

Home Exercises for the Summer Part 3

Now you're ready to layer in exercises for a more serious workout, which will elevate your practice, and deepen your core control in ways you never knew were possible. We've thrown in some classics like Teaser and Neck Pull, which are great indicators of your progress in terms of abdominal control. Get ready to perform an Intermediate-Advanced workout. Don't forget to start with your workout from Part 1 and 2.

I. Contract – Deep Abdominals



1) Double Straight-Leg Stretch. (Best performed after Criss Cross or Double Leg Stretch) Lie on your back, with head cradled in interlaced fingers; pull knees into the chest. Extend legs straight up to ceiling as you roll the head, neck and shoulders up. Look at your belly button. Anchor your lowest ribs and pelvis firmly to the mat by contracting deep abdominals. Exhale as you lower both legs away from you, stopping if you start to arch your back. Inhale deeply, contract the buttocks, and draw the legs back up to 90 degrees at the hip. Experiment with reversing the breath. Perform 6-8x. Follow with Teaser.



2) Teaser I & II. Lie on your back, keeping legs extended to the ceiling; stretch the arms overhead, keeping the back rooted to the floor. Exhale and roll-up reaching the arms up and towards the toes. The legs will slightly lower to more of a 45 degree angle at the hip while you do this. Think of floating your body to a V shape at the hip, with the arms and legs parallel on an upward diagonal. Repeat 4-6x, keeping the legs up. To progress to Teaser II, allow the legs to release fully outstretched to the floor (as well as the arms) so you are lying extended on the mat. Then float up into your V shape. It is very important to keep your pelvis in a slight posterior pelvic tilt (a "scoop" behind the sit bones) and not perch on top of the sit bones and merely balance. The abdominals should be working hard to control the position. Repeat 4-6x. Now lie down for Neck Pull.

II. Articulate & Deepen the Powerhouse



3) Neck Pull. Lying on your back, place hands behind head, extend legs on mat and press firmly into the heels. Exhale, and scoop under with buttocks, as you forcibly scoop up and curl nose up over the knees, diving forehead over legs. Your aim is to look like the letter P at the top of the movement. Imagine your legs are bolted down to the mat and cannot lift up. Now lengthen crown of head forward and stretch spine straight as you come to sit up, elongating into a long sit position, with 90 degrees at the hip. Hinge back keeping a straight spine, dissolving into a curled scoop back at the last second, to roll down fully. A forceful, audible breath is key to the success of this movement. The breath forces deep, internal compression as you perform this exercise. Aim to do 6x. Finish in the upright position, shift to the front of your mat and prepare for Open Leg Rocker.



4) Open Leg Rocker. Sitting at the front edge of your mat, knees bent towards the chest. Open the knees shoulder width and clasp hold of your ankles. Engage abs and curl back until you are balancing in back of sitz bones, as in Teaser. Now extend the legs, straightening the arms until you are in a V shape. Initiate the rock-back though the abdominals scooping, not momentum. Inhale as you rock back onto the middle of the shoulder blades, exhale to scoop your way back up to starting position, balancing at the top of the movement. Repeat 6x. On the last one allow yourself to roll over, and stay on back, legs reaching out behind you, in preparation for Roll Over.



5) Rollover & Jackknife. From the overhead position of the legs from Open Leg Rocker, start to roll down the spine whilst exhaling, until your legs point up to the ceiling (90 degrees at your hip) and the pelvis re-anchors to the mat. Inhale to prepare, and exhale the legs up and overhead again, until they are parallel to the floor. Be mindful to use the abdominals to really lift the pelvis up and overhead, not collapse the pelvis down on the chest. In other words, the waist should be elongated fully in roll over. Toes pointed, legs shoulder width apart. Repeat 4-6x.



Once in full Roll Over, progress into the Jackknife. With legs overhead in Roll Over, now stabilize through the powerhouse and press the legs up to the ceiling, keeping the pelvis still. Squeeze into the glutes, and open the front of the hip joint to make this happen. The movement should only occur in the hip joint. Repeat 6x then roll down the spine, keeping the legs extended up to the ceiling as in Roll Over. Transition to Corkscrew.



6) Corkscrew. With the legs extended up to the ceiling, arms long and heavy by sides, begin to circle the legs over to the right in line with the shoulder. Then sweep them down and around, bringing them back up to the left in alignment with that shoulder. On your next one, reverse direction starting to the left and circling down, around, and up to the right. Be sure to squeeze the buttocks and inner thighs as you perform these circles. Your back remains flat and the pelvis minimally shifts from side to side as you perform the exercise. Complete 3-5 sets.