Get Faster

Try These Challenging Cone Drills to Boost Your Speed and Agility

By Jim Carpentier Published On: 2022-02-08

Comfortable spring temperatures are ideal for athletes to exercise in the great outdoors after spending the winter months training inside gyms.

Besides reaping the healthful benefits of fresh air and the vitamin D we receive from direct sunlight (which strengthens the immune system and promotes muscle-building testosterone), the following intense outdoor cone drills will also provide that extra edge on the field, court or ice.

Grab a water bottle, four cones, a tape measure and a timer, head out to a nearby spacious park or field, and get ready to go.

Guidelines

- Do an upper- and lower-body dynamic warm-up and finish the workout with upper- and lower-body cooldown static stretches for greater flexibility and range of motion.
- Hydrate before, during and after the exercises.
- Perform 2 sets
- Rest 60-120 seconds between sets; 90-120 seconds between drills (allowing time to reset the cones for the next movement and also hydrate if needed).
- Choose four of the six listed drills to perform each workout.
- Vary the cone drill sequence in subsequent workouts to avoid staleness.
- Perform workouts on non-consecutive days for adequate recovery.

Lateral Cone Jumps/Cariocas

This combo blends lower-body explosiveness with lateral agility. Directions: Laterally space three cones 12 inches apart and the fourth cone laterally 20 yards away. Line up 12 inches alongside the first cone. Jump as high as possible over it and then do the same for the successive two cones. Upon landing, perform Cariocas to the farthest cone. Once you reach that cone, reverse direction with Cariocas back to the cone set and explosively jump over each cone to finish the drill.

Forward Cone Jumps/Multidirectional Sprints

Time yourself to measure how fast you can perform this drill. Position two cones 12 inches apart in front of you; cone 3 20 yards diagonally right and cone 4 20 yards diagonally left from cone 3. Jump as high as possible over cones 1 and 2, then sprint to cones 3 and 4. Backpedal to cone 3, turn around and jump over each of cones 2 and 1. Another lower-body power and agility-building combo drill. Try doing the forward jumps and diagonal sprints uphill.

Forward and Reverse Sprints

Space three cones 30 yards apart in front of each other. Directions: Set a timer determining how fast you can complete the sprints. Start in a sprint position with one hand atop cone 1. Sprint forward to cone 2. Backpedal to cone 1, then sprint to cone 3 (bypassing cone 2). Touch cone 3 and backpedal all the way to start position at cone 1.

Single-Leg Hops

This is a key drill for those seeking to improve core stability for better balance. Directions: Position cones 1 and 2 laterally 6 inches apart. Space cone 3 6 inches in front of cone 2, and cone 4 6 inches diagonally right of cone 3. Starting with your left foot airborne, hop with your right foot laterally over each of cones 1 and 2, then change direction and hop forward over cone 3, and then hop diagonally over cone 4. Immediately switch with your right foot airborne and hop over each cone with your left foot from 4, to 3, to 2, and ending with cone 1.

Explosive Push-Ups/Forward Sprints

Time yourself for this combo that taxes your upper and lower body, beginning with upper body power-blasting Explosive Push-Ups, and finishing with lower body all out 40-yard Forward Sprints. Directions: Use two cones spaced 40 yards apart in front of each other. Start in a Push-Up position alongside cone 1. Do six Explosive Push-Ups (hands leaving the ground between each rep), then immediately sprint to cone 2. Upon touching the cone, quickly turn around and sprint back to cone 1. Going from the Push-Ups to Forward Sprints is especially sports-specific by mimicking having to rapidly rise from a prone position and chase after an opponent downfield, for instance. As stated for previous drills, occasionally perform the Push-Ups and Sprints uphill for added intensity.

Squat Thrusts/Cariocas/Forward & Backward Sprints

Using three cones, this is perhaps the toughest drill combination mixing lower body explosive power (Squat Thrusts) with multidirectional agility. Directions: Space cones 1 and 2 30 yards laterally apart and cone 3 40 yards in front of cone 2. Begin in a Push-Up position alongside cone 1 and do six Squat Thrusts. Immediately rise and perform Cariocas to cone 2, then sprint forward to cone 3. Backpedal to cone 2 and finish with Cariocas to cone 1.

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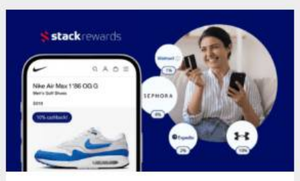

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