



CRAFTING A
CLASSIC PHYSIQUE

ABS

Prepared exclusively for eddiegillies@icloud.com Transaction: 20267TWS

BUILDING A CLASSIC PHYSIQUE • THE PERFECT GUIDE FOR ABDOMINALS

OLD SCHOOL ABS

For abs, like any other aspect of bodybuilding is based on the idea that form follows function. If you are properly using a muscle, and using it in a way that has a functional element rather than just trying to make it look good, you'll end up accomplishing both. There have been tons of new theories, camps, gurus, and schools of thought around how to get big, strong, and conditioned, but no school is as powerful and effective as the old school for building raw power and muscle.

Abs are really no different than any other muscle, except for the fact that they help protect your spine from very serious injury. That's kind of an important difference. So what does that mean? It means that your primary concern with your abs is creating strength and overall stability in the trunk of your body. If you do that, your abs will look chiseled and strong as long as you have a low body fat level. The key concept to remember here is that you need to create functional objectives for you to work on that apply to other aspects of your training instead of looking at abdominal training as a separate and sometimes optional training session.



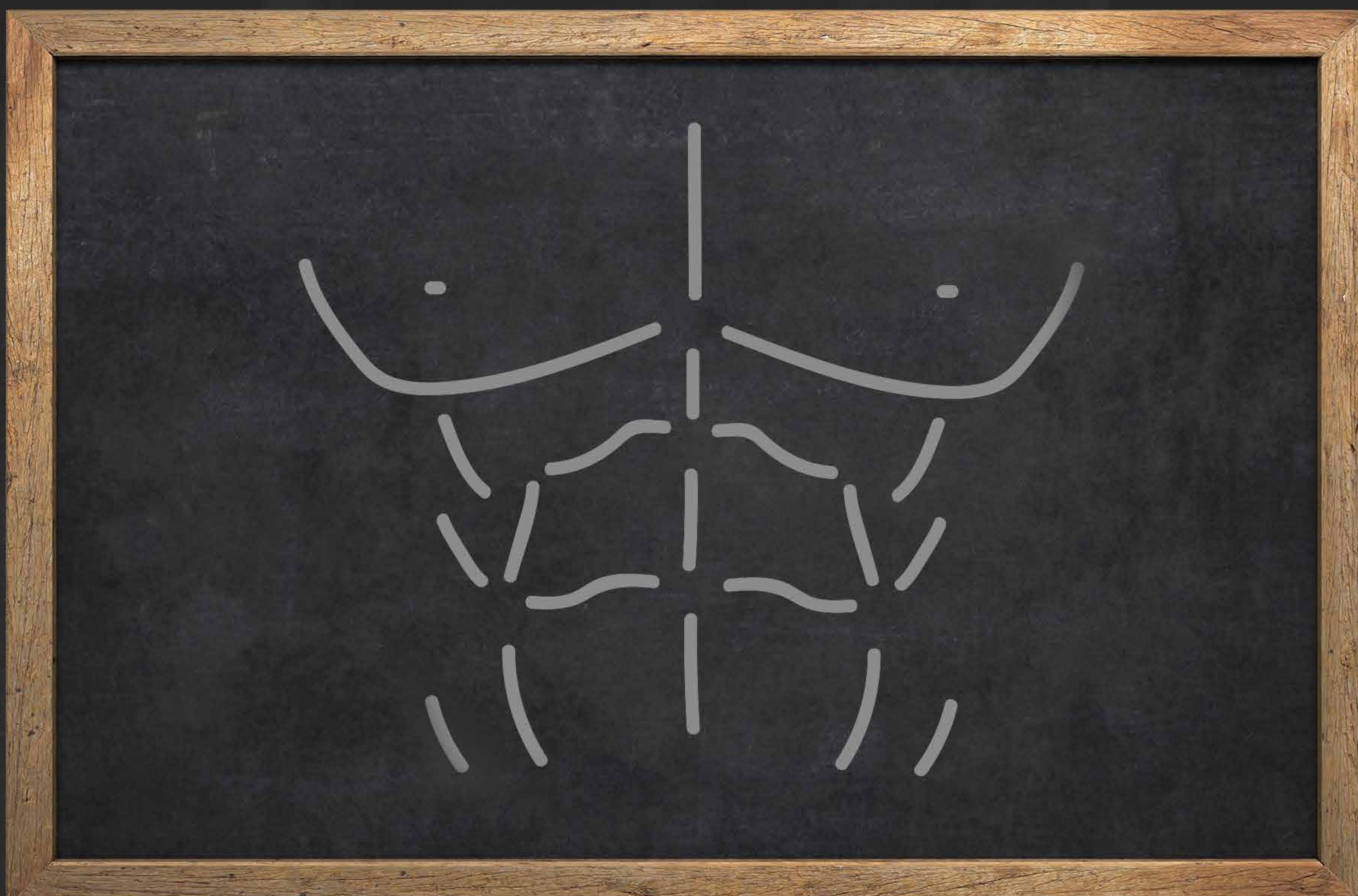
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Not only do abs look good and provide support and protection to your spine, but they can correct mobility and functional biomechanical problems that arise from untrained, weak abs or overly tight abs. Untrained or over-trained, tight abs can negatively impact posture and create a cascading effect on mobility and other movement patterns and end up creating a bunch of problems all over the place. You know the kid's song "the hip bone's connected to the leg bone?" Well they weren't lying. Everything is somehow connected, and sometimes problems can arise from unexpected places. All I'm saying is train abs, stay balanced, and lift hard.

Okay, now let's get into the basic anatomy of the abs and learn how solid core development can carry over into every other aspect of your training.



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ANATOMY OF THE ABS

As I mentioned, your abs are a tool for you to use to position your body correctly. Without a balanced back, lumbo-pelvic hip complex, and core, you can end up with upper cross syndrome, lower cross syndrome, anterior and posterior pelvic tilt, and overall a bunch of aches, pains, pinches and problems in the hips and shoulders. I'm a big believer in training at the lowest volume to force your body to adapt, so that you see long-term progress by slowly increasing overall volume and intensity. The abs are no different than any other muscle group as far as that is concerned, and since the abs are a series of small muscles whose purpose is mostly stabilization, it's better to train them for strength with a lower volume, explosive and isometric movement. Let's look at each muscle that makes up the abs, and then get into core training strategy and an effective program you can use to create strong, aesthetic abs.



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ABDOMINAL TRAINING

There are two major necessary components to having a sick set of abs. the first, is putting in the conditioning work necessary to get you down to a low body fat so you can actually see them. That means dieting hard anywhere from 6 weeks to 6 months, or if you've got quite a bit of body fat, it could take longer than that but the important thing is to stick with it and stay the course. If you decide to quit, you'll never see your abs. Even if you do it just once, you should really dial yourself in so you have that experience. The other half of the conditioning equation is burning through as many calories as possible, whether it be from hard training, HIIT, steady state cardio, heavy load conditioning work, or even getting out and playing some sports or hiking. It really doesn't matter as long as you're supporting your muscle with adequate protein, carbs, and some healthy fat sources, you likely won't see any negative impact on your muscular size and strength.

Don't train abs every day. Your abs are just like every other muscle in your body and they need to adapt to stimulus and be given adequate rest to improve. Over-training your abs can be dangerous because if you train with overly sore or weakened core muscles, they could fail while baring a heavy load, which could lead to a spinal injury.



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IMBALANCES AND WARNING SIGNS

The abs don't work fully independently much in the same way that your back doesn't work independently during a row. There are lots of muscles playing supporting roles in getting the job done. We're going to look at what happens when the system is broken and the abs are either doing too much, too little, or don't have the proper support they need. Then, we'll take a look at how to address and prevent those issues. These problems are a lot more common than you might think and most people have one of these to some degree. Try to identify any imbalances you have and correct and prevent them with the following.

— UPPER CROSS SYNDROME

This is the heavy phone user's disease. Tightness in the upper traps, and a shortened chest. This causes a hunched-over look and can eventually shorten your abs by creating a hunched posture, which will put you in a dangerous position to squat, deadlift, or shoulder press.

— LOWER CROSS SYNDROME

This one has a lot to do with your lumbo-pelvic-hip complex, which just refers to your back, pelvis, and hips. This postural problem happens when you have weak glutes, weak abs, and tight hips and lower back. It makes you walk like a duck, with your ass sticking out and it can cause serious back pain, putting you in a dangerous position for doing squats, deadlifts, and basically any full body movement.



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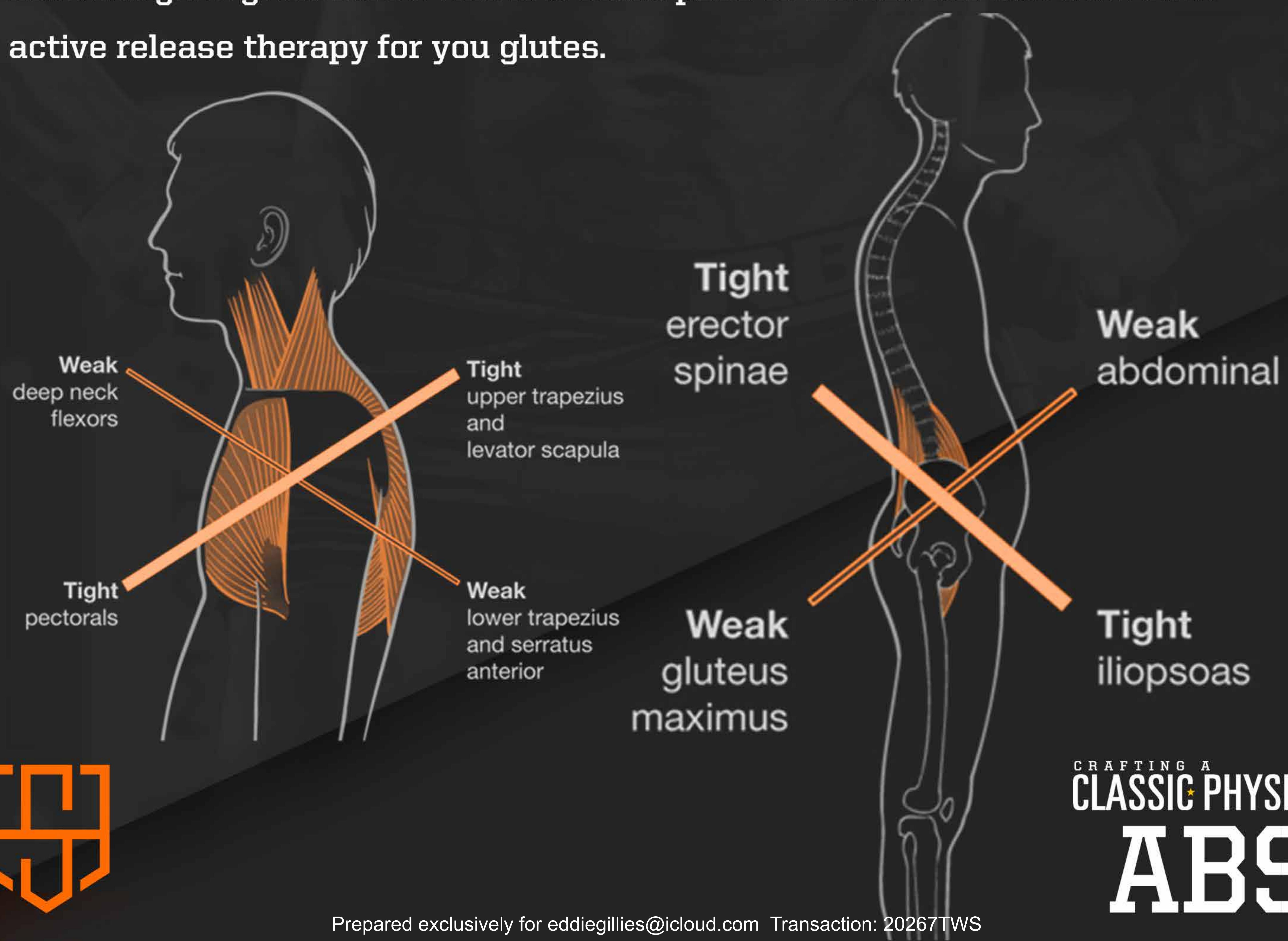
IMBALANCES AND WARNING SIGNS

— ANTERIOR PELVIC TILT

An anterior pelvic tilt is what happens to your hips in lower cross syndrome. It is caused by a weak set of abs, a tight back, and tight hip flexors, and lengthened, weak glutes. This brings up a great point to keep in mind – don't confuse a good ab workout with a hip flexor workout. Try to consciously take out your hip flexors from ab movements so you don't end up with this problem down the line.

— POSTERIOR PELVIC TILT

With a posterior pelvic tilt, you have the opposite set of imbalances. Tight glutes will cause a tilt in your pelvis that pulls your lumbar spine flat. This could potentially happen if you have very tight abs along with tight glutes and hamstrings. A great fix for this is a cobra pose to stretch the abs and some active release therapy for your glutes.



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With all that being said, core training is actually a lot more about function than looks, and when you train your abs, you should be conscious about the rest of the muscle groups that work with them to keep your body functioning properly. So, this ab workout isn't just for abs, but rather it is for your upper back, abs, lower back, glutes, and hip flexors. This is a routine designed to keep your movement patterns healthy so you can function at your best. The looks will come in time. Afterall, if you can't train hard due to muscular imbalances, you won't be able to develop the necessary musculature or conditioning to reach your goal.



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CLASSIC FUNCTION

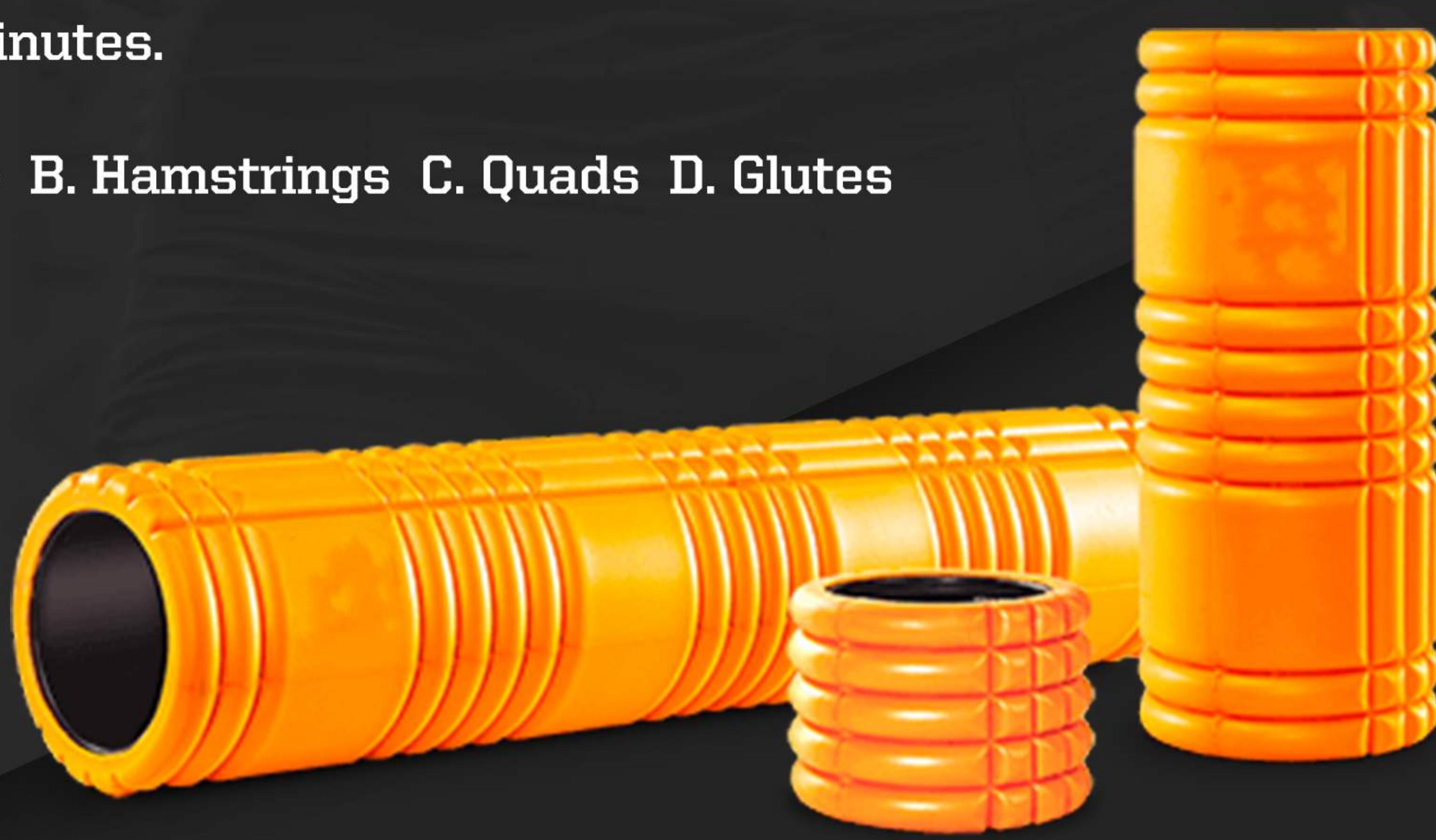
— CORE AND LUMBO-PELVIC HIP COMPLEX TRAINING PROTOCOL

This isn't your typical core training program. That's because it's not just core training. It's a dynamic movement protocol that will help you not only develop an aesthetic set of abs, but improve your movement patterns, reduce stiffness, tightness, and pain, and allow for better mobility and strength in your hips, core, and even upper body. It will allow you to better transfer power across muscle groups during explosive or athletic movements, and get you on stage looking your best, if that's what you're after. You've seen how to lumbo-pelvic hip complex works as a system to adjust body positioning, posture, and create proper movements patters, so that's exactly what we're going to work on when we train core.

What you're about to do is a 3x week protocol that involves stretching, active release therapy, strength movements for the hips, and classic abdominal training. You can use this as a warm up to your workout for that day, or in a separate training session when you do your cardio for that day.

— ACTIVE RELEASE

1. FOAM ROLL the following muscles for 60 seconds each, minimum. No longer than 3 minutes.
 - A. Calves
 - B. Hamstrings
 - C. Quads
 - D. Glutes



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— ACTIVE RELEASE

2. Use a LACROSSE BALL to create a more intense myo-fascial release on extra tight areas. The best way to do this is to using your bodyweight to apply pressure to the “peak” of the muscle or a specific knot, and then bring that muscle through a full or partial range of motion. Here are the most important places to employ this method.

- A. Upper traps B. Glutes C. Hip Flexor



— STRETCHING

Perform the following stretches for 2 rounds of 45 seconds each, or as long as it takes to relieve any tightness you might have.

- 1. Cobra Pose 2. Lunging hips stretch 3. Glute Stretch 4. Hamstring stretch

— MUSCLE ACTIVATION AND MOVEMENT PATTERN CORRECTION

Obviously you’re lifting heavy weights all the time, so why do some light bodyweight movements in the girly warm-up room of your gym? Because it’s good for your body and it will improve your firing patterns, ultimately improving all of your lifts. The exercises might seem lame, but they are simple steps you can take to make sure you’re a well-oiled machine. Perform these light exercises in an explosive fashion for 3 sets of 15.

- 1. Banded Glute Bridge 2. Reverse Hyperextension 3. Single Leg RDL



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CORE TRAINING

Think of your abs as simply being a single cog in a complex machine. We've talked about how the abs work with the glutes, hips, and back to create posture and stability, so now we're going to work on the last piece of the puzzle and finish up with training the abs. There are two types of core training that are useful in developing full function and aesthetics: Isometric and full ROM. Because the torso needs to be kept rigid under heavy loads while training, planks are going to be really important in your core training, and you'll notice that the hips and glutes come into play, which is why we focused on them earlier. Once we're done with that, we'll go into the classic movements to help build a little size so that you can show them off. Perform all planking movements for 3 rounds of 60-90 seconds, and all other movements for 2 sets of 15. If it gets too easy, you can play with gradually adding weight, sets, and reps. Let's get it.

1) PLANK



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2) SIDE PLANK



3) DECLINE CRUNCHES



4) B WHEEL/BARBELL ROLLOUT



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2) Hanging leg raise with hold



FINAL NOTES

When you are lifting, the first thing you should think about is the position of your torso – is your chest high and scapula retracted slightly? Are you abs rigid so that your hips are stacked above your knees and not sticking out like a duck? Before you blindly begin working out, understand how your posture should look and feel, and take action to strategically correct it. If you follow the above guide, you should be on your way to proper movement and a sick set of abs.



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