

# GOLF FITNESS

The exercises you need to hit with more power and accuracy every time

## POWER

Training for more power on the course doesn't necessarily involve heavy weights and explosive ballistic workouts—in fact, too much strength training could hinder your performance. “A guy who is very strong but lacking in mobility and flexibility won't be able to bring his body and muscles to a full range of motion,” says Katherine Roberts, certified golf performance trainer. “Without that full range of motion he won't be able to reach maximum potential in strength.” However, someone who is weak and too flexible won't be able to generate enough power, she says. That's why a more powerful swing is best achieved with a mix of lifting and flexibility training. Do these 14 exercises three to five days a week to strengthen your power muscles and improve your range of motion for a stronger swing and more distance off the tee.

### Side Split Squat

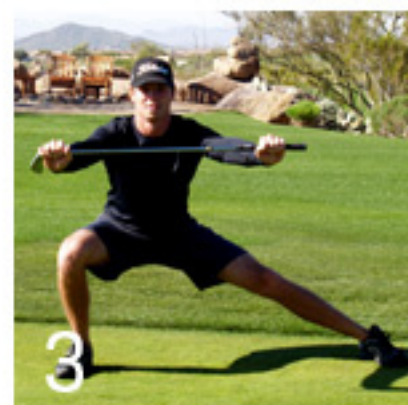
Spread legs as far apart as you comfortably can. With arms extended straight in front of you, shift weight to one leg and slowly sit back. Emphasize moving hips backward rather than knees forward. Switch to opposite side. Start slowly moving back and forth; increase speed at your own pace to make sure the motion doesn't shorten. Complete 20 repetitions.

**Benefit:** This move stretches the inner thighs and strengthens the glutes. “The glutes are your power muscles in your golf swing,” says Roberts.

**Flexibility: 2**

**Mechanics: 3**

**Power: 5**



## Golf Squat

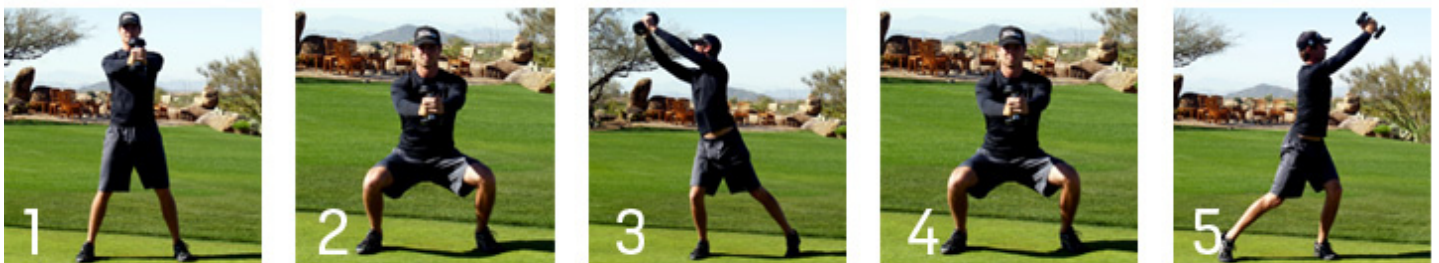
Stand holding a 10-pound dumbbell with hand-over-hand grip. Feet should be more than shoulder-width apart. Lower to a squat. Rise, turning to the right while bending your elbows and raising the weight over right shoulder. Hips should face right, with your weight over your right foot and your left heel off the floor. Return to the starting position and repeat to the opposite side.

**Benefit:** In addition to strengthening the glutes, this move increases strength and mobility in the large muscles in the back and shoulders. “The muscles of the shoulders help you control the golf club at the top of your backswing through impact, so it really helps you control the plane of the club and improve consistency on impact,” says Roberts.

**Flexibility:** 2

**Mechanics:** 2

**Power:** 5



## Single-leg Romanian Deadlift

Stand with feet shoulder-width apart. Hold a dumbbell or pair of dumbbells with hands slightly more than shoulder-width apart. Move one foot slightly behind the other, holding it a few inches off the ground. With back flat and abs tight, slowly lower the weight toward front foot and allow free leg to float behind you for balance. Once the weight reaches mid-shin level, push through grounded heel to return to the upright position, and repeat on the opposite leg. Perform two to four sets of eight reps.

**Benefit:** “I do this exercise with every golfer,” says Roberts. “It teaches you to activate each glute independently, so it’s a huge power generator. It also improves stability in the right leg so the golfer can rotate around a stable right base, which equates to distance, consistency, and accuracy.”

**Flexibility:** 3

**Mechanics:** 5

**Power:** 5



## Pilates Roll Down with Oblique Twist

Squeeze a ball between hands. Inhale as you articulate spine down to the floor. When bottom rib touches the floor, exhale and roll back to the starting position. Repeat ten to twenty times.

**For more challenge:** Articulate spine toward the floor to the point of abdominal muscle activation. Inhale; rotate from core, bringing ball to the right. Exhale and return to starting position. Switch sides. Once you have mastered the movement, speed up the action to a more explosive movement.

**Benefit:** This move works your transverse abdominus, which is critical for stabilizing the back. “This helps you get the posterior pelvic tilt which is what helps generate power through your hips at the point of impact. If you aren’t able to create that it will deplete your body of generating power,” says Roberts.

**Flexibility: 3**

**Mechanics: 4**

**Power: 4**



## Core Crunch with Ball

Lie on floor with knees bent and a medicine or towel between knees. Clasp hands behind head supporting neck. On exhale, lift shoulder blades off the floor. Repeat until muscle fatigue.

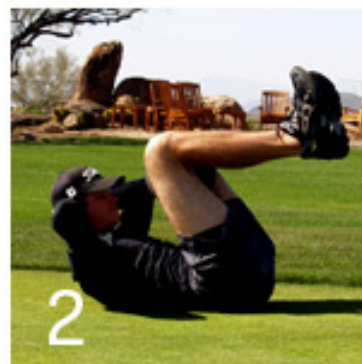
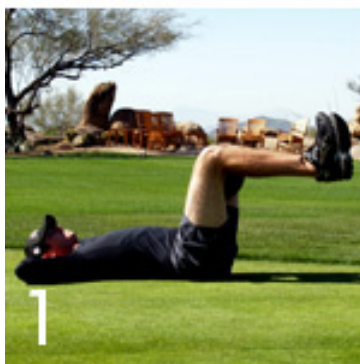
**For more challenge:** Squeeze the upper and lower body together.

**Benefit:** Crunches work the rectus abdominus muscles, or what you might know as the “six-pack” muscles, which are important for core stabilization during the swing. For a complete abs workout, pair this exercise with the Pilates Roll Down with Oblique Twist. “These two exercises are a very complete abdominal program for golf,” says Roberts.

**Flexibility: 2**

**Mechanics: 3**

**Power: 5**



## 30-second Speed Drill

Extend the arm at shoulder height and open and close the hands as quickly as possible for 30 seconds. Rest for 60 seconds and repeat three times. Switch sides.

**Benefit:** “This exercise very critical in creating more action in hands, wrists and forearms,” says Roberts. This will improve the technique of your downswing and generate more power on impact, she says.

**Flexibility: 2**

**Mechanics: 5**

**Power: 5**



## Front and Side Leg Swing

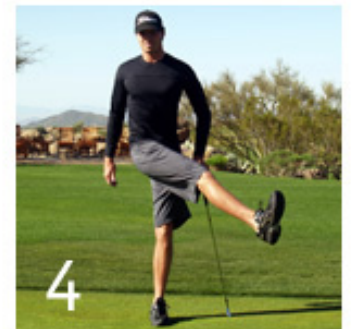
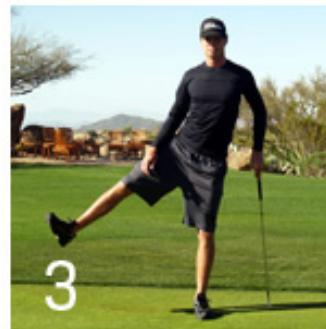
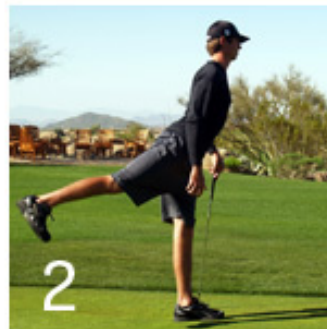
Stand tall with feet shoulder-width apart. Hold a golf club in right hand for balance and swing left leg forward as far as possible, then backward as far as possible. Increase the pace into a smooth movement. Perform a set of eight reps for each leg. Then, take a narrower stance and change the motion so each leg swings out to the side, holding hands on hips for balance. Perform one set of eight reps for each leg.

**Benefit:** This move is key for increasing mobility in the hips. When you can internally rotate the right hip in the backswing and during the downswing, you can generate more power from the right glute. “It will definitely help you increase distance on the course,” says Roberts.

**Flexibility: 4**

**Mechanics: 4**

**Power: 4**



## Dumbbell Row with Rotation

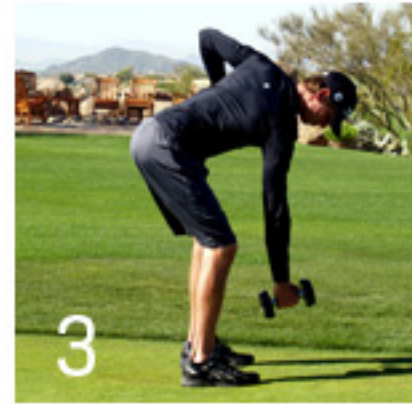
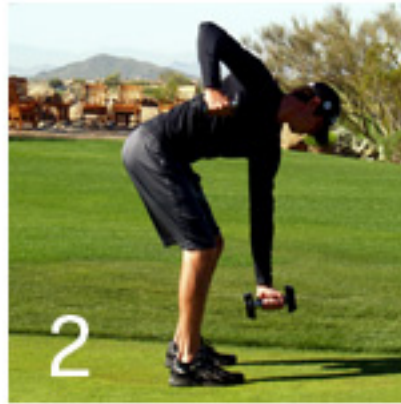
Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and hold a 10-pound dumbbell in each hand. Bend forward at waist, slightly bending knees, and letting dumbbells hang in front of your thighs, palms facing each other. Pull right arm toward rib cage while rotating your torso as far as possible to the right. Pause, then lower right arm while pulling up left arm and rotating left. Perform two to four sets of eight reps.

**Benefit:** This move improves core strength and the ability to activate the obliques. “In your golf swing, the trunk should move before hands, which requires strength and flexibility in the trunk,” says Roberts

**Flexibility:** 4

**Mechanics:** 4

**Power:** 4



## Power Rotation with Clap

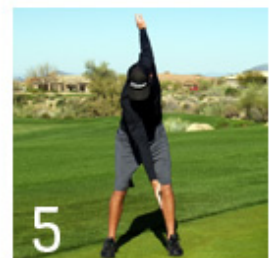
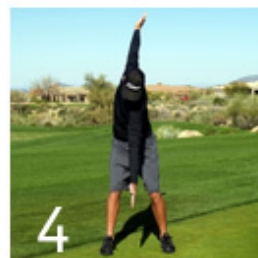
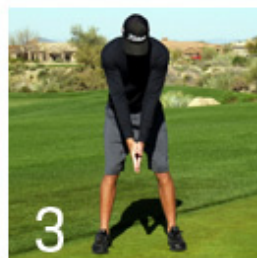
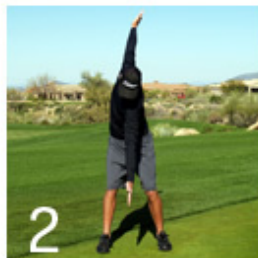
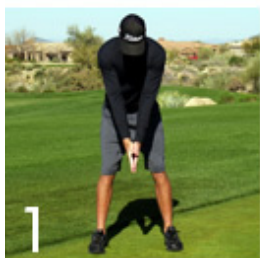
Stand in golf address position with palms together, pointing to the ground. Raise right arm above head so arms form a vertical line, then swing it down clapping right hand with left. Repeat 20 times on both sides. Then, extend both your arms and rotate the torso so your arms switch positions, swinging like a windmill. Repeat 20 times.

**Benefit:** This move increases explosive power from trunk and shoulders. “Do this exercise to strengthen core muscles and action from shoulders and increase explosive power from the trunk through the shoulders and out through the hands,” says Roberts.

**Flexibility:** 3

**Mechanics:** 3

**Power:** 4



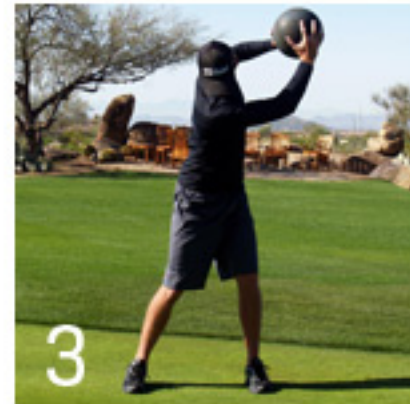
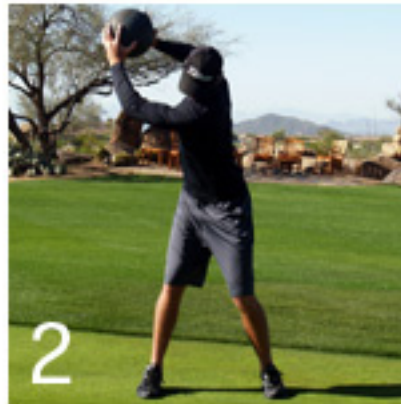
## Golf Twist

Stand in a golf-address position with feet slightly more than shoulder-width apart, weight on the inside of each heel. Use both hands to hold a 5-pound medicine ball or dumbbell at center of chest, with elbows extended out to sides. Keeping head still and feet flat, bring the ball up and to the left, as in a backswing, until right shoulder is underneath chin. Return to starting position and repeat to the right.

**Benefit:** This exercise helps increase the range of motion of the trunk and shoulders, and helps you generate power in the trunk through impact. “This will improve range of motion in the upper body, which equates to power and consistency,” says Roberts. **Flexibility: 2**

**Mechanics: 4**

**Power: 4**



## Rear Delt Exercise

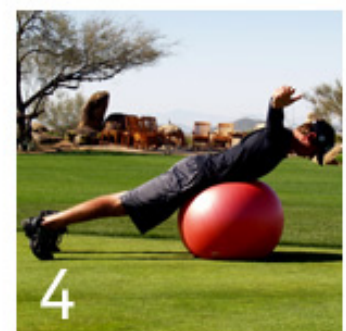
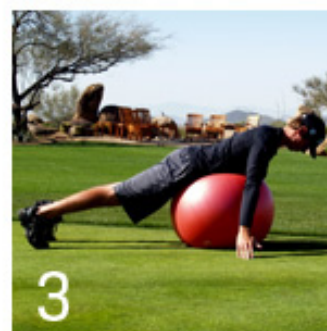
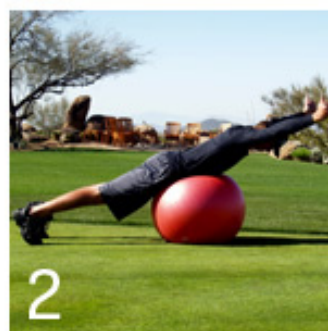
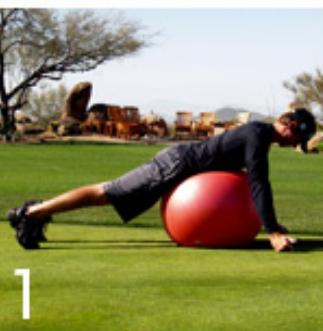
Lie face-down on a Swiss-ball. Squeeze legs together to stabilize the lower body. Lift chest off the ball, thumbs facing the ceiling, arms extended slightly wider than shoulder-width apart. Lift arms five to ten times. Rest for one minute. Bring arms perpendicular to shoulders. Lift the arms five to ten times. Rest for one minute. Bring the arms to a 45-degree angle, thumbs facing the ceiling. Lift the arms five to ten times. Rest for one minute.

**Benefit:** This move is key for increasing strength in the shoulders and can help eliminate swing faults. “This will help you with control of club at top of backswing through impact, and give you greater extension at finish position through your upper back,” says Roberts.

**Flexibility: 3**

**Mechanics: 4**

**Power: 4**



## Twister

Get into a modified pushup position with shins on a Swiss ball and hands on the floor, directly beneath shoulders. Slide your legs about halfway down the sides of the ball. Keeping legs straight and navel pulled in toward spine, roll the ball to the left by attempting to touch left foot to the floor. Next, try to touch right foot to the floor so the ball rolls to the right, and return to starting position. That's one repetition. Focus on initiating the move from your hips while keeping the rest of your body stable. Perform three sets of 12 repetitions, 3 days a week.

**Benefit:** This exercise delivers major power—it strengthens the oblique abdominal muscles, which are the initiating muscles in the backswing and the muscles in your downswing,” says Roberts.

**Flexibility:** 2

**Mechanics:** 3

**Power:** 4



## Swiss-Ball Russian Twist

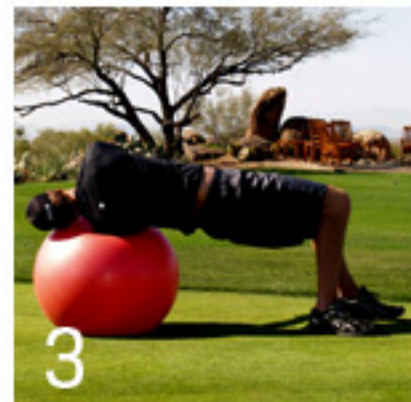
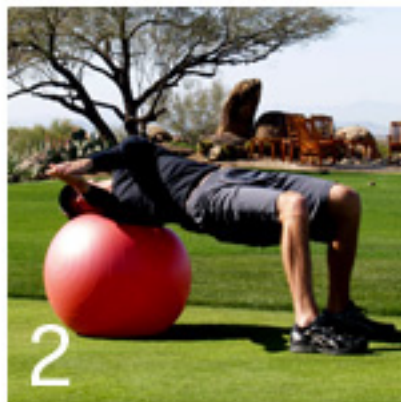
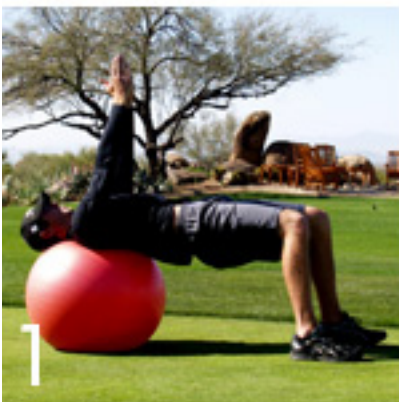
Lie with shoulder blades and head on a Swiss-ball and feet flat on the floor. Raise arms straight in the air, clasping hands together. Slowly rotate your shoulders to the left until your arms are roughly parallel to the floor. Pause, then rotate to the right. Do two sets of 15 repetitions.

**Benefit:** This exercise teaches you how to rotate the spine, hips, and shoulders to create a very compact, powerful coil. “The shoulders should ultimately turn to a 90-degree angle over the hips that turn at a 45-degree angle. This compact rotation is much more efficient and powerful,” says Roberts.

**Flexibility:** 5

**Mechanics:** 4

**Power:** 4



# Supine Groin Stretch

Lie on back with the soles of your feet together and knees spread. Relax, feeling the stretch in the groin.

**For more challenge:** Bring feet closer to glutes.

**Benefit:** This stretch releases the groin muscle, inner thighs, and hip flexors. “It’s also very important for releasing the lumbar spine—the low back is the number one injury for golfers,” says Roberts.

**Flexibility: 5**

**Mechanics: 5**

**Power: 4**

