Gazelle Sports

Basic Strength Training Exercises

Single Leg Squat

Squat down on one foot until your leg is bent about 50 degrees; push back up. "Keep your hips even, and your knee over your foot," says coach Bob Larsen. Once you've mastered the move, add dumbbells (start with 5 pounds).
Repetition: 2 sets of 10; build to 2 sets of 12
What it Works: Quads and glutes

Heel Raises

Stand on a curb or platform with your heels over the edge. Lift up onto your toes, raise one foot and slowly lower. Once you have the move down, add dumbbells (start with 5 pounds).
Repetition: 1 set of 8; build to 3 sets of 15
What it Works: Calf muscles and Achilles tendon

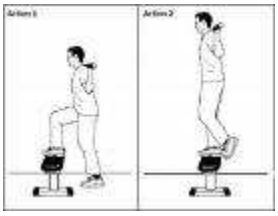
Wood Chop

Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, holding a 5 to 8 pound ball in your hands. Squat down with the ball between your knees, keeping your heels on the floor, sticking your butt out, and not letting your knees go more than a few inches toward your toes. Return to standing, raising the ball overhead, maintaining a slight bend in your knees. Keep your core engaged the whole time, as if bracing for a punch. Do two or three sets of 12 to 15 reps; increase weight of the medicine ball when you can do 15 in good form
Repetition: 2 to 3 sets of 12 to 15 reps; increase weight of the medicine ball when you can do 15 in good form.

What it Works: Hips, quads, glutes, shoulders, back and core

Bench Step Downs

This exercise may be performed with body weight only or with additional resistance by holding a dumbbell in each hand. Stand on a bench that is 18 to 24 inches high, in an upright position. If you are holding dumbbells, they should be held at your side with a neutral grip. Contract your abdominal muscles to stabilize your trunk and spine. Keeping most of your weight on one foot (lead foot), slowly remove the trailing foot from the bench and step down to the floor. Keep the lead foot flat on the bench. Step down very slowly and with full control. Keep your back vertical. Step down until your trailing foot is flat on the floor. Forcefully push off with the trailing foot (the foot on the floor) and reassume the original standing position on the bench. Repeat using the other leg as the lead leg.
Repetition: 2 sets of 10 for each leg and progress to 3 sets of 15 for each leg.
What it Works: Quads, and Hamstrings



Lunges

Hold two dumbbells in your hands by your sides or just use body weight. Step forward with one leg and lower your upper body down, bending you leg (don't step out too far). You should have about two to two and half feet between your feet. Do not allow your knee to go forward beyond your toes as you come down, keeping your front shin perpendicular to the ground. Push up and back and repeat with the other leg or do all the reps with one leg then switch.]
Repetition: 2 sets of 10 for each leg and progress to 3 sets of 15 for each leg.
What it Works: Quads, Glutes, and Hamstrings.