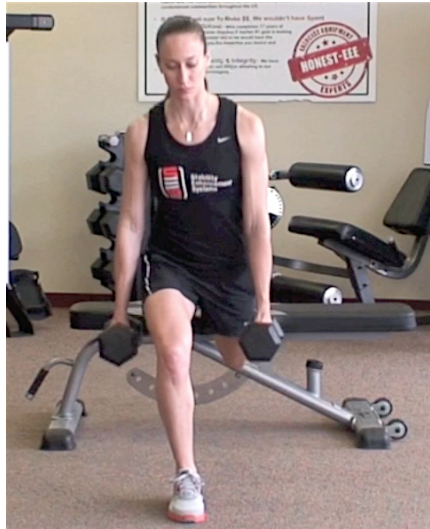


5 VITAL EXERCISES FOR BASKETBALL ATHLETES

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Basketball strength and conditioning (S&C) programs consist of complex layering of strength development, power transformation and the on-court translation of both. When choosing exercises it is important to consider their relevance to basketball-specific movements and on-court explosiveness. This article will outline 5 of the most important exercises for basketball athletes.



1) Bulgarian Split Squat: This exercise is one of our favorites! The Bulgarian Split Squat (figure 1) is important in developing posterior-chain strength—specifically gluteal and hip strength. Increased gluteal and hip strength will directly translate to on-court explosiveness and power. Additionally, this exercise develops asymmetric strength and stability. Basketball is a game of asymmetric movements and positions (i.e. layups), it is important to develop strength in asymmetric positions to develop sport-specific strength and injury risk reduction.

2) Pull-Up: This exercise takes an incredible amount of full-body strength and stability. The pull-up not only targets the major muscle groups, but also the smaller stabilizing muscles that often get overlooked. Training these stabilizing muscles are paramount in effectively preventing injuries and continuing to develop strength in the major muscle groups. Athletes who can effectively and efficiently perform pull-ups can boast great core stability and body control, which will ultimately make them more efficient athletes on the basketball court.

3) Hang Clean: This exercise is important for developing power, explosiveness and improving vertical. The only caveat to this exercise is that it is very technique heavy. Athletes have to master the correct Hang Clean (figure 2) technique to truly reap its benefits.

4) Single-leg RDL: The single-leg RDL is a great posterior chain exercise. Additionally, it targets an important group of stabilizing muscles in the hip known as the external rotators. The external rotators are crucial in maintaining safe and efficient lower extremity mechanics. This exercise also emphasizes a balance element, which will ultimately train greater control when athletes encounter unstable conditions (which they inevitably will playing basketball).



Figure 2. Hang Clean

5) Squats: Squats are vital for strength and power, especially when considering the development of explosiveness and enhancing vertical. This exercise takes a tremendous amount of full body stability. It is important to ensure that athletes have adequate stabilizing and core strength in order to maximize squat potential.

These are 5 of our favorite S&C exercises to develop basketball-specific strength and power. Creating a useful and targeted strength training program for basketball athletes requires a pragmatic layered approach. One should always consider how a chosen exercise directly translates to the movement demands of a sport.

Dr. Selena Budge is an expert in ACL injury risk-reduction training and President of Stability Enhancement Systems (SES). SES supports enhanced sport performance through individualized injury prevention sciences and sport-specific strength training. Through their unique systematic approach and exemplary track record, SES has quickly become a national leader in women's basketball injury prevention and performance. Dr. Budge can be contacted through the SES website: <http://stabilityes.com> or at selena@stabilityes.com