



Build Muscle and Balance with Unilateral Training

The most common form of strength training we do is bilateral—incorporating exercises that use movements for both sides of the body at the same time. By using two limbs simultaneously, we are able to load the body evenly because we are symmetrically balanced. The benefit of bilateral training is we put less stress on the core—allowing our muscles to work safely against higher levels of resistance. While this method is advantageous for intense training at high loads, it is also suitable for beginners because their muscles (both weak and stronger sides) are not yet adapted to working against increased levels of resistance.

In contrast, unilateral training involves moving one limb or side of the body at a time. By loading the body asymmetrically, more of our core muscles are recruited to stabilize our trunk and pelvis. Unilateral training focuses on the specific movements occurring on the weaker side (or limb) of the body. The benefits of unilateral training include balanced strength for both sides of the body, stronger core muscles and improved coordination.

Real Life is Mostly One Sided

Even though the majority of exercises we perform in group exercise are bilateral, the reality is that most activities we do in daily life are unilateral. Examples include: opening a door, throwing a ball or stepping on the brake pedal. How often do we perform these tasks using both our limbs? To help our students develop more functional strength, it is necessary to incorporate unilateral (one sided) exercises into our aquatic strength training routines.

HYDRO-FIT Exercises

Try this progression of four grounded, shallow water exercises using HYDRO-FIT WAVE WEBS® and Mini Cuffs. The first exercise is bilateral—using a powerful sweep front & back to strengthen the chest, shoulders and upper back; the second exercise is unilateral—repeating the exercise action using only the right side of the body; the third and fourth exercises change the focus and engage the core in active rotation.

—By Craig Stuart, HYDRO-FIT Founder and President

Exercise 1 — LUNGE STANCE – RIGHT / Sweep Front & Back

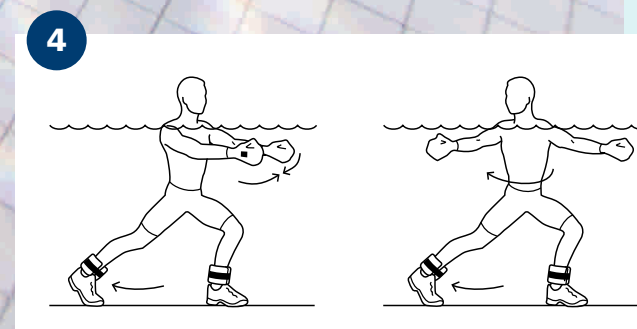
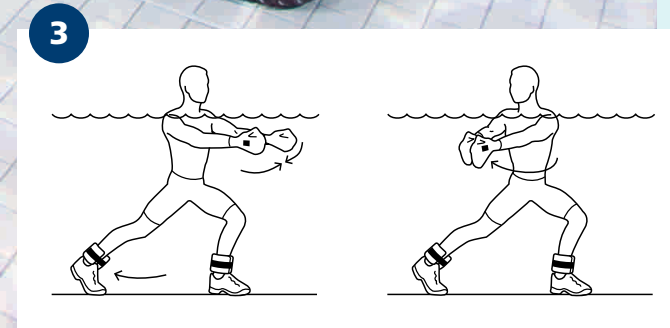
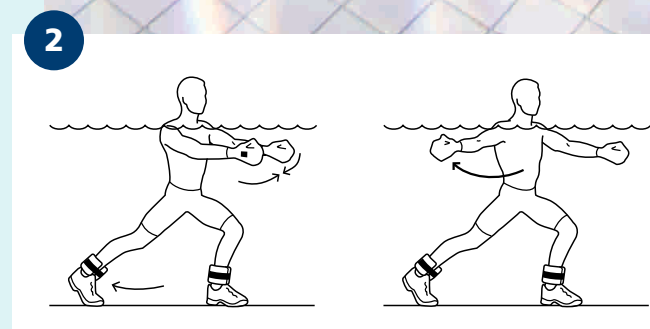
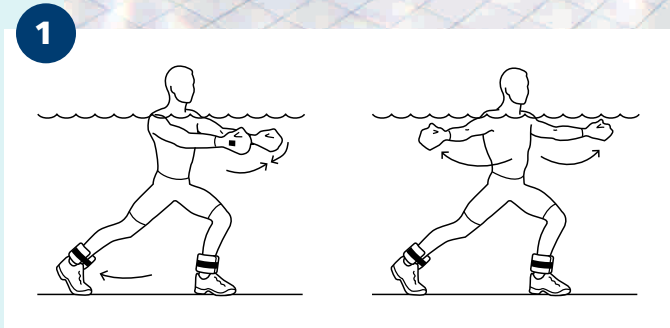
Step your RIGHT leg back into a reverse lung position, submerge your body to neck depth and extend both arms straight in front of your body.

Exercise Action: Look straight ahead and engage your abdominal muscles to stabilize your spine and pelvis as you sweep both arms back and front. Maintain straight arms and a firm and aligned wrist (in neutral). Stay firmly grounded with weight equally distributed through both legs. Complete four repetitions.

Exercise 2 — LUNGE STANCE – RIGHT / Sweep RIGHT

Begin in the same reverse lunge position as Exercise 1.

Exercise Action: Look straight ahead and engage your abdominal muscles to stabilize your spine and pelvis as you sweep your RIGHT arm back and front. Keep your LEFT arm extended straight and held stable in front of your body. Stay firmly grounded with weight equally distributed through both legs. Complete four repetitions.



Web Your Workout

HYDRO-FIT webbed gloves increase the surface area of your hands, giving you the ability to push and pull more water around your body. The more water you move, the more muscles you strengthen and the more endurance you build.

WAVE WEB® PROs are shaped to fit like a second skin and be worn comfortably for an entire workout. Made from a unique material that allows water to pass through the gloves, guarding against injury and joint strain.



WAVE Mitts are opened fingered and slightly firmer than WAVE WEB PROs. WAVE Mitts feature an adjustable closure for greater ease when putting on and taking off.



HYDRO-FIT WET VEST® Mitts are constructed of super-durable poly-propylene and offer heavy-duty resistance. The opened-fingered design cups your hand to capture greater volumes of water.



Exercise 3 — LUNGE STANCE – RIGHT / Rotate & Sweep – RIGHT

Begin in the same reverse lunge position as Exercise 2.

Exercise Action: Lengthen through your spine and engage your abdominal muscles to rotate your ribs and shoulders to the RIGHT. Both your RIGHT and LEFT arms remain extended and follow the rotation action of the shoulders and ribs. Keep your nose in line with your sternum and your sternum in line with your navel. Repeat the trunk rotation action, center to right/right to center, four times.

Exercise 4 — LUNGE STANCE – RIGHT / Rotate & Sweep – RIGHT

Begin in the same reverse lunge position as Exercise 3.

Exercise Action: Lengthen through your spine and engage your abdominal muscles to rotate your ribs and shoulders to the RIGHT. Only your RIGHT arm follows the rotation action of the shoulders and ribs. Your LEFT arm remains extended straight and held stable in front of your body. Keep your nose in line with your sternum and your sternum in line with your navel. Repeat the trunk rotation action, center to right/right to center, four times. REPEAT the entire series, Exercises 1–4, maintaining a LEFT leg reverse lunge position and repeat the exercise actions to the LEFT.

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