

Fitness Forum: To improve core strength and mobility, rotate legs and hips from side to side

by CNS

This exercise that focuses on the trunk, can be done by beginners and veterans alike.

THE MOVES: Supine rotation of the torso.

WORKS ON: Trunk range of motion and core strength.

CORE VALUE - To improve core strength and mobility, firefighter Michael Nelson slowly rotates his legs and hips from side to side. CNS Photo by Nadia Borowski Scott.

SETUP: On a firm surface, lie down on your back. The arms should be 90 degrees to the trunk and resting on the ground. Bend your knees to 90 degrees. Firm the abdominal muscles and flatten the lower back against the floor. With the abs tight and the back flat, lift the legs until the hips are 90 degrees to the trunk. Keep the legs firmly together.

THE MOVES: Maintain the above leg and hip position and slowly rotate to one side until the legs almost touch the ground. Pause and repeat the move to the opposite side.

REPETITIONS: Start with one set of rotations for 30 seconds. Progress to three to five sets, at one minute for each set.

PRECAUTIONS: Progress slowly with the range of motion until you can get near the ground. Do not allow the lower back to arch during this activity. Do not hold your breath.

OPTIONS: For beginners, keep the heels on the ground and just work on increasing range of motion. For extra challenge, pinch a small dumbbell between the ankles or knees, but take every precaution not to drop it on yourself!