

# HAVE A BALL



## SWISS BALL EXERCISES

## SWISS BALL TRAINING

Swiss Ball training is an excellent way to build 'core body strength' and have some fun at the same time. Training on the Ball forces you to use muscles that stabilise and control the body's position (otherwise you slip off the Ball). Exercises progress from simple to complex by placing the body in a more 'unstable' balance position. This forces the musculature to activate and stabilise the joints and body. This type of training provides a high level of nervous system activation and therefore can be strenuous. It also encourages a transfer of power and strength through the 'kinetic chain' (i.e the linked system of joint actions).

Swiss Ball Exercises are used to develop:

- Core strength in the muscles of the trunk.
- Good postural alignment.
- Smooth and controlled movement through the kinetic chain by activating muscles fixed to the trunk.
- Joint stability and control (i.e. this reduces the likelihood of joint injury).
- Flexibility and range of motion.

Swiss Ball Training is also a great complement to more specific forms of sports training -- not a replacement. Just about every sportsperson will be able to gain some advantage from Swiss Ball training.

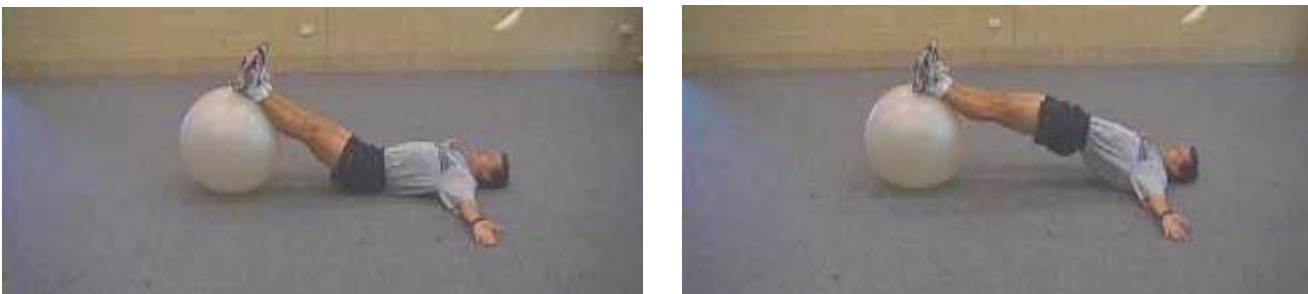
Generally, Swiss Ball exercises are done slowly and with great muscular control. Most of the exercises also require a 'hold' position at the limits in the range of motion. Once individual exercises are learnt they can be done in 'sets' (i.e. multiple repetitions) and then sets can be combined into a training routine.

### PELVIC TILT (side-to-side)



Starting Position → sitting with feet flat on the floor, buttocks lightly pressed into the Ball.  
 Action ⇒ tilt pelvis to the left and right, keep head and shoulders steady. Contract abdominal muscles so that the trunk remains erect.

### SUPINE SHOULDER BALANCE



Starting Position → Flat on back, arms extended, heels resting on the Ball.  
 Action ⇒ Press hips up, keeping back straight, balance bodyweight on shoulders and heels (hold).

SUPINE BRIDGE AND ROLL (in-and-out)



Starting Position → on the back (bridge position), bodyweight balanced on shoulders and heels.  
Action ⇒ contract lower abdominal muscles to roll Ball toward body, finish with feet flat on the Ball.

(advanced)



arms held against the chest



roll Ball with left leg only



roll Ball with right leg only

## ABDOMINAL CRUNCH



Starting Position → supine, Ball resting above the buttocks, feet flat on the floor, arms folded over chest.  
Action ⇒ contract abdominal muscles and curl trunk forward.

(advanced)



hands behind head



finish forward curl with a twist to the left and then to the right



## OBLIQUE CRUNCH



right side view →



Starting Position → Ball resting along the side of trunk, legs spread for balance, hands behind head.  
Action ⇒ lift trunk away from the Ball to upright position (hold), then lower.

## PRONE HIP TWIST



Starting Position → "push-up" position, feet apart to put pressure on the Ball.  
Action ⇒ twist from the hip to roll the ball left, then roll the ball right (shoulders remain level).

### PUSH-UP (basic)



### (intermediate)



### (advanced)



Push-ups are made more difficult by changing the balance points (away from the body's centre of gravity) and decreasing the contact area with the Ball.

## PUSH-UPS (continued)

Starting Position → hands at shoulder-width apart, contract abdominal muscles to keep body straight.

Action ⇒ lower the trunk (keeping back level) until chest almost touches the floor (hold), return to start.

## SQUAT



advanced



Starting Position → feet hip-width apart and flat on the floor (slightly forward of the body), back straight and head up, arms forward. Ball rests lightly between the back (above hips) and wall surface.

Action ⇒ bend at the hip and knee to lower the trunk so that the thighs are at 90 degrees (hold), return to start position keeping bodyweight centred over the heels. Increase difficulty by changing arm position or holding a weight in the hands.

## SUPINE TWIST (also called a Russian Twist)



Starting Position → bodyweight balanced on shoulders and feet, back straight, arms together overhead.  
 Action ⇒ roll shoulders to the left, return to start position, roll shoulders to the right (feet flat on the floor).

(advanced)



add difficulty by holding a weight (arms extended) as shoulders and trunk twists left then right

## WALKING ON HANDS (out-and-in)



return to start →



Starting Position → "push-up" position, Ball resting on at mid-thigh.

Action ⇒ walk out (hand over hand) so the Ball rolls out onto the toes, then walk back in to the start position (keep back flat at all times by holding abdominal muscles and lower back muscles tight).

## PRONE FORWARD TUCK ROLL



Start Position → "push-up" position, bodyweight resting on hands and instep of the feet.

Action ⇒ bend at the hip and roll feet across the Ball to draw it toward the body (hold), return to start.

(advanced)



exercise done with one foot in contact with the Ball

### PRONE FORWARD PIKE ROLL



Starting Position → prone with Ball resting at the hip, hands extended forward at shoulder width.  
 Action ⇒ start by rocking forward slightly, then rock back and push the hips up to a pike position, balance with toes on the Ball (hold) and then slide Ball onto instep and return to starting position.

### KNEELING TRUNK EXTENSION



Starting Position → kneeling with the Ball slightly forward of the head, hold hands together in a fist  
 Action ⇒ push bodyweight forward to roll the Ball onto the forearms (hold a balance point with elbows on the ball and knees on the floor), keep trunk straight by contracting the abdominal muscles. Return to starting position by rolling the ball back onto the fist.

(advanced)



roll the Ball out and extend the body to a full stretch position (hold a balance point with the elbows on the Ball and the toes on the floor), return to start position

## BACK EXTENSION



(advanced)



Starting Position → prone over the Ball with arms folded over chest, legs spread for balance.  
Action ⇒ lift the trunk and keep the elbows pulled back slightly (hold), body should be in a straight line.  
(add difficulty by holding the arms out to the side with elbows bent -- pull shoulders back)

## PRONE BODY EXTENSION (also called the 'superman' position)



Starting Position → prone over the Ball, toes touching the floor.

Action ⇒ lift trunk to a level position, balance lightly on fingertips (hold), return to start.

(advanced)



lift right-arm and left-leg simultaneously (hold), return to start position, lift left-arm and right-leg (keep back straight during extended 'hold' position) and continue to alternate positions

## SUPINE PELVIC TILT



(advanced)



Starting Position → back flat on the floor, arms out to the side, feet spread to grip Ball with heel and calf.  
 Action ⇒ tilt pelvis to lift buttocks off the floor while holding Ball (hold), then lower the Ball (but do not let it touch the floor), repeat the movement. (add difficulty by folding the arms across the chest)

## SUPINE LEG EXTENSION



Starting Position → supine bridge position, arms folded over the chest, feet flat on the floor, knees at 90 degrees and bodyweight resting on the shoulders and feet.  
 Action ⇒ start by rocking bodyweight onto the toes, then extend the knees to shift bodyweight onto the heels and mid-back, body should be as straight as possible in the extended position (hold), then return to the starting position.

## STRETCHING EXERCISES WITH THE SWISS BALL

### QUADRICEPS STRETCH



Starting Position → standing with one foot resting on Ball, back straight.  
Action ⇒ lower bodyweight (hold), return to start.

### SHOULDER STRETCH



Starting Position → kneeling with hands on ball and back parallel to the floor.  
Action ⇒ lower bodyweight.

### HAMSTRING STRETCH



Starting Position → supine with heels resting on Ball.  
Action ⇒ lift one leg and hold in vertical position (using hands), then alternate exercise with other leg.

### LATISSIMUS STRETCH



Starting Position → side resting on Ball with legs spread apart for balance.  
Action ⇒ allow arms to reach across Ball.

### PECTORAL STRETCH



Starting Position → kneeling with one hand on the Ball and one hand on the floor for balance.

Action ⇒ lower bodyweight (alternate left and right).

### PRONE BODY STRETCH



Starting Position → prone -- body draped over the Ball.

Action ⇒ allow body to go limp.

### GROIN STRETCH



Starting Position → supine with legs extended and heels resting on the Ball. Bring one leg across the other knee.

Action ⇒ roll Ball toward the body so that the 'contact leg' finishes at 90 degree angle (alternate left then right legs).

## SUPINE BODY STRETCH



Starting Position → supine, Ball resting in the middle of the back, feet on the floor.

Action ⇒ reach back and touch hands to the floor (straighten legs as much as possible).



**"HAVE A BALL"**

# Credits

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Swiss Ball skills are demonstrated by Peter Hannent of the Arena  
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