

PILLAR STRENGTH 101

Your body's pillar is the foundation for all movement. It consists of your shoulders, torso, and hips. When your pillar lacks stability, you transfer energy less efficiently from your lower body to your upper body (and vice versa). This can increase your risk of knee and low back injury and make your workouts less effective.

Use these movements to strengthen your pillar, improve your posture, exercise more efficiently, and decrease your risk of injury.

MINI BANDS

Perform 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions each

GLUTE BRIDGE



01 Place the mini band above your knees. Maintain tension throughout the movement.

02 Lie on your back and bend your legs, bringing your heels directly under your knees.



03 Squeeze your glutes to raise your hips off the floor while driving your heels through the ground. Aim to have a straight line from heels to head.

04 Pause, then gently lower your hips to the ground and repeat.

EXTERNAL ROTATION



01 Place the mini band above your knees, feet should-width apart, toes forward, hips back, chest up.

02 Keeping your chest up, feet flat on the floor, move your right knee inward then outward. Feel your hip activate.



03 Maintain tension in the band by continuously pressing the opposite knee away from your body.

04 Complete 10-15 reps, then switch sides.

MEDICINE BALL

Perform 2-4 sets for 30-60 seconds each; rest 30-120 seconds between sets, as needed

OVERHEAD PASS STANDING

Before you start, check that you have a sand-filled ball to prevent bounce-back.



01 Facing a wall, place yourself an arm's length away. Start with your feet shoulder-width apart, toes forward, hips back, chest up. Position the ball behind your head.

02 Maintain a tight torso and keep your feet planted to the ground as you throw the ball into the wall.

03 Try to hit the same spot each time. Continue for as many reps as possible during the prescribed time.



SQUAT TO PRESS THROW

Before you start, check that you have a sand-filled ball to prevent bounce-back.



01 Start in the bottom of a squat position, holding the ball directly at your chest.

02 Drive the ground away as you explode up tall—extending your hips and arms, throw the ball straight up.

03 DO NOT CATCH THE BALL.

04 Set back up in starting position and repeat.



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PILLAR BRIDGES

Perform 2-3 sets for 20-40 seconds each

PILLAR BRIDGE WITH ARM LIFT



01 Start in the pillar bridge position – glutes tight, stomach engaged, continuously driving the ground away from you.



02 Separate your feet shoulder-width apart. Keep your forearms under your chest, maintaining even weight on both feet.



03 Slowly reach your arm forward, careful to prevent your torso from rotating.

04 Come back to center and repeat on the opposite side.

PILLAR BRIDGE WITH LEG LIFT



01 Start in the pillar bridge position—glutes tight, stomach engaged, continuously driving the ground away from you.



02 Maintain a straight line from head to heels and even weight on both forearms.



03 Slowly lift your toe, driving your heel to the ceiling. Feel your hip extend and glute activate.

04 Come back to starting position and repeat on the opposite side.

4 SIMPLE STRATEGIES TO MAINTAIN PILLAR STABILITY

01

SIT STRONG

Engage your pillar at your desk by elevating your chest, pulling your shoulder blades down and back, and drawing your stomach up and in.

02

IMPROVE LAPTOP USE

Avoid putting undue strain on your neck and shoulders by using a laptop stand or stacking books under your laptop and using an external keyboard.

03

DOORWAY POSTURE CHECK

Designate a doorway at work you frequently walk through as a posture checkpoint. Think "tall" and feel as if you're balancing a cup of water on your head.

04

PERFECT POSTURE BEHIND THE WHEEL

Don't sacrifice posture during your commute. Sit with your hips equal or slightly higher than your knees and hold the steering wheel 9 and 3 (not 10 and 2).