

# The End All Killer Ab Workout

Stability balls. They were a buzzword in the fitness industry a few years ago, and everyone seemingly wanted to learn how to use them properly due to their enormous benefits to the entire body. But somewhere along the way, the stability ball went the way of 8-tracks and VCRs....

Now, these oversized balls can give you a great workout for almost any body part, but this book is designed just to talk about the benefits with your core and abdominals. Soon, and in a different book, I will show you a great full-body workout with just some free weights and a stability ball.

Back to the workout! This workout is progressive, with a recommended number of repetitions and sets, but you can alter it to meet your own fitness ability. If you can only do one or two reps at a time, then by all means do that! There's no need to risk injury trying to get 12 reps of each exercise. Trust me, if you do it as much as YOU can (be it 5 reps or 15), you will feel it!

I have shown different ways of doing each exercise to meet any fitness level. Some are extremely basic (don't confuse that with "easy" because you will receive a killer workout even with the basic exercises) and some are extremely difficult. However, you should mix and match these exercises to do which ones are comfortable to you and which ones you enjoy doing.

All the ab exercises below are done using a stability ball. If you are working out at a gym, it probably has plenty of stability balls. Make sure you can sit on it comfortably, and it is very well blown up. If you do not have a stability

ball, I recommend you go to Perform Better at [Perform Better](#) to get your equipment.

Feel free to e-mail me at [Matt@elderspersonaltraining.com](mailto:Matt@elderspersonaltraining.com) with any questions on the workout, or you can call me toll free at 1-877-ELDER01. I am a personal trainer at Evolve Fitness in Framingham and a fitness expert who specializes in half hour workouts from your home.

So, on to the workout!

To your health,  
Matt Elder  
Certified Personal Trainer  
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## THE SIT UP

This is your basic sit up, and if done properly will give you a better ab workout than any machine. See what I said? **If done properly!** Unfortunately, most people don't do these properly and they make them much easier and just waste their time. Let's show you the WRONG way to do a basic sit up on a stability ball.

**START:** You should have your hands behind your neck and as far back as you can go. If you have the flexibility, then bend back until your head hits the floor! Since most people don't have this ability, I started out with my back pretty straight. Look at the location of the ball. It's right on my lower back. Not on my butt, and not on my shoulders. On my lower back.



**WRONG FINISH:** Keep in mind, this is the wrong way. You should not go all the way up. At this point, you are not working out your abs at all. By going this far up, you have taken all the pressure off your abs and core, and moved it to your hips, which is not what we are trying to do!



**CORRECT FINISH:** Do you see the difference? Right at about this point, I am hitting my abdominals hard, but not putting all the concentration on my hips like I was in the wrong finish above. **TIP:** To maximize hitting your lower abs, try to picture yourself getting your chin up to the ceiling. If you do this, you will really feel it hit your lower abs and core, and I highly recommend it. Simply by lifting your chin, you have changed your ab workout to basic to killer in one simple step.



**RECOMMENDED WORKOUT:** Do three sets of 12, with about 30 seconds of rest in between sets.

## MORE ADVANCED SIT UP

Once you've mastered the basic sit up, you should try the advanced sit up directly after it. In this, you just add a little resistance, which will really help hit your abs and also work your hips, knees and ankles as you use dozens of muscles to stabilize yourself.

**START:** In this picture, I have an 8 lb. medicine ball that I used for resistance. You can use a dumbbell or medicine ball, whichever you have access to. Also, of course, adjust the weight accordingly. Bring the medicine ball/dumbbell as far back as you can to really stretch out your back and also make a longer range of motion with the resistance.



**FINISH:** Same as above, DO NOT go all the way up. And also, same as above, concentrate on bringing the ball up to the ceiling. Don't just do a sit up, do a basic sit up and then go an extra push as you bring the ball up to the ceiling. It'll really focus on hitting your lower abs.



**RECOMMENDED WORKOUT:** Do three sets of 10, and do these right after the basic sit up. Your abs already got a great workout with the basic sit up, so now really attack them!

## OBLIQUE ATTACK

Now that you've hit your abs hard with the basic sit up and the advanced one with a little resistance, it's time to concentrate on your obliques, which are the muscles at the side of your abs ("love handles"). This exercise is a little difficult, so you should work your way up to doing the final result, if necessary.

**START:** You are going to start the same way you did with the basic sit up. Put the stability ball at your lower back, but this time, you are going to lie straight back, like in the picture below. Do not lean as far back as you can, like recommended in the basic sit up.



**FINISH:** Now, pick up your head/shoulders a bit, like pictures below. When your upper body is in a "half crunch," pick up either your right or left knee, and aim it towards your opposing elbow. Since this is the first level of the

oblique attack, we are not going to bring our elbow to our knee. You can see how close you can get them to each other. Just get used to the motion and instability of bringing up one knee to the opposing elbow. When you do one knee, lower it slowly and raise the opposing knee and aim it at its opposite elbow.



**RECOMMENDED WORKOUT:** Two sets of 20, so you do 10 of each leg. Go slow and controlled so your body gets used to the instability of balancing on one leg on the stability ball. (You can also do the same type of sit up where you bring one elbow to the opposing knee, but keeping both legs on the ground. Do this if you are having trouble balancing on one foot).

## ADVANCED OBLIQUE ATTACK

Now that you've mastered the basic oblique attack, it's time for you to go nuts and completely obliterate your obliques leaving your core screaming for days!

**START:** The start is the same as the basic oblique attack, pictured below.



**FINISH:** The motion is similar to the exercise above, except you will actually bring your opposing knee and elbow together. This really hits your obliques hard, and will also work your whole core/hip area. To do it, slowly



lift your right leg and bring your left elbow to your lifted knee. Slowly return the two, and use the opposite knee and leg.



**RECOMMENDED WORKOUT:** Do 10 on each side for three sets. Rest about 30 seconds in between each set.

## The Introduction to the Jackknife

Now it's time to flip over and work your way up to a jackknife, which is a very good core/abdominals workout. However, since the actual jackknife is a very difficult exercise to do, there are a few alterations that will also really hit your abs very hard.

**START:** To start, get out a workout mat to take some stress off your elbows. Put your knees on the stability ball and keep your back as straight as possible.



**FINISH:** To complete the exercise, slowly bring your knees in towards your body and squeeze your abs as you do. Hold that position for about a second or two, and then return back to the starting position. You can raise your butt in the air, as shown on the left, or keep it low to the ground, as shown on the

right. Raising your butt will make it more difficult, so you can see what your ability is.



**RECOMMENDED WORKOUT:** Three sets of 12, making sure you go slow and controlled and squeeze your abs as you bring your knees to your body.

## The Jackknife

This is extremely difficult, so get accustomed to the introduction to the jackknife before you go to this. The exercise above is extremely difficult and will hit your abs very hard, but this next one is more difficult.

**START:** You can start with your arms in a push up position, or on your elbows. You should start on your elbows the first time you try this, and then progress to a push up position, which is harder. Start the same way you did as the introduction to the jackknife, with the ball around your knees/lower leg.



**FINISH:** To complete this exercise, bring your feet up on the ball, eventually finishing on your toes. As you do this, slowly bring your butt up in the air. Flexibility and balance will be vital in this exercise, and that is why you should be proficient at the introduction to the jackknife before you



attempt this. As you bring your butt in the air, squeeze your abdominals. Hold the finishing position before returning to the starting position. The closer the ball is to your body, the harder the workout will be.



**RECOMMENDED WORKOUT:** For this exercise, do three sets of 8. It puts a lot of pressure on your wrists/elbows (depending on your starting position) so after your 8<sup>th</sup> rep, it is time to rest for 30 seconds before doing your next 8.

## The ABC's

On this exercise, you will spell out your ABC's on the ball! Don't laugh, like most my clients do, because they aren't laughing when they hit XYZ!

**START:** Start off with your elbows right on the fat part of the ball, as shown on the left. You can clasp your hands together or not, whichever you prefer. Don't rest your chest and stomach on the ball, so make sure it's far enough away from your body. Keep your back as straight as possible before you start (to make it much more difficult, start off on your toes and not resting on your knees, and make sure your body is straight!)



**FINISH:** Keeping your body in as close to the starting position, with your back as straight as possible, take your elbows and simply spell out the

alphabet. Draw each letter, slow and controlled, with your elbows. You may not feel it at first, but you soon will.

**RECOMMENDED WORKOUT:** Spell out the alphabet twice, slow and controlled. Rest about 30 seconds between sets. If your lower back starts to hurt during the workout, stop doing it no matter how far you get in the alphabet. Work your way from there, and make it a goal to complete the alphabet.

## The Reach

This one really hits your core, especially your hips and obliques, but it will still hit your abs. Working out your core, namely your hips, will really help out your day-to-day life whether it's walking up and down flights of stairs or carrying a baby to and from the car.

**START:** Take a stability ball and put it between your feet as pictured below. Don't put your feet straight up, because it will make the reach much easier.



**FINISH:** For this exercise, it's two parts, and that makes it much more efficient. For the first part, rotate your feet up and down on the ball, switching sides. In other words, bring your right foot to the top of the ball and your left foot to the bottom of the ball. Then, switch feet. After you feel comfortable with this, bring your opposing hand and reach it to whichever foot is on top of the ball, as pictured below. So, bring your right foot up to the top of the ball and reach your left hand up to your right foot. Then, bring your left foot to the top of the ball and reach your right hand and reach it up to your left foot.



**RECOMMENDED WORKOUT:** Do three sets of 20, with you reaching to each foot 10 times. Rest 30 seconds in between each set.

## Conclusion

You now have eight killer abdominal exercises that are guaranteed to leave your core screaming at you for days. Do the eight exercises three times a week, but if you can't squeeze that in, then twice a week is perfectly okay.

If you have any questions about this workout, please don't hesitate to contact me. Good luck!

To your health,  
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