



HYDRO-FIT[®] IN FOCUS

Balance Training

The Most Essential Physical Skill

Regardless of our age or ability, the most essential physical skill we need to maintain is balance. Balance is the basic skill needed for walking, running and virtually all sports. From tennis to golf to rock climbing, the ability to change our center of gravity to match our movements is necessary for successful performance. The technical term is agility. It enables our joints to handle a full range of motion smoothly and confidently. Agility is what allows us to move gracefully, and greatly reduces our risk of injury.

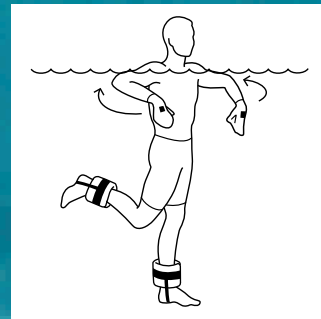
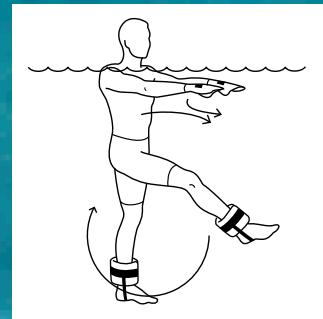
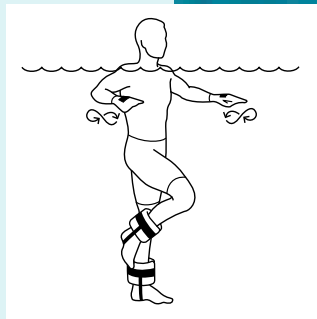
Balance Training in the Water

It is well documented that balance and agility can be learned, challenged and improved through training. On land, where gravity enables stability, it is necessary to use training aids such as foam rollers and stability balls to challenge our balance and train effectively. These products are designed to do one thing—create an unstable working environment. In stark contrast to the land, where gravity supports stability, the water provides an *unstable* working environment. Water's unique physical properties—buoyancy and 360 degree resistance—create instability and resistance to movement, both of which can be used to challenge and improve balance. The two deep-water exercises illustrated below use HYDRO-FIT Cuffs and a progression of single-leg stability exercises designed to challenge balance and agility. Try adding these simple and functional exercises to your deep water workouts and help your students improve their balance for improved function on land.

BICYCLE – Forward – RIGHT Leg / Breaststroke Pull

To begin, establish a vertical body position and dynamic leg action by jogging in place and sculling with the arms.

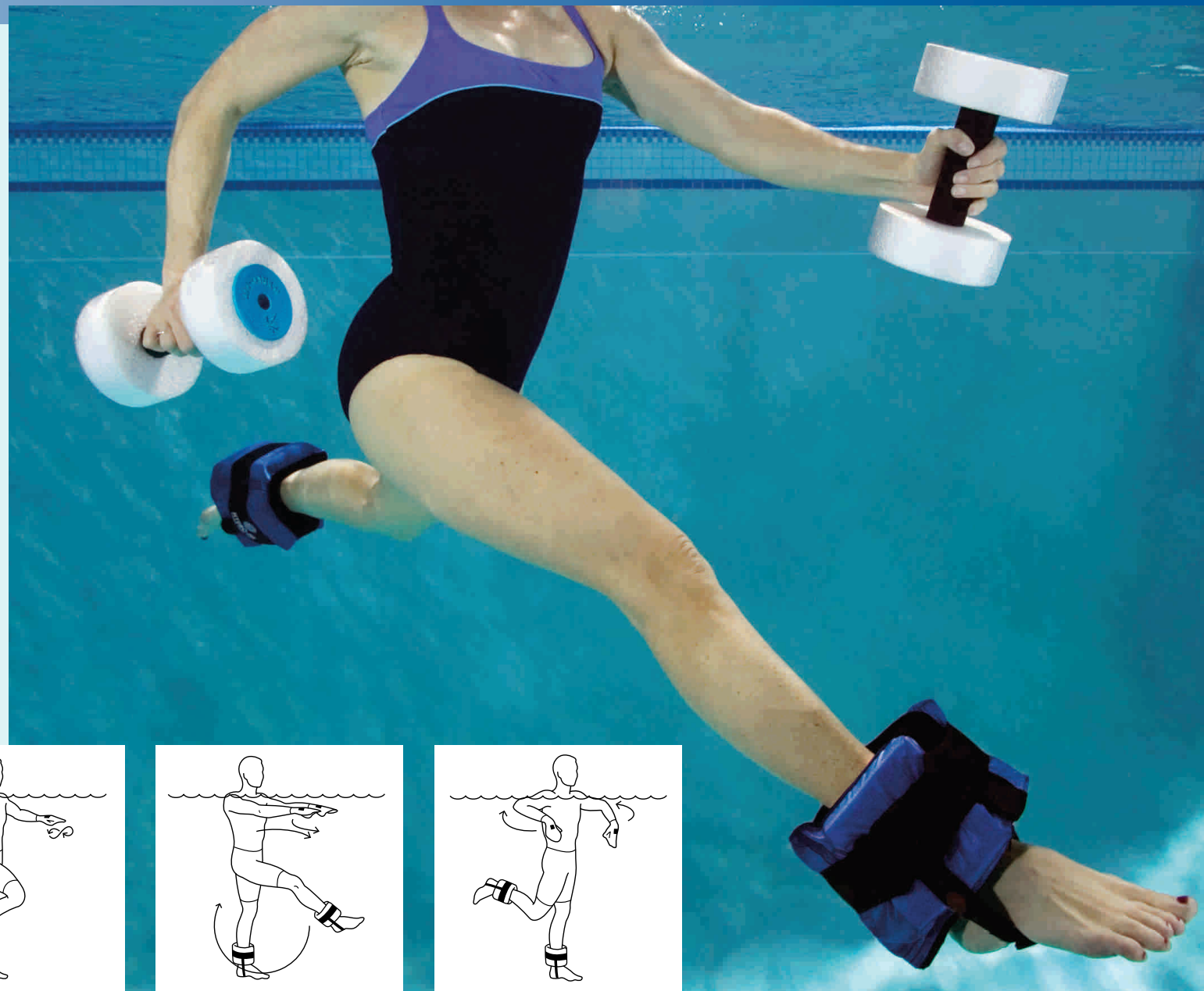
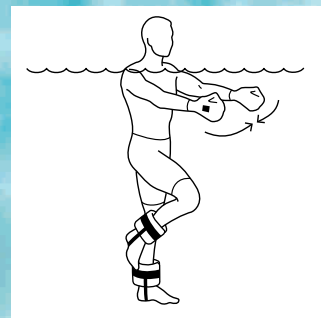
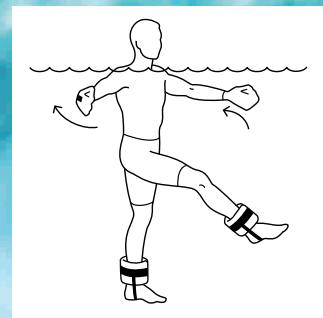
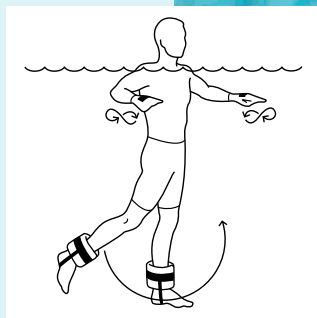
Exercise Action: With your shoulders aligned over your hips and pelvis in neutral, extend your left leg straight down. Bicycle forward with your right leg *only* as you breaststroke pull with your arms to assist your travel forward through the water. Engage your abdominals and lengthen through your spine. Keep your chest open and sternum lifted. Maintain your left leg firm and straight in the vertical position, your hips stable and your pelvis in neutral. After 8–16 repetitions, repeat the coordinated exercise action with your right leg held straight and your left leg bicycling forward.



BICYCLE – Backward – RIGHT Leg / Sweep Front

To begin, establish a vertical body position and dynamic leg action by jogging in place and sculling with the arms.

Exercise Action: With your shoulders aligned over your hips and pelvis in neutral, extend your left leg straight down. Bicycle backward with your right leg only as you extend both arms straight out to your sides and sweep them forward and in front of your chest. Pull your arms directly in toward your chest to recover and repeat the sweeping arm action to assist your travel backward through the water. Engage your abdominals and lengthen through your spine. Make sure your wrists are held in a neutral position with your thumbs facing up. Maintain your left leg firm and straight in the vertical position, your hips stable and your pelvis in neutral. After 8–16 repetitions, repeat the coordinated exercise action with your right leg held straight and your left leg bicycling backward.



“The use of water as an effective training tool requires manipulating buoyancy and resistance to create work and rest. In deep water, exercisers must adjust to buoyancy and learn to maintain balance by using their center of buoyancy (at the lungs) instead of their center of gravity (in the pelvis). Maintaining an upright, vertical and aligned posture is essential to ensure exercise safety and to optimize training benefits.”



— By Craig Stuart, President and Founder, HYDRO-FIT, Inc.

Why Train For Balance?

When we think of losing our balance, we most often think of falling. The consequences of falling, especially for adults 65 and over, are alarming—13,700 deaths, 1.8 million visits to the emergency room, and \$19 billion in medical costs annually result from hip fractures, head trauma, and more. But many of us—particularly under the age of 65—don't necessarily fall when we lose our balance. Instead, we end up with a host of sprains and strains that put a damper on everything from walking to playing sports. Fortunately, balance and agility can be learned, challenged and improved through training.



HYDRO-FIT Easy-Close Cuffs

You asked for it and we've done it—created a more comfortable and easy to fit Cuff. Our new Easy-Close Cuffs feature a Velcro-like fastening system. Easier to put on and adjust than our Classic Cuffs, they provide a wider range of fitting options. Easy-Close Cuffs offer the same level of function and performance as Classic Cuffs.



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