

A better workout with Bosu balance training

Part 2 - Lower body and core

With the valuable assistance of my client Karen O’Brien, we are continuing our Bosu exercise series. This week we are demonstrating lower body and core workouts for different levels. Karen enjoys a variety of combined functional movements that don’t allow her to plateau.

Functional training challenges the whole body. Instead of focusing on building muscle groups in isolation of single joint training, functional training integrates movement and coordination of several muscle groups to work together. This results in better movement, not bigger muscles.

Balance, controlled instability and proprioception are intentionally used in functional training. You learn how to manage your body’s interaction with its surroundings and how to re-establish the centre of gravity and stabilise when optimal alignment or positioning is lost.

Gradually, you will move and react better. The result is the ability to express varying degrees of motion, balance and mobility and better reaction to a variety of physical challenges that may present themselves in sport and life. This is a critical reminder of the benefits of safe,

efficient and highly skilled movement training.

If you’re tired of the same old cardio machines for doing your warm up, it’s time for a change. If you simply need to improve lower body power and agility, use the Bosu. Try step ups on Bosu rather than step ups on a bench. You will have to work harder on your balance. Or perform side-steps/side-lunges by holding one foot on Bosu and the other one on the floor. You can also do lunges either with your back foot on Bosu or the front foot on it. When doing squats, you can stand on the round side or on the flat side for an advanced level. Bosu is great for plyometrics since it provides a smooth surface for landing, but is still very challenging for balance. After a few repetitions only, your heart rate will raise. With practice, you will improve your balance and coordination. You can do small squat jumps with both feet on Bosu. Jump on and off, jump side to side, or jump with one foot on Bosu only. If you need to improve your wake boarding, jump and involve the obliques too; try a squat jump with a twist in the air. Any kind of jump on Bosu will be a

cardiovascular exercise and will give you an instant burn in your thighs and glutes.

Pretty much any exercise you perform on the floor will have an added degree of difficulty on Bosu. For the lower back, you can try to balance the whole body face down without touching the floor with your limbs; or try lifting one leg and the opposite arm off the floor, while one knee is on top of the Bosu, as Karen demonstrates in the photo; just holding the pose for a few seconds involves all the core muscles. Place the Bosu on the reverse side and perform mountain climbers with a lunge forward. If you master your yoga poses on the ground, try Warrior III with one foot on Bosu or balance by placing your arms by your side in an airplane. The leg series in Pilates can be done on Bosu too. The variations are endless and it is great idea to incorporate Bosu in your training once in a while.

For questions or information on training and healthy lifestyle you can contact Manuela Ioana Nemes at Body Sculptor Fitness Centre (Mirco Centre); Tel: 939 5288 or bodyscul@weststartv.com



Single Leg Balance



Lower Back Extension



Side Lunge



Lower Back Extension Variation



Squat



Single Leg Balance



Back Lunge



Side Leg Circles