

Core Routine 3- Instructions and Information

Core routine 3 is a series of rather **advanced** core exercises that use equipment - primarily a **Swiss ball and Therabands**. It's appropriate for triathletes of all levels who have done core training previously. If you can comfortably do routine 1, then you could try both routine 2 and routine 3 and mix it up.

When you're new to this routine, or to core training with equipment in general, you may need to **scale down** the duration of the exercises and **take breaks** between them.

As with routines 1 and 2, if you do this routine (and mix and match with the other two) consistently you'll build excellent strength and stability in your hips, glutes, abs and lower back. This routine however, adds an **additional element** of quite challenging **core stability training**, which is great exercise for even more efficient movements in all three disciplines (see below).

The benefit of all three routines is that they target all groups of core muscles that are essential for triathletes to be able to handle the training done **without getting injured**. In addition, strengthening your core with these exercises will allow you to **swim, bike and run more efficiently** - that is, go faster for the same amount of energy, since you're wasting less energy to compensatory or simply unnecessary motions. Finally, you'll be able to **finish races stronger** with a strong core. Typically, if your core strength or stability is lacking, it shows through towards the end of races when running and even biking form breaks down.

Check out the **instructional video** and additional information about this routine here: <https://www.scientifictriathlon.com/core-training-module-3/>

Routine 3 - 10 min

1. Swiss ball plank - 90 seconds
2. Swiss ball glute bridge - 90 seconds
3. Theraband side-steps - 2 minutes
4. Theraband lateral raises - 45 seconds per side
5. Hamstring pulls - 90 seconds per side
6. Swiss ball tuck in - 1 minute
7. Swiss ball torso twist - 1 minute

1.

Swiss ball plank

Instructions

From a front plank position with your hands on the floor and feet on the ball (see top image), cross one of your legs sideways under your other leg, hold for a moment (bottom image), and return to the starting position. Repeat for 45 seconds per leg.

Notes

- Don't let your hips, butt or lower back sag.
- Your glutes, back and neck should form a straight and flat line.
- You'll need to engage your entire core and your stabilizers to hold your position during the crossover phase.

Muscle groups emphasized

Rectus abdominus, transverse abdominals, lower back, obliques and even the upper body.



2.

Swiss ball glute bridge

Instructions

With your upper back and head planted firmly against the floor and your feet on the ball (top image), engage your glutes to raise your hips until you reach the position seen in the bottom image. Hold for a moment and return to the starting position. Repeat for 90 seconds.

If you want an additional challenge, do a single-leg variation, where one of your legs is just hovering next to the ball instead of resting on it. Repeat doing the raises for 45 seconds per leg.



Notes

- Keep your body completely straight and aligned in the raised position.
- Fold your arms across your chest for an additional stability element. If it's too challenging, keep your arms flat on the floor next to your body.
- Make sure you squeeze your glutes and brace your core during this exercise.
- Don't lift with your hamstrings!

Muscle groups emphasized

Glutes, abdominals, lower back

3.

Theraband side-steps

Instructions

With a theraband fastened just above the knees (see left image), take 10 side-steps to the right (as long steps as you can, see right image), and then 10 steps back to the right. Repeat for 2 minutes.

Notes

- Tighten the theraband enough so that you can feel a strong resistance during the steps.
- Once you master this variation you can experiment with different theraband positions (around the ankles, just below the knees, even higher up, etc.)
- Ideal exercise for preventing patellofemoral pain syndrome and iliotibial band syndrome, since it maximizes recruitment of gluteus maximus and minimus, but minimizes recruitment of the TFL (tensor fascia lata).



Muscle groups emphasized

Hip abductors, glutes

4.

Theraband lateral raises

Instructions

Lie on your side with a tightened theraband placed around your ankles. Repeat raising your top leg, holding briefly (see image) and returning to the starting position for 45 seconds per side.



Notes

- Tighten the theraband enough so that you can feel a strong resistance during the steps.
- Make sure you engage not only your hip abductor, but also the glute muscles of your top leg.

Muscle groups emphasized

Hip abductors, glutes

5.

Hamstring pulls

Instructions

With your foot attached to a cable machine or a theraband (anchored around something sturdy), balance on the other foot and keep the attached foot slightly in front (left image). Drive backwards with the attached foot (right image). Return to the starting position and repeat for 45 seconds per leg.



Notes

- Generate a powerful movement using your hamstrings and glutes.
- You can hold onto something (like the cable machine handles) for support.
- Don't add too much weight if using the machine. You should be able to complete all repeats with equally good form.
- This exercise is perhaps the single most important exercise you can do to help you run faster. It will help you get a more powerful running stride.

Muscle groups emphasized

Hamstrings, glutes

6.

Swiss ball tuck in

Instructions

Starting in the Swiss ball plank position (top image), draw your knees in under your body with your feet still on the ball, rolling it towards you. Return to the starting position. Repeat for 1 minute.

Notes

- Keep your body straight from your feet all the way to your shoulders in the starting position.
- Don't let your hips sag, but don't elevate them excessively either.
- Don't arch your back.
- Moving the ball farther back under your toes increases the difficulty, and vice versa.
- Brace your core during the entire exercise.
- For an additional challenge, try to do a single-leg variation of the exercise.



Muscle groups emphasized

Abdominals, lower and upper back

7.

Swiss ball torso twist

Instructions

Press your shoulder blades into the exercise ball and plant your heels firmly into the ground. Hold your arms reached out in front of you. Start twisting from side to side with speed but control (see images to the right). Repeat for 1 minute.



Notes

- This is a very challenging exercise, that targets not just strength and stability, but also speed, mobility and coordination of your core. The benefits are huge, but it probably will take some practise to master it.
- Do it slowly enough that you learn to do the movement correctly with control. Don't worry about speed when starting to learn this exercise.
- Don't let your hips sag. This can happen very easily in this exercise.
- Engage your entire core to control both the resistance and the rotational momentum generated in the exercise.

Muscle groups emphasized

Oblique strength, speed, mobility and coordination in the entire abdominal area.