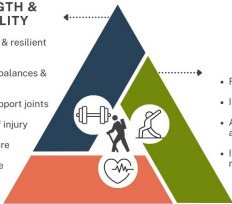


HIKING FITNESS: TRAINING COMPONENTS & BENEFITS

STRENGTH & STABILITY

- Build a strong & resilient body
- Fix muscle imbalances & asymmetries
- Stabilize & support joints
- Reduce risk of injury
- Improve posture
- Better balance



MOBILITY

- Reduce risk of injury
- Improve joint health
- Alleviate stiffness, aches, and pains
- Increase range-of-motion

CARDIO

- Increase cardiorespiratory efficiency & endurance
- Improve overall general health



IMPROVE PERFORMANCE & ABILITY



PREVENT INJURY

MUST DO EXERCISES!



GLUTE BRIDGE

Overview: It's common, even in very active and fit individuals, that the gluteal muscles are weak or do not activate properly. This exercise awakens the glutes and helps correct any weakness or asymmetries. If you suffer from low-back pain, it could be a sign of weak glutes.

Hiking Relevance: The glutes are the "powerhouse" muscle of hiking so it's obvious that they deserve prime attention.

Focus: Glute activation

Sets: 2-3

Reps: 10-15

Movement pattern:

Start on your back in a bent-knee position. Feet are hip-width apart, flat on the floor, and toes pointed straight ahead. Engage your abdominal muscles and keep a neutral spine throughout the exercise. Press your hips up into the bridge position by contracting your glute muscles. Really squeeze and hold the contraction for 3-5 seconds before lowering to the starting position.

Cues/Tips:

- In the bridge position, your legs should form a 90 degree angle. Don't position your heels too close to your butt or too far out.
- Your knees, hips, and shoulders should form a long, straight line. Avoid extending your hips too high.
- On the down phase of the movement, drop the pelvis to the floor instead of rolling the spine down.
- After a few reps you should really feel your glutes working. If you feel it more in the hamstrings, quads, low back, or calves that's a good indication that you aren't using your glutes to initiate and maintain the bridge position.
- To deactivate the hamstrings, imagine pushing the feet forward instead of straight down, or try this exercise with your toes against a wall.

Progressions:

- Place a mini-band around your thighs to activate the outer glute and hip muscles.
- **Single-leg Glute Bridge:** Keep your hips level as you push through the heel of your right leg and extend your left leg towards the ceiling. Press up into the bridge position by contracting the right glute muscle. Hold the contraction, then lower the pelvis, but keep the left leg extended. Perform one complete set before switching to the other leg. It's common to have one side stronger than the other, just make sure you work to create symmetry.
- **Glute Bridge March:** Start in the bridge position. Alternately extend your legs while maintaining the bridge. Keep your hips stable and level while marching.



DEAD-BUG

Overview: An isometric core exercise, that when done properly, really challenges the core.

Hiking Relevance: Hiking with a pack requires good core stability and endurance. Also, this develops mind-muscle connection of contra-lateral movements (opposite arm, opposite leg).

Focus: Core muscle activation and endurance; Spine stability

Sets: 2-3

Reps: 8-10 each side

Movement pattern:

On your back, start with your hips and knees bent in a 90-90 position. Extend your arms straight up towards the ceiling. Engage your core and maintain a neutral spine. Begin the movement by slowly extending one arm and the opposite leg towards the wall on both sides of the room. Return to the starting position and repeat the movement with the other arm/leg.

Cues/Tips:

- Movements should be slow and controlled.
- A neutral spinal position MUST be maintained throughout the movement. Watch for the tendency to arch the low back. Initially, you can place a hand under low back to build awareness.
- If you notice your low back arching or feel low-back discomfort during this exercise, that's an indication that your core is not strong enough yet. In this case, should modify the exercise and slowly build up to the full movement pattern.

Modifications:

- Start with a static hold (no arm or leg movements).
- Then, progress to alternating just the arms and then alternating just the legs.
- The next progression would be opposite arm/opposite leg movement but only extending to about 45 degree (not full extension).

Progressions:

- Load arms with weights
- Resistance band around feet



PRONE "Y"

Overview: Activate and strengthen the small stabilizing muscles of the back.

Hiking Relevance: It's important to build endurance in these small muscles of the upper-back so they don't fatigue and become achy while hiking with your backpack on.

Focus: Upper & mid back muscles; scapular stability

Sets: 2-3

Reps: 10-15

Movement pattern:

Face down on the floor (or stability ball). Raise your arms over head into a "Y" position. Keep your elbows straight and thumbs pointed up. Pull the shoulder blades back and down. Engage the muscles of you back, not your arms, to lift the arms as high as you can. Imagine pinching your shoulder blades together.

Cues/Tips:

- Don't shrug your shoulders up
- Keep your chin tucked and head neutral
- Initiate the movement with your back muscles not your arms.

Progression: Add hand weights and/or add "W", "L", "T" arm positions.



ANKLE FLEXION LUNGE/ HIP OPENER

Overview: Increases mobility of the ankle joint and opens up the hip.

Hiking Relevance: Your feet/ankles are important for the obvious reason that they make direct contact with the trail. Additionally, decreased mobility in the ankle often contributes to discomfort in the knee and hip. The muscles in the front of the hip (hip flexors) can become tight, resulting in pain and limited range-of-motion of the hip.

Focus: Improve ankle dorsiflexion; lengthen hip flexors

Sets: 2 each side

Reps: 4

Movement pattern:

In a kneeling position, lunge the right leg forward. Keep the foot flat on the ground as you push forward to reach your end-range of motion at the ankle. You should feel a stretch in the right ankle as well as in the hip flexor of the back leg. Rock back-and-forth 4 times before switching to the other side.

Cues/Tips:

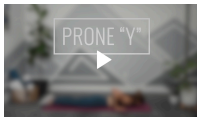
• Play around with the position of your front and back legs to find the optimal stretch for you.

Modification: Do this standing with your feet placed on a chair or bench.



Instructional Videos

Enroll in the **HIKE-ABILITY Training Program** and you'll get full access to an extensive library of instructional videos (including a 7-minute, follow-along total-body mobility routine) **PLUS** weekly exercise plans specific to hiking fitness.

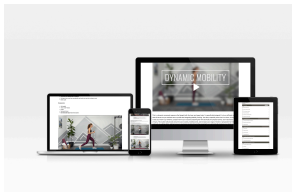


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