

Soccer Player Tabata Workout

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Our Athlete's Goals

Skill goal: Our athlete wants to improve his lateral agility so he can move more nimbly.

Fitness goal: Our athlete wants to improve his cardio and endurance so that he can play for long periods of time without becoming very tired.



Key Terms

Agility - shifting directions quickly and effectively while maintaining control

In our case, the soccer player wants lateral agility, meaning that he wants to be able to move left to right quickly, while also being able to quickly change his direction from left to right, or right to left.

Endurance - being able to exert an amount of force for an extended period of time

Cardio - activities that relate to the strengthening of the cardiovascular system

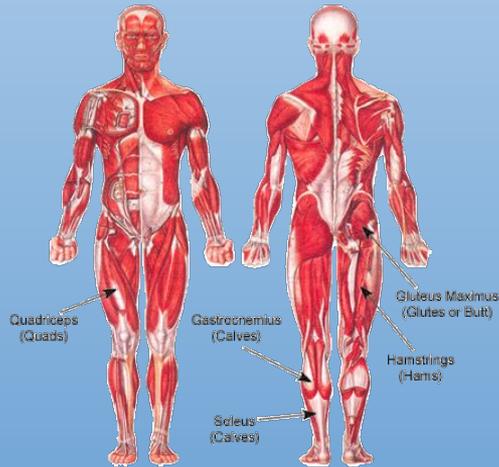
How we are Improving Lateral Agility

Equipment:

Bosu Balls,
Agility Ladder,
Agility Hurdles

Targeted Muscle Groups:

The leg is split up into three main compartments: anterior, posterior, and lateral. We are targeting all of these compartments to strengthen the leg as much as possible. In doing so, we increase the athlete's ability to quickly change direction because he is able to apply more force in the direction he wants to travel.



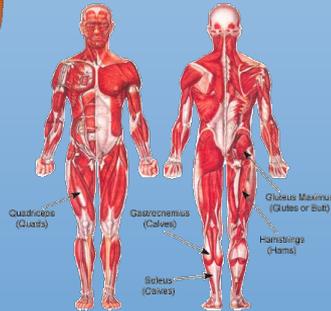
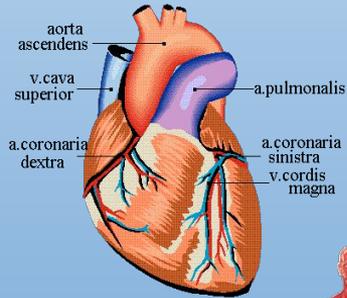
How we are Improving Endurance and Cardio

Equipment:

Bosu Balls,
Resistance bands

Targeted Muscle Groups:

Since the target is endurance for a soccer player, it is important to condition all of the leg muscles to use over an extended period of time. This means that we are essentially targeting the same muscles as we are with lateral agility. Additionally, as endurance improves, so will cardiovascular strength, so both endurance and cardiovascular strength can be improved simultaneously.



Getting Started

Station 1) 2 Agility Hurdles per person

Station 2) 1 Resistance Band Per Pair

Station 3) One Bosu Per Person

Station 4) One ladder per three people

Station 5) One ladder per three people

What it's going to look like:

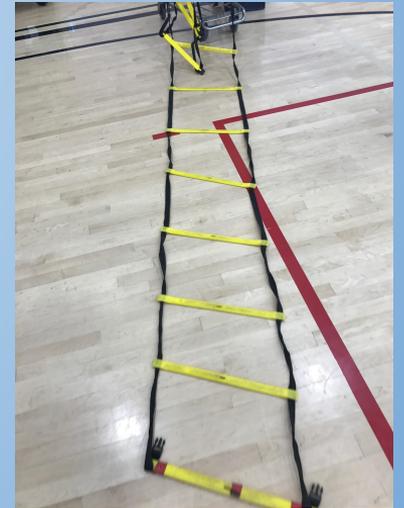
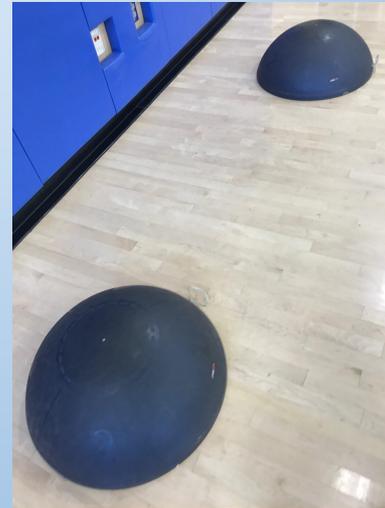
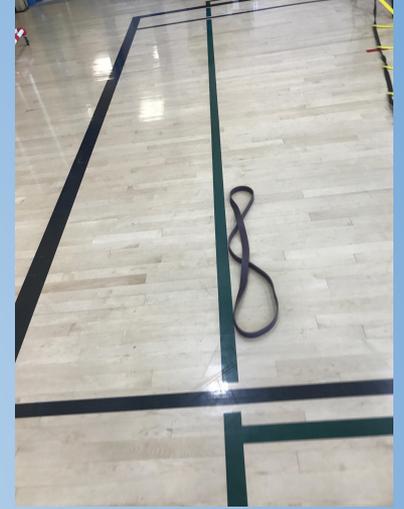
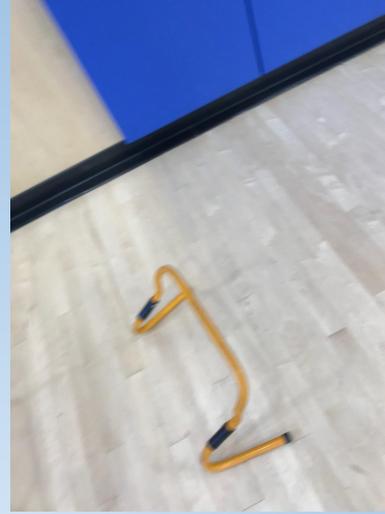
At the first station, there will be two agility hurdles for each person and it will be straightforward for this station. At the second station, the group will split people into pairs and the first time around there will be one person running and one person pulling and at the second time around at the same station the positions of the people in the pairs will switch. The third station will be straightforward, one bosu trainer per person. In the fourth and fifth stations the groups will split into smaller groups of three people per ladder and do the ladder drill for that particular station. The next ladder station will work the same way.

Format of the Circuit

This workout utilizes a Tabata format. It is a high-intensity interval training regimen that uses short workouts at a very high intensity to strengthen muscles and cardiovascular endurance. Tabata circuits use a 20/10 format, meaning that there are 20 seconds of exercise, followed by 10 seconds of rest.

The total length of this circuit is 15 minutes, or 6 rounds of 5 stations.

Finished Setup



Warm Ups (30 seconds each)

Let's get the blood flowing and be ready for the workout ahead of us. These workouts apply to not being injured when performing each exercise but also improving some of the key aspects that we will be touching on in our circuit.

Jumping Jacks: Works on cardio

Jump Rope: Works on cardio

Skater Jumps: Works on lateral agility

Stair Climbs: Works on endurance

High Knees (In Place): Works on endurance

Station 1: Lateral Hurdle Jumps

Lateral Hurdle Jumps

Equipment needed: 2+ Agility Hurdles per person

In this exercise, the athlete sets up two hurdle with a gap between them, and stands to one side of it. The athlete will then jump side to side over the hurdles several times in a row. Repeat this exercise until the time is over.

This exercise will be repeated at the station for all of the rounds.



Video demonstration of exercise

Too Easy? Try this!

If you're looking for more of a challenge, spread out the hurdles to make a larger jumping distance. This will work your muscles work harder and increase your heart rate. Alternatively, you can double up the hurdles to increase the distance you have to clear at a significant height.



Too Difficult? Do this instead!

If you're having trouble with the exercise, try moving the hurdles closer. If it's still difficult to jump over the hurdles, switch to a quick three-step pattern. Keep one foot in between the hurdles, and step from left to right in a shuffling motion between the hurdles.



What Makes This Exercise Beneficial?

- This exercise works on strengthening your quadriceps and hamstrings, both of which are very important for generating power in the legs.
 - This equates to faster cutting speeds and changes in direction.
- Cardiovascular endurance will be improved when doing this exercise.
 - This allows for longer times on the soccer pitch and not becoming tired as easily.
- While improving all of these things, this exercise also improves coordination.

Station 2: Resistance Band Sprints

Resistance Band Sprints

Equipment needed: 1 Exercise Band per pair.

In this station, you will have a resistance band around one person's waist, while another person is behind them holding the band. The person in the band will sprint in place while the other person will be pulling the band, creating resistance.

Video demonstration of exercise



Too Easy? Try this!

Instead of only running forward with the person staying in place, try having the person pull back as well. This will add an additional level of difficulty because the resistance is enhanced. This makes it harder to run forward. As a result, the muscles are worked harder which exercises them further.

Too Difficult? Do this instead!

Instead of using a thick band, use a thinner one. This will make it so that the band flexes more and has less resistance on the runner. Additionally, you could make the resistance less even further by increasing the slack on the band. Finally, you could run slower to decrease the difficulty.

What Makes This Exercise Beneficial?

This exercise is beneficial because it strengthens specific muscles in the legs. It works the hamstrings and quadriceps. This workout makes these muscles resistant to fatigue and further allows the muscles to grow bigger and stronger. This is essential for a soccer player because of the long games that they have to push through. This exercise also simulates a real game because there are times in a soccer game where you have to sprint as hard as you can while you only have to jog at other times.

Station 3: Bosu Trainer Touches

Bosu Trainer Touches

Equipment needed: 1 Bosu Trainer per person

For this station, you will place the Bosu trainer flat side down, and will be skipping across the Bosu trainer with one foot on the ball while the other is on the ground. With each skip across the trainer, you will then touch the ground with the outside hand. You repeat this motion for the entire 20 seconds.

This exercise also focuses on the core because you need good balance in order to correctly do this exercise.



Video demonstration of exercise

Too Easy? Try this!

To make this exercise harder, skip across the bosu trainer as usual and touch the ground further away from your body (towards the outside) to increase your lateral movement.



Too Difficult? Do this instead!

Do not touch the ground each time you skip. Instead, do a mini squat in order to minimize the amount of work your legs have to do. Still too hard? Instead of jumping across, take two steps to skip across the body trainer.



What Makes This Exercise Beneficial?

This exercise is beneficial because it improves the athlete's sense of balance when travelling laterally. Balance improves the core, and by utilizing your sense of balance, you strengthen your core. The exercise also improves coordination and strengthens the major muscles of the leg, including the quadriceps and the gastrocnemius. This exercise is especially beneficial for a soccer player because those are the muscles that produce power in a kick, and the gastrocnemius is a vital muscle to quickly move a player's foot to change direction.

Station 4: Agility Ladder Slalom Quick Steps

Slalom Quick Steps

Equipment Needed: 1 agility ladder per 3 people.

For this exercise, stand at one end of the ladder facing the other side. Stand to one side of the ladder. To perform the exercise, move in a diagonal motion placing two feet in each ladder rung or box. Then end up with the foot that the side of the ladder you're on outside of the ladder and move back across continuously at a fast pace until the end of the agility ladder.



Video demonstration of exercise

Too Easy? Try this!

If this exercise is just not giving you a challenge, try pushing yourself by going faster. If you need a challenge then clearly you have the footwork memorized, now you need to work on speed.



Too Difficult? Do this instead!

If the slalom quick steps is too difficult for you, try moving side to side a little bit slower. Focus on the footwork first and the speed will come later.



What Makes This Exercise Beneficial?

This exercise is beneficial because it works on the athlete's lateral agility and footwork at the same time. Quick steps in a small space is great for working on footwork especially for a soccer player. At the same time while the exercise is working on the athlete's footwork it is also working on lateral agility because the athlete must move side to side very quickly for a long amount of time with no breaks. Working for a long time with no breaks will increase the athlete's endurance to play for longer periods of time in games without becoming fatigued. This exercise works on the gastrocnemius muscle and the ability to cut and turn faster and more efficiently.

Station 5: Agility Ladder Quick Sidesteps

Quick Sidesteps

Equipment needed: 1 Agility Ladder per three people

Start facing the side of the ladder with your dominant leg facing the end of the ladder. Quickly place your dominant foot first into the box then your non-dominant foot into the same box. Then, take your dominant foot out of the box in a diagonal motion and then your non-dominant foot in the same motion. When you are done with one you should be at the next box or rung in the ladder. Repeat these same movement in every box until the end of the ladder.



Video demonstration of exercise

Too Easy? Try this!

The footwork is too easy and the exercise really doesn't seem to challenge you that much. What do you do? Move at a faster pace and decrease the time between two boxes or rungs. This is sure to give you a challenge.



Too Difficult? Do this instead!

The footwork is going too fast and you are struggling to keep up. Not a problem. Slow down a little bit and focus on the footwork instead of the speed. Understanding the footwork is more important than speed.

What Makes This Exercise Beneficial?

This exercise is beneficial to a soccer player because it not only works on footwork, but it also works on lateral agility and endurance. Footwork to a soccer player is a key attribute to a player which will improve his or her skill level and make the athlete more nimble. Lateral agility is another characteristic of all good soccer player to make them quicker and more nimble. Endurance to any soccer player is a crucial element because it is the difference between playing the whole game and sitting on the sidelines because you were overcome by fatigue. This exercise works on the gastrocnemius muscle and the ability to cut and turn faster and more efficiently.

Good Work! Now let's do some cool-downs.

Cool downs are very important, if not more important than the warm-ups. One might say, “I'm done, so why should I have to do anything else?”. However, in reality, cool downs make sure that the exercises that you did in the circuit do not injure or strain your muscles.

Cool-downs prevent damage of the muscles due to strenuous activities.

Butterflies: (Groin)

Flamingo: (Quadriceps)

Leg reaches: (Hamstrings and calves)

Left leg reach: (left hamstring and calve)

Right leg reach: (right hamstring and calve)

Toe touches: (Hamstring)

Try doing these cool-downs **for about 2 minutes in total.**

Why Should You Do This Circuit?

Each exercise works on cardio and lateral agility. That's what makes this circuit so great!

This will help reach the goal of improving our athlete's overall lateral agility and cardio.



Bibliography

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