

Ab CHALLENGES



New Ways to Get Old School Abs

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Ab Challenge

WELCOME!

I get frustrated when I see people training abs. There's so much misinformation out there.

Even so called 'experts' get it wrong many times. What I see trainers having clients do, or group X instructors do is they give a client a move that is TOO difficult. The client makes an effort to do the move, but in doing so, they work other muscles to compensate for their weak abdominal muscles.

The thing to remember with training abs is that sometimes 'less is more'.

It's best to train the core strictly and once failure is achieved, you're done. By doing more, you don't necessarily do yourself any favors.

As well, there's the whole concept of 'weighted ab work'.

Weighted abs? Yay or nay?

To me doing weighted abs is a pretty old school abdominal training method. I see several people doing these movements at the gym. Things like hooked feet and a plate being held at the chest for sit ups, weighted side bends and I see a line up at weighted ab machines.



Let's discuss why the concept of doing weighted abs is flawed.

First off, the weighted sit up...



The sit up, especially with hooked feet, will tax the hip flexors more than the abdominals. The rectus abdominus will fire, yes, you'll get a burn in your abs, but you also potentially can strain the back, especially when adding a 25-45 lb plate to the load. Your possibly already-too-tight-hip flexors will carry the majority of the load as well.

Any weighted side bends are also on the 'nay' list. The spine isn't designed to sustain the sheer that this movement causes. Again, the impetus for potential back strain is there.

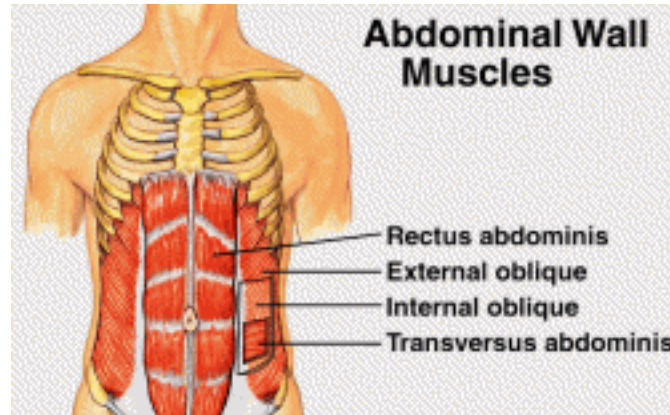
Any machine that has your legs locked in a position while you do forward or side flexion is potential for back injury.

Get the message? Your back can be seriously strained while your abdominals aren't seriously taxed. The risk to benefit ratio is far too high with these movements.

Another reason these exercises aren't very effective is that they may the abdominal wall, but more likely, they work muscles like the hip flexors (usually already too tight due to excessive sitting).

The quiet and shy muscle, the transverse abdominus will not fire under these loaded positions.

Let me introduce you to the transverse abdominus, hidden under those other ab muscles...



The transverse abdominus is a muscle that, when strong, aids with core stability and reduces back pain and strain.

Any movement that involves planking will help get this muscle firing.

I've got some cool workout challenges for you to follow. But follow common sense when doing them. If you feel any back pain, stop. When you feel that your abdominals are done, stop. Training abs is different than squatting to failure. Slowly build up abdominal and core strength.

These Ab Challenge Workouts are designed to be about 10-15 minutes long. You can do one at the tail end of your workout. You can do an Ab Challenge Workout on your rest day, or you can incorporate an Ab Challenge workout into a HIIT workout on your day off from resistance training.

Let's get started.

Disclaimer:

See your physician before starting any exercise or nutrition program. Prior to starting, you should discuss all nutritional changes with your physician or a registered dietician. If you are taking any medications, you must talk to your physician before starting any exercise program. If you experience any lightheadedness, dizziness, or shortness of breath while exercising, stop and consult a physician.

These recommendations are not medical guidelines. This book is for educational purposes only. You must consult your physician prior to starting this program or if you have any medical condition or injury that contraindicates physical activity. This program is designed for healthy individuals 18 years and older only.

All forms of exercise pose some inherent risks. It is advisable that readers to take full responsibility for their safety and know their limits. The exercises and dietary

programs in this book are not intended as a substitute for any exercise routine or treatment or dietary regimen that may have been prescribed by your physician.

Don't perform any exercise unless you have been shown the proper technique by a certified personal trainer. Don't perform any exercise without proper instruction. Always do a warm-up prior to your workout session and end with a stretching cool down segment.

Safety First

You will only get positive results from this program if you are performing the exercises correctly. Here are a few tips for you to maximize your results:

1. Check with your doctor before starting any new exercise or diet program.
2. It may be necessary to consult a trainer if you are unsure of how to do any of the exercises. Do NOT do exercises that you don't understand how to do.
3. If something 'hurts' do not do it. You must understand the difference between muscle fatigue and injury. Always error on the side of caution if you feel pain.
4. This program has the potential to be used with those new to fitness as well as those that are very fit. Start off conservatively and increase intensity as you go.
5. We can 'do it all'; however, we may need an extra day of rest between workouts so feel free to take a day of active rest between workouts if you aren't up to the workout. Active rest is an activity that is low intensity calorie burning in nature such as walking.
6. Use proper exercise form and train conservatively in all workouts.
7. Always start with the easier alternative exercises if appropriate, even if you have exercised in the past. The new exercises, and new style of movements will cause muscle soreness even from workouts you think "look easy".
8. Do NOT do interval training more than 4 times per week.
9. Do NOT skip a warm-up, as well, take a few minutes to cool the body down.
10. If you have an injury, get medical attention to rehabilitate your injury before starting an exercise program.

Exercises (see library and video page):

1. TRX plank
2. TRX side plank
3. TRX pike
4. TRX tuck
5. TRX pendulum
6. TRX pull thru
7. TRX eccentric sit up
8. TRX pendulum pike
9. TRX hip drop
10. Hanging leg raise
11. Hanging alternate side leg raise
12. Hanging oblique lift
13. Hanging windshield wiper
14. Bicycle crunch
15. Spider crawl
16. Ball plank
17. Floor plank
18. Mountain climber
19. Ab roller
20. Reverse hip lift
21. Inverted sit up

Workout 1

- 1a. TRX plank 30 sec (no rest)
- 1b. Bicycle crunch 30 sec (no rest)
- Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

- 2a. Hanging leg raise 30 sec (no rest)
- 2b. Ab roller 30 sec (no rest)
- Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

- 3a. Spider crawl 30 sec (no rest)
- 3b. Reverse hip lift 30 sec (no rest)
- Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

Workout 2

1. Hanging windshield wiper to failure
Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

2a. Hanging oblique lift 30 seconds (no rest)
2b. Side plank each side 30 seconds (no rest)
Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

3. Stability ball plank to failure

Workout 3

1a. TRX tuck 10 reps rest 10 seconds
1b. TRX tuck 9 reps rest 10 seconds
1c. TRX tuck 8 reps rest 10 seconds
Continue pattern until you get to TRX tuck 1 rep

Workout 4

1. TRX pull thru to failure
Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

2. TRX pendulum 30 seconds
Rest 10 seconds
Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

3a. TRX side plank 30 seconds (no rest)
3b. TRX side plank other side 30 seconds (rest 10 seconds)
Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

Workout 5

1a. Mountain climber 30 seconds (no rest)
1b. Floor plank 30 seconds (no rest)
1c. Ab roller 30 seconds (no rest)
Repeat 4 times (total 5 sets)

Workout 6

1a. Hanging alternate side leg raise 30 seconds (no rest)
1b. Floor plank 30 seconds (no rest)
Repeat 2 times (3 sets total)

2a. TRX hip drop 30 seconds (no rest)
2b. TRX hip drop same side 30 seconds (10 seconds rest)
Repeat on the other side
Repeat to do 2 sets on each side

Workout 7

TRX pendulum pike 10 reps (10 seconds rest)
TRX pendulum pike 9 reps (10 seconds rest)
TRX pendulum pike 8 reps (10 seconds rest)
Continue to get TRX pendulum pike 1 rep

Workout 8

1a. TRX pull thru 10 reps (change foot position)
1b. TRX pike 10 reps (change foot position)
Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

2a. Hanging windshield wiper 10 reps (rest 10 seconds)
2b. Hanging windshield wiper 8 reps (rest 10 seconds)
2c. Hanging windshield wiper 6 reps (rest 10 seconds)
2d. Hanging windshield wiper 4 reps (rest 10 seconds)
2e. Hanging windshield wiper 2 reps (rest 10 seconds)

Workout 9

1a. Front plank 30 seconds (no rest)
1b. Bicycle crunch 30 seconds (no rest)
1c. Mountain climber 30 seconds (no rest)
Repeat 4 times (5 sets total)

2. Ab roller 10 reps
Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

Workout 10

1a. TRX eccentric sit up 30 seconds (no rest)
1b. Reverse hip lift 30 seconds (no rest)
Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

2a. Hanging oblique lift 10 reps (5 per side)
2b. Ball plank 30 seconds
Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

Workout 11

TRX pike 10 reps (no rest)
Ab roller 10 reps Rest 10 seconds

TRX pike 9 reps (no rest)
Ab roller 9 reps Rest 10 seconds

TRX pike 8 reps (no rest)
Ab roller 8 reps Rest 10 seconds

Continue pattern until you get to:
TRX pike 1 rep (no rest)
Ab roller 1 rep

Workout 12

1a. Inverted sit up 10 reps (rest 10 seconds)
Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

2a. Reverse hip lift 30 seconds (no rest)
2b. Hanging leg raise 30 seconds (10 seconds rest)
Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

Workout 13

1a. TRX tuck 30 seconds (no rest)
1b. TRX plank 30 seconds (no rest)
Rest 10 seconds

2a. TRX pike 30 seconds (no rest)
2b. TRX side plank 30 seconds (no rest)
2c. TRX side plank (other side) 30 seconds
Rest 30 seconds

Repeat whole sequence two times (total 3 sets)

Workout 14

1a. Hanging alternate leg raise 10 reps (5 per side)
1b. Bicycle crunch 20 reps (10 per side)
1c. Mountain climber 30 reps (15 per side)
Repeat 2 times (total 3 sets)

Workout 15

1a. Hanging windshield wiper 10 reps (10 seconds rest)
1b. Ab roller 10 reps (no rest)
1c. Floor plank 30 seconds (30 seconds rest)
Repeat 5 times

Ab Challenge Exercise Library

TRX plank

- Brace your abs. Put your hands directly under your shoulders.
- Keep your back flat, your body should form a straight line from your shoulders to your ankles.

Hold the plank position for the designated time.



TRX side plank

- Brace your abs. Balance on your elbow which is directly under your shoulder.
- Keep your back flat, hips fully extended, your body should form a straight line from your shoulders to your ankles.
- Don't let the hip drop to the ground.

Hold the plank position for the designated time.



TRX pike

- Brace your abs. Put your hands directly under your shoulders.
- Keep your back flat, your body should form a straight line from your shoulders to your ankles.
- Elevate the hips into a pike position, return to start.



TRX Tuck

- Brace your abs. Put your hands directly under your shoulders.
- Keep your back flat, your body should form a straight line from your shoulders to your ankles.
- Bring the knees into the chest into a tuck position, return to start.



TRX pendulum

- Brace your abs. Put your hands directly under your shoulders.
- Keep your back flat, your body should form a straight line from your shoulders to your ankles.
- Let the body swing like a pendulum to one side, bring it to the center and stop. Repeat on the other side.
- The key is to keep this a controlled movement and stop to hold the center plank position for a few seconds before repeating the swing to the opposite side.



TRX pull thru

- Put the heels in the foot cradles.
- Brace your abs. Put your hands directly under your shoulders.
- Extend the hips into a reverse plank like position.
- Pull the hips back, preferable past the hands, bringing the chest to the knees.
- Repeat.



TRX eccentric sit up

- Put the hands on the handles and apply constant downward pressure as you roll to the floor one vertebrae at a time.
- Return to sitting position while applying downward pressure on the handles.
- Try not to use the handles to pull back up to the seated position.



TRX pendulum pike

- Brace your abs. Put your hands directly under your shoulders.
- Keep your back flat, your body should form a straight line from your shoulders to your ankles.
- Let the body swing like a pendulum to one side, bring it to the center and stop.
- Repeat on the other side and stop.
- Elevate the hips into a pike position.
- Repeat the swing to either side, then do a pike.
- The key is to keep this a controlled movement and stop to hold the center plank position for a few seconds before repeating the swing to the opposite side.



TRX hip drop

- Stand directly sideways to the TRX with both hands in the handles.
- Keep the hands on the top of the head.
- Brace the abs and drop one hip outwards.
- Keep the abs braced as you bring the hip back into a standing position.
- Repeat on both sides.



Hanging leg raise

- Hang from a chin-up bar using an overhand grip. Brace your abs.
- With a slight bend in your knees, curl your hips back and raise your legs up in front of you until they are parallel to the floor or higher.
- Don't use momentum. Go slow and controlled both ways.



Hanging alternate side leg raise

- Hang from a chin-up bar using an overhand grip. Brace your abs.
- With a slight bend in your knees, curl your hips back and raise your legs up and to the opposite elbow.
- Don't use momentum. Go slow and controlled both ways.
- Repeat to other side.



Hanging oblique lift

- Hang from a chin-up bar using an overhand grip. Brace your abs.
- With a slight bend in your knees, bring the knees to the side as if you were to touch rib to hip on the same side.
- Don't use momentum. Go slow and controlled both ways.



Hanging windshield wiper

- Hang from a chin-up bar using an overhand grip. Brace your abs.
- While bending the knees, raise the hips so that the body is parallel to the floor.
- Drop the knees to one side and return to the center position.
- Don't use momentum. Go slow and controlled both ways.
- Repeat to other side.



Inverted Sit Up

- Hang with the back of the knees on the bar.
- Brace the abs as you curl upwards.
- Slowly return to hanging position.



Bicycle crunch

- Lie on your back and bring one elbow towards the opposite knee.
- Alternate opposite knee to elbow.
- Ensure the lower back is pressed into the floor at all times.



Spider crawl

- Brace your abs. Start in the top of the push-up position.
- Keep your abs braced, pick one foot up off the floor, and **slowly** bring your knee up to your chest. Do not let your hips sag or rotate.
- Keep your abs braced and slowly return your leg to the start position.
- Alternate sides until you complete all of the required repetitions.



Ball plank

- Brace your abs. Put your elbows on the ball and balance on your toes.
- With your elbows under your shoulders and your back flat, your body should form a straight line from your shoulders to your ankles.
- Hold the plank position for the designated time.



Floor plank

- Brace your abs. Put your elbows directly under your shoulders, palms up.
- Keep your back flat, your body should form a straight line from your shoulders to your ankles.
- Hold the plank position for the designated time.



Mountain climber

- Brace your abs. Start in the top of the push-up position.
- Keep your abs braced, pick one foot up off the floor, and **quickly** bring your knee up to your chest. Do not let your hips sag or rotate.
- Keep your abs braced and slowly return your leg to the start position.
- Alternate sides until you complete all of the required repetitions.



Ab roller

- Kneel on a mat with your hands on the ab wheel or elbows on a stability ball.
- Keep your body in a straight line, brace your abs, and keep your low back tensed.
- Slowly roll out as far as is comfortable.
- Keep your abs braced, and contract them maximally to come back up to the start.
- Maintain shoulder over hip, over knee position and avoid sticking your butt out behind you.



Reverse hip lift

- Lay with your back flat on the floor, arms by your sides.
- Lift the hips up off the floor as if someone has tied your feet to a rope and is lifting from the ceiling.
- Slowly lower the hips to the ground with control.

