

## the surfer's workout

Did you know that surfing is experiencing one of the largest growth surges in history? If you surf, you can surf longer and get less fatigued if you're stronger and more flexible when you hit the waves. Even if you don't surf, these training tips can help you improve upper-body and core strength. To understand what makes the best surfing-specific workout, read these insights from Lenita Anthony, MA, exercise physiologist, Reebok master trainer and San Diego surfer.

### [1]

#### Cardiovascular Endurance

Although cardiovascular endurance is important for performance, surfing *itself* may not provide enough cardio training. Swimming is an obvious choice for improving a surfer's cardiovascular conditioning, but some surfers experience shoulder-overuse injury from combining surfing and swimming. If so, cross-train with activities like rowing, cycling and running.

### [2]

#### Strength and Flexibility

As a surfer you spend significantly more time paddling than actually surfing, so upper-body strength and endurance are essential. The

lats, pecs and triceps muscles provide the power for paddling. The rhomboids, levator scapulae and erector spinae muscles act to allow you to extend your trunk, and the deltoids are largely responsible for the recovery portion of the arm stroke. Strength in the lower body is also important for leg drive and power. Squats and lunges are great exercises because they mimic the semicrouched position required in critical sections of the wave.

Flexibility in the leg, hip and back muscles and mobility throughout the body are also crucial to surfing success. Paul Frediani, author of *Surf Flex*, feels that yoga is the perfect presurfing warm-up. A routine of yoga Sun Salutations after surfing is also a good way to improve flexibility.

### [3]

#### Sensing Your Body's Moves

Riding waves requires you to react quickly to the unstable environment of the ocean. You need to move dynamically in many planes while maintaining core stability, balance and coordination. You can use exercise equipment such as stability balls, core boards, foam rollers and pads to develop proprioception, which is the unconscious perception of movement and spatial orientation arising from stimuli within the body. ■

### sample surf conditioning exercises

Use these two exercises to strengthen the upper body for surfing.

**STABILITY BALL LAT PULL WITH TUBING:** This exercise increases the strength and endurance of the muscles used in paddling. The unstable surface of the ball (much like a surfboard) also fosters stability in the core muscles to maintain balance.

- Lie face down with stability ball under belly and chest lifted, holding tubing handles with middle part anchored or held by a partner. (You can also use this position for a posterior raise with small dumbbells to work the posterior deltoids and rhomboids.)
- Alternately pull each arm toward thigh in paddling motion. (Pull both arms simultaneously for more resistance.)

**STABILITY BALL PUSH-UP WITH REVERSE CRUNCH:** This exercise simulates the "pop-up" action and strengthens the chest, shoulders and core.

- Lie face down with stability ball under ankles, spine neutral and hands on floor in push-up position.
- Perform push-up and immediately follow push-up with reverse crunch by pulling ball in toward belly with legs.

To learn more about conditioning for surfing, talk to a personal trainer or read the following resources, both available on Amazon.com:

Frediani, P. 2001. *Surf Flex: Flexibility, Yoga and Conditioning for the Ultimate Surfing Experience!* New York: Hatherleigh Press.

Snyder, R. 2003. *Fit to Surf: The Surfer's Guide to Strength Training & Conditioning.* Camden, ME: International Marine/Ragged Mountain Press.

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