



Lateral Speed Work

Workout from Stack.com training

Hip Mobility

Restricted hip mobility is the number one thing that will limit your lateral quickness. You absolutely need to have adequate mobility in your hips. This can be relatively simple to accomplish. Try this:

Step 1 - Foam roll your quads, IT bands, glutes and adductors

Step 2 - Stretch your quads, hip flexors, hamstrings, IT bands, glutes and adductors

Step 3 - Perform 2 sets of 10 repetitions of each of the following exercises:

- Bridges (5-second holds)
- Fire Hydrants
- Scorpions
- Straight Leg High Kicks (Frankensteins)
- Side Leg Swings
- Mountain Climbers (knee outside the elbow)
- Backward Hip Rotation Walk

Lateral Movement Strength

Focusing on lateral movement strength in the weight room yields tremendous benefits. A few simple exercises will help you quickly improve lateral movement as a defender. Here are the top three weight resistance exercises you can do to improve your lateral movement.

1. **Side Lunges:** Holding either a dumbbell or a kettlebell against your chest (like a Goblet Squat), take a big step out to the side, push your hips out in the same direction, sink into a squat position with the other leg still straight, and explosively push back up to your starting position. You can perform all reps on one side before switching, or alternate sides. Complete 3 sets of 8-12 repetitions.

2. **Side Squat Walk:** Holding either a dumbbell or kettlebell against your chest, assume a squat position. Walk laterally, maintaining a low hip level and tight midsection. Keep your torso tall and erect and your head forward. Walk for either a set distance or for 10-12 steps in each direction. Perform 3-4 sets of 10-20-yard Side Squat walks in each direction, resting 1 minute between sets.

3. **Lateral Sled Drags:** Using a weight sled (Prowler or other type), attach a harness, TRX or other form of handle to pull the sled. Don't load the sled too heavily, but don't make it too easy to pull either. Pull the sled using lateral movement for about 90 feet. Start by



dragging the sled at a walking pace and increase it to a lateral sprint. Perform 3-4 sets with one-minute rest between.

Footwork and Plyometric Drills

The last piece of the puzzle when improving lateral movement is to work on your explosiveness and footwork. What good does it do to mobilize and gain movement strength if you lack explosiveness or are tripping over your own feet? These simple drills will have you moving smoothly and quickly in no time.

Agility Ladder, 2 In, 2 Out

The 2 in, 2 out drill is a classic and it's excellent for improving lateral footwork.

- Using an agility ladder, begin on one side.
- The foot nearest the ladder always steps first.
- Beginning with the inside foot, step into the first square of the ladder. Follow with your second foot.
- Leading with the same foot, step out of the ladder with both feet.
- Your opposite foot is now the lead foot for stepping into and out of the next square. Your feet should never cross!

Sets/Reps: Repeat this pattern in a smooth and controlled manner twice through the ladder, resting 30 seconds between sets. Don't worry about speed in the beginning. Just try not to get your feet tangled or snag the ladder.

Skaters

This plyometric exercise is also a footwork and balance drill, but it will help you improve your lateral movement capabilities. Beginning on one foot, jump sideways to the opposite side (if on your right foot, jump to the left), and land on the opposite leg. Jump with as much power as you can. Repeat this movement side to side as explosively as possible.

Sets/Reps: 3x20 (10 each direction)

Side-to-Side Shuffle

Set up two cones about 5 yards apart. Beginning at one cone, assume a low position and shuffle sideways to the other cone. When you reach it, shuffle back to the first cone. Begin this drill slowly, focusing on keeping your hips low and square and moving your feet smoothly.

Sets/Reps: 2x5, with 1 minute rest between sets



Partner Mirror Drill

This may be one of the best exercises to help basketball players develop lateral quickness and improve their reaction time. In a 5-yard space, stand facing your teammate. One of you is the lead, the other is the shadow. Within the 5 yards, the lead moves laterally, changing direction as he or she feels like it, while the shadow tries to mirror every move.

Sets/Duration: 6x10-20 seconds (3 as lead and 3 as shadow), with 1 minute rest between sets.

20-Yard Short Shuttle

The traditional 5-10-5 version of this drill is often used to test football players. However, for the purpose of improving lateral quickness, you will perform a 5-5-5-5 version. Set up two cones 5 yards apart. Starting at Cone 1, sprint laterally to the opposite cone, touch the line, and sprint laterally back to the first cone. Touch the line and repeat until you have covered the distance four times for 20 yards.

Sets/Reps: 3-5 sets, resting 1 minute between