuffling to the right for 40 to 50 meters, then switch sides.



## HIGH PLANK ROW

This challenging plank variation works your core while also increasing your shoulder stability.

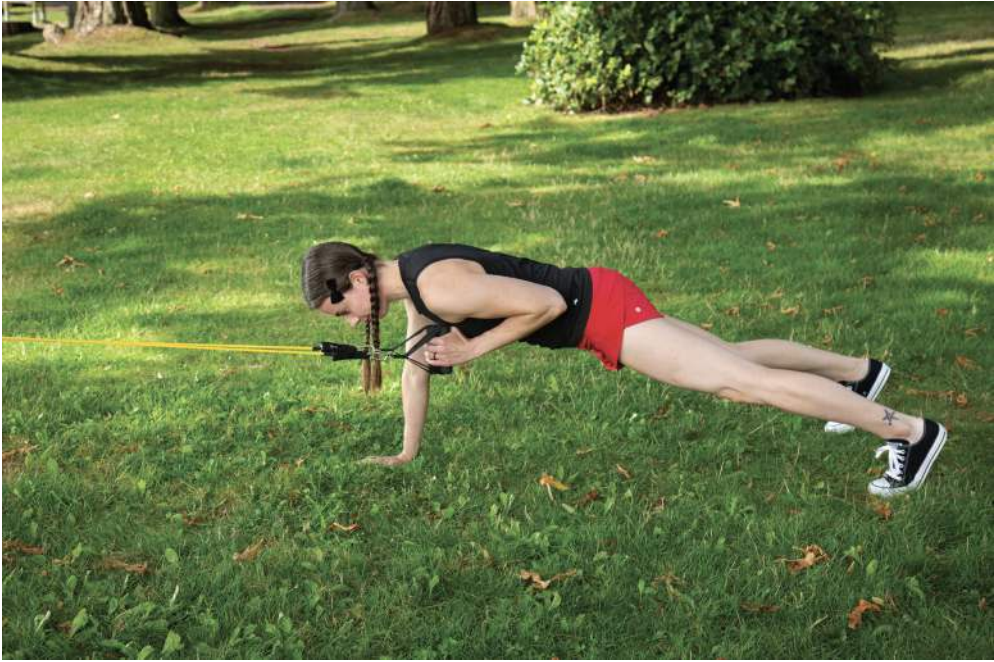
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Set your anchor point to about knee height. Facing the anchor point, start in a high plank position (the top position of a push-up), holding both resistance band handles in your left hand. Place your hands directly underneath your shoulders and place your feet hip width apart. Your body should form a straight line from your head to your ankles.

Brace your abs and avoid rotating your hips as you straighten your left arm toward the resistance band anchor point. Make sure you feel tension on the resistance band in this start position.

Maintaining your plank position with your hips in line with your shoulders and parallel to the ground, row the band handles to the left side of your chest. Pause briefly, then return to the start position by straightening your arm. Your hips should remain level throughout the movement. Complete all reps on one side, then switch sides.





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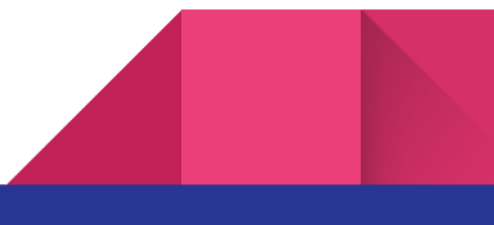
## HIGH-LOW CHOP

Chops target the transverse abdominis and oblique muscles in your core, while strengthening the rotational movement pattern. This is beneficial for any twisting motion such as throwing, boxing, or golfing.

Stand with your feet hip width apart, to the right of a resistance band anchored just above head height. Hold both resistance band handles together. Start with your arms straight and extended to your left, hands at head height, knees slightly bent.

Using your core muscles to initiate the movement, move the band handles in a smooth arc to your right, ending with your hands at about hip height. Perform all reps on one side, then switch sides.

Make sure you're initiating this movement with your abs (specifically your obliques), not your arms. It should feel like your arms are just going along for the ride!





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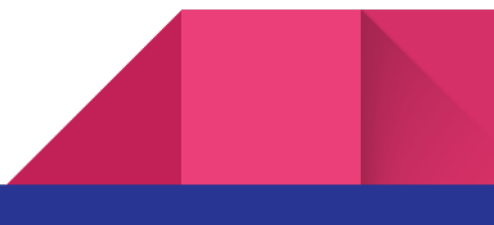
## HIP HINGE

This resistance band hip hinge variation is an excellent way to practice good deadlift form. Having the resistance band pull your hips backward “grooves” the movement pattern of a hip hinge, ensuring you’re using the correct muscles to perform the exercise.

Anchor a pull-up assistance band at about ankle height. Stand facing away from the anchor point, with the band around your hips and your arms straight out in front of you.

Hinge your hips back behind you, making sure you feel most of the work in your hamstrings and glutes. Keep your spine neutral, and your head in line with your spine. In this bottom position, you should be looking at the ground about three feet in front of you. Make sure you feel tension on the band in this position.

Using your hamstrings and glutes, thrust your hips forward to come to a standing position. Squeeze your glutes at the top position, then repeat for reps.





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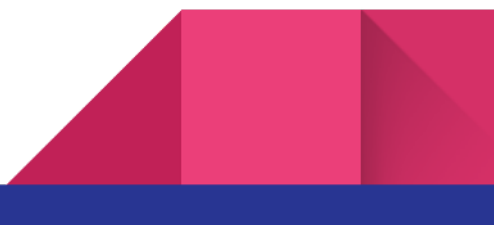
## HIP RAISE

Hip raises are a classic core exercise, focusing on the lower abdominal muscles. Adding a resistance band is a unique way of increasing the challenge level.

Lie on the floor with your legs straight and feet toward the ceiling. Loop a resistance band around your feet and hold a handle in each hand next to your hips, keeping your arms straight.

Use your abdominal muscles to lift your glutes and hips off the floor, aiming your feet straight up toward the ceiling. Press into the resistance band handles with your hands to keep them in place throughout the exercise. Lower your back down to the start position, making sure to prevent your legs from swinging toward the ground, away from your head.

Throughout your set, make sure to keep your head on the ground and your neck muscles relaxed.





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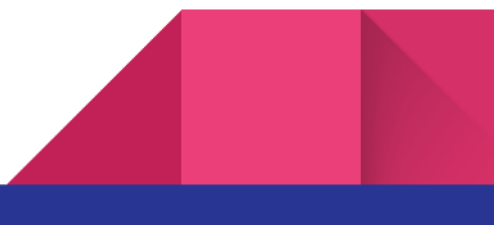
## LOW-HIGH CHOP

Much like the high-low chop, this exercise targets your transverse abdominis and oblique muscles. It's usually a bit more challenging than the high-low chop, so you may need to use slightly less resistance.

Stand with your feet hip width apart, to the left of a resistance band anchored just below knee height. Hold both resistance handles together. Start with your arms straight and extended to your right, knees slightly bent.

Using your core muscles to initiate the movement (your arms should feel like they're just going along for the ride), move the band handles in a smooth arc to your left, ending with your hands at about head height.

Perform all reps on one side, then switch sides.





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## PEC FLY

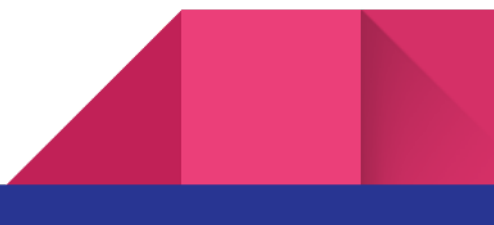
In addition to strengthening the pectoral (chest) muscles, this move can help improve posture by stretching out the chest muscles and helping you squeeze your shoulder blades together in the start position of the exercise.

Stand facing away from your anchor point, set to about chest height. Place one foot in front of the other and lean forward slightly. Make sure your spine stays in a neutral position; avoid rounding or hyperextending your back.

Start with your arms mostly straight—just a slight bend in your elbows—with your hands just behind your back. You should feel a slight stretch in your chest muscles.

Without changing the angle of your elbows, and keeping your arms parallel to the ground, bring the resistance band handles together in front of your chest until your hands touch.

Hold the contraction briefly, then slowly reach your arms back to the start position.





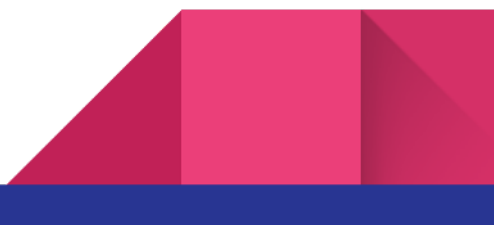
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## PULL-THROUGH

This hip hinge movement focuses on the hamstrings and glutes and is an excellent exercise for practicing deadlift form.

Set your resistance band anchor point to about ankle height. Facing away from the anchor and holding a resistance band handle in each hand, stand with your feet hip width apart. Hinge your hips backward toward the anchor point, bending your knees and keeping your spine neutral. You should feel your hamstrings activating and you should have most of your weight on your heels. Keep your head in line with your spine; in this bottom position, you should be looking at the ground a few feet in front of you, rather than looking straight ahead.

Keeping your hands between your legs, thrust your hips forward, squeezing your glutes. You should be fully upright in this ending position, with your head, shoulders, hips, knees, and ankles in line. Hold the contraction briefly, then hinge your hips back to return to the start position.





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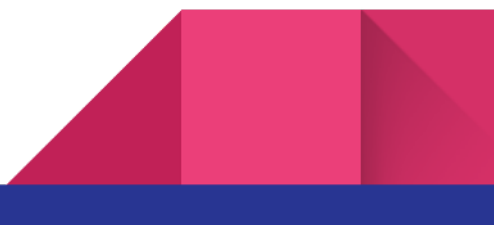
## QUADRUPED KICKBACK

This move strengthens the glutes while also working the entire musculature of the core.

Holding down the front of the band with both hands, get onto all fours on the floor. Loop the resistance band around the middle of your left foot. Start with your hands directly under your shoulders and your knees under your hips. Brace your abs.

Keeping your hips and shoulders stable, squeeze your left glute as you extend your left leg. Bring it parallel to the floor and make sure it's completely straight. Hold this contracted position briefly, then return to the start position.

Make sure you don't bring your leg much higher than parallel to the floor, as you'll hyperextend your low back. Perform all reps on one side, then switch sides.





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## SIDE PLANK REACH

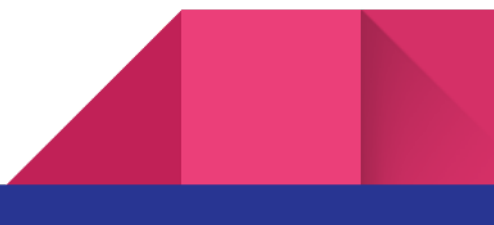
Challenge your core—especially your obliques—with this unique side plank variation. You'll also challenge your shoulder stability and upper back muscles.

Place your left hand on a resistance band. Support your body on your left hand, with your wrist directly under your shoulder, legs straight, and right foot stacked on top of your left foot. Your body should form a straight line from your head to your heels.

You may need to perform a slight posterior pelvic tilt to maintain proper alignment. Do this by squeezing your glutes, bracing your abs, and flattening out the curve in your low back.

Hold the resistance band handle in your right hand, with your arm across your chest, elbow just slightly bent. Make sure you feel tension on the band at this point. If not, adjust the band so that more of its length is unused, creating a shorter “working” section that has more tension.

Maintaining the side plank position throughout your set, raise your right hand up to the ceiling, keeping your right arm straight. Pause briefly, then slowly bring your arm back to the start position. Perform all reps on one side, then switch sides.





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## SIDE PLANK ROW

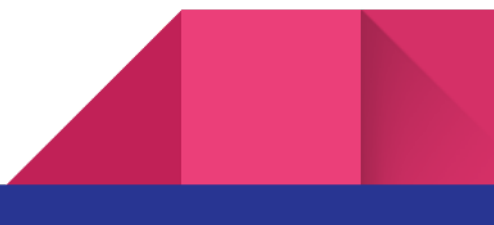
This challenging side plank variation will work your obliques, gluteus medius (the side of your glutes), shoulders, and back.

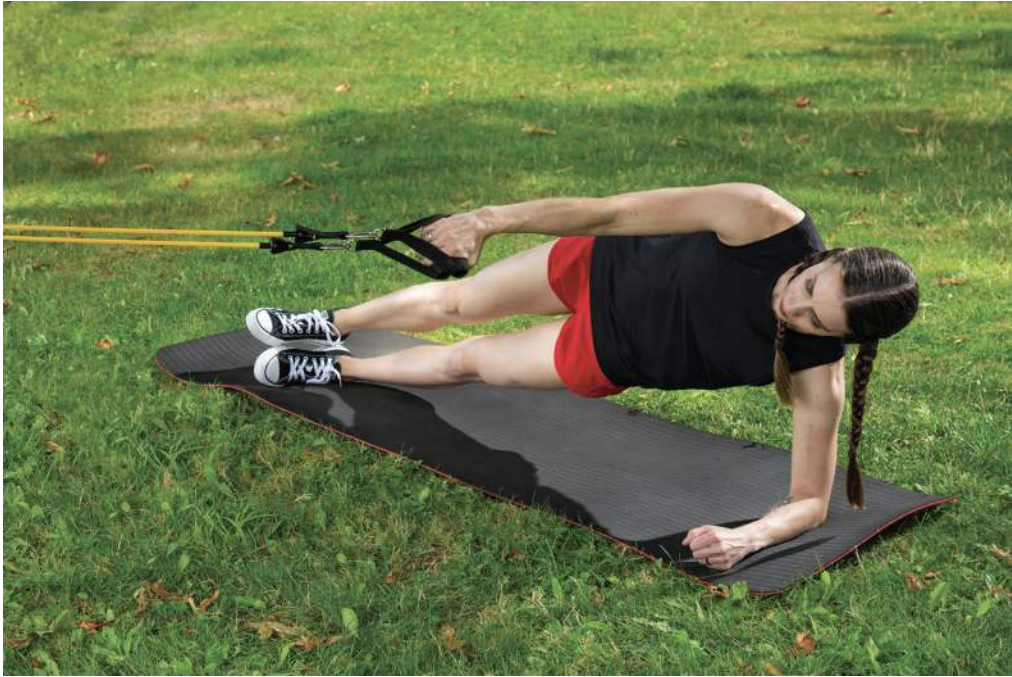
Set up a resistance band in an anchor point at about knee height. Facing the anchor point, get into a side plank position by propping yourself up on your left forearm (making sure your elbow is directly under your shoulder), stacking your right foot onto your left foot, and lifting your hips off the ground. Your body should form a straight line from your head to your heels.

You may need to perform a slight posterior pelvic tilt to maintain proper alignment. Do this by squeezing your glutes, bracing your abs, and flattening out the curve in your low back.

Hold both resistance band handles in your right hand, reaching your right arm out in front of you so it's completely straight. Make sure you feel tension on the band at this point. If not, adjust your position so you're slightly further away from the anchor point.

Maintaining the side plank position throughout your set, row the resistance band handles to the right side of your chest. Pause briefly, then return to the start position. Perform all reps on one side, then switch sides.





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## SINGLE-LEG BENCH SQUAT

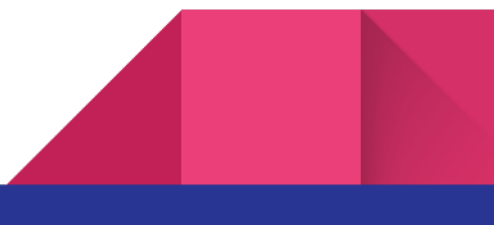
This is one of those moves that looks easy when you see someone else perform it . . . until you try it yourself! If you're new to single-leg bench squats, try them without a resistance band first. Once you can perform three sets of 10 reps on each leg, add a resistance band.

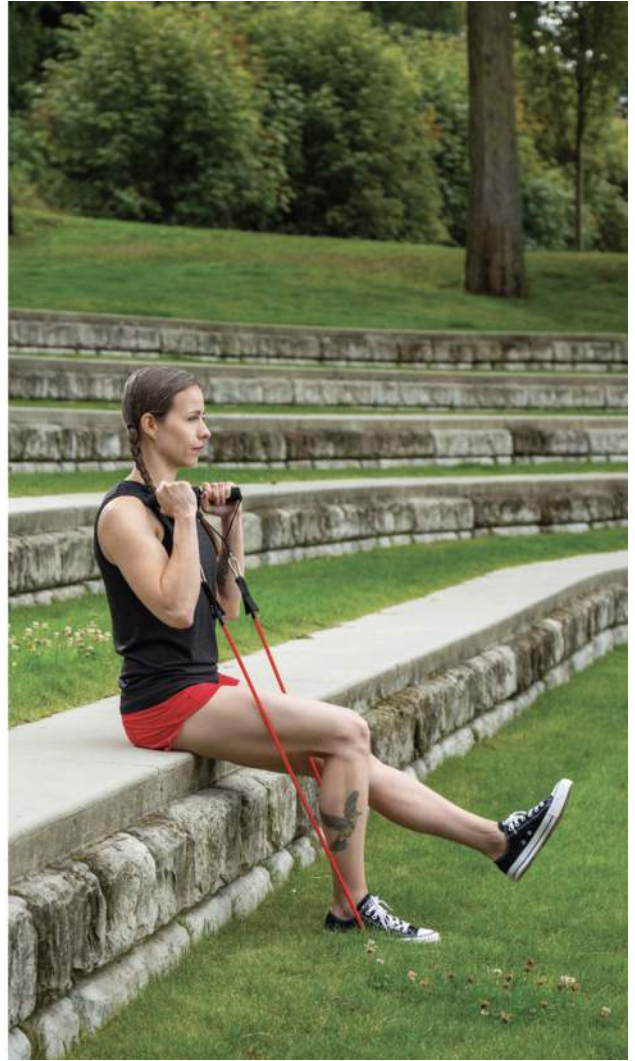
Stand with your back to a bench or chair. Place your right foot in the middle of a resistance band, and hold a handle in each hand at shoulder height.

Keeping the band handles at shoulder height, lift your left foot off the floor. Bend at your right knee and hip to squat down toward the bench, until your glutes touch the bench and your knee is bent at 90 degrees, right thigh parallel to the floor.

Keeping your spine neutral (no low back hyperextension, and no back rounding), press through your right foot to straighten your leg and return to the start position.

Complete all reps on one side, then switch sides.





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## SINGLE-LEG DEADLIFT

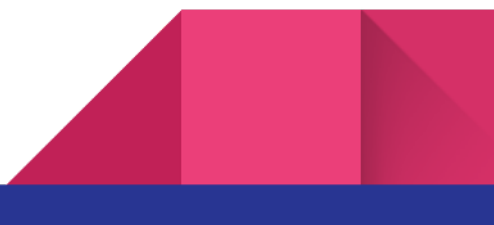
Unilateral movements (which work one side at a time) like this one are very important to prevent injury and improve athletic performance. Most of us have a dominant, and thus stronger, side. Working each side separately can balance out differences between sides. The single-leg deadlift strengthens your hamstrings and glutes, while improving your balance.

Stand upright with your left foot on the middle of a resistance band. Hold a resistance band handle in each hand, arms straight, with your hands in front of your thighs. To create enough tension for this exercise, you'll likely need to coil or fold the band a few times and place that under your foot. Most of your weight should be on your left leg, with your right foot lightly touching the ground just behind your left foot.

Hinging your hips back behind you, bend your left knee slightly as you lean your torso forward and reach your right leg behind you. Keeping your arms straight throughout the movement, bring your hands a few inches past your knee. Keep your head in line with your spine; in this bottom position, you should be looking at the ground a few feet in front of you, rather than straight ahead.

Press through your left heel to return to the start position, lightly tapping your right toes to the ground next to your left foot between reps.

Keep your spine neutral for the duration of the exercise. Complete all reps on one side, then switch sides.





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## SINGLE-LEG HIP EXTENSION

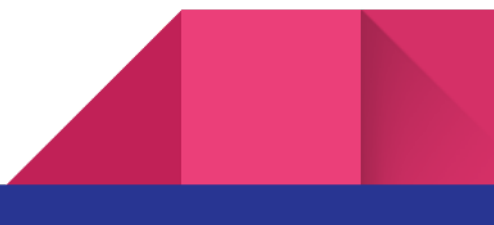
This move isolates the glutes. Strong glutes are extremely important for preventing low back pain, preventing injury, and increasing athletic performance.

Set up a resistance band in an anchor set to about ankle height. If your resistance band set came with an ankle strap, use that for this movement. If not, you can place your foot into one of the regular handles.

Face the anchor point and start with the strap around your left ankle (or handle around your left foot). Keeping your back straight and right knee slightly bent, you can place one or both hands on the wall in front of you for support, if needed.

Extend your left leg behind you, squeezing your left glute and keeping your left leg straight. Pause at the top of the movement, then slowly bring your leg back to the start position.

Make sure you don't lift your working leg too high; you'll hyperextend your low back. You should feel this move in both of your glutes. Your left glute is working against the resistance of the band, and your right glute is stabilizing you.





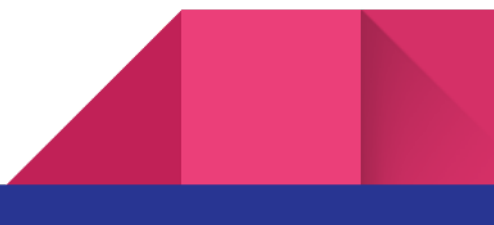
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## SKATER SQUATS

Skater squats are a challenging unilateral (single-sided) lower body strength movement. Once you've mastered bodyweight skater squats, adding a resistance band increases the challenge level! I first saw this skater squat variation being performed by strength coach Meghan Callaway.

Stand on a pull-up assistance band with your left foot. Loop the other end of the band around your shoulders. Start standing upright, with your hands in front of your chest and your right knee bent, foot off the ground.

Bend at your left hip and knee to squat down on your left leg as low as you can while keeping your spine neutral. Pause briefly in the bottom position, then press through your left foot to return to standing.





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## SPLIT SQUAT

Split squats work all the major muscles of the lower body, including the glutes, quads, and hamstrings.

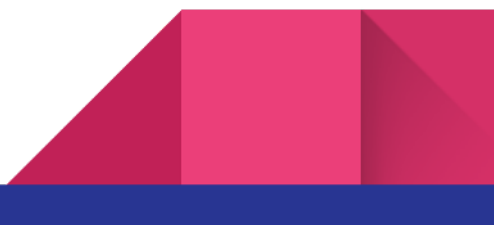
Stand with your left foot in the middle of a resistance band, holding a handle in each hand at shoulder height. Step back with your right foot and balance on the ball of your foot. Keep your back straight and your head in line with your spine.

Keeping the resistance band handles at shoulder height, bend both knees until your left thigh is parallel to the ground. Both knees should be bent at 90 degrees and your right knee should be just above the ground.

Press through your left foot to straighten your legs and return to the start position. Throughout the exercise, make sure that your head, torso, and hips remain in a stacked position.

Perform all reps on one side, then switch sides.

This move can also be performed as a reverse lunge: instead of keeping your feet in the same position throughout each set, you can step one foot behind you, lower into a lunge, and step that foot back to the start position with each rep.





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## TORSO ROTATION

Targeting your transverse abdominis and oblique muscles, this exercise involves more rotational movement than the high-low and low-high chops.

Stand with your feet hip width apart, to the right of a resistance band anchored at about chest height. Hold both resistance handles together. Start with your arms straight and extended to your left, knees slightly bent.

Using your oblique muscles to initiate the movement, move the band handles in a smooth arc to your right, keeping your arms at chest height throughout the movement.

Make sure you're initiating this movement with your abs (specifically your obliques), not your arms. It should feel like your arms are just going along for the ride!

