

# JONATHAN LAST

ONLINE TRAINING | INTERMEDIATE



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JONATHAN\_LAST

# HELLO!

What is **UP** Handstand Army?

Firstly, I just want to say a **HUGE** thank you for all the messages I've already received in anticipation of this programme – they've been truly heart warming. Times are tough for everyone at the moment and I have felt God tell me to create this programme for **ANYONE** who'd benefit from some handstand training over the next few months.

Secondly, this is **NOT** a beginners training programme but IF you'd still like to participate in the Facebook group and share your progress you can download a **FREE** beginners training programme right **HERE**.

Thirdly, click **HERE** to join the Facebook group so that I can give occasional feedback. Please understand that I coach in person at a circus university, have private online students **AND** a family so I'll only give feedback when I have extra time.





## ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

*“So how’s this going to work, you absolute nutter?” I hear you say.*

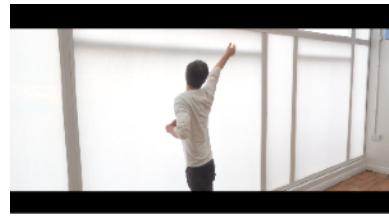
Well this is kind of hard. I normally create personalized programmes but, as I have **NO IDEA** who’s going to use this one, I’ve set it for early intermediate practitioners. I’ve basically just created a very simple training plan in the hope that it might give you something to work towards.

The next page will be a **VIDEO LIBRARY**. It will have all the drills you’ll need for the next month. It’s important to note that these videos are **SUPPLEMENTARY** to the main programme - the videos themselves do not go super deep into detail. Normally this would be where I’d give individual feedback to each student, but in this situation I won’t be able to do that for everyone for each drill... **SO PLEASE** pay attention to the Facebook group to see if I’ve already answered your question elsewhere.

In this programme I will mostly be focusing on **SHAPES** and **DYNAMICS** (passing from one shape to another). **IF** any of these drills are too hard I suggest you use a wall or a get a friend, partner, dog or cat to spot you. If using a wall for the dynamics **I SUGGEST YOU HAVE YOUR CHEST FACING THE WALL TO ENSURE GOOD TECHNIQUE.**

# VIDEO LIBRARY

Below are your training videos. Please become well accustomed to them before you start your training.  
PLEASE CLICK THUMBNAILS TO BE TAKEN TO VIDEOS.



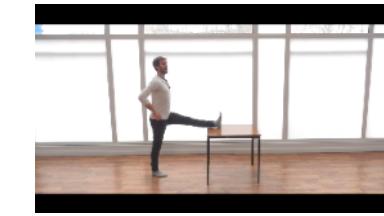
WALL CIRCLES



SHOULDER STRETCH



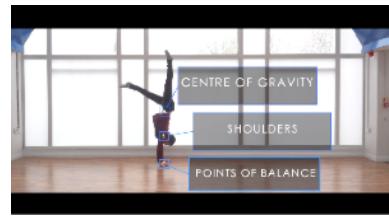
WRIST PREP



OSTRICH PREP



OSTRICH WALK



HALF HANDSTAND



ONE SECOND SHAPE



1-5



STRADDLE INTRO



TUCK INTRO

THESE VIDEOS CONTAIN EXERCISES I CREATED. PLEASE DON'T USE/ TEACH WITHOUT SOURCE REFERENCING.

# VIDEO LIBRARY

Below are your training videos. Please become well accustomed to them before you start your training.



STAG INTRO



TUCK UPS



DYNAMICS



STRADDLE – STRAIGHT



STAG - TUCK



STRAIGHT – TUCK



HEAD THROUGHHS



TUCK ACADEMY



ATTITUDE



AIR BABY

THESE VIDEOS CONTAIN EXERCISES I CREATED. PLEASE DON'T USE/ TEACH WITHOUT SOURCE REFERENCING.

# WEEK 1

This week's focus is all about shapes. Now, a **STRAIGHT** handstand is and should be the foundation of **ALL** handstand training. A handbalancer without a straight handstand is like a swimmer without a swimming pool – it just shouldn't happen.

So even though we're starting to delve into the beautiful jungle of **SHAPES**, we'll always start our training with some **STRAIGHT HANDSTANDS**. The Straight Handstand is the **HARDEST SHAPE** to master and it requires our respect.

This being said, I've had a lot of my students hit their first 10, 30 and 60 seconds in Stag before they've hit it in Straight. Stag is an amazing shape - it's easier to balance, looks fresh and gets you **BARE** likes on your Instagram, fam.

This first week is going to be nice and simple to give those who have never tired these shapes a chance to catch up.



# T W E E K

SKILL	REPS/ TIME	SETS	FREQUENCY
Half Handstands	10	3	5 Days
1 Second Shape	10 Minutes	Allow short breaks	5 Days
1-5	5 Minutes	Allow short breaks	5 Days
Stag	10 Seconds	10	5 Days
Straddle	5 Seconds	10	5 Days
Tucks	10 Seconds	3	2 Days
Wall Endurance Chest Facing (Straight)	30 Seconds	6	2 Days

Please use a wall if you're unable to hold these shapes.

# WEEK 2

From now on I'm going to be using pictures of my students, because they're **AMAZING** and I get bored of seeing my **FACE** \*crying emoji\*

This week is all about **DYNAMICS**. Now, this can be the turning point for a lot of people's training. It can also make you want to quit handstands and find another hobby, like underground street wrestling or collecting sticks.

There's no lying here, learning to move between shapes **CAN** be frustrating, **BUT** if you give it time it can also teach you a lot about how to correct your handstand effectively and how to *catch the balance*. Essentially, in a handstand you're always one mistake away from falling. We're just trying to increase your awareness and understanding of balance so that you learn to avoid those mistakes.



# WEEK 2

SKILL	REPS/ TIME	SETS	FREQUENCY
Half Handstands	10	3	5 Days
1 Second Shape Marathon*	2 Minutes	1	5 Days
1-5	5 Minutes	Allow short breaks	5 Days
Tuck Ups	5 Minutes	Allow short breaks	5 Days
Straight - Straddle	1	10	5 Days
Stag - Straight	1	10	5 Days
Wall Endurance Chest Facing (Straight)	60 Seconds	3	2 Days

\*Complete as many successful 1 Second Holds in the time I've allocated. You can't twist out/ take steps and you mustn't stop for the entirety of the set time. Don't stop kicking up!

# STILLNESS



I'd like to take a moment to briefly talk about what I call, **The Three Circles of Balance**, in the hope of helping you improve how you use your hands to balance.

Here we have three circles that represent different amounts of corrections people might use when balancing their handstands.

**RED** - *Macro adjustments, fast, aggressive, never under control.*

**ORANGE** – *Generally more consistent than red, feels controlled but still shaky. Looks like jelly.*

**GREEN** – *Micro adjustments, a statue, consistent holds, great foundation for **One Arm Handstands***

Now these circles **DO NOT** represent where the weight **SHOULD** be placed. They are simply a visual aid to explain this concept. I advise all of my students to try and focus on learning to balance in the green circle. If someone balances in the **RED** zone they have **NO** margin for error and are generally less consistent.



So what about the **ORANGE** Circle? Yeah, this is good... but it's basically knocking at the door of the **RED** Circle. I personally don't even recommend being neighbours with the **RED** Circle. Like, seriously, pack your bags and go stay at your Aunt's house... the Aunt with the pet T-REX – so sick.

For me, it's all about the **GREEN** Circle, baby. It's reliable and stable. Learning to balance in the **GREEN** is essentially trying to do a handstand with as few corrections as possible - ideally none. Balancing in the **GREEN** Circle also means you have two other circles to go through before you lose complete balance. It's a bit like having two safety nets go to through before you hit the ground.

Your hands are your **BASE OF SUPPORT** in the handstand. If your base of support is making macro corrections then your whole handstand becomes unstable and shaky. Now, let me make this clear... **YOU DO CORRECT WITH YOUR HANDS IN A HANDSTAND.** I'm just asking you to be more gentle and intentional with your corrections.



# FIND YOUR BALANCE POINT

This drill is an extension of the **Three Circles of Balance**. I often get my intermediate/ advanced students to practice it.

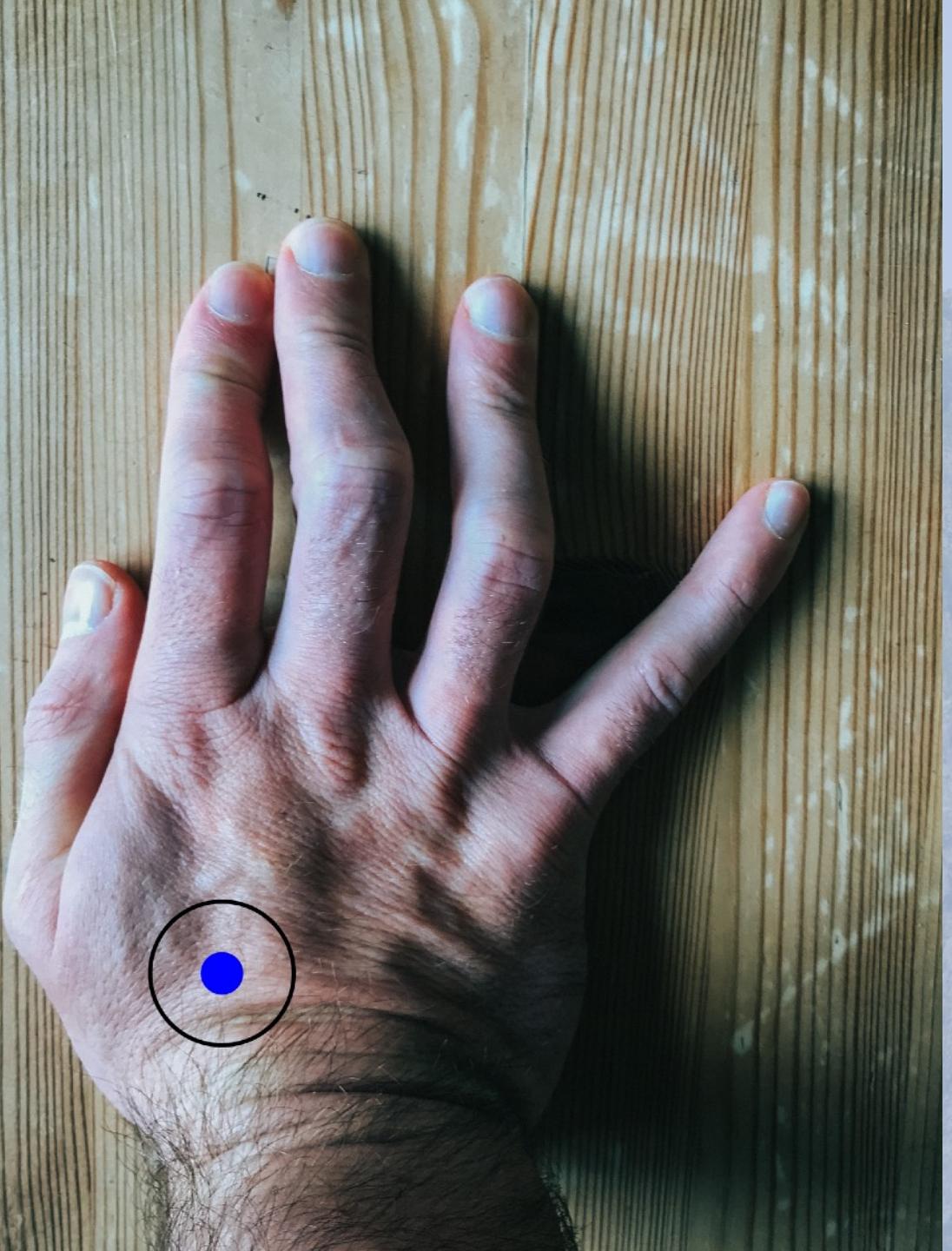
I'd like you to perform a straight handstand, but with a slightly different focus from usual - I want you to pay attention to where the majority of your weight sits while you're balancing.

Afterwards, consider where you would draw a dot on your hands to represent where the majority of your weight sits – this is your balance point.

My students usually point to a single place on their hands where they feel the majority of their weight. This will be different for everyone.

Once you have located your **BALANCE POINT** then imagine there's a small circle around it. Your job now is **TO PREVENT** your balance point from leaving that circle. This will help create a stable, energy efficient and statuesque handstand. This will take time but remember

**BALANCE CAN BE REFINED.**



# WEEK 3

This week we're focusing on the **TUCK** shape and **DYNAMICS** that pass in and out of Tuck.

This shape is more physically demanding than the traditional Straight Handstand as it requires good active shoulder flexion **BUT**, when this isn't a factor, it's actually easier to hold because your centre of gravity is closer to your point of balance (hands).

In short, you're likely to have a *love/hate* relationship with this shape. Expect Tuck to be like a relationship where you're always the one calling them but they never answer. Then you're like, "Right, I'm leaving," then all of a sudden Tuck runs back into your arms and takes you out for the night of your life. The next day your best mate tells you that Tuck has fled the country, taken all of your money and changed their identity to El Tuckio. It's still painful to talk about.

Note: Please use a **Wall** for **ANY** of these drills if you're struggling.



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# 3 WEEK

SKILL	REPS/ TIME	SETS	FREQUENCY
Half Handstands	15	3	5 Days
1 Second Shape Marathon*	1 Minutes	3 ( <i>2 Minutes break between sets</i> )	4 Days
1-5 in Stag	5 Minutes	Allow short breaks	5 Days
Straight – Stag - Straight	1	5	5 Days
Straight – Straddle - Straight	1	5	5 Days
Tuck Academy *	5,5,5	5	2 Days
Stag - Tuck	1	10	5 Days
Wall Endurance Chest Facing (Straight)	90 Seconds	2	1 Day

\*Tuck Academy – All three stages of Tuck must be held for 5 Seconds.  
If you don't have the mobility for True Tuck then perform the Second Tuck twice.

# WEEK 4

This week I want to put special emphasis on presentation. Generally, my students tick the following three boxes:

- Consistency of balance
- They live in the Green Circle
- They present their craft beautifully

My old Karate coach used to say, “*Practice makes permanent, not perfect.*” When you begin to have some level of consistency in a skill it’s essential you practice making it beautiful - refine your craft. You’re not going to wake up one day with all your bad habits suddenly gone. You need to choose, with each training session, each rep and set to pay attention to the quality of your presentation.

No matter what skill you’re working on this week I want you to make special effort in doing the basics: *straightening your legs, pointing your toes, not rushing, balancing in the Green circle.*

I’d also really recommend supplementing your training with flexibility work to improve your presentation

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# WEEK 4

SKILL	REPS/ TIME	SETS	FREQUENCY
Half Handstands	15	3	5 Days
1 Second Shape Marathon*	90 Seconds	2 ( <i>2 minutes break between sets</i> )	4 Days
5-10 Straight	5 Minutes	Allow short breaks	5 Days
Head Throughs*	15 Minutes	Allow short breaks	5 Days
Straight - Tuck	1	5	5 Days
Tuck Academy	5,5,10	3	2 Days
Attitude*	10 Minutes		5 Days
Air Baby*	10 Minutes		3 Days
Wall Endurance Chest Facing (Straight)	90 Seconds	3	1 Day

\* No pressure. Explore and play with these.

# IT'S BEEN EMOTIONAL!

So, here we are... four weeks of something beautiful. I want to say how thankful I am to ALL of you who have taken part in this. I really pray that you've all seen some form of improvement in your practice and that you will continue to push forward in this incredible yet often frustrating discipline.

For those who'd like to carry on training, I'd like to **SHOUT OUT** a few of my personal friends who get great results. Please do go and check them out through the links below:

- How to Handstand
- Tom Merrick – The Bodyweight Warrior
- Nelson Cuadras
- Kyle Weiger
- Manu D'Aquino
- Matthew Smith

Once again, thank you for taking part in this journey. If you'd ever like prayer for anything please don't hesitate to send me a message on my Instagram.

Loads of love,  
Jonathan



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ATHLETE @BETHANYBALANCES