



Super Short Strength Circuit #4

[designed by Coach Mary-Katherine Fleming]

Instructions: Perform each move for one minute, then transition quickly to the next. A mirror to check your form alignment is very helpful for this circuit.

Move 1: Pistol Squat

Stand on both feet with your legs together and lock your cage: engage your abs, pull your shoulders back and down. Lift your left foot off the floor, and slowly bend your right knee, squatting slightly. Your right knee should track straight (read: not waver inward); glue your left knee to your right one and push against it to keep your right one from caving inward. The depth of the squat does not matter; the alignment of your knee does. Start with 30 seconds of squatting on one leg, then switch legs. Work up to 60 seconds.

Move 2: V-Up

Lie on your back, arms extended overhead on the floor (pits are facing the ceiling), legs straight out. Keeping your legs glued together, raise both legs off the floor together, keeping your lower back on the floor. (If this hurts your back, take a break.)

Version #2: Raise your legs to a 90-degree angle, and lift your arms off the floor to reach towards your toes. Your shoulders will come off the floor, but don't worry about getting maximum clearance. Do not let your back form a "C" shape; your spine should stay straight. Lower your legs and arms simultaneously, then lift them both up again.

Move 3: Superman

Lying on your stomach, glue your legs together again and extend your arms straight out in front of you. Engage your core and lift your feet slightly off the ground; the goal is not to fly, but to strengthen your lower back, so don't lift your legs above shoulder level.

Version #2: Lift your arms off the ground at the same time as you lift your legs.

Version #3: Swim with your arms: extend each arm individually down to each side. Keep your lower body still as you swim; no kicking or wiggling allowed.

Move 4: Single-Leg Deadlift

Same set-up as pistol squat: locked cage, legs together. With a slight behind in your right leg, lift your left leg off the ground, and tip forward from your hips so that your left leg extends behind you and your arms, extended in front of you, reach towards the ground. Hold for two seconds, tip back to straight without letting your left leg touch the floor, and tip back down again. You should feel this in your glutes and hamstrings; if you're not, straighten your back more and decrease the angle of your tip. The goal is not to get parallel to the floor; the goal is to work on balance and glute strength. Start with 30 seconds on each leg and work up to 60.