

RESISTANCE BAND WORKOUTS

How To Avoid The 3 Big Mistakes
Of Most Home Workouts



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Resistance Band Workouts – How To Avoid The 3 Big Mistakes Of Most Home Workouts by Core Fitness Zone provides guidance and ideas for safe and effective home workouts using Resistance Bands. However, the nature of Resistance Bands means that if not used correctly, they can cause damage and/or injury. When exercising with Resistance Bands, please concentrate fully on each exercise and be in control of the full movement. Never struggle controlling a movement, lower the resistance level if you find control difficult.

If in any doubt, please always consult a qualified medical professional before commencing this or any other fitness program, particularly if you have any medical condition, e.g. pregnancy, high blood pressure etc.

Core Fitness Zone does not accept any liability for any injury, illness or damage caused using Resistance Bands.

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Introduction

Congratulations in taking, what is either your first step, or a further step, towards improving your health and fitness. Everyone has their own unique reasons for starting and maintaining their exercise programme. These include:

- Losing weight
- Looking and feeling good about yourself
- Feeling stronger
- Improving health

Whatever your reason, working out with Resistance bands at home is a very effective, time efficient and economical way of achieving your health, fitness and weight loss goals.

This book is really split into two parts:

1. Firstly, we cover the subject of workouts
 - a. The common mistakes many people make when working out at home
 - b. How to create effective workouts
 - c. Suggested workouts to get you going
2. We then get down to the exercises themselves, which are broken down into four types; leg exercises, pull exercises, push exercises and core exercises.

The exercises described here are by no means exhaustive but if you are new to exercise, they will enable you to put together a varied and balanced workout.

OK, let's move on...

3 Big Mistakes of Most Home Workouts

Working out at home can have a huge positive impact on your health, fitness, confidence and self-esteem. However, to fully reap these benefits, please don't make these mistakes.

1. Muscles are not being challenged
 - Lack of progression occurs when you are not overloading the muscles
2. Unbalanced workouts
 - Random choice of exercises
3. Plateau
 - Repeating the same exercises every time

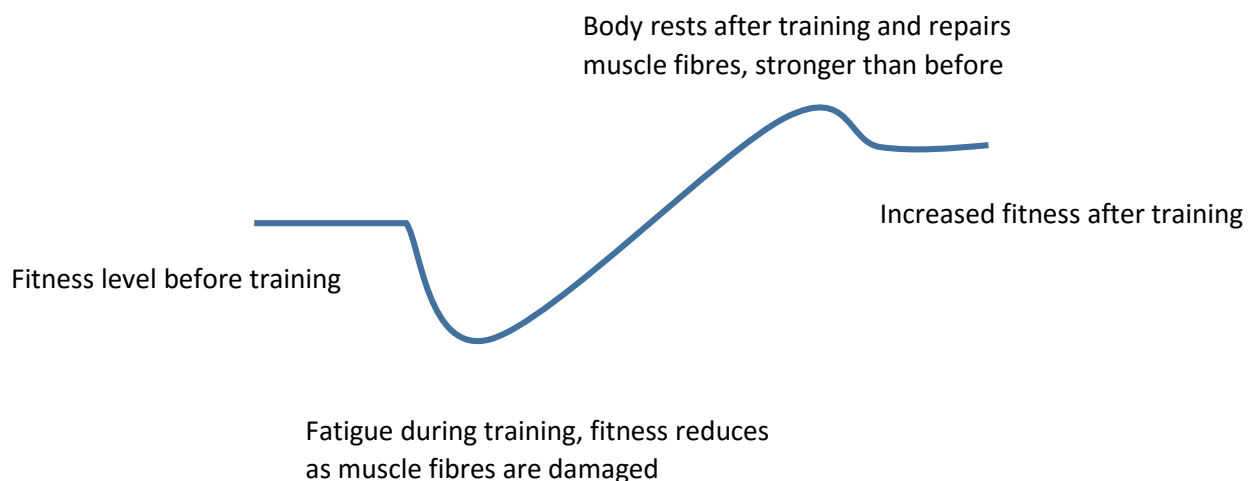
Let's explore these in more depth:

Muscles Are Not Being Challenged

One of the big mistakes of many home workouts is getting into a comfort zone and working with a resistance level that is not challenging the body.

The body is great at adapting to whatever stimulus we give it but it can only do so if the stimulus is greater than it is used to. This means that to become fitter and stronger, we must overload the muscles, by increasing the resistance level, during training.

When we train, we fatigue as we overload the body. At this point, we are damaging our muscle fibres and our fitness is temporarily reduced. After training, when our body is now resting, the body repairs the muscle fibres, making them stronger than before. This is the process of Supercompensation, where our body has adapted to an overload stimulus, making it fitter and stronger than before.



For muscles to adapt and progress, we must allow adequate recovery time. It can take 2-3 days to fully recover from a full-body resistance training workout

Unbalanced Workouts

Too often, a home workout will simply consist of a number of random exercises, which have typically been taken from an instruction leaflet supplied with the exercise equipment. This was certainly my first experience of working out at home!

An unbalanced workout will develop one or two muscle groups at the expense of others. This runs the risk of poor posture and injury, as well as a generally unbalanced look to your body. Therefore, our aim is always to train all major muscle groups equally. The added bonus is that by working all muscle groups, we further increase our metabolism for faster weight loss.

We can easily do this by understanding that exercises can be divided into four groups; Legs, Push, Pull and Core.

- **Leg exercises** are pretty self-explanatory and work the lower body.
- **Pull exercises** are where you pull a resistance toward you, e.g. a row. These typically work the back muscles, as well as the biceps at the front of the upper arm.
- **Push exercises** are the exact opposite to pull exercises, where you are pushing a resistance away from you, e.g. chest press. Push exercises typically work the muscles of the chest and shoulders and the triceps at the back of the upper arm.
- **The core** muscles, as the name implies, support the whole of the body and are the link between all other areas of the body. Strengthening the core prevents a lot of the lower back pain we seem to suffer from these days.

One of the advantages of training with resistance bands is that they naturally work the core muscles. So, if time is short, we can focus our workouts on Leg, Push and Pull exercises, knowing that our core is taken care of.

An effective and balanced full-body workout consisting of 6 exercises would incorporate 2 x Leg exercises, 2 x Pull exercises and 2 x Push exercises.

Plateau

This ties in a little with the first big mistake of not overloading the muscles, where we mentioned that the body is great at adapting to a stimulus. However, if we continue to do the same thing, repeat the same exercises, same number of repetitions and same resistance level, our body becomes too familiar with the stimulus. It no longer adapts to our efforts and we hit a plateau.

We need to periodically change what we are doing and we can do this in several ways:

- Change the exercises in your workout. This gives our body a completely new challenge to adapt to. If you are training twice per week, make changes every 4-6 weeks. If you are training 3 or more times per week, consider changes every 2-4 weeks.

- Change the tempo of the repetitions (speed of the movements) during training. All exercises have a concentric phase and an eccentric phase, e.g. during a chest press, pushing the resistance away from your body is the concentric phase and returning to the starting position is the eccentric phase. A typical tempo for most people would be 2 seconds for each phase. Varying this tempo gives the body a new challenge, e.g. a tempo of 1 second concentric, 3 seconds eccentric.
- Change the number of repetitions and increase the intensity, i.e. resistance level. Example - Shoulder press:
 - one set 12-15 reps Green tube (10-12 lbs)...
 - one set 8-10 reps Black tube (15-20 lbs)...
 - one set 12-15 reps Black tube...
 - one set 8-10 reps Red tube (25-30 lbs) etc.

To summarize, correct these mistakes by:

1. Regularly increasing the resistance level.
2. Ensuring your workouts are balanced.
3. Changing your workouts periodically.

How to Create Simple and Effective Workouts

Your workout plan should be designed to take you on a journey from where you are now to where you want to be, with each workout being a small step on the way. The workouts need to be balanced and your role in this is to carry them out consistently in order for you to reach your goal.

Exercise order

We've already talked about having a balanced workout, e.g. 2 x Leg exercises, 2 x Pull exercises and 2 x Push exercises. We now have a few choices over the order we do them in.

Sequential

This is when the exercises are performed in sequence, i.e. Legs, Pull, Push, Legs, Pull, Push. This is good for beginners, giving sufficient recovery time for each muscle group.

Grouped

A grouped workout would mean carrying out all exercises for one muscle group before moving onto the next muscle group, i.e. Legs, Legs, Pull, Pull, Push, Push. This takes a little longer to complete as working the same muscle groups back to back would require a little more recovery time. However, it is a more intense workout.

Upper body / Lower body alternation

Alternating between upper and lower body exercises works the legs more, while allowing sufficient rest for the upper body, i.e. Pull, Legs, Push, Legs, Pull, Legs, Push. As the legs have the biggest muscles in the body, this is a good format if you are looking to lose weight.

Split

Split programmes focus on specific areas of the body during each workout, rather than the full-body approach and allows us to increase the training volume throughout the week, e.g.

Upper body / Lower body split

This is where one workout focuses on upper body exercises, followed by a legs only workout, e.g.

- Day 1 - Upper body (Pull and Push)
- Day 2 – Lower body (Legs)
- Day 3 – Upper body (Pull and Push)
- Day 4 – Lower body (Legs)

This works the legs 50% of the time but gives a 48 hour recovery period.

Legs and Back (Pull) / Chest and Shoulders (both Push)

Pull exercises are essentially working the muscles of the back. Push exercises combine both chest and shoulder exercises, which we can further split into separate entities, e.g.

- Day 1 – Legs and Back (Pull)
- Day 2 – Chest and Shoulders (both Push)
- Day 3 – Legs and Back (Pull)
- Day 4 – Chest and Shoulders (both Push)

This approach focuses more on the upper body than the lower body and again allows a 48 hour recovery period.

How Many Repetitions?

The principle of overload is far more important than the number of reps (repetitions) that we do. As we discussed earlier, overload provides the stimulus for our muscles to adapt. Put another way, it is more important to get to fatigue (when technique falters) than to stop at a pre-defined number of reps.

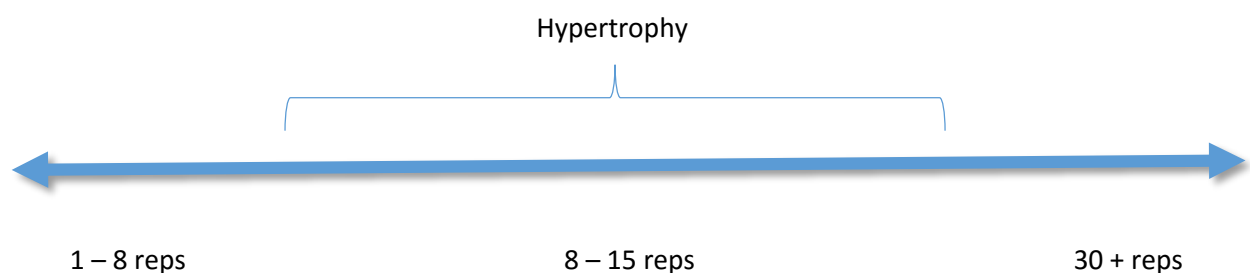
As an example, have a target range of 12 – 15 reps rather than 12 reps. If you can do 15 reps, great, but if you 'only' achieve 13, you have still got to the point of overload, which you wouldn't have by only setting out to do 12.

Rep Range

You may well have heard of phrases such as high weight/low reps or low weight/high reps. These two opposite approaches will obviously produce two different results. The former increases strength while the latter develops endurance.

Linking these two together is hypertrophy, which leads to the biggest gains in muscle size. There is not a cut-off point where one phase stops and is replaced by the next phase, it is more of a continuation. However, the following rep ranges can be used as a good guide:

- Strength: 4 – 8 reps
- Hypertrophy: 8 – 15 reps
- Endurance: 30 + reps



If your goal is to generally improve your health and fitness and/or lose weight, then work within the hypertrophy rep range. If your aim is to increase strength, then work with greater resistance up to 8 reps. If you are an endurance athlete, then 30+ reps is your aim.

If exercising is new to you, particularly if you are using Resistance Bands for the first time, you are learning a new skill. This means you need to master the movements of the exercises and the equipment itself. Therefore, if working in the hypertrophy range, start with 12 – 15 reps and as your skill level increases, increase the load and reduce the reps. A good way to progress would be:

12 – 15 reps - Resistance level 6 lbs

10 – 12 reps – Resistance level 12 lbs

8 – 10 reps – Resistance level 20 lbs

12 – 15 reps - Resistance level 20 lbs

10 – 12 reps – Resistance level 30 lbs

And continue....

Increasing the resistance level with Resistance Bands is easy.

Resistance Bands are stackable, meaning you can attach more than one band to the handles. Once you can handle the heaviest band (Red) for a particular exercise, further progressions could be:

- Red and Yellow
- Red and Blue
- Red and Green
- Red and Black
- Red, Black and Yellow etc.

How Many Sets?

There is really no right or wrong number of sets we should do. We all lead busy lives and the last thing we want is exercise sessions dragging on for too long. With that in mind, we suggest 1 -2 sets of each exercise for efficient and effective results.

With one set, you can increase intensity and they are time efficient. But you only have one chance to overload your muscles.

Two (or more) sets help improve technique and develop the skills for the movement of the exercise, because you are repeating the movements more often.

We generally keep to two sets in our sessions for the reasons mentioned above, i.e. to benefit from the principle of overload and improve technique. If time is short, then do one set, really focusing on technique and overload. If you have the time and enjoy training, there is nothing wrong in doing 3 or 4 sets per exercise. For most people though, we would recommend two sets.

What resistance level?

As mentioned several times already, the principle of overload should be our number one consideration. Therefore, having decided upon our fitness goals we want to work with a resistance level where we 'fail' within the appropriate rep range, e.g. if our goal is hypertrophy, we would start at a range of 12 – 15 reps. Remember that our definition of 'failure' is when good form and technique falters.

How Much Rest?

A further thought in this section is how much rest should you have between sets?

Again, there is no right or wrong answer. Our suggestions would be:

- Strength training – 2 – 5 minutes
- Hypertrophy training- 1 minute
- Endurance training – 30 – 60 seconds

And finally, a word about exercises themselves

You are probably familiar with many common resistance exercises, e.g. squats, chest press, bicep curls, triceps extension etc. However, these fall into two categories; compound exercises and isolation exercises.

Isolation exercises only work one muscle group at a time as the movement is across one joint only. Bicep curls, triceps extensions and hamstring curls are all examples of isolation exercises. This means, if we want to do a whole body workout in each session, it will take a long time to work all our muscle groups.

Compound exercises are much more time-efficient. They work two or more joints during the exercise, working a number of muscle groups. Squats, lunges, chest press and low rows are all examples of compound exercises.

When considering the pull and push exercises mentioned earlier, pull exercises work the triceps as well as the back muscle groups, while push exercises work the biceps as well as the chest and shoulder muscle groups. So if your whole body workout comprises of compound exercises, providing the upper body exercises work the biceps and triceps equally, you have a well balanced workout.

Compound exercises also engage the smaller stabilising muscles, making them safer to use.

Isolation exercises can be added at the end of a session to give a little more variety, e.g. calf raises, bicep curls and triceps extension. However, they would most typically be used in Split programs, e.g.

- Day 1 – Shoulders
- Day 2 – Legs
- Day 3 – Chest
- Day 4 – Back
- Day 5 – Core
- Day 6 - Arms

This allows you to train most days each week and give sufficient recovery time for adaptation of each muscle group to take place following overload.

Isolation exercises can also be used by athletes to strengthen specific muscle groups for their sport. My sport is open water swimming and so I do both internal shoulder rotation and external shoulder rotation exercises to strengthen my rotator cuff muscles.

Suggested Workouts to Get You Going

Having given you some ideas about how to put together your own workouts, here are some 'ready made' workouts to get you going.

Sequential and Grouped

Sequential 1		Grouped 1	
Legs	Squats	Legs	Squats
Pull	Lat pull down	Legs	Lunges
Push	Chest press	Pull	Lat pull down
Legs	Lunges	Pull	Low row
Pull	Low row	Push	Chest press
Push	Shoulder press	Push	Shoulder press

Sequential 2		Grouped 2	
Legs	Squats	Legs	Squats
Pull	Horizontal row	Legs	Lunges
Push	Press ups	Pull	Horizontal row
Legs	Lunges	Pull	Upright row
Pull	Upright row	Push	Press ups
Push	SA Shoulder press	Push	SA Shoulder press

All of these workouts are balanced, using compound exercises, working each muscle group equally.

If you want to include some core exercises and/or additional isolation exercises, do these after the compound exercises, e.g.

Sequential 1		Grouped 1	
Legs	Squats	Legs	Squats
Pull	Lat pull down	Legs	Lunges
Push	Chest press	Pull	Lat pull down
Legs	Lunges	Pull	Low row
Pull	Low row	Push	Chest press
Push	Shoulder press	Push	Shoulder press
Core	Bicycle crunch	Core	Abdominal crunch
Core	Lateral bends	Core	Torso rotation

Sequential 2		Grouped 2	
Legs	Squats	Legs	Squats
Pull	Horizontal row	Legs	Lunges
Push	Press ups	Pull	Horizontal row
Legs	Lunges	Pull	Upright row
Pull	Upright row	Push	Press ups
Push	SA Shoulder press	Push	SA Shoulder press
Isolation	Bicep curls	Isolation	Reverse bicep curls
Isolation	Triceps push-down	Isolation	Triceps kick-back

Upper body / Lower body alternation

Upper body / Lower body alternation 1		Upper body / Lower body alternation 2	
Pull	Lat pull down	Pull	Horizontal row
Legs	Squats	Legs	Lunges
Push	Chest press	Push	Incline chest press
Legs	Lunges	Legs	Squats
Pull	Low row	Pull	Upright row
Legs	Lateral lunges	Legs	Lateral lunges
Push	Shoulder press	Push	SA Shoulder press

Upper body / Lower body split

Day 1		Day 2	
Pull	Lat pull down	Legs	Squats
Push	Chest press	Legs	Calf raises
Pull	Bent over row	Legs	Hamstring curl
Push	SA Shoulder press	Legs	Lunges
Pull	Horizontal row	Legs	Hip Adduction
Push	Incline chest press	Legs	Hip Abduction

Day 3		Day 4	
Pull	Low row	Legs	Lateral lunges
Push	Press ups	Legs	Hip Abduction
Pull	Incline row	Legs	Hip Adduction
Push	SA Chest press	Legs	Squats
Pull	Reverse fly	Legs	Calf raises
Push	Shoulder press	Legs	Hip extension

Legs and Back (Pull) / Chest and Shoulders (both Push)

Day 1		Day 2	
Legs	Squats	Chest	Chest press
Pull	Horizontal row	Shoulders	SA Shoulder press
Legs	Lunges	Chest	Chest fly
Pull	Bent over row	Shoulders	Anterior raise
Legs	Calf raises	Chest	Incline chest press
Pull	Upright row	Shoulders	Internal shoulder rotation

Day 3		Day 4	
Legs	Lateral lunges	Chest	Press ups
Pull	Low row	Shoulders	Shoulder press
Legs	Squats	Chest	SA Chest press
Pull	Lat pull down	Shoulders	Lateral raise
Legs	Lunges	Chest	Incline chest press
Pull	Reverse fly	Shoulders	External shoulder rotation

Using Your Resistance Bands

Resistance Bands are a simple and effective way of exercising. They are very versatile, you can exercise every part of the body with them and they take up very little space at home. There is also no reason to disrupt your routine when travelling, either on holiday or business, as they can easily be packed into a bag or suitcase.

However, Resistance Bands must be treated with respect. If you remember messing about with elastic bands as a child, you'll know that if misused, they can inflict a nasty sting when they snap back on you. Resistance Bands are a much more powerful version of an elastic band with far more painful consequences.

So always be aware of the potential dangers, always fully concentrate on the exercise when using them and be in complete control throughout the movement.

If you are new exercising with resistance Bands, the following is a guide to using the attachments.

Handles



Each Resistance Band has a metal carabiner at each end. To attach the handles (or ankle/foot cuffs), simply clip the metal ring of the handle into the carabiner.

Ensure the clip has closed fully before using



Resistance Bands are 'stackable,' which means more than one band can be attached to the handles. This creates an almost limitless combination of resistance levels, enabling you to continually increase the resistance as your strength and fitness increases.

Anchor Attachment

The Anchor Attachment allows you to perform Pull exercises using Resistance Bands at home.



- Pass the Resistance Band through the loop of the Anchor Attachment
- Open the door and place the attachment so that the 'sewn in ball' end is on the other side of the door
- Close the door, trapping the 'sewn in ball' on the other side with the flat webbing between the door and door frame



- Pull on the Resistance Band before starting the exercise to ensure it is located securely
- Ensure that the door is solid and there is no risk of it opening onto you as you are performing an exercise. Wherever possible, use the side of the door that closes onto the door frame. If this is not possible, make sure the door shuts securely. In the photos, we have used a front door where the locking mechanism is very secure

Ankle Cuff



- With the Resistance Band attached to the metal ring of the Ankle Cuff, place the cuff around your ankle
- Bring together both sides of the Velcro and fully secure



- Make sure the cuff is comfortable around your ankle

Foot Cuff



- With the Resistance Band attached to the metal ring of the Foot Cuff, place the cuff around your foot
- Bring together both sides of the Velcro and fully secure



- Make sure the cuff is comfortable around your foot

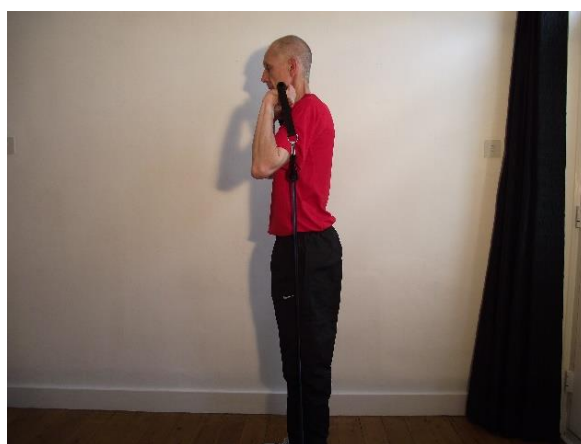
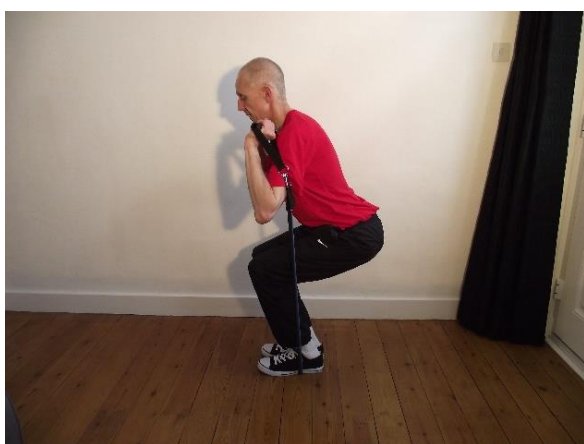
The Exercises

This section describes how to safely perform 42 exercises. We've firstly separated them into Legs, Pull, Push and Core exercises. Within the Legs, Pull and Push sections, we've further split these into Compound exercises and Isolation exercises.

Leg Exercises - Compound

Squats

(Quadriceps, Hamstrings, Gluteals, Hip Flexors and Lower Back)



- With feet shoulder width apart and toes forward, place the Resistance Band under both feet
- Holding the handles loosely by your side, squat down, create tension in the bands by raising your hands to your shoulders with palms facing upwards and elbows pointing down
- Ensure knees do not extend beyond your toes
- Keep back straight, engage core muscles and push up through your heels until your legs are straight. DO NOT lock out the knees.
- Bend at the hips and lower body back to starting position

Lunges

(Quadriceps, Gluteals, Hip Flexors)



- Place Resistance Band under one foot, holding handles loosely by your side
- Step back with other foot and create tension in the bands by raising your hands to your shoulders with palms facing upwards and elbows pointing down
- Lower body so that both knees are bent at approximately 90 degrees
- Push up through front heel while balancing on rear toes, then return to starting position
- Complete set and change legs

Lateral lunges

(Quadriceps, Gluteals, Adductors, Hip Flexors)



- Place Resistance Band under one foot, holding handles loosely by your side
- Take other foot out sideways.
- Lower body to bend the knee over the Resistance Band and create tension in the bands by raising your hands to your shoulders with palms facing upwards and elbows pointing down
- The leg out to the side should be straight
- Push up through heel to upright position, then return to starting position
- Complete set and change legs

Leg Exercises - Isolation

Calf raises

(Calves)



- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands in the lower half of the door
- With back to the door, hold the handles at shoulder height
- Lean forward, ensuring the bands are under tension
- Keep back straight, engage core muscles and raise heels off the floor and up onto your toes
- Control the movement and return to start position

Hamstring curl

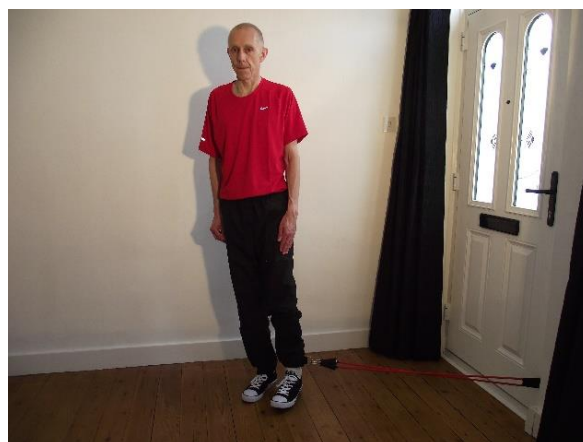
(Hamstrings)



- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the bottom of the door
- Attach both ends of the Resistance Band to the ankle cuff
- Attach the ankle cuff to one ankle
- Lying face down, raise lower leg to create tension in the band
- Bend at the knee and curl lower leg towards buttocks
- Return to starting position
- Complete set and change legs

Hip Adduction

(Adductors)



- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the bottom of the door
- Attach both ends of the Resistance Band to the ankle cuff
- Standing side-on to the door, attach the ankle cuff to the ankle closest to the door
- Stand with feet apart, with tension in the band
- Move foot with band attached slowly towards standing leg and return to starting position
- You may want to hold onto something to maintain balance
- Complete set and change legs

Hip Abduction

(Abductors)



- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the bottom of the door
- Attach both ends of the Resistance Band to the ankle cuff
- Standing side-on to the door, attach the ankle cuff to the ankle furthest from the door
- Stand with feet apart, with tension in the band
- Move foot with band attached slowly away from standing leg and return to starting position
- You may want to hold onto something to maintain balance
- Complete set and change legs

Hip extension (Gluteals)



- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the bottom of the door
- Attach both ends of the Resistance Band to the ankle cuff
- Attach the ankle cuff to one ankle and stand facing the door
- Stand far enough from the door to create tension in the band
- Initiating the movement from the hip, move foot with band attached slowly backwards and then return to starting position
- You may want to hold onto something to maintain balance
- Complete set and change legs

Pull Exercises - Compound

Low row

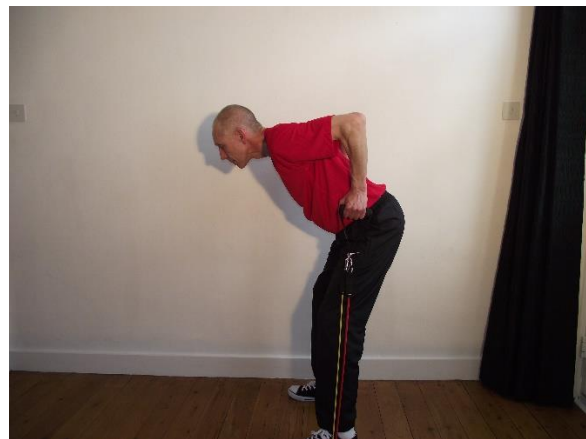
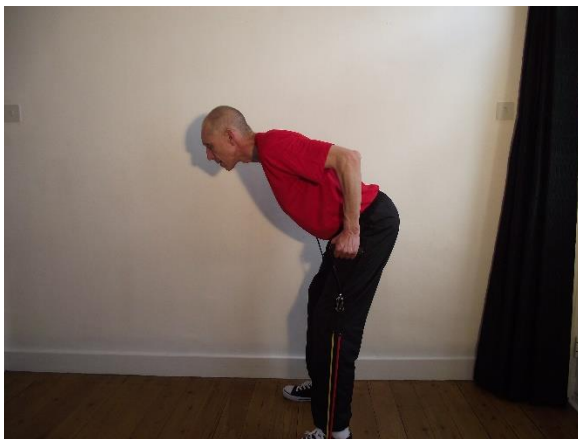
(Back and biceps)



- Use anchor attachment and position in door at around chest height
- Facing door, hold handles with palms facing each other at chest height
- Step back to create tension in the band with arms stretched forward
- Lean back slightly and keep back straight
- Pull back as far as possible so elbows extend behind you, squeezing shoulder blades together
- Return to start position

Bent over row

(Back and biceps)



- Stand with both feet on Resistance Band
- Bend at knees and hips
- Keep back straight, leaning forward
- Pull handles of Resistance Band towards chest and elbows extend behind you
- Squeeze shoulder blades together
- Return to start position

Horizontal row

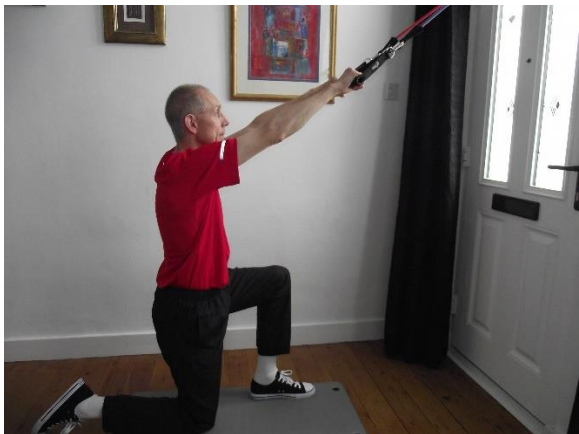
(Back and biceps)



- Use anchor attachment and position in door at around chest height
- Facing door, hold handles with palms facing down at chest height
- Step back to create tension in the band with arms stretched forward
- Lean back slightly and keep back straight
- Pull back as far as possible so elbows extend behind you, squeezing shoulder blades together
- Return to start position

Incline row

Back and biceps)



- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the top of the door
- Kneeling on one knee, hold handles so that, when under tension, both arms and bands are at an angle of 45 degrees
- Keep back straight and vertical
- Pull down and back as far as possible, keeping everything at a 45 degree angle, squeezing shoulder blades together
- Return to start position

Lat pull down

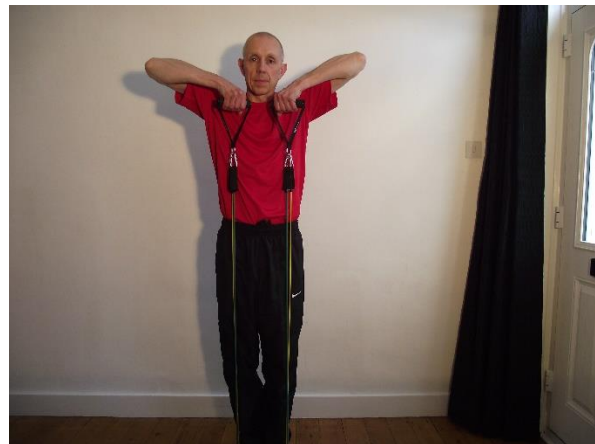
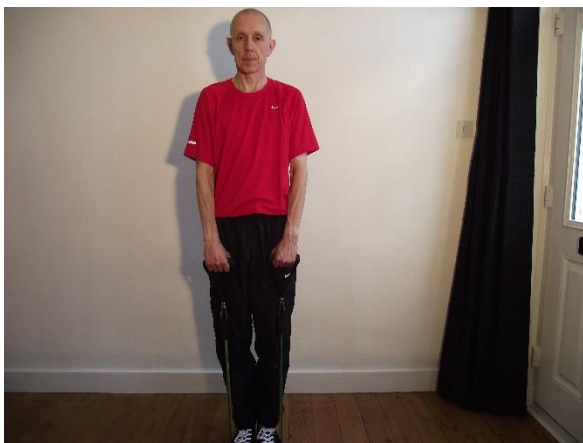
(Back and biceps)



- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the top of the door
- Kneel on one knee, lean forward and extend arms above head, palms facing down
- Pull handles as far as possible by the side of the head, with elbows out
- Return to start position

Upright row

(Back and biceps)

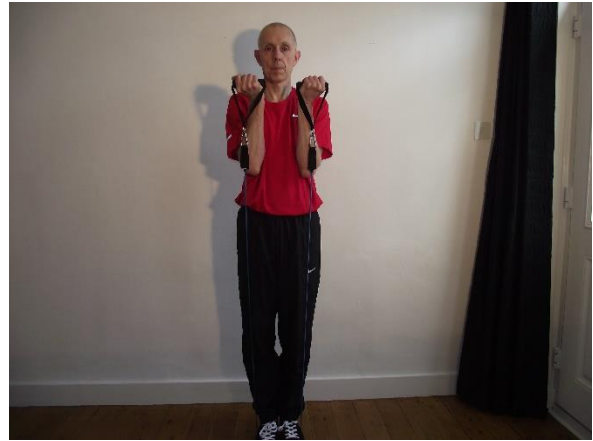
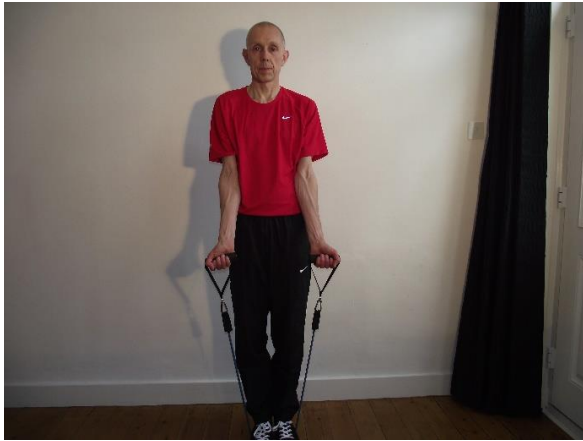


- Stand with both feet on Resistance Band, hands down by your thighs
- Keep a straight back and engage core muscles
- Pull hands up to chin with elbows pointing out
- Return to start position

Pull Exercises - Isolation

Bicep Curls

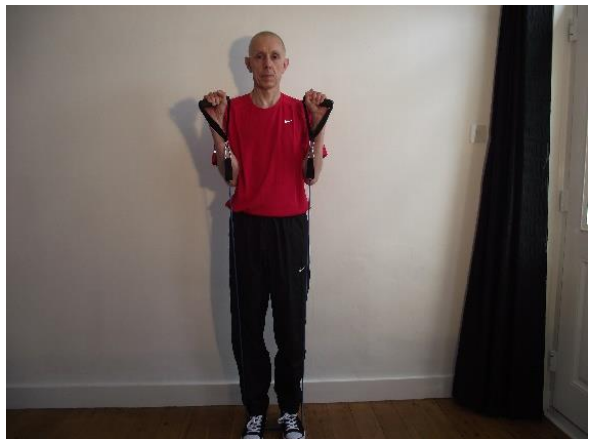
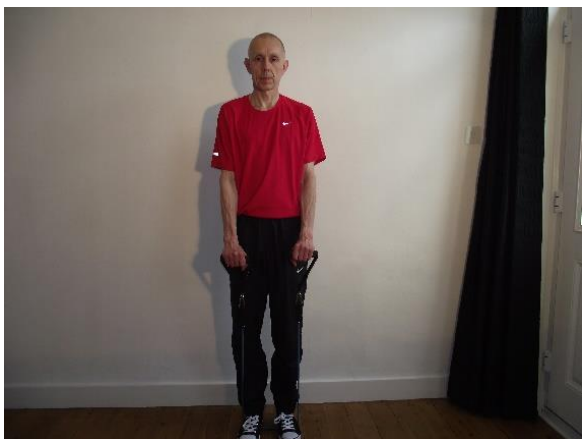
(Arms)



- Although not strictly a 'Pull' exercise, we've included bicep curls here as all 'Pull' compound exercises work the biceps.
- Stand with both feet on Resistance Band
- Bend knees slightly and engage core muscles to protect your lower back
- With hands down by your side and palms facing forwards, bend at the elbows to raise forearms
- Reverse the move back to starting position
- Either curl your arms together or alternately

Reverse Bicep Curls

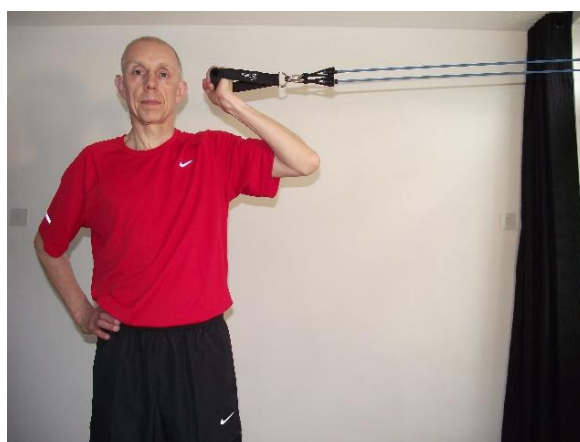
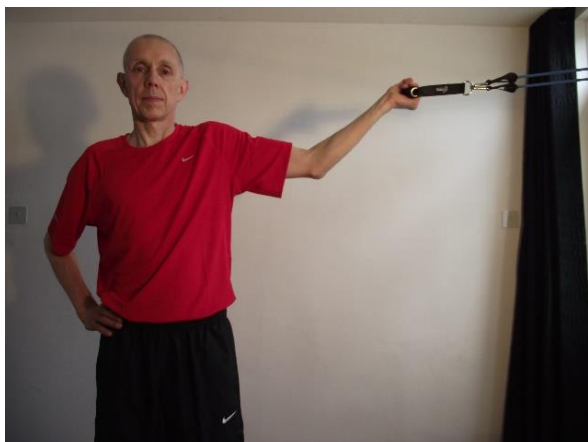
(Arms)



- Reverse bicep curls are great for strengthening the wrist
- The only difference to the biceps curl exercise is that the hands are in front of your thighs and palms facing backwards
- Bend at the elbows to raise forearms. Reverse the move back to starting position

High Bicep Curls

(Arms)



- Use anchor attachment and position in door at around shoulder height
- Attach both ends of resistance band to one handle
- From a 'side-on' position, hold handle at head height
- Bend at the elbow bringing hand towards head
- Return to start position

Reverse fly

(Back)



- Use anchor attachment and position in door at around chest height
- Facing door, hold handles with palms facing each other at chest height
- Step back to create tension in the band with arms stretched forward
- Lean back slightly and keep back straight
- Keeping arms straight (without locking elbows), pull handles out wide and back, in-line with shoulders.
- Squeeze shoulder blades together as you perform the movement
- Return to start position, keeping in control of the movement

Bent over reverse fly

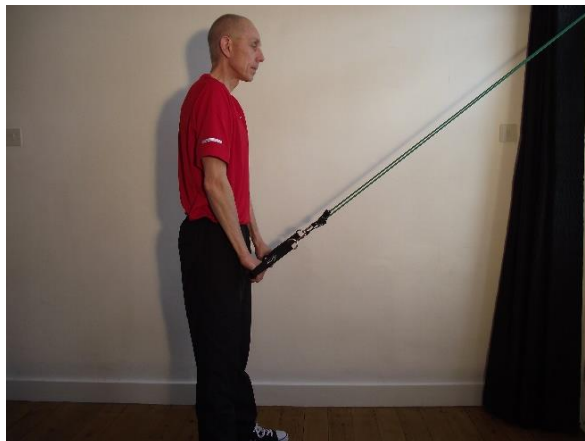
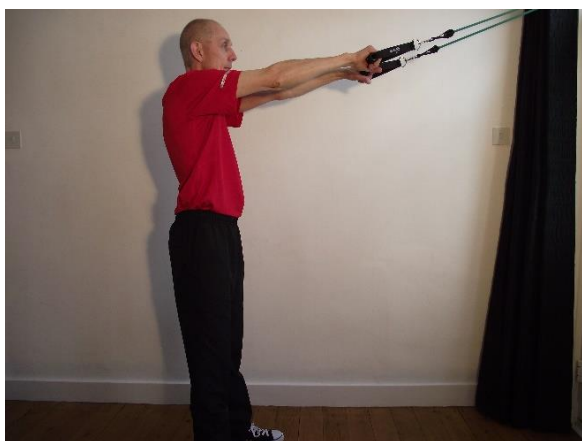
(Back)



- Stand with both feet on Resistance Band
- Bend at knees and hips
- Keep back straight, leaning forward
- Keeping arms straight (without locking elbows), pull handles out wide and back, in-line with shoulders.
- Squeeze shoulder blades together as you perform the movement
- Return to start position, keeping in control of the movement

Shoulder extension

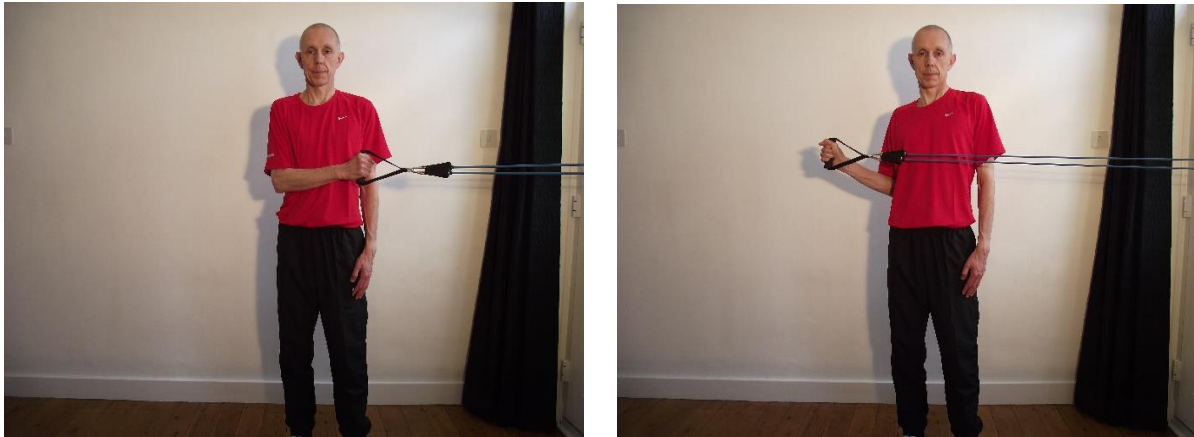
(Shoulder)



- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the top of the door
- Facing door, hold handles with palms facing down with arms stretched upwards, in line with the Resistance Bands
- Step back to create tension in the bands
- Lean back slightly and keep back straight
- Keeping arms straight (without locking elbows), pull down and back to your thighs
- Return to start position

External shoulder rotation

(Shoulder)

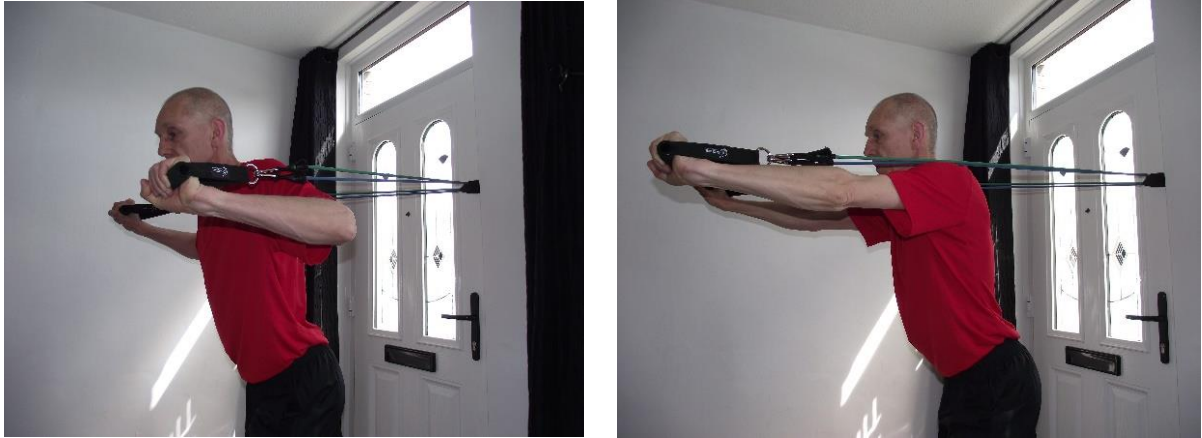


- Use anchor attachment and position in door around waist height
- Attach both ends of resistance band to one handle
- From a 'side-on' position, hold the handle with the hand furthest from the door
- With the elbow bent at 90 degrees, the starting position is with the forearm across the body
- The movement takes the hand outwards and away from the body as far as you can rotate it
- Keep the elbow as close to the body as possible
- Return to start position, complete the number of reps for the set and repeat with other arm

Push Exercises - Compound

Chest Press

(Chest and triceps)



- Use anchor attachment and position in door at shoulder height
- Hold handles with palms facing down at shoulder height
- Lean forward slightly and step forward to create tension in the band
- Place one foot in front of the other for stability
- Push arms forward, bringing hands together
- Bring hands back to form 90 deg. angle at elbows

Single Arm Chest Press

(Chest and triceps)



This very similar to the Chest Press exercise except you press forward with one arm only at a time. This takes longer to complete but works the core stabilising muscles more intensely.

- Use anchor attachment and position in door at shoulder height
- Hold handles with palms facing down at shoulder height
- Lean forward slightly and step forward to create tension in the band
- Place one foot in front of the other for stability
- Push one arm forward
- Bring hand back to form 90 deg. angle at elbows
- You can either alternate between left and right arms or complete one set with your right and then one set with your left.

Incline Chest Press

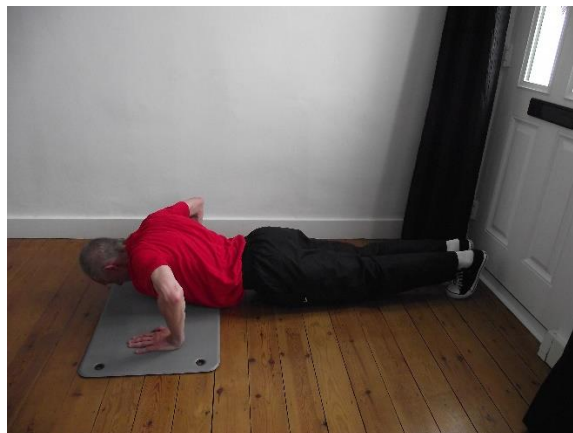
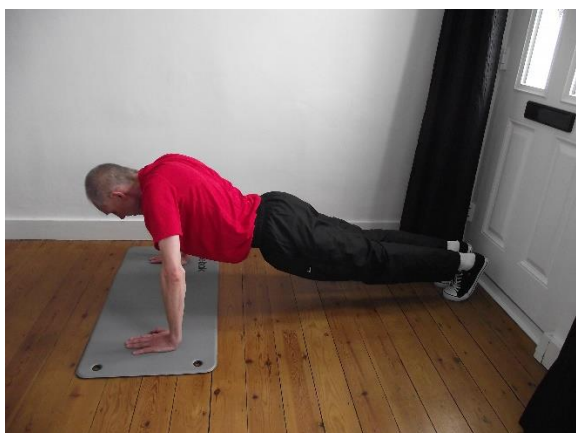
(Chest and triceps)



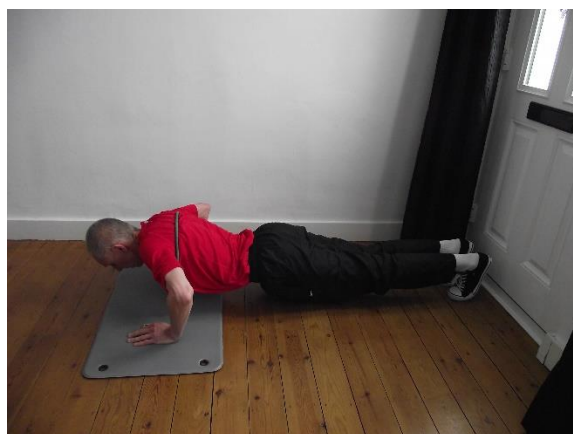
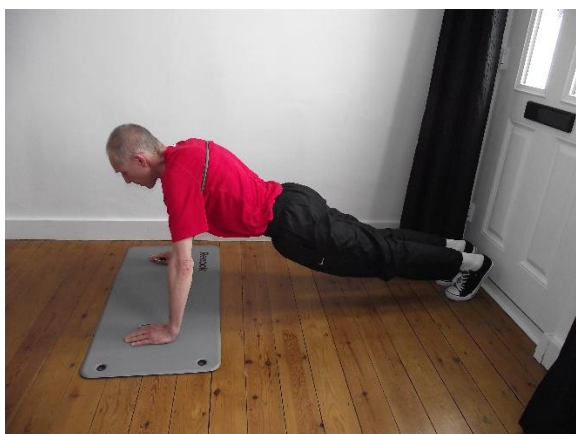
- Use anchor attachment and position in door at hip height
- Starting position is with elbows down, arms at 45 degrees and hands at shoulder height
- Lean forward slightly and place one foot in front of the other for stability
- Push arms forward and up, at an angle of 45 degrees
- Return hands to starting position

Press Ups

(Chest and triceps)



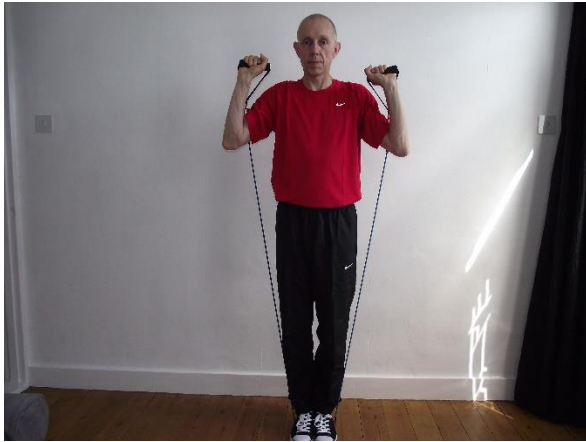
- OK, we admit you don't need Resistance Bands to do press ups. However, we like to add in some body weight exercises because they increase the variety in our workouts.
- Having said that, Resistance Bands can be used to increase the resistance of a standard press up.



- Wrap the band around your back, under your armpits
- Get onto the press up position, placing the palms of hands over each end of the band, Hands should be shoulder width apart.
- Keeping head, torso, hips and legs in one straight line, lower your body in a controlled manor
- Return to start position, again controlling the movement
- You may have to adjust the position of the band if it 'rolls' down you back (that'll make more sense if it happens to you!)

Shoulder press

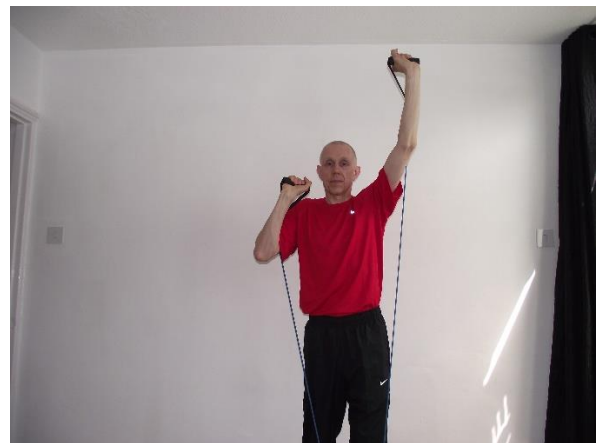
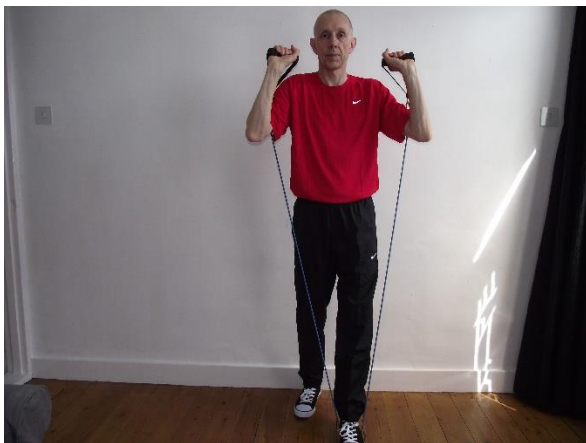
(Shoulders and triceps)



- Stand with both feet on Resistance Band
- Bring hands above shoulder level, palms facing forward
- Push straight up to perform shoulder press
- Ensure elbows remain slightly bent when arms extended
- Lower hands to starting position and repeat

Single Arm Shoulder Press

(Shoulders and triceps)



- As with the Chest Press and Single Arm Chest Press, the Single Arm Shoulder Press works the core stabilising muscles more intensely than the Shoulder Press.
- Stand with one foot in front of the other, with the band under the front foot
- Bring hands above shoulder level, palms facing forward
- Push straight up with one arm to perform shoulder press
- Ensure elbow remain slightly bent when arms extended
- Lower the hand to the starting position
- Either complete the set with the same arm before changing to the other arm, or alternate between left and right arms

Push Exercises - Isolation

Overhead Triceps Extensions

(Arms)



- In the same way that bicep curls are not strictly a 'Pull' exercise, triceps extensions are not strictly a 'Push' exercise. But following the same logic, we've included triceps extensions here because all 'Push' compound exercises work the triceps.
- Use anchor attachment and position in door at shoulder height
- With your back to the door, hold the handles with hands above your head, elbows bent at 90 degrees and palms facing forward
- Push handles forward, straightening your arms so they are at shoulder height.
- Avoid locking elbows
- Return to start position with controlled movement

Triceps kick-back

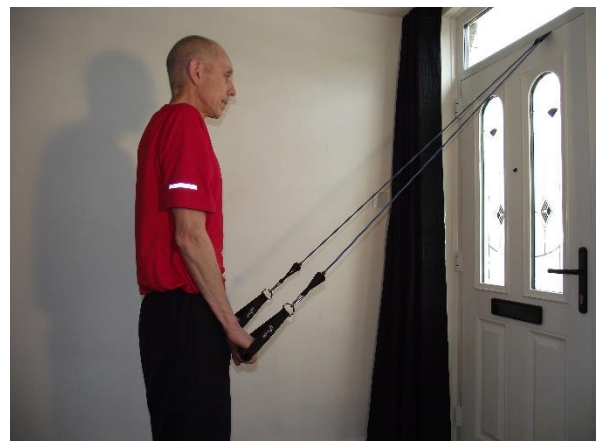
(Arms)



- Use anchor attachment and position in door at shoulder height
- Face door and hold one end of band in each hand. This can be either with or without handles attached, whichever is more comfortable
- Lean torso forward approximately 45 degrees with both arms bent at elbows, hands level with chest
- Take one hand back, to straighten the arm
- Either complete the set with the same arm before changing to the other arm, or alternate between left and right arms

Triceps Push Downs

(Arms)



- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the top of the door
- Facing door, hold handles with palms facing down and elbows bent at approximately 90 degrees
- Step back to create tension in the bands
- Keeping upper arm by the side of your torso, push handles down towards thighs, straightening the arms but not locking the elbows. Return to starting position

Reverse Triceps Push Downs

(Arms)



- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the top of the door
- Facing door, hold handles with palms facing upwards and elbows bent at approximately 90 degrees
- Step back to create tension in the bands
- Keeping upper arm by the side of your torso, push handles down towards thighs, straightening the arms but not locking the elbows
- Return to starting position and repeat
- This reverse version of triceps push downs works the medial head of the triceps more, meaning you should use a lower resistance level

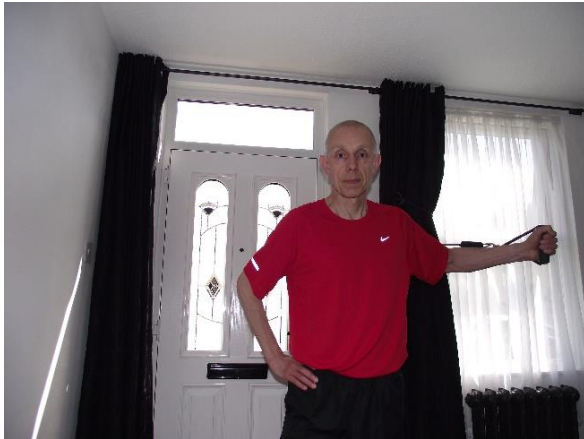
Chest Fly (Chest)



- Use door anchor or loop Resistance Band around a sturdy post (or similar) at shoulder height
- Hold handles with palms facing forward at shoulder height
- Arms are out to the side almost straight (keep elbows just slightly bent)
- Step forward to create tension in the band, with one foot in front of the other for stability
- Bring arms forward, keeping the arms almost straight, so that hands meet in front of your body
- Take hands back to starting position, slowly and in control of movement
- **BE AWARE:** Never perform with heavy resistance. Too much load risks tearing the pectoral muscles

Single Arm Chest Fly

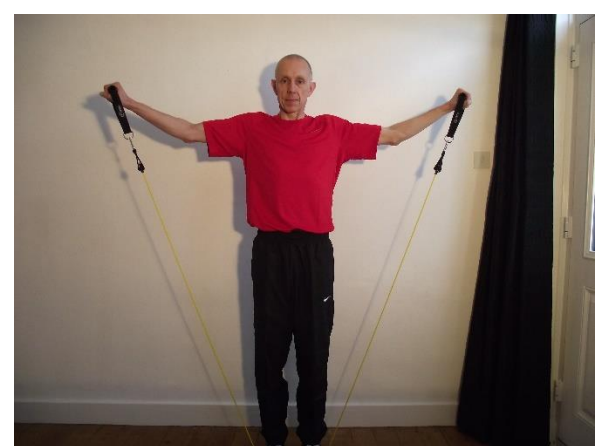
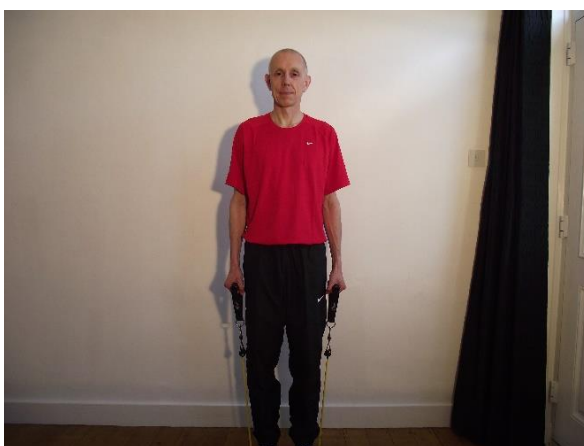
(Chest)



- Another Single Arm option with the same pro's and con's mentioned before (works the core stabilising muscles more intensely but takes longer to complete)
- Attach both ends of resistance band to one handle
- Starting position is similar to Chest Fly's but only one arm is holding the resistance band handle.
- Step forward to create tension in the band, with one foot in front of the other for stability
- Bring arm forward, keeping the arm almost straight
- Take hand back to starting position, slowly and in control of movement
- **BE AWARE:** Never perform with heavy resistance. Too much load risks tearing the pectoral muscles

Lateral raise

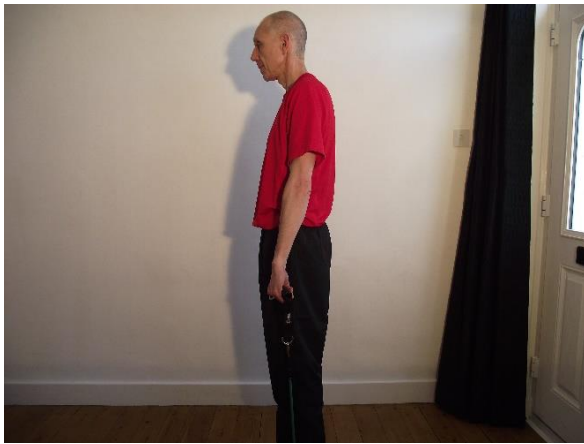
(Shoulders)



- Stand with both feet on Resistance Band
- With hands facing inwards, hold handles with hands down by your thighs
- Take hands out to the sides, away from the body and raise up to shoulder height
- Lower hands to starting position and repeat

Anterior raise

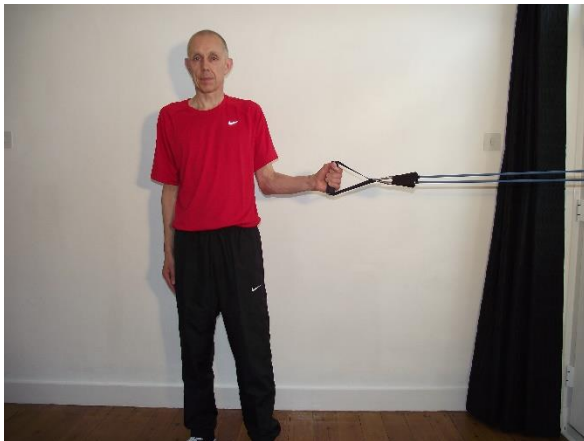
(Shoulders)



- Stand with both feet on Resistance Band
- With palms facing behind you, hold handles with hands down by your thighs
- Take hands out in front of you and raise up to shoulder height
- Lower hands to starting position and repeat

Internal shoulder rotation

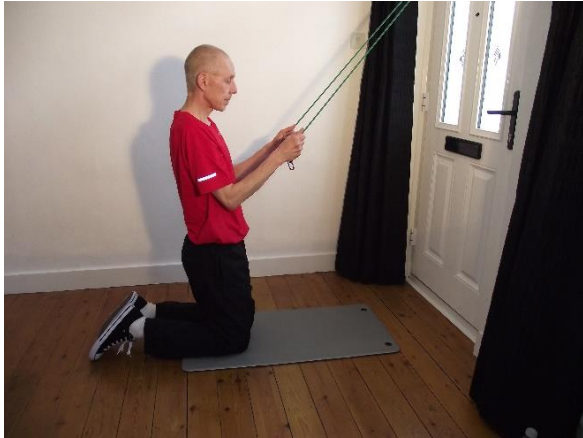
(Shoulders)



- Use anchor attachment and position in door around waist height
- Attach both ends of resistance band to one handle
- From a 'side-on' position, hold the handle with the hand closest to the door
- With the elbow bent at 90 degrees, the starting position is with the forearm away from the body as far as you can rotate it
- The movement takes the hand inwards and across the body
- Keep the elbow as close to the body as possible
- Return to start position, complete the number of reps for the set and repeat with other arm

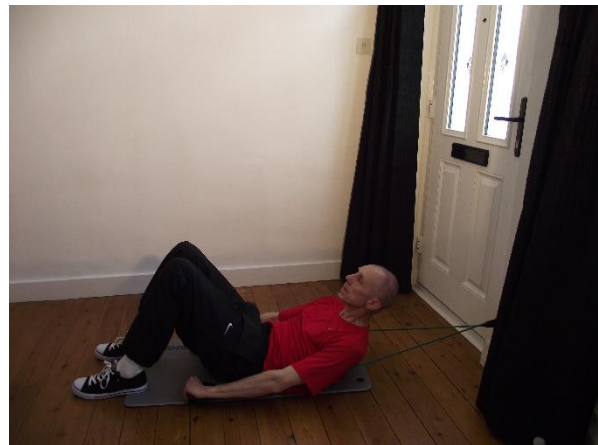
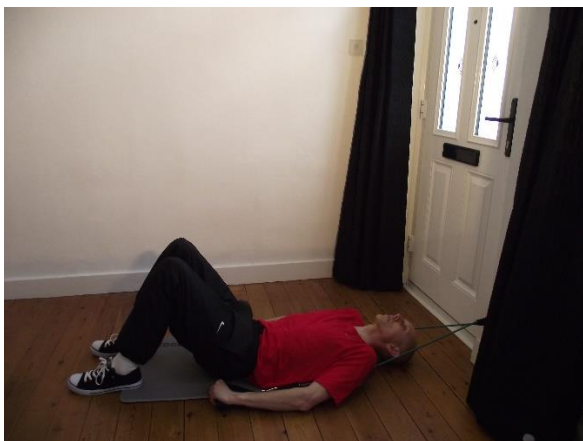
Core Exercises

Abdominal crunch



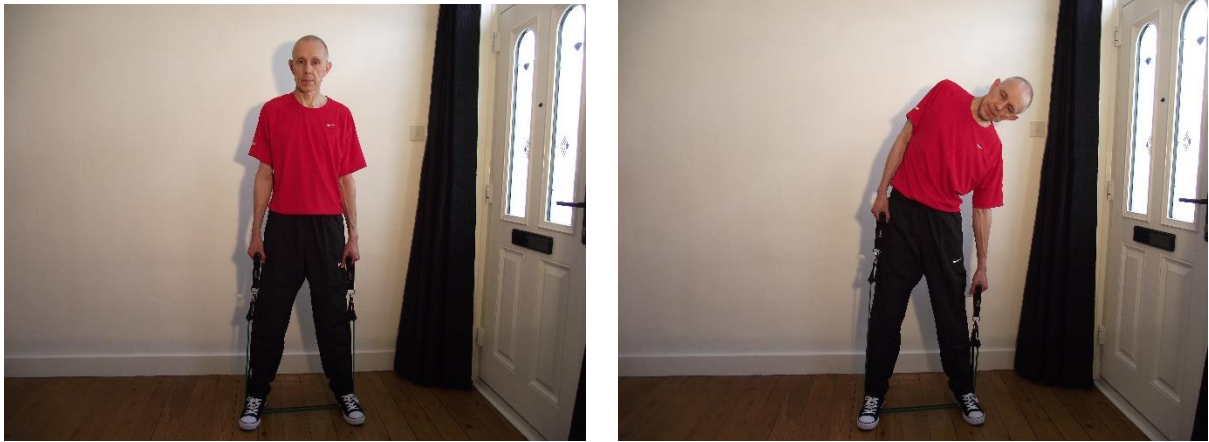
- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the top of the door
- Kneeling on the floor, facing the door, hold one end of the band (without handles) in each hand, ensuring there is tension in the band
- Keeping hands at chest level, bend forward at the hips contracting the abdominal muscles
- Crunch down slowly, as far as possible and return to start position

Lying abdominal crunch



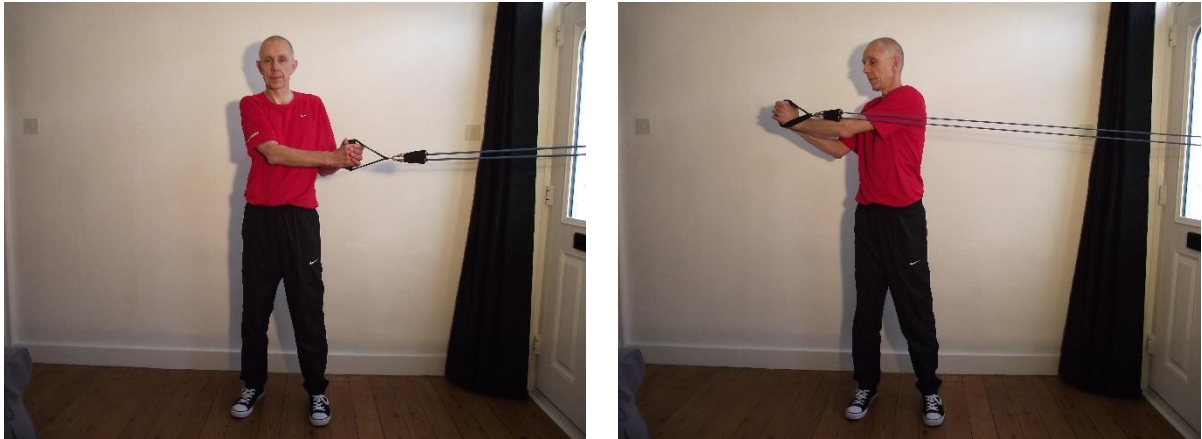
- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the bottom of the door
- Holding a handle of the Resistance Band in each hand, lie on the floor on your back, with your head closest to the door and palms facing down
- Bend knees, keep feet flat on the floor, and with the band under tension
- Keeping arms straight, curl torso up and move the handles a few inches towards your feet
- As you curl up, try to feel each vertebrae of the spine leave the floor one at a time (starting from the top)
- Control the resistance and return to start position. Again, try to feel each vertebrae re-connect with the floor individually

Lateral bends



- Stand with both feet on Resistance Band
- Hold handles of Resistance Band with hands down by the side of your legs, palms facing legs
- Feet should be spaced apart so that there is tension in the band
- Bend the torso to one side
- Return to start position, or just beyond and repeat
- Complete the set and repeat in opposite direction

Trunk rotation



NOTE: Please do not perform rotations if you have a lower back problem or have had a disc herniation (slipped disc). Rotations risk aggravating this injury

- Use anchor attachment and position in door around waist height
- Attach both ends of resistance band to one handle
- From a 'side-on' position, hold the handle with both hands and out to the side towards door
- Ensure there is tension in the band
- Rotate the torso so that the hands move away from the door, through 180 degrees
- The movement comes from the torso only. The hands are only holding the handles, not pulling the handles around
- Return to start position, controlling the movement all the way

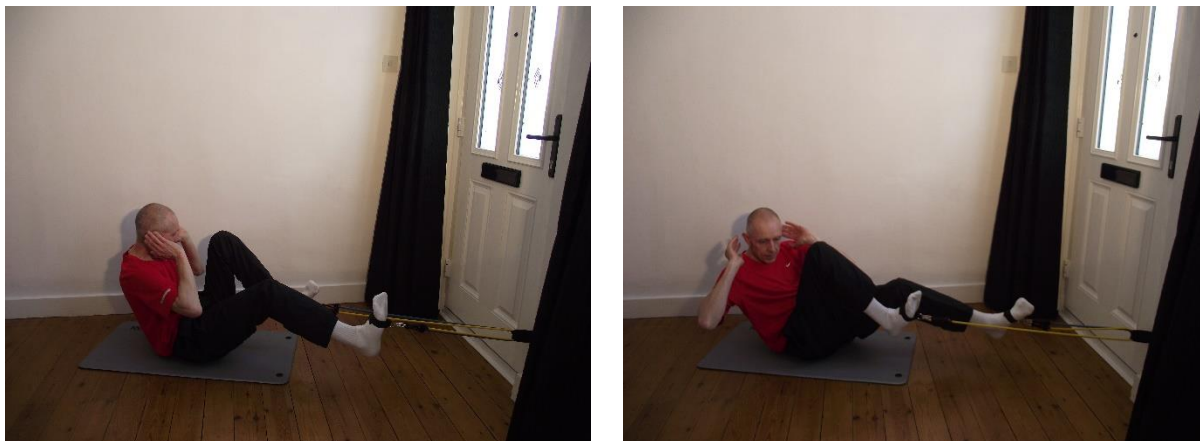
Woodchopper



NOTE: Please do not perform rotations if you have a lower back problem or have had a disc herniation (slipped disc). Rotations risk aggravating this injury

- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the bottom of the door
- Stand 'side-on' to the door with one foot on the band.
- Hold the handle with both hands out to the side of the thigh, closest to the door. Ensure the band is under tension
- Keeping both arms and back straight, rotate body and swing round and up finishing with your hands above your opposite shoulder
- Feel the Resistance Band pulling through your whole core and that the movement comes from the torso only
- Return to start position in a controlled manor, with Resistance Band continuously under tension
- Complete set and repeat with other side

Bicycle crunch



NOTE: Please do not perform rotations if you have a lower back problem or have had a disc herniation (slipped disc). Rotations risk aggravating this injury

- Use anchor attachment, locating the Resistance Bands at the bottom of the door
- Attach a foot cuff to each end of the band
- Sitting on the floor, facing the door, attach a foot cuff to each foot
- Lie on your back and with legs stretched out, ensure the band is under tension
- With hands close to but not touching the side of your head and elbows pointing out, raise shoulders off of the floor
- Pull one knee towards your chest and, at the same time, rotate torso so that opposite elbow touches knee
- Return to start position and repeat movement in the opposite direction
- Perform equal number of repetitions each side

And Finally

When it comes to exercise, having a routine can be the difference between success and failure. If you haven't planned what to do from one day to the next and you've had a difficult day at work, you can easily make excuses to miss 'just one session.' That one missed session can easily become 2, 3 or 4 and in no time, all the progress you have made becomes a distant memory. This is how I make my routine easier to do.

At the beginning of each week, I write down my exercise program for the week. My sport is open water swimming, so obviously more days are for swimming than resistance training. However, I have always used resistance training to build my strength for my sport. At the time of writing (June 2016), my training consists of swimming 5 days each week and resistance training, using Resistance Bands, 2 days each week, based on the exercises in this ebook.

So, at the beginning of each week I will write down:

1. The days I am swimming and the days I am resistance training
2. What I will be doing in each of my swimming sessions
3. The exercises I will be doing on each of my resistance training days

As I know what I will be doing each day, there is never any question in my mind of missing a session. I know what I am supposed to be doing, I don't need to think about it, I just turn up.

We've tried to cover as much as we possibly can to get you started. Inevitably there are going to be some gaps that we haven't thought of. If you find any of these gaps, please don't keep them to yourself. Let us know so that we can address these for you and also update this ebook for the benefit of other people on the same path as you.

Good luck on your journey...

Allen
Core Fitness Zone