BOSU® Ballast Ball Core Challenge

Take core training to the next level using new stability ball training techniques on the BOSU® Ballast Ball. Add fresh elements to abdominal and back training, and learn many new core exercises that effectively challenge every muscle in your "power center" while simultaneously improving overall movement capabilities. Do you think you've seen it all with regard to stability ball core training? Lift it, shift it, shake it... and think again!

1. Core Challenge Overview
   A. Purpose: Train the core so that it is functionally capable of stabilizing the spine, and efficiently links the upper and lower body for power development that occurs in sport and real life.
   B. Four key skill requirements
      1. Sustained Flexion (maintain a flexed spine)
      2. Dynamic Flexion (alternately flex spine and release)
      3. Neutral Bracing (maintain neutral spine)
         • Co-activates the transversus abdominis with the external and internal obliques
         • "Ensures spinal stability in virtually all modes of instability." (McGill 2002, pg. 210)
         • Can lower risk for soft tissue injuries of the spine and increase function
      4. Reflexive Bracing (automatic stabilizing response)
         • Favored for athletic and functional movement requirements
         • Enhances stability and performance during daily activities, fitness and sport
   C. Teaching Neutral Bracing
      1. Find neutral by positioning the spine and pelvis mid-position between extremes of spinal flexion and extension
      2. Isometrically contract the abdominal muscles without pulling in or pushing out
      3. "Set" or "stabilize" abdominal wall with little to no movement in the spine or pelvis
   D. Enhancing Reflexive Bracing
      1. Practice bracing during drills, daily life and athletic movements
      2. Progress and integrate appropriately

2. Important Considerations
   A. Safety: the BOSU® Ballast Ball is still unstable
   B. Neutral ball position
   C. Skill progressions
   D. Stretches for key postural muscle groups (e.g., hip flexors/hamstrings)
### BOSU® Ballast Ball Core Challenge

#### BOSU® Ballast Ball Core Warm Up

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<th>Exercise Name</th>
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| Seated Bounce for Posture and Core Bracing | • Sitting on ball in NBP, bounce gently up and down  
• Teach neutral spinal posture and core bracing  
• Variation: Add 1/8 and 1/4 directional turns |                                    |
| Squats (from seated position)         | • From seated NBP, press up to standing  
• Squat back to seated position on ball                                                               | • Add jump-stick instead of press up to standing |
| Seated Rotary Torso                   | • From seated NBP, rotate the torso slowly side to side  
• Emphasize stationary hips and mobile torso                                                              | • Combine rotary torso with squat |
| Lift and Shift                        | • From standing NBP, flex and extend legs  
• Lift and lower ball with “no shift” of load first, then  
• Lift and lower ball with “impact shift” of load                                                        |                                    |
| Forward Lunges with Rotary Shift      | • Lunge forward, rotate torso and ball to one side  
• Emphasize stationary hips and “smooth shift” of load                                                   |                                    |
| Side to Side Shuffle                  | • From seated NBP, step side to side, rolling ball laterally  
• Emphasize core bracing while lower body moves                                                          | • Vary single steps side to multiple steps side |
| Seated Infinity Circles               | • From seated NBP, lean and reach forward  
• Sweep the arms to one side, and circle the torso until the trunk is inclined  
• Hinge at the trunk and return to seated position                                                   |                                    |
| Squat to Incline                      | • Standing in front of ball on floor, squat until hips engage ball  
• Lean back to incline position  
• Pause, then curl or hinge to seated and press back to standing position                               | • Squat to supine instead of incline |
| Around the World                      | • From standing NBP, rotate torso and ball to one side  
• Continue rotation overhead and to other side  
• Emphasize “smooth shift” of load                                                                   |                                    |

#### BOSU® Ballast Ball Core Challenge Exercises

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| Squat to Supine                      | • Standing in front of ball on floor, squat until hips engage ball  
• Lean back to incline or supine  
• Pause, then curl or hinge to seated and press back to standing position  
• Hold soft fitness ball in hands for more challenge                                           | • Add 2 – 4 ab curl reps before curl or hinge up  
• Hold supine; open arms and “creep” laterally from one shoulder to the other                  |
| Squat to Supine with Heel Out or Leg Lift | • Standing in front of ball on floor, squat until hips engage ball  
• Lean back to incline or supine and extend one leg forward with the heel resting on the floor  
• Pause, then curl or hinge to seated, return the foot to neutral, and press back to standing position | • Extend leg parallel to floor while inclining |
| Extended Oblique Curls with Opposition Arm | • From incline or supine, extend spine and reach overhead and slightly side with one arm  
• Flex and rotate the trunk, pulling the extended arm across toward the opposite thigh         | • Hold soft fitness ball in one hand for challenge |
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<tr>
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| Standing Diagonal Impact Shift - Wave Shift Center                | • Stand holding ball in NBP facing front  
• Step diagonally forward and counterbalance ball diagonally backward  
• Perform repeating diagonal impact shifts                                                                                                     | • Perform multiple wave shifts in centered position between sides     |
| Squat to Supine - Alternating Punch and Roll - Core Bounce        | • From seated NBP, roll to incline position  
• Roll side to side, letting the hip and shoulder lift while arms alternate in punching motion  
• Hold supine position, quick bounces with ball centered under thoracic region                                                                 | • Hold soft fitness ball for more challenge                           |
| Standing Pivot and Shift                                          | • Stand holding ball in NBP facing front  
• Pivot side and simultaneously rotate ball to side  
• Return to center using lateral impact shift, or  
• Return to center using circular wave shift                                                                                                   | • Pivot and simultaneously rotate diagonally up; return to center with impact shift |
| Prone Plank - Pike and Extend - Forward Diagonal Lunge - Lateral Flexion | • From standing position behind the ball, roll to prone  
• Pike head and toes toward floor, extend hips and spine, then roll up to standing  
• Step forward to diagonal lunge, laterally flex over ball, return upright and step to start position                          | • Perform multiple reps of lateral flexion                            |
| Prone Superman Spine and Hip Extension                            | • From prone plank position, center the ball under the abdomen or pelvis with the hands and feet lightly touching the floor, and the knees bent  
• Simultaneously press forward with the legs and extend the spine with arms reaching forward  
• Hold and balance before flexing back to start                                                                                                 | • Hover and balance in prone position  
• Teeter totter to hips lifting off ball slightly                          |
| Ball Plank with Lateral/Vertical Leg Lifts & Alternating Knee Lifts | • Standing behind ball, bend knees and roll forward to half plank or full plank position  
• Lift one leg at a time, vertically or laterally  
• Pull one knee at a time toward ball                                                                                                           | • Elbows on ball progresses to extended arms with hands on ball       |
| Prone Plank to Roll-Over                                          | • Assume prone plank position on floor with ball placed next to upper torso  
• From plank, roll shoulder and trunk into ball  
• Continue rolling to supine and then over ball  
• End in plank position on the other side                                                                                                       | • Vary from bent knee to fully extended starting plank positions  
• Load outside arm, then roll                                             |
| Lunging Circles                                                   | • From standing NBP, lunge and circle ball in “around the world” motion 1x  
• When ball is center, hold legs and perform small, circular “wave shifts” 3x  
• Reverse direction and repeat                                                                                                               | • Emphasize core brace with variation in range of motion and cadence of circles |
| Prone Tucks - Prone Plank with Side Twists                        | • From prone plank position, flex the hips and knees, rolling the ball forward and tucking the knees toward the chest  
• Return to plank with ball under hips  
• Slowly lift one hip, “twisting” to one side as far as technique allows  
• Keep shoulders as square to floor as possible                                                                                              | • Vary tucks to long lever pike ups  
• Keep legs together during twist, or scissor legs for more challenge  
• Vary tucks to side tucks                                                                                                                   |
| Supine Ball Raise with Single or Double Leg Lift                  | • Lie supine on floor with ball in NBP between hands and lifted over chest  
• Flex shoulders and lower ball to floor over head  
• Raise ball, adding alternating single leg lifts each time ball moves over chest                                                                 | • For more challenge, add double leg lift, touching ball to front of legs at top of motion                                             |
| Seated Lift It, Shift It, Shake It                               | • From seated position on floor, bend knees, place feet wide on floor, and hold ball in front  
• Perform “impact shift” 5x center, then “wave shift” 5x in one direction. Repeat impact and wave shifts                                                                 | • Alternate seated lift, shift and shake series with same series performed supine                                                   |
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<tr>
<td><strong>Supine Ball Pass Series</strong></td>
<td>• From supine position, grip ball between ankles</td>
<td>• Lower legs slightly to one side and the other before lowering back to starting position</td>
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<td>• Lift legs and pass ball to hands (holding legs up)</td>
<td>• Hold ball between ankles and flex/extend diagonally</td>
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<td>• Lower ball overhead, then pull over chest</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Pass ball back to legs and lower to starting position</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Add diagonal pass variations with arms and legs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Add impact shifts when arms are passing ball</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>V-Sit to Roll Down – Supine Tuck to V-Sit</strong></td>
<td>• From v-sit position, hold ball between hands and lift overhead</td>
<td>• Vary roll down to tuck, keeping feet off floor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Slowly roll torso down to supine; keep knees bent</td>
<td>• Reach diagonally with ball while tucking up</td>
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<td>• Lower ball overhead, then curl back to start</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Partner Ball Balance with Push-Up</strong></td>
<td>• From kneeling push-up position, balance ball on upper back (near neck) or lower back</td>
<td>• Vary to extended push-up position for more challenge</td>
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<td>• Lower into push-up with partner assisting slightly to keep ball balanced</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Partner Ball Pass Series</strong></td>
<td>• Partners stand back to back; one squats and passes ball overhead to partner</td>
<td>• Vary from smooth shifts to impact and/or wave shifts while passing the ball</td>
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<td>• Partners stand back to back and pass ball by rotating torso only or by rotating torso and pivoting feet</td>
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<td>• Partners stand shoulder to shoulder, facing front and pass ball around the world</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Partner V-Sit Foot Pass</strong></td>
<td>• Partners sit on floor with knees bent and feet touching on floor</td>
<td>• Lift ball overhead while leaning back and passing</td>
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<td>• Holding ball at chest level, lean back into “V”</td>
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<td>• Hinge back to seated and pass ball to partner</td>
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### BOSU® Ballast Ball Stretch

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supine Scissor Stretch</strong></td>
<td>• From supine position on the floor, bend one knee and place foot on floor, lift other leg to 90 degree hip flexion</td>
<td>• Extend both legs and with “scissor” motion, change from side to side</td>
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<tr>
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<td>• Place ball between back of extended thigh and front thigh of bent leg</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Slide bottom leg forward or back to adjust stretch in hamstrings muscles of extended leg</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch</strong></td>
<td>• From kneeling position behind ball, place one leg forward at side of ball in lunge position</td>
<td>• Start in a standing lunge position and place the ball against the front hip</td>
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<td>• Extend back leg to the point of stretch</td>
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<td>• Rest torso and arms on ball for support</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Seated Lateral Stretch</strong></td>
<td>• From seated NBP, lift one arm and flex laterally</td>
<td>• Vary to reverse infinity circle and hinge to seated</td>
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<td>• Roll ball and pull hips downward</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Squat to Supine – Anterior Trunk Stretch</strong></td>
<td>• From squat to supine, hold supine position</td>
<td>• Keep knees flexed, or extend for more challenge</td>
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<td>• Extend trunk and relax into stretch w/arms open</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prone Spinal Stretch to Prone Hover</strong></td>
<td>• From prone over ball position, flex into stretch</td>
<td>• Alternate between hover and stretch positions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Extend to neutral spine, then lift hands and feet</td>
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</tbody>
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*Thank you for attending this workshop!*  
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