

**Core Training Workout and Stretching- Part II**  
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In our late summer JAM Fitness Feature we demonstrated movements that work the forward and backward bending of the torso (the “sagittal” plane). In this JAM Fitness Feature, we will focus on twisting movements involving the core (the “transverse” plane). These are great exercises for increasing your range of motion, balance, and improving your performance in activities like swinging a golf club or tennis racquet.

**The photos below illustrate the exercise called Cycles:**



Cycles- Advanced Level



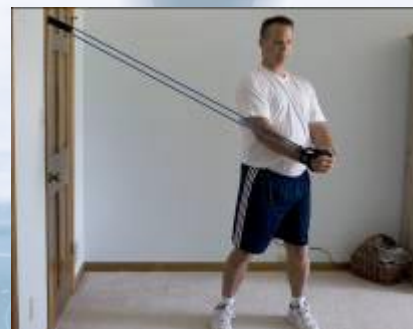
Cycles- Beginner Level

Maintain a position with your lower back in contact with the ground throughout the exercise. In a controlled fashion, raise one shoulder blade while simultaneously raising the opposite knee (as shown in the photos). Pause for a moment, then lower the shoulder blade and the opposite leg. You can repeat on the same side or alternate by working the opposite side every other repetition. Maintain a neutral position with your chin by pretending there is a tennis ball between your chin and your chest. Visualize the muscles of your abdominals and lower back working as you twist. The Advanced Version requires the non-working leg to remain in a 90 degree position, while the Beginner Version allows the non-working leg to remain resting on the ground.

The *Wood Chop* can be performed with a resistance band, a dumb bell, or a cable/pulley system. Stand with knees slightly bent, shoulders turned toward the origin of resistance, hips square, holding the handle with the far hand first and overlapped with the near hand.



Starting position of Wood Chop



Finishing position of Wood Chop

With elbows slightly bent, rotate your shoulders, keeping your hands in front of your sternum as you bring them across your torso. Be sure to twist at the waist, keeping your hips stationary. As always, maintain a controlled breathing pattern and exercise tempo. The *Wood Chop* can also be performed seated on a chair or an exercise ball.

The photos below illustrate two versions of a *Torso Twist*. Both involve rotating the shoulders, focusing on the muscles of the abdominals and lower back. The beginner version involves rotation of the shoulders only, whereas the advanced version also includes a leg raise.



Advanced Standing Torso Twist

Beginner Standing Torso Twist

Stretching after exercise is extremely important for recovery and increasing the body's range of motion and functioning. Take 15 seconds per stretch to perform those shown below that are within your physical capabilities.



Comments or questions on these exercises and stretches? Contact me at [jeff@jamprofitfitness.com](mailto:jeff@jamprofitfitness.com).

