

Get fit for the football season

Football is a sport that requires a multitude of athletic abilities, aim to make improvements in the following to improve your game:

- Explosive acceleration and fast sprinting speed.
- Muscular endurance and strength in the lower body.
- Muscular balance and high levels of neuromuscular co-ordination.
- Body awareness and agility, the ability to know where your body is, and be able to move it.
- Discipline to take orders and decisions, as well as putting the team first.
- Good flexibility to avoid injury, football players are prone to poor hamstring flexibility.
- Correct balance between your quadriceps and hamstrings, as well as strength imbalances between your left and right leg.

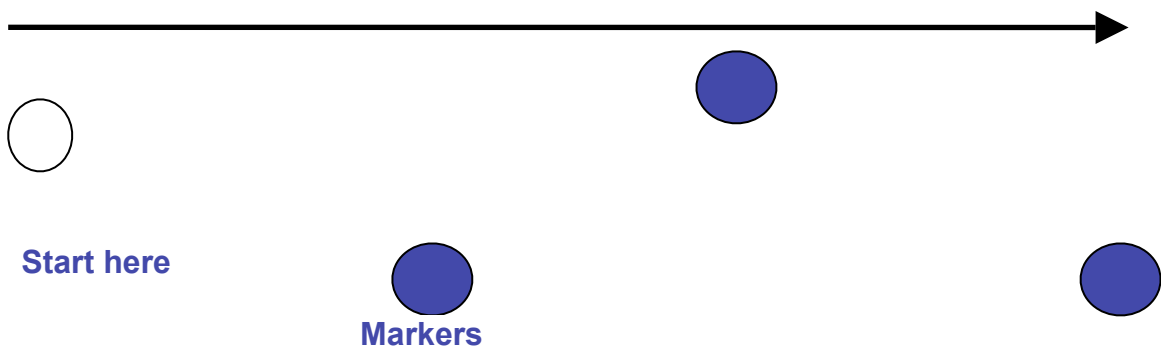
Your fitness training should take the following form:

Speed work

Look at this plyometric circuit to developing explosive power, aim to do this circuit no more than once a week, and certainly not on days before a match, as this type of circuit takes a few days to recover from.

Shuttle sprints, most sprints last for between 6 and 15 meters in a match, so look at this distance for your training. Work your sprints in the following form, standing start, lying flat on your stomach start, running start, sprint forward with run back and then repeat all with a ball. Aim to have a minimum of 3 markers to turn around, not necessarily in a straight line.

6 – 15 Metres






Muscular Endurance

Use this circuit once a week to develop muscular endurance, best performed alongside a skill session or on a day after a match.




| DISTANCE | SPEED | DRILL / NOTES |
|--------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2 X LAPS | LIGHT RUN PACE | WARM UP & STRETCH |
| 3 X LAPS | JOG / RUN / FAST | PACE YOURSELF |
| 3 X 1/2 LAPS | AS ABOVE | DO DRILL WITH FOOTBALL |
| 1 X LAP | RUN PACE | HK - SS - HTB -SS * |
| 4 X 1/2 LAPS | FAST RUN | LEG CIRCUIT AFTER EACH 1/2 LAP |
| 4 X 1/2 LAPS | FAST RUN | AS ABOVE PLUS UPPER BODY CIRCUIT |
| 4 X 1/2 LAPS | FAST RUN | AS ABOVE PLUS ABS CIRCUIT |
| 4 X LAPS | SPRINT / JOG | SPRINT ONE SIDE THEN JOG BACKWARDS * |
| 4 X 1/2 LAPS | FAST AS POSSIBLE | DO DRILL WITH FOOTBALL |
| 5 X LAPS | FAST RUN | LEG CIRCUIT AFTER EACH LAP |
| 2 X LAPS | LIGHT RUN PACE | COOL DOWN & STRETCH |




- HK = HIGH KNEE RUNNING SS = SIDE STEPPING HTB = HEEL TO BUM
- AIM TO SPRINT THE WIDTH OF THE PITCH, THEN JOG BACKWARDS ALONG THE LENGTH BEFORE SPRINTING AGAIN. ONCE YOU GET FITTER, YOU CAN THEN SPRINT THE LENGTH AND JOG ON THE WIDTH.

Perform 8-15 of each exercise as fast as possible, remember first time around to perform just the leg circuit, then the leg and upper body and finally all three. Make sure that you do the lap run after each circuit.

| LEG CIRCUIT | | |
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| Two footed squat thrusts - aim for a 12 inch jump. | Walking lunge forward - changing lead leg. | Alternate leg squat thrusts - count reps on 1 leg only. |

UPPER BODY CIRCUIT

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| Wide arm press-up. Take elbows out to your sides. | Normal press ups, aim to keep a straight line through your back. | Close Hand - Aim to keep your thumbs touching each other. |

| ABDOMINAL CIRCUIT | | |
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| Normal sit ups, keep your chin off your chest. | Alternate elbows to knees - count reps on one side only. | Alternate hand to foot - count reps one side. |


Along with this session you can do straightforward cardiovascular training in the form of running, rowing and stepper's. Aim to build up to doing sessions that last a minimum of 45 minutes either 2-3 times a week. You can also do your weight training after your C.V. workouts, in order to give your body a chance to rest and recover for key matches.







Strength Training

Use the table below to guide you as to how many reps and sets of each exercise to complete – and how much rest period between sets.

| LEVEL | SET 1 | | SET 2 | | SET 3 | | SET 4 | |
|--------------|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| | REPS | REST | REPS | REST | REPS | REST | REPS | REST |
| INTERMEDIATE | 12-15 | 30 SEC | 10-15 | 30 SEC | | | | |
| ADVANCED | 15-20 | 20 SEC | 15-20 | 20 SEC | 12-15 | 20 SEC | | |
| ATHLETIC | 20-25 | 10 SEC | 20-25 | 10 SEC | 15 -20 | 15 SEC | 15-20 | 15 SEC |

LOWER BODY WORKOUT

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|  | <p>Seated leg extension machine Quads. Keeping your back firmly into machine, place your feet under the foot pad, about shoulder width apart, just above your ankle level.</p> <p>As you develop your leg strength, aim to work for 3 sets of 10 - 12 reps, followed by 1 - 2 sets of 50% weight, using 1 leg for 4 - 8 reps.</p> |
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|  | <p>Calf machine. Most modern gyms will have a calf machine, if not that use either a Smith Machine or Barbell across your shoulders.</p> <p>Stand straight with the balls of your feet on the platform, with the shoulder weight cushions comfortably placed on your shoulders, - avoid being bent up, or straining to reach the supports.</p> <p>Lift and lower slowly for 2 - 3 sets of 10 - 12 reps working for a full range.</p> |
|  | <p>Cable adductor and abductor pulls, Inner / Outer Thighs. Aim for 2 sets Of 10 - 12 reps with a suitable weight. Work one leg, then simply turn around to face the other way, in order to work the abductors.</p> <p>Repeat on the other leg. Count the number of reps that you can do, in order to gauge the difference if any in strength in each leg.</p> |
|  | <p>Leg Press Quadriceps. There are a number of foot positions you can use to work the different muscles of your quadriceps, you can have your feet close together - wide or shoulder width apart.</p> <p>Work for 3 sets of 10-12 reps, for first set work with your feet close, then normal and finally wide, with toes pointing outwards.</p> |
|  | <p>Hamstring Curl Machine. Use a suitable weight and perform smooth reps. Avoid pushing yourself on this exercise, as most people's hamstrings will tend to be tight, and can easily be damaged.</p> <p>Aim for 2 - 3 sets of 10 - 12 reps, using a light weight for your first set.</p> |
|  | <p>Gluts / Hip Flexor Cable Pull Connect a foot strap around a leg, just above the ankle joint, and attach this to a low cable pulley.</p> <p>Aim to keep your legs and back straight throughout the exercise, to help isolate the gluts, holding a secure object for balance.</p> <p>Work for 2 sets of 10 - 12 reps, on each leg - facing forward (gluts) and rearward (hip flexors).</p> |
|  | <p>Complete Lower Body. A combination of either front or rear lunges can be performed using a Smith Machine, however always make sure that you perform with a lightweight, enabling your leg muscles to get use to the movement prior to increasing the weight.</p> <p>Aim for 2 sets of 10 - 15 reps each leg, using a light weight, however aim for a full range of movement.</p> |

UPPER BODY WORKOUT

This session is designed to work all muscle groups of your upper body, as an endurance / toning circuit and also to increase the heart rate sufficiently to provide you with a sweat.

Aim to work at a fast comfortable pace within your own limits, taking minimal rest between the different exercises.

WARM UP AND STRETCH PRIOR TO DOING THIS CIRCUIT



Wide Arm Press-Up. Take your hands out at double shoulder width, with your palms facing forward. Dependent on your fitness level, choose your style to work in, i.e. 3/4 position for intermediates and full position for advanced.



1 Arm Row. Support your body by placing your left hand and knee on a bench, whilst placing the weight in your right hand, with the right foot securely on the floor.

Aim to keep your back parallel to the floor, whilst lifting the weighted elbow from a straight position to an angle of 90 degrees or more, aiming to take the elbow high without rotation.



Biceps Curl, again if possible perform in a seated position to limit excessive body swing.

For intermediates and advanced aim to perform the movement in the 3 following actions, normal / hammer / and reverse, full descriptions of all the exercises can be found in the members area.



Tricep Dips, place your hands either side of your buttocks, with fingers facing forward. Bend at your elbows, taking them backwards. Perform on a secure bench with feet on the floor for intermediates, and feet on another bench for advanced. Focus on taking your elbows behind you.



Breast Stroke. Control the movement, ideally standing with feet shoulder width apart. Keep your head up looking straight ahead, with elbows at shoulder height. **LIGHTWEIGHT**

Make smooth controlled breast stroke swimming movements, whilst focusing on keeping your elbows at shoulder height.








Bench Press Aim to perform the exercises in either a close arm normal or wide stance exercise. Again you can adapt the exercise by using an incline / decline / or flat bench, whilst working with either dumbbells or a barbell.

Focus on a complete range of movement, lowering the weight down to your chest, however never use a weight that is too heavy so you can't lift it back up.



Tricep Kick Backs. Sit on a secure bench with your feet firmly on the floor, leaning over as far as possible, ideally to a position that enables your body to be parallel to the floor. **LIGHTWEIGHT**

Smoothly extend the arm back from a bent position, in order to straighten the arm, focusing on keeping your upper arm horizontal whilst keeping your elbow tucked into your side.

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|  | <p>Reverse Fly's. Support your back on either an inclined bench or the thigh of one leg. Keeping a bend in your arms lift the weight up no higher than shoulder height in a smooth motion, before lowering under control. LIGHTWEIGHT</p> |
|  | <p>Lateral Raise. Holding suitable dumbbells in each hand, smoothly lift the weights up from your side, to a horizontal position out to your sides, aiming to keep a slight bend in your arms, hands inline with your shoulders.</p> <p>For best results, certainly for beginners, aim to work on a declined bench so that you have some support for your lower back.</p> |
|  | <p>Close Arm Press-Ups. Beginners should perform in a box style press-up, as this is a hard exercise. Aim to make a triangle with your fingers and thumbs, taking your elbows out to the side. Your hands should be under your chest.</p> |
|  | <p>Normal Fly's. Work on either a flat or incline bench, taking the weights from a central position, out to your sides, in line with your shoulders.</p> <p>Keep a slight bend in the arms at the elbow, lowering the weights no lower than your shoulders.</p> |
|  | <p>Shoulder Press. Aim to work in a seated position on an inclined bench for support for your back. Lift the weights from your shoulders, up above your head, keeping the palms of your hands facing forward. Make sure the weights are secure.</p> |

Co - ordination / Skills

Eye - Body - Brain, is the way we want to have our co-ordination and skills. Unfortunately many of us see the ball, and our body takes too long to react to it passing us. This area can be improved by developing what is called your motor skills, so that you see the ball, and your body automatically positions itself in the correct place. With a complete variety of situations you can be in for a ball to pass you, you need to work on improving your total body, to react as one fast efficient machine.

Ladder Drills

Used to gain speed in footwork, lay out a rope ladder, or chalk out an area with approximately 15 inch squares. Combining ladders so that you go both forward and side ward's, will give you rapid results. The numbers indicate the order to run in. By performing these drills in both directions, you will soon realize that you are better on one side than the other. Aim to work on your weaker side for greater improvements in your game.

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| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Single leg run ; aim to run on the ball of your foot, without catching the rope or chalk lines. L = Left foot R = Right foot |
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|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| L 1 | L 3 | L 5 | L 7 | L 9 | L 11 | Double leg run ; aim to run at speed through the rope ladder, pumping with your arms. L = Left foot R = Right foot |
| R 2 | R 4 | R 6 | R 8 | R 10 | R 12 | |

| | | | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--|
| L R | L R | L R | L R | L R | L R | Double side step , run through the ladder in a sideways direction, with either double or single leg. L = Left foot R = Right Foot |
| 1 2 | 3 4 | 5 6 | 7 8 | 9 10 | 11 12 | |

| | | | | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----|--|
| | | 6 | | 12 | | 18 | Hockey Shuffle , As with the double run, but this time every third step comes outside the rope. L = Left foot R = Right foot |
| L 2 | L 4 | L 8 | L 10 | L 14 | L 16 | | |
| R 1 | R 5 | R 7 | R 11 | R 13 | R 17 | | |
| | 3 | | 9 | | 15 | | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Cross over's, Side step through the rope , taking your leading leg both in front and then behind the trailing leg. L = Left foot R = Right foot |
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