



TRAINING TECHNIQUES FOR WOMEN

5 Functional Ways to Use a BOSU Ball

Get the most out of your BOSU ball with these five methods.

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Not sure what else to do with a BOSU ball besides crunches? We've got you!

Here, health coach and virtual fitness studio owner [Aimee Nicotera](#), MS, ACSM-certified exercise physiologist and AFAA-certified personal trainer helps you get the most out of your BOSU.

1. Find Balance

The ability to balance on one leg isn't just important for athletes and acrobats. It can help prevent falls, ward off injuries and improve our confidence during any move we make.

"Whether you play sports regularly or simply want to avoid shuffling your feet as you age, mastering balance is key," Nicotera says. "One-leg balance drills can improve neuromuscular strength in the ankles and knees and help maintain proper joint function."

How to Do the One-Leg BOSU Balance Drill

Stand on the dome side of the BOSU with your feet hip-width apart and knees slightly bent. To help balance yourself, you can put both arms straight out to your sides. Once you master that without struggling, take the difficulty up a notch by moving one foot toward the center of the BOSU and lifting your other foot up in the air a few inches. Work up to holding this one-leg balance pose for 30 to 45 seconds at a time.

As you get more proficient, challenge yourself further by extending your arms overhead instead of to the sides.

2. Stabilize Your Core

Core strength and stability are necessary for good posture and maintaining a healthy back, including reducing pain and preventing injury.

"Movements that require stabilization from the shoulder girdle, the abdominals, the back and the hips contribute to a strong back and a healthy spine," Nicotera explains. "The classic bird dog exercise is a fantastic example."

How to Use a BOSU Ball for Bird Dogs

Get into a quadruped position on the dome side of the BOSU, placing your hands under your shoulders and your knees under your hips. After mastering this position, lift the opposite arm and leg off the dome, extending them out as far as possible and holding the position for 5 seconds before switching to raise the other arm and leg. Be sure to look slightly ahead, focusing your eyes on the floor and keeping your neck in a neutral position. Aim for five to 10 reps per side.

3. Burn Fat With HIIT

High-intensity cardio drills torch calories while also improving heart health and brain function. "Incorporating the BOSU in HIIT drills can keep things fun, fresh and interesting," says Nicotera. "The BOSU can be used as a prop to touch, tap, move around or even lift — as you'll do in this burpee shuffle combo."

How to Do the Burpee BOSU Shuffle

Position the BOSU in front of you, dome side down. Shuffle to the right, moving around the BOSU in a circular fashion. When you get back to the start position, squat down in a wide stance and grab the BOSU with both hands using the protruding hand holds on each side. Keeping your spine long and BOSU close to your body, lift it fully overhead.

Reverse the movement, placing the BOSU back down, and shuffle to the left, repeating the alternating sequence. Work as intensely as you can handle while maintaining good form. Aim for one minute, then rest for two minutes. Repeat for five sets, with a goal of increasing the number reps you can complete each time.

4. Get Up With G2S Drills

Getting yourself up from the ground to a standing (G2S) position isn't just a handy ability when you're making a sliding catch in the outfield for your company softball league or bouncing back from a tackle on the soccer pitch — it has been linked to decreased mortality by research scientists.

To practice, Nicotera suggests incorporating the following drill into at least one of your regular workouts every week. "Mastering getting up off the BOSU from this low position will pay dividends down the road, offering a nice middle point before working on pure G2S drills," she says.

How to Do the BOSU-Ball G2S Drill

Sit down on the dome side of the BOSU, positioning your feet approximately shoulder width apart. Keeping your spine long and chest lifted, pitch your trunk forward, push your feet into the floor and stand up tall. If you need a little assistance, use your hands and push off your legs. Work up to three sets of five reps.

5. Be One With Your Body

"The BOSU can add a challenging component to most bodyweight exercises by introducing the element of stability and improving relative strength," Nicotera says. "Moving your own bodyweight efficiently is not only necessary for locomotor sports like running and cycling, but also just for aging well and handling everyday tasks like climbing stairs and moving boxes. A push-up is a classic example."

How to Do a BOSU-Ball Push-Up

Place the BOSU dome side down and assume a high plank position with hands on the protruding hand holds, arms straight and legs extended. Lower your body down as one unit, your back straight from head to heel, until your elbows bend to 90 degrees, then press yourself back up to the start by extending your elbows as you simultaneously flex your chest and lats.

If you need an easier starting point to build up your strength, you can put your knees down to the floor and/or decrease the range of motion. Work up to three sets of 10 reps.

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