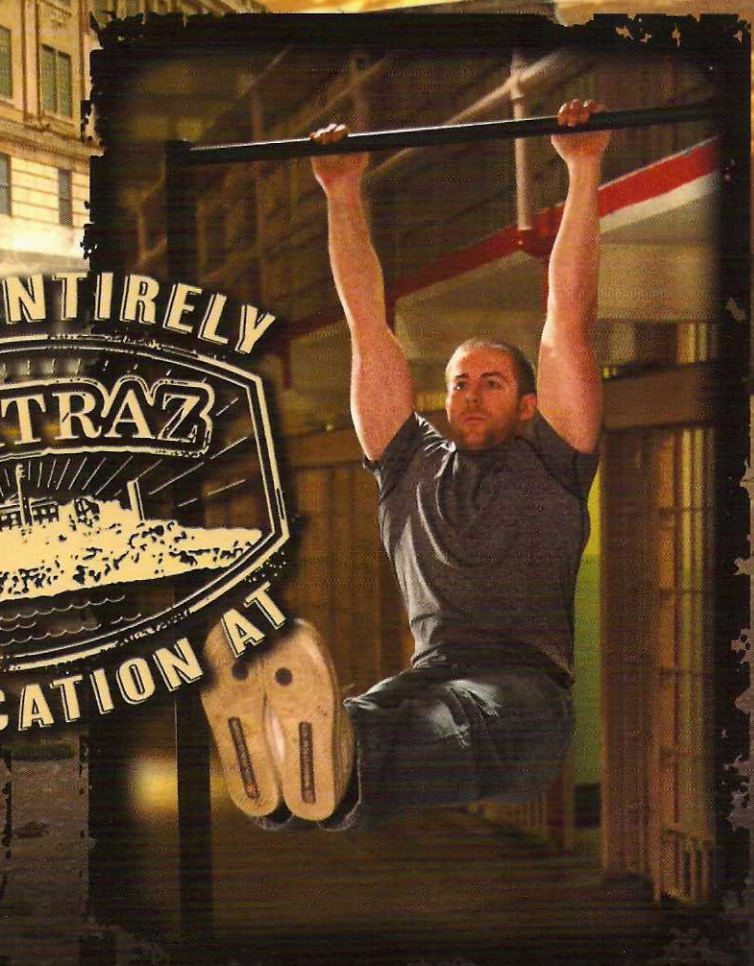
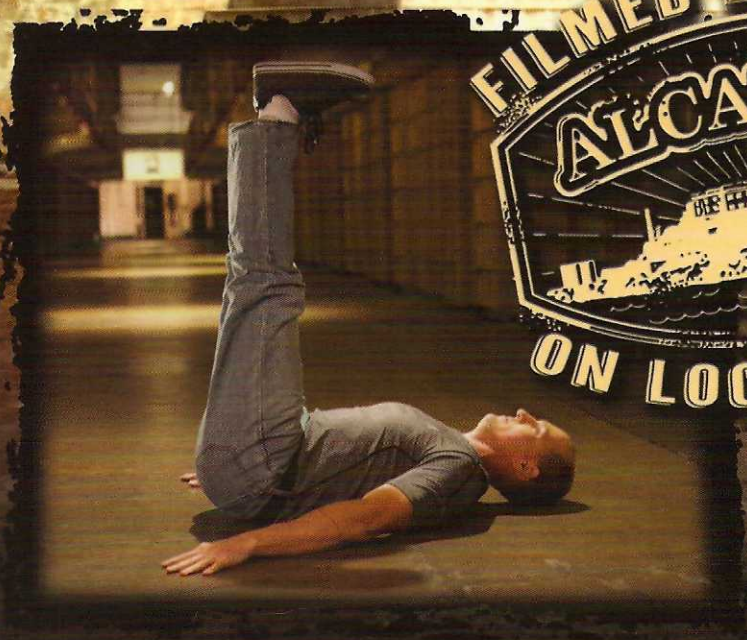
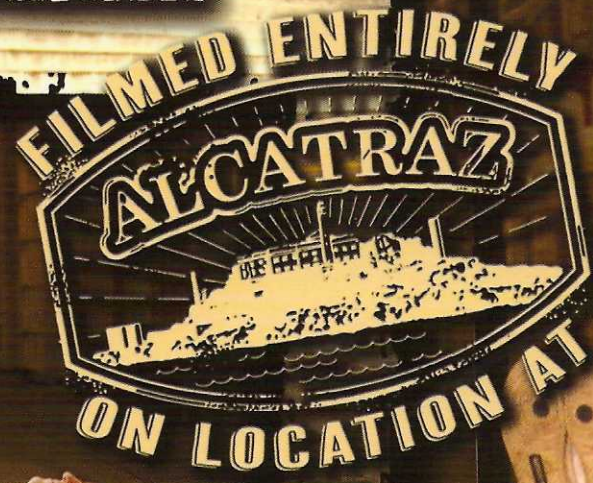


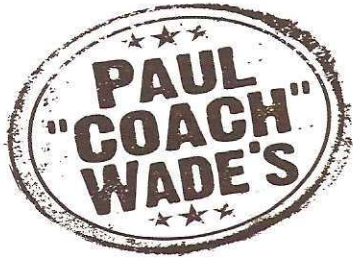
CONVICT CONDITIONING

VOLUME
III:

LEG RAISES: SIX-PACK FROM HELL

WITH BRETT JONES
AND MAX SHANK





CONVICT CONDITIONING

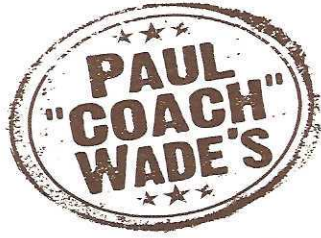
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DISCLAIMER!

Fitness and strength are meaningless qualities without *health*. With correct training, these three benefits should naturally proceed hand-in-hand. In this book, every effort has been made to convey the importance of safe training technique, but despite this all individual trainees are different and needs will vary. Proceed with caution, and at your own risk. Your body is your own responsibility-look after it. All medical experts agree that you should consult your physician before initiating a training program. Be safe!

Despite this, the author maintains that all the exercise principles within this volume-techniques, methods and ideology-are valid. Use them, and become the best.

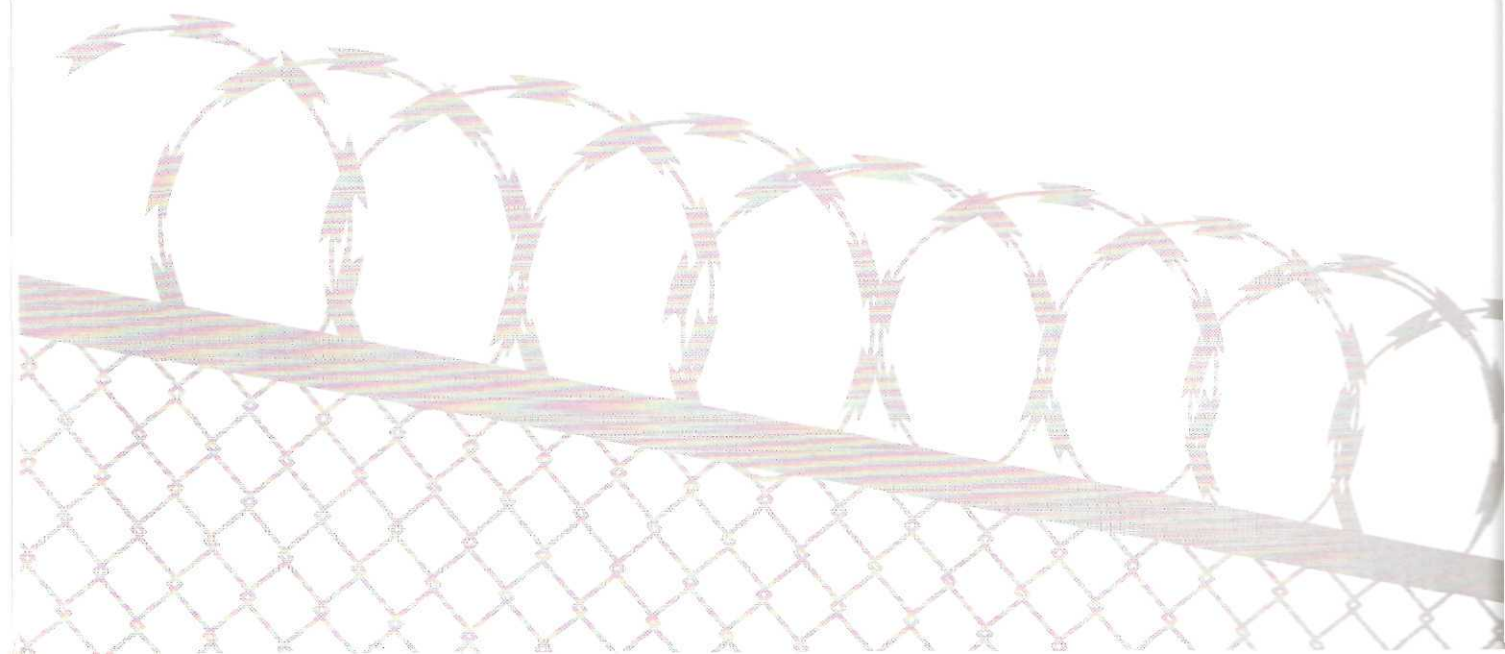
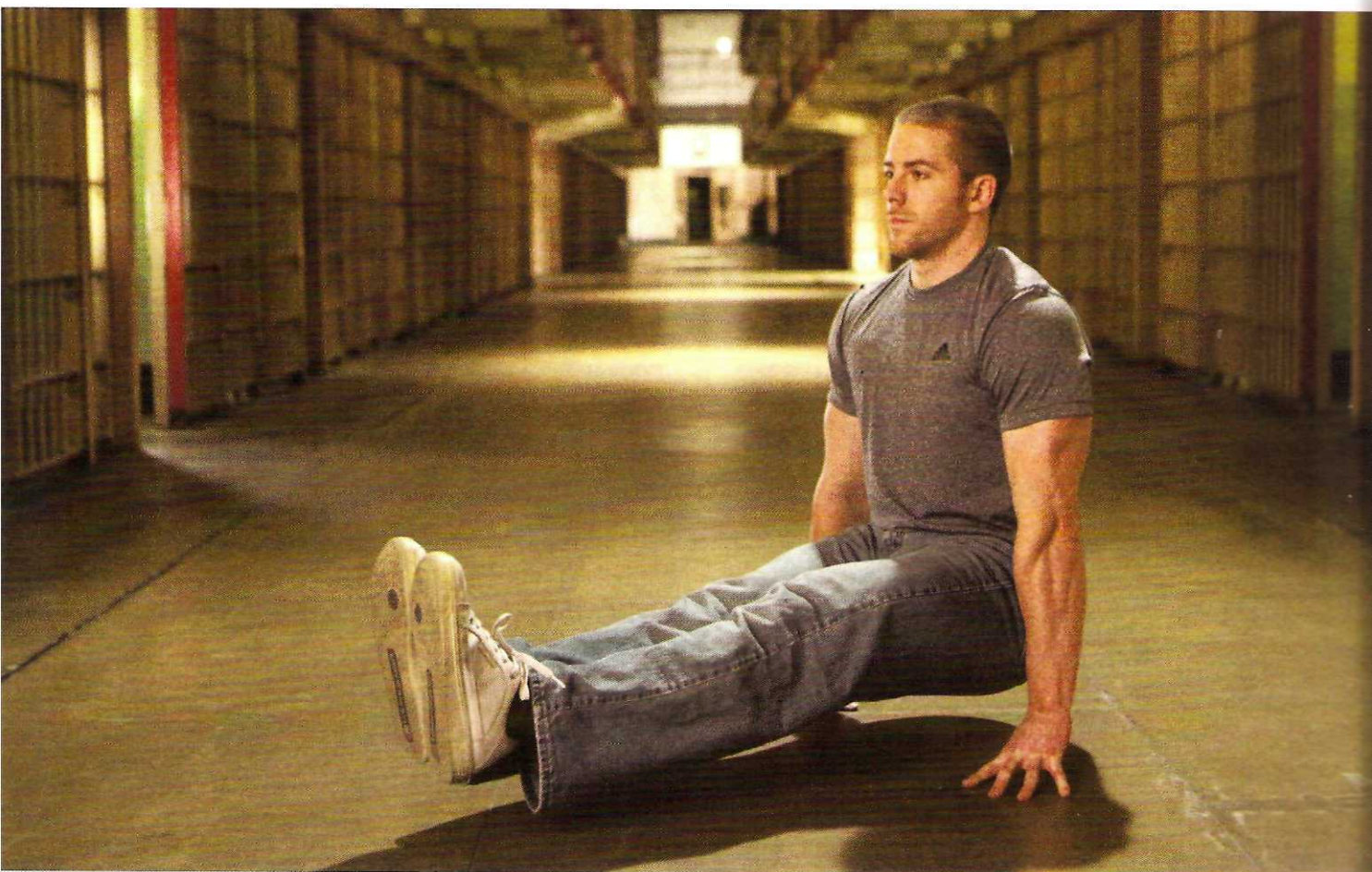


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CELL 1

**LEG RAISE
THEORY**



Welcome to the third DVD in the Convict Conditioning series.

These DVDs are based on the bodyweight strength system first presented in the Dragon Door book *Convict Conditioning*, written by Paul Wade. The Convict Conditioning system represents the most powerful, efficient distillation of the best hardcore prison bodyweight training methods ever to exist.

Many of these older, very potent solitary training systems are on the verge of dying out behind bars, as American prisoners begin to gain access to weights gyms, and modern “bodybuilding thinking” floods into the prisons. That’s why we chose to shoot these groundbreaking DVDs in Alcatraz. Back in the day, The Rock was the biggest, baddest jailhouse there was. It seemed like the right place to show you the most powerful prison training techniques there are.

In this system, no matter what kind of movement we’re working on, we focus on a chain of ten progressive exercises. When you master one exercise, you move on to the next, and so on. Because the later exercises build on the earlier ones, they are sometimes called the “ten steps”. When you reach the tenth exercise, you will be just about as strong as it’s possible for a human being to be in that movement. For this reason, the tenth exercise in any chain is called the “Master Step”. How this all works will be crystal clear if you’ve picked up a copy of the *Convict Conditioning* bodyweight book. This DVD is pretty self-explanatory as it goes along. For right now though, don’t worry about getting too tied up in terminology and numbers. In this third DVD of the series we’ll focus on the classic bodyweight movement for midsection strength—leg raises.

Modern abdominal training methods.

Pick up any training and fitness comic from the newsstand and the chances are you’ll see the words “ab training special” splashed all over the front cover. If you read these articles, you’ll find they’re mostly the same—they advise lots of puny isolation exercises for the abs, lots of different techniques to supposedly hit the midsection “from all angles”, and they usually advocate quite high reps and sets. If you ask the average gym member or guy on the street, good abs will generally be the bodypart most trainees desire more than anything. It’s this craving for the fabled “six-pack” which sells most of the fitness magazines on the market today, not to mention most of the

gadgets; from the overpriced ab springs, cages and rubber band exercisers to those dumb electrical stimulation belts that do jack squat for your abs. That's why it's so ironic that the majority of the advice you find in these magazines is completely impotent to transform a flabby midsection into a steel washboard. In fact, most of the information on ab training today is just pathetic.

Prison-style midsection training.

If you're sick to death of high volume, complex, drawn-out midsection training programs that give you nothing but a bad back and deliver zero in the way of noticeable results or training satisfaction, don't worry. In the first half of this DVD we're going to induct you into the kind of hardcore abdominal training you find, not in gyms or health centers, but in the nastiest, most dangerous prisons. When convicts train their waists, they want real, noticeable results—and by "results" I don't mean that they want cute, tight little defined abs. I mean that they want thick, strong, muscular midsections. They want *functionally* powerful abs and hips they can use for heavy lifting, kicking, and brawling. They want guts so strong from their training that it actually hurts an attacker to punch them in the belly. Prison abs aren't about all show, no go—a prison-built physique has to be all show *and* all go. Those guys don't just want six-packs—they want *six-packs from Hell*. And, for the first time, we're going to show you how these guys get what they want. We're not going to be using sissy machines or easy isolation exercises—we're going straight for the old school secret weapon for gut training; progressive leg raises.



THE TEN LEG RAISE COMMANDMENTS

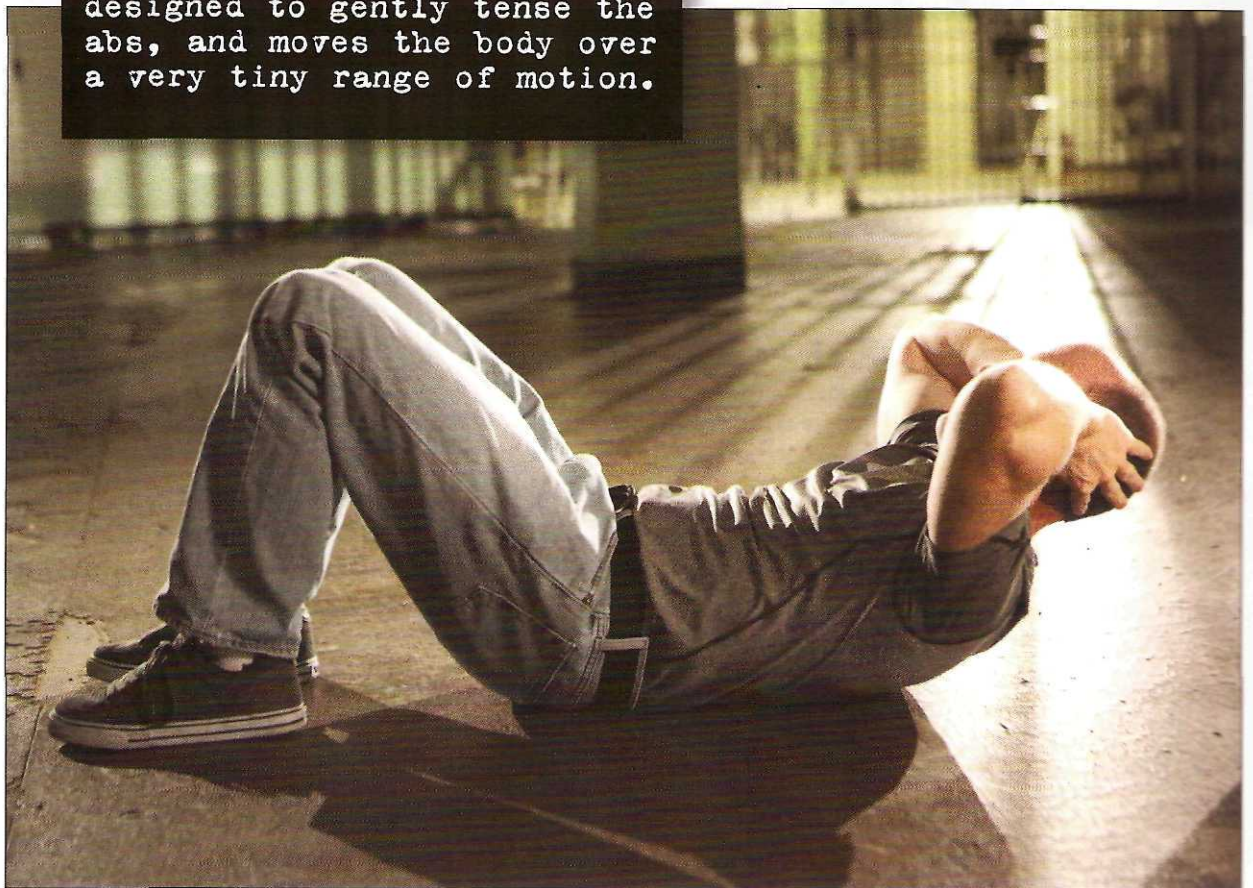
Before we launch into the leg raise series, we're going to quickly break down the essence of how to work those leg raises properly. We're going to give you ten key points, the "Ten Commandments" of leg raises, that will take your prison-style core training from just "okay" to absolutely phenomenal. We want the results to be so effective that they'll literally shock you. This kind of accelerated progress can be achieved, but if you want to achieve it you better listen carefully to these ten key pointers we're about to reveal to you.

Bodyweight mastery is a lot like high-level martial arts. It's more about *principles* than individual techniques. Really study and absorb these principles, and you'll be on your way to a six-pack from Hell in no time.

COMMANDMENT I: BIG, FUNCTIONAL MOVEMENTS!

This is lesson one when it comes to effective midsection training. If you take nothing else away from this DVD, take this. The most popular midsection exercise in the world is the *crunch*. For those who don't know, the crunch is an exercise designed to gently tense the abs, and moves the body over a very tiny range of motion. A crunch usually looks something like this:

For those who don't know, the *crunch* is an exercise designed to gently tense the abs, and moves the body over a very tiny range of motion.

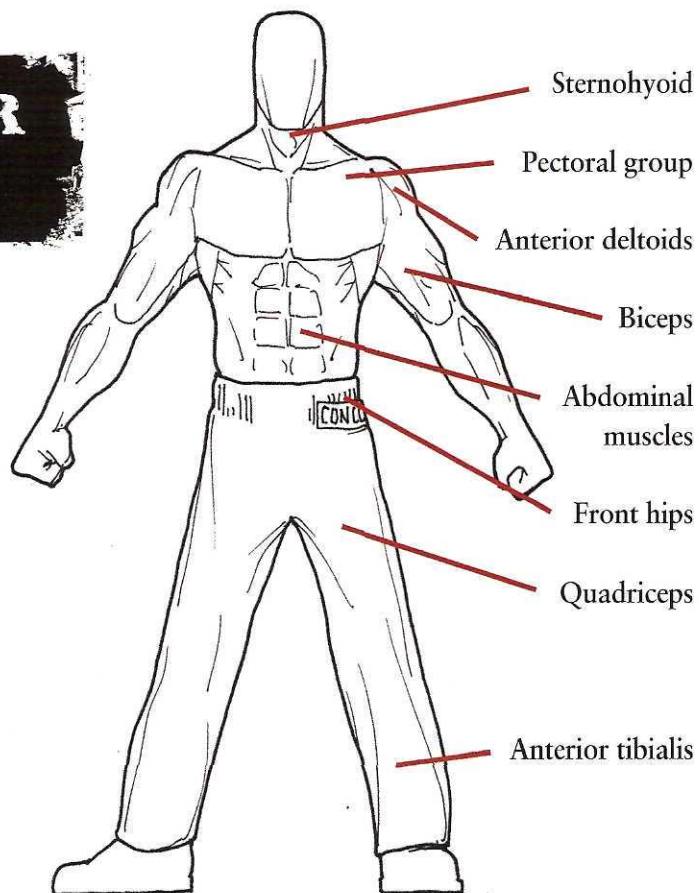


The goal is to “feel the burn” in your abs. This is pretty much the opposite of what you should do if you want to develop high levels of useful, functional strength. That’s because the human body evolved to move in its entirety—*big* movements of the body and limbs. Your muscles don’t care how you think they “feel”. They care what they are *doing!* In athletics or strength, we use the *whole body* as a tool, not just parts of it. Look at fighting, running, throwing, lifting heavy weights—all these functional things involve the whole body moving as a unit. The abdominal muscles have evolved to play their role in these “big” movements. Train your abs the way nature intended. Use big motions which actually move your body and limbs, not little motions which just tense the muscles a bit. How do you train your midsection with “big” movements? Well, since the midsection is just that—the middle of the body—the muscles there function by contracting and bending the body in the middle. Ideally, they either bring your torso to your legs, as with sit-ups, or they bring your legs closer to your torso, as with leg raises. Both these techniques are fine exercises, but for reasons given in the *Convict Conditioning* book, leg raises are superior to sit-ups. For maximum results, train your waist as it was meant to be trained. Ignore the modern subjective methods of “tensing” and “feeling” your abs using little movements. Concentrate on big, objective movements. And the leg raise is the biggest and best there is.

COMMANDMENT 2: TOTAL BODY INTEGRATION!

This commandment follows on from the first. A diet of crunches, cable crunches, reverse crunches and ab machine work will isolate your abdominis rectus, the “six pack” muscles running up the center of your abdomen. This kind of “isolation” is all the rage in modern core training. But if you want a thick, athletic, well-developed midsection, “isolation” of the abs is probably the *worst* thing you can do. Your muscular system is just that—a *system*. During natural motion, no muscle group ever acts in isolation. Ever. Your midsection is a perfect example of this. A lot of people these days are aware of the importance of the “posterior chain” of muscles which support the back of the spine; the hamstrings, glutes, spinal erectors, etc. Unfortunately, fewer athletes are aware of the “anterior chain” which runs up the front of the body. When you move your body forward, when you run, kick, punch, jump, do a pullup, you use this chain. And it’s called a “chain” because the muscles within it are interconnected. They include the deeper heads of the quadriceps, the rectus femoris and the sartorius, the hip flexors, the psoas, the obliques and the iliacus muscles.

ANTERIOR CHAIN



This chain of muscles continues up into the thorax, with the intercostals and serratus. The abs are just one link in this chain. Training one link in a chain whilst letting the other links wither away is a surefire recipe to make that chain break, somewhere down the line! The only true cure for the problems caused by isolation is to train your midsection using your *total body* as much as possible. The best way to do this is by the leg raise series we're about to show you. Because leg raises are a functional, compound exercise, they naturally work the entire anterior chain automatically, without you having to use any special techniques. Raising your legs works the thighs and front of the hips, and stabilizing your torso works the obliques and trunk. As a side benefit, performing leg raises as we're about to show you, you'll naturally integrate your whole body into the movement. On the floor, you push with your hands, which activates the lats, spine and arms as support; when you hang, you are giving your shoulder girdle and grip a heck of a workout.

This is why you should always go old school, and do your vertical leg raises hanging from a bar. Those new stations with padded handles to rest your forearms on not only take your shoulders out of the movement, they also prevent your anterior chain from working properly as a system. Never be afraid of looking old fashioned and hanging while you work your waist. This is a super-efficient way to train. Forget about isolating your abs, your obliques, or any other muscle in your waist. When it comes to core training, the whole is definitely more than the sum of its parts. Learn to put your whole body into leg raises and not only will you get thick abs faster than with crunches, you'll make your *entire* midsection stronger, and also learn naturally how to integrate your core as an element of total-body power.

COMMANDMENT 3: HARD WORK, NOT LOTS OF WORK!

So far I can sum up the Convict Conditioning core training philosophy quite simply; don't use small, short stroke movements in the hope of isolating your abs. Use big movements like leg raises, and when you do them don't be afraid of working your entire body. Leg raises *should* be tough—they exhaust the whole system, particularly hanging leg raises. Some prison athletes get a harder upper body and grip workout during a single, brutal set of hanging leg raises than a lot of gym bunnies get doing ten sets of machine rows and forearm curls! If you're going to train your abs this way, you have to tailor your programming appropriately. The modern attitude is to work the abs for lots of sets and reps—sometimes dozens of sets, or hundreds of reps per workout, several times a week. You might hear a load of bullshit justification for this; stuff like “abs have a lot of red muscle fibers”, or “high reps will give you a six-pack”. This is totally misleading. Your waist muscles adapt to hard exercise no differently than any other muscle, and high reps won't make your abs “cut”—only fat loss can do that, and the best way to achieve fat loss is through a disciplined diet. To be honest, this high-volume approach only evolved to match the ineffectual modern exercises like crunches. Crunches do virtually nothing for your body, because they require virtually zero energy. As a result, you need to do lots and lots to feel like you're doing anything at all. If you want a strong, powerful, athletic midsection and hard abs, forget about increasing your reps endlessly and working out several times a week with light exercises. Train your midsection with the hardest exercises you can do—leg raises. Work hard to increase your reps, but when you reach your goal, don't just keep adding reps. You need to make the exercise *harder*, not *longer*. You can do this by moving to more and more advanced leg raise exercises, which we'll show you in this DVD. After you've hit your leg raises good and hard, let your core muscles rest, so they can adapt and get acclimatized to the progressive workload. Don't feel the need to train them every day or even every other day. Let them rest, so they can come back stronger next time!

COMMANDMENT 4: INHALE FOR ENERGY!

The next two commandments can be thought of as twins. They relate to the art of *breathing correctly* during your midsection training. Although I'll be focusing on leg raises, these two commandments can be successfully applied to all abdominal or waist training. Correct breathing is an essential part of all the bodyweight skills, but it's of particular importance when we're training the midsection, because many of the muscles which facilitate respiration, breathing, are found in the midsection. One of the main rules when working leg raises is to inhale on the negative—you breathe in only as your legs are descending. One of the main reasons for this is that, whilst you lift your legs up, the muscles of your core contract to do the lifting. This makes your midsection and thorax stiff, like armor, because the muscles layering your ribcage are tense. That doesn't make for easy expansion of the lungs. When you lower your legs, gravity is helping, so the tension around your trunk is greatly decreased. This is the perfect time to inhale—so do it. Don't gulp, don't pant, just take your breath in smooth and controlled.

A lot of athletes lose rhythm as they perform leg raises, especially as they tire, and sometimes even hold their breath. Holding your breath might have some use if you're pushing your limit on single or double rep bench presses, but when you're trying to add another ten reps to your leg raises, it's a bad idea. Your body needs plenty of oxygen if you're pushing yourself for double figure repetitions. Don't ignore this factor. Inhale deeply, expand your lungs and take plenty of air in during your sets. You'll find this can make your numbers fly up. Most people aren't used to deep, healthy breathing; if, at first, you find yourself getting dizzy or out of breath, take an extra breath or two at the top or bottom of the leg raise motion.

COMMANDMENT 5: EXHALE FOR POWER!

This is the flip side of the above rule. Just as the muscles of the thorax, abdomen and rib cage *relax* when we breathe in, so they *contract* when we breathe out. Do you remember the last time you got sore abs just from laughing too hard? That was due to the musculature of your core and midsection being recruited to cope with all the extra exhalation caused by laughter. You should use this biomechanical recruitment to help you train your midsection. Exhale strongly and deeply while your legs are coming up during the leg raise. Try to time it so that your lungs are fully empty by the time you reach the top of each rep. Watch the exhalation.

Really practice this with each type of leg raise, so you've got it down by the time you get to the hanging leg raises. Exhaling not only gives the muscles a different, added form of workload, it also makes lifting your legs up easier, because your internal organs won't be squashed down by lungs swollen with air. A tight stomach leads to a more fluid rep.

COMMANDMENT 6: KEEP YOUR GUT IN!

While we're on the subject of a tight stomach, here's another cardinal rule you should always observe during core training—*keep your gut in*. When we talk about the midsection muscles, we usually admire the external muscles—the abs, the exterior obliques, the intercostals and so on. That's probably natural, because these are the muscles we can see. But your waist also has a deeper, internal layer of muscle. One of these deep layers is called the transversus. The transversus runs from the hips to the rib cage. Rather than moving the legs, trunk or pelvis up and down, the transversus keeps the stomach wall held *in*. You know the way you suck your gut in when a hot

lady walks by? That's the transversus doing his job. A strong transversus is crucial to symmetrical strength, healthy posture and injury prevention. The transversus is, in many ways, the antagonistic muscle group of the *diaphragm*, the powerful sheet of muscle underneath the lungs. When we strain or lift something heavy, the diaphragm contracts, which places pressure on the internal organs below. During great effort, this internal pressure can cause the gut wall to split, which pushes a little lump of intestine out, making a bulge. This is what a hernia is, and it can be devastatingly painful and require a lot of physio or surgery to correct. If you train your transversus so it's as powerful as your diaphragm muscle, the two will be in balance and your chances of having a hernia will fall to near zero. The best way to do this is to keep your stomach tightly pulled in when you train your abs. Of course, your stomach should be braced during nearly all your exercises, but since the transversus is technically a core muscle, it's appropriate to train these areas together. Training your transversus couldn't be easier—just consciously keep your navel pulled as close to your spine as you can, during every rep of every set of leg raises.

Even when you inhale, that gut should be strongly braced; when you breathe out, your diaphragm will contract, so you'll be able to suck your stomach wall in to maximum tightness. Don't allow your belly to relax and sag when you train. Keep that gut in!

COMMANDMENT 7: NO MOMENTUM!

This next one's a no-brainer. The objective of leg raises is to work the muscles of your core. If momentum is moving your legs, it stands to reason that your muscles aren't. So for maximum muscle-strength, eliminate momentum from your leg raises. For some very advanced strength feats, like one-arm prison pushups and one-arm pullups, you obviously need a little "body English" to get things moving. But there's no excuse when it comes to leg raises. Whatever particular leg raise technique you are working on, cease all momentum and speed at the bottom—even if it's only for a fraction of a second. Lift your legs smoothly for a two count, making certain that your speed of motion is the same during every part of the lift. That's the key to perfect cadence. Don't get into leg raises that are too fast and sloppy.

If you want to train your abs safely using explosive motions, there are better ways—like medicine ball work, kips, tumbling or rebound throws. Save the leg raises for pure strength building.

COMMANDMENT 8: HOLD AT THE TOP!

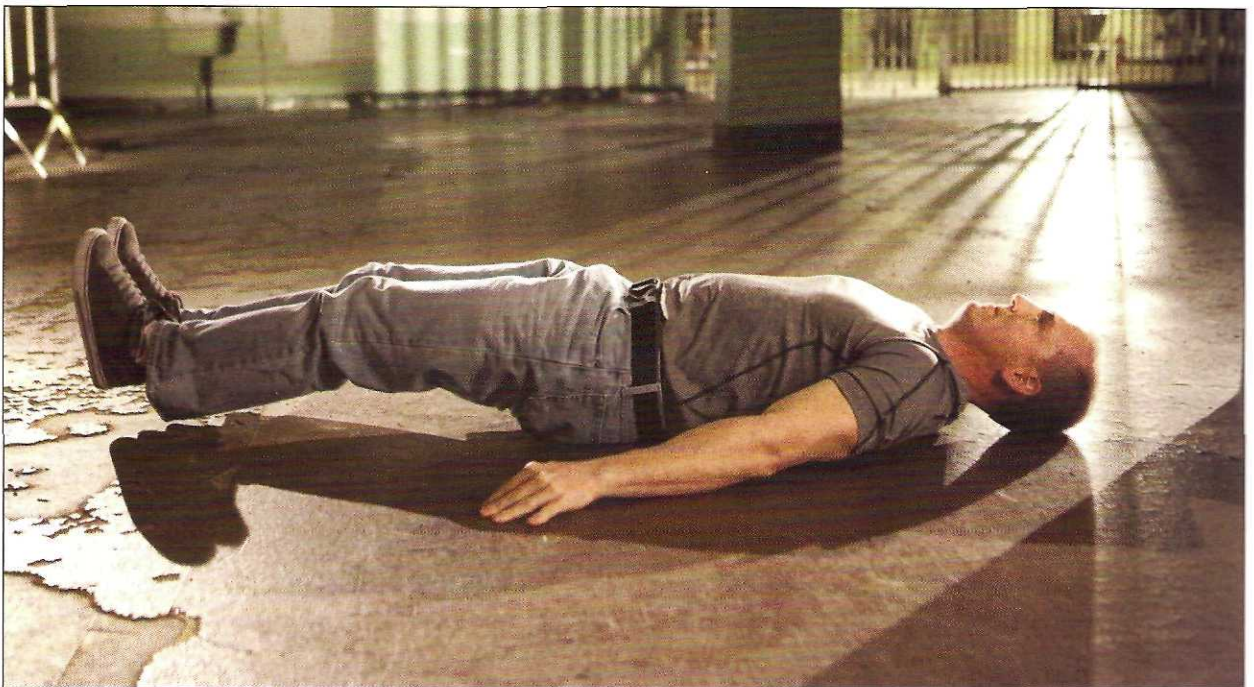
This is a commandment which directly applies to leg raises. A quick pause at the bottom position, with your legs straight or almost straight, is a good idea to eliminate momentum, but you don't really need to *hold* at the bottom. You should always hold at the top though—for at least a count of “one”. Pausing at the top is a great gauge of true waist and core strength. If you're using momentum to do your reps, just kicking your legs up, it'll be very hard to pause. Many athletes just throw themselves up and down during their training; there's no *control*. What do I mean by “control”? One definition of “control” in any exercise—whether with free weights or using body-weight—is the *pause test*. If you can pause for a full second at any stage in the technique, whether it's the first part of the positive, halfway through the negative, or wherever, then you know you are in control of that technique. The top position for hanging leg raises is the hardest position, so you know if you can pause at the top, you can pause anywhere in the rep—you have total control.

By the time you get to doing your midsection work while hanging, that top position pause will really add some juice and power to your abs; so it's a great idea to cultivate this habit of pausing at the top even when you start with leg raises on the floor. That way, by the time you get to hanging leg raise work, the top pause won't be nearly as difficult or intimidating. Keep it in your head as a *commandment*, not an option—from day one! Always hold at the top of a leg raise, no matter what step you're on.

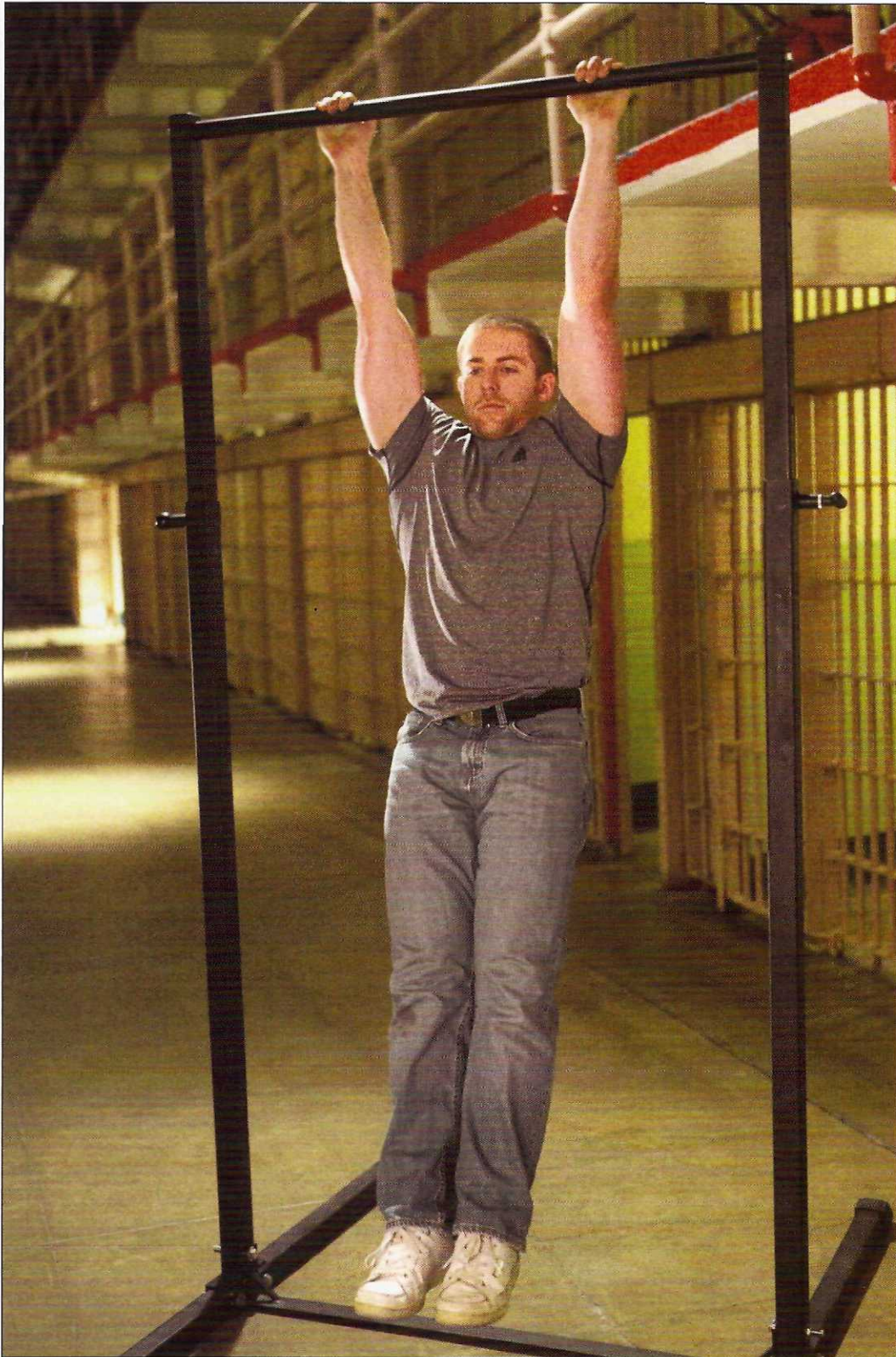
COMMANDMENT 9: NEVER ALLOW YOUR FEET TO TOUCH THE FLOOR!

This commandment is a lovely tactic, a great trick to get the most out of your leg raises. It exploits the fact that, unlike your biceps or pecs, the muscles of your core are active almost all day. Your abs fire when you sit up, or move; they fire while you're standing still, just to keep your body vertical. As a result of this basic function, the core muscles respond well to continuous tension while you are training them. The best way to achieve continuous tension isn't through mega high reps or some weird, esoteric mind-muscle technique. The best, and the simplest, way is to simply keep your heels off the ground when you do your leg raises. When they're doing leg raises lying down, a lot of athletes rest their heels on the floor, taking tension away from the midsection.

When performing hanging leg raises, many athletes use a low bar for the same reason; so they can rest their feet on the floor between reps. This is a mistake. Your abs were designed to develop good levels of prolonged tension. Don't rest your heels on the floor when you do leg raises. When you perform lying leg raises, keep your heels an inch or two off the floor at the bottom, like this.



When doing hanging leg raises, use a bar that's high enough to allow your body to hang all the way down without your feet touching solid ground. Following this rule during all your midsection training is a good way to get very athletic abdominal muscles, very fast.



COMMANDMENT 10: TRAIN YOUR SPINE!

This final commandment isn't specifically about leg raises; but it's very important if you're going to be training your waist properly. The anterior chain gets a great workout from leg raises. If you're going to work the anterior chain, you need to work its antagonistic muscle chain, too—the posterior chain. The more you work leg raises—or any good, compound core movement—the more you stretch your posterior chain, the muscles running vertically along the back of your legs, hips and spine. Unfortunately, our back is being relaxed forwards all the time; although most people don't methodically stretch their backs forward, they do hunch over desks, slump in chairs and stoop when they walk. All this stretches the posterior chain. You add leg raises and make your anterior chain at the front incredibly powerful, and you're going to need to do some similar work for the posterior chain, or your locomotor system is in danger of becoming unbalanced. How often do people slump or stretch their spines backwards? There are various ways to work your posterior chain with kettlebells, barbells and so on. But the simplest, most powerful way to ensure that your posterior and anterior chains are in perfect balance, is by bridging. Bridging is the bodyweight art of arching the body backwards, as opposed to leg raises, which bend the body forwards. Since you're going to want to learn to bridge, you're in luck. The fourth DVD in this series, *Advanced Bridging: Forging an Iron Spine* contains the ultimate prison-style bridging seminar. It's all you'll ever need to have a spine like a titanium whip. If you only ever get your hands on two waist training DVDs, make it this one, and the sequel on bridging. Follow these and you can kiss goodbye to a flabby gut and back pain!

CELL 2:
THE
LEG RAISE
SERIES



Let's break it down. If you want a six-pack from Hell, the first thing you need to do is focus your efforts. If a weightlifter wanted a very thick, powerful chest in a hurry, he wouldn't spread his efforts out over a dozen exercises and perform them gently all day long. No—he'd pick just one exercise, probably the bench press, and just focus on getting stronger and stronger on that lift until he was monstrously strong. When he reached this level, and his pecs were thick slabs of meat, only *then* would he maybe begin sculpting them with minor exercises and higher reps. Mind you, if he made that kind of progress, he might not even bother changing his routine at all! It's no different if you want a mind-blowing midsection. Just pick one exercise that hits all the muscles in the midsection—the hip flexors, the abs, the intercostals, the obliques—then blast it. Don't waste your time just adding endurance. Endurance training does nothing for functional strength, and it won't help your physique, either. Who looks more ripped? An endurance athlete like a marathon runner, or a strength athlete like a gymnast? The gymnast! You can't see endurance. You can only *see* muscle.

The one exercise we're going to be showing you is the best midsection exercise known to man, and the most popular amongst soldiers, warriors, martial artists and prison athletes since men started working out—the leg raise. There are lots of different types of leg raise, but unfortunately many of these have become obscured in gyms due to the influx of comfortable, overpriced ab training machines. Forget these machines—we'll show you all the techniques you'll ever need. A little later, we're going to be showing you *ten* different leg raise movements, each one a little harder than the last. You'll learn how to get the most out of each of these techniques, each of these ten steps, before moving up to the next step. By the time you get through all *ten steps* and you're working with the final Master Step of the leg raise series, you'll have a solid, athletic, stomach made of steel, as well as powerful hips and a ribcage armoured with dense muscle. You'll have abs that would've made Bruce Lee take notice!

STEP I: KNEE TUCKS

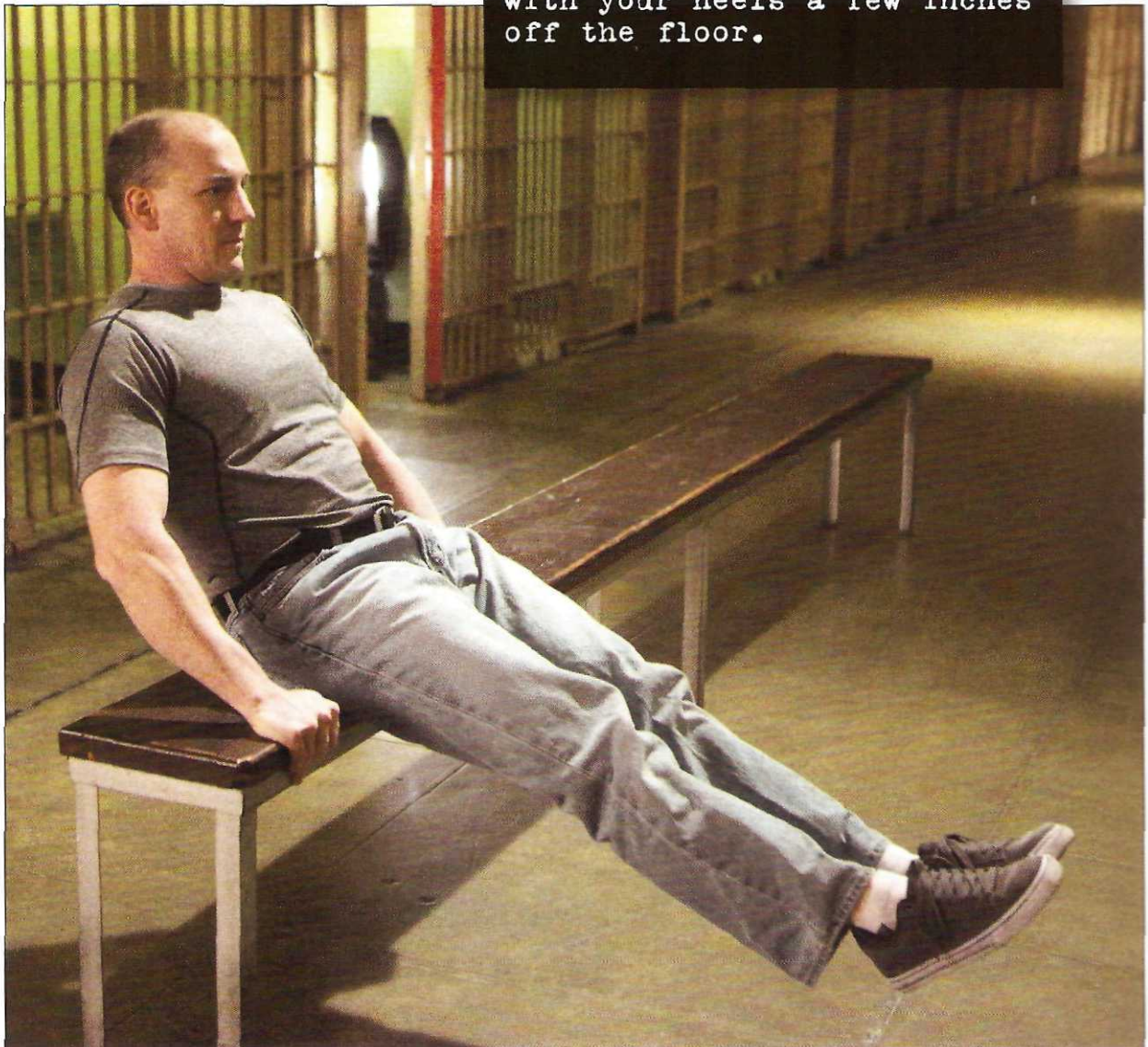
OVERVIEW

The whole point of the leg raise series is to strengthen the midsection by pulling the knees up. We're going to start with a nice, easy variation of this—knee tucks. For knee tucks, you don't even have to get down to the floor. You can do them off the edge of a bed, a chair, a bench or whatever. Due to the body angle this creates, the stress on the hips is quite small when the legs are out straight. In addition, this is a fairly low range movement. The feet only move a short distance. So it's a perfect, low stress way to begin conditioning the muscle cells of the abdomen and the hip flexors, while loosening tight lower backs.

BASIC POSTURE

- Sit on the edge of a chair, bunk or bed.
- Grip the edge and lean back while straightening your legs.
- Your feet should be together with your heels a few inches off the floor.
- Keep your stomach tucked in.

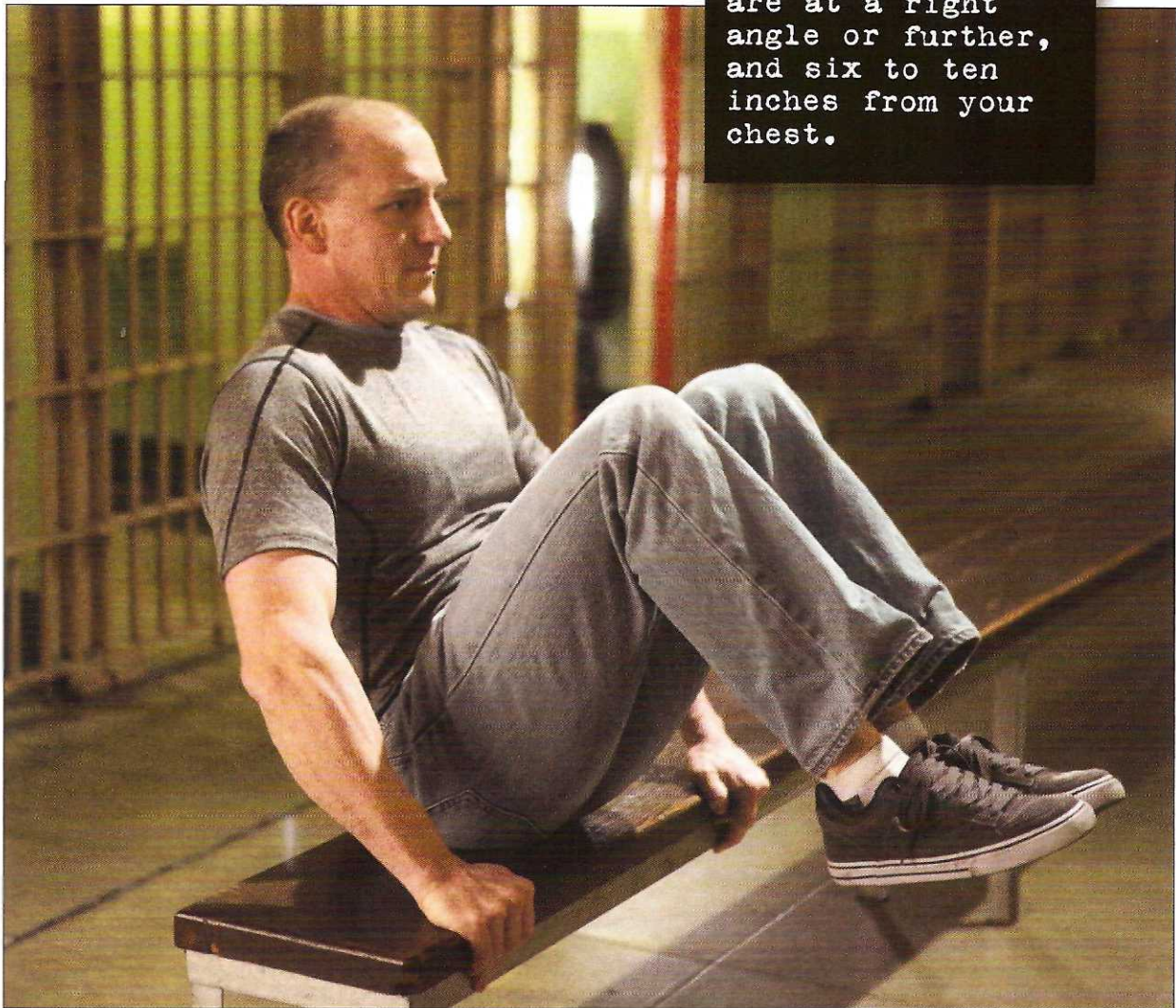
Your feet should be together with your heels a few inches off the floor.



POSITIVE

- Smoothly pull your knees towards your chest.
- Exhale as you pull in.
- Your feet should move in a straight line towards your butt, meaning that your knees must bend as you go.
- Continue pulling until your knees are at a right angle or further, and six to ten inches from your chest.
- Pause in this position for a one count.

Continue pulling until your knees are at a right angle or further, and six to ten inches from your chest.



NEGATIVE

- Reverse the movement and push your feet back to where they were, in a straight line.
- Inhale as you push out.
- Stop when your legs are extended and your body is straight again, and immediately repeat the technique.

“HIDDEN STEPS” KNEE TUCKS

- Tilting your torso back further and beginning with your feet higher off the ground will make things easier
- A shorter range of motion between the start and finish points of the reps will also help until you can work into full repetitions

Most people should be able to build to this exercise slowly. If you can't perform the reps as described, try leaning back further, starting with the feet higher, or using a shorter range.

PROGRESSION LEVELS KNEE TUCKS

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| • BEGINNER STANDARD: | 1 set of 10 reps |
| • INTERMEDIATE STANDARD: | 2 sets of 25 reps |
| • PROGRESSION STANDARD: | 3 sets of 40 reps |

Begin this exercise with one set of 10 reps, and gradually add reps from workout to workout. When you can perform a strict set of 25, add a second set of 10. Build up to two sets of 25, then add a third set of 10. From there, work up to three sets of 40 before moving to Step 2.

STEP 2: FLAT KNEE RAISES

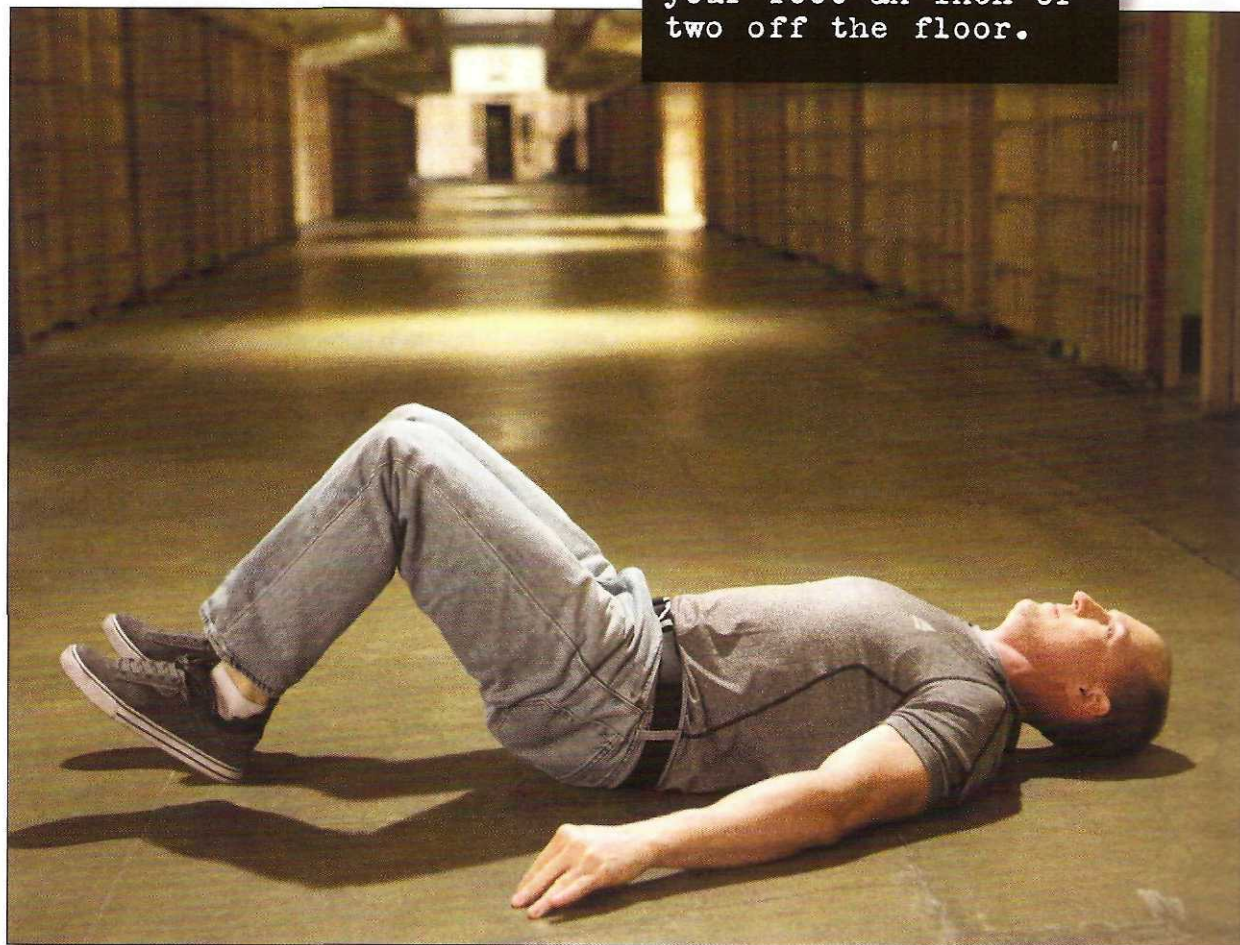
OVERVIEW

If you've completed the knee raise course, your abs and hips will be good and toned. It's now time to move up a step and hit the *floor* for your midsection training. You'll be lying on your back, and moving forces will be passing through your spine and hips, so make sure you are comfortable; if your floor doesn't have carpeting, you may want to use a training mat. Lying on the floor will make these movements harder and more productive for the muscles at the front of your hips. Having to move the feet directly up against gravity will also activate the abdominal muscles more, which will further improve your core. Keep your stomach held in tight and keep mastering that all-important breathing rhythm. Flat knee raises are a great way to continue improving your breathing skills and waist power to prepare you for the floor exercises which come next in the leg raise series.

BASIC POSTURE

- Lay on the floor with your arms by your sides and your feet together.
- Bend your knees so that they are at approximately ninety degrees, a right angle.
- Press down through your palms and lift your feet an inch or two off the floor.
- Keep your stomach tucked in.

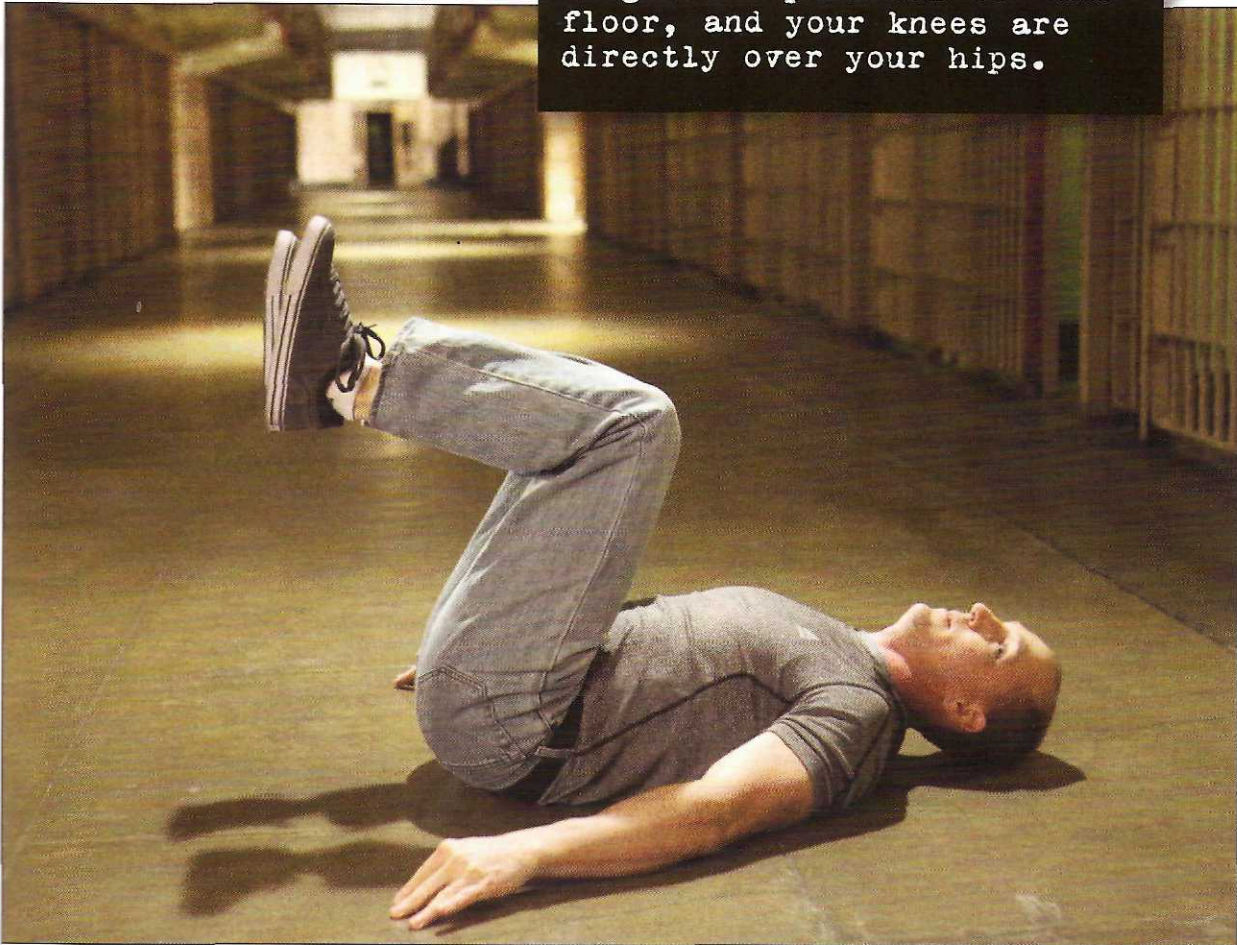
Press down through
your palms and lift
your feet an inch or
two off the floor.



POSITIVE

- Smoothly lift your knees up towards your hips.
- Exhale as you pull in.
- Keep your knees locked in a right angle throughout.
- Continue pulling until your thighs are parallel to the floor, and your knees are directly over your hips.
- Pause in this position for a one count.

Continue pulling until your thighs are parallel to the floor, and your knees are directly over your hips.



NEGATIVE

- Reverse the movement and slowly lower your legs back to the start position.
- Inhale as you lower.
- Stop when your heels are just a few inches from the ground again, and repeat the technique.

“HIDDEN STEPS” FLAT KNEE RAISES

- If at first this exercise is too hard on your hips, bring your feet in closer to your butt
- As you gain strength, bring your feet out a little each workout until they are in the correct 90 degree position

If you can't perform this exercise properly, improve your leverage by bending your knees more and bringing your feet closer to your body. Over time, perform the exercise correctly.

PROGRESSION LEVELS FLAT KNEE RAISES

- BEGINNER STANDARD: 1 set of 10 reps
- INTERMEDIATE STANDARD: 2 sets of 20 reps
- PROGRESSION STANDARD: 3 sets of 35 reps

Begin this exercise with one set of 10 reps, and gradually add reps from workout to workout. When you can perform a strict set of 20, add a second set of 10. Build up to two sets of 20, then add a third set of 10. From there, work up to three sets of 35 before moving to Step 3.

STEP 3: FLAT BENT LEG RAISES

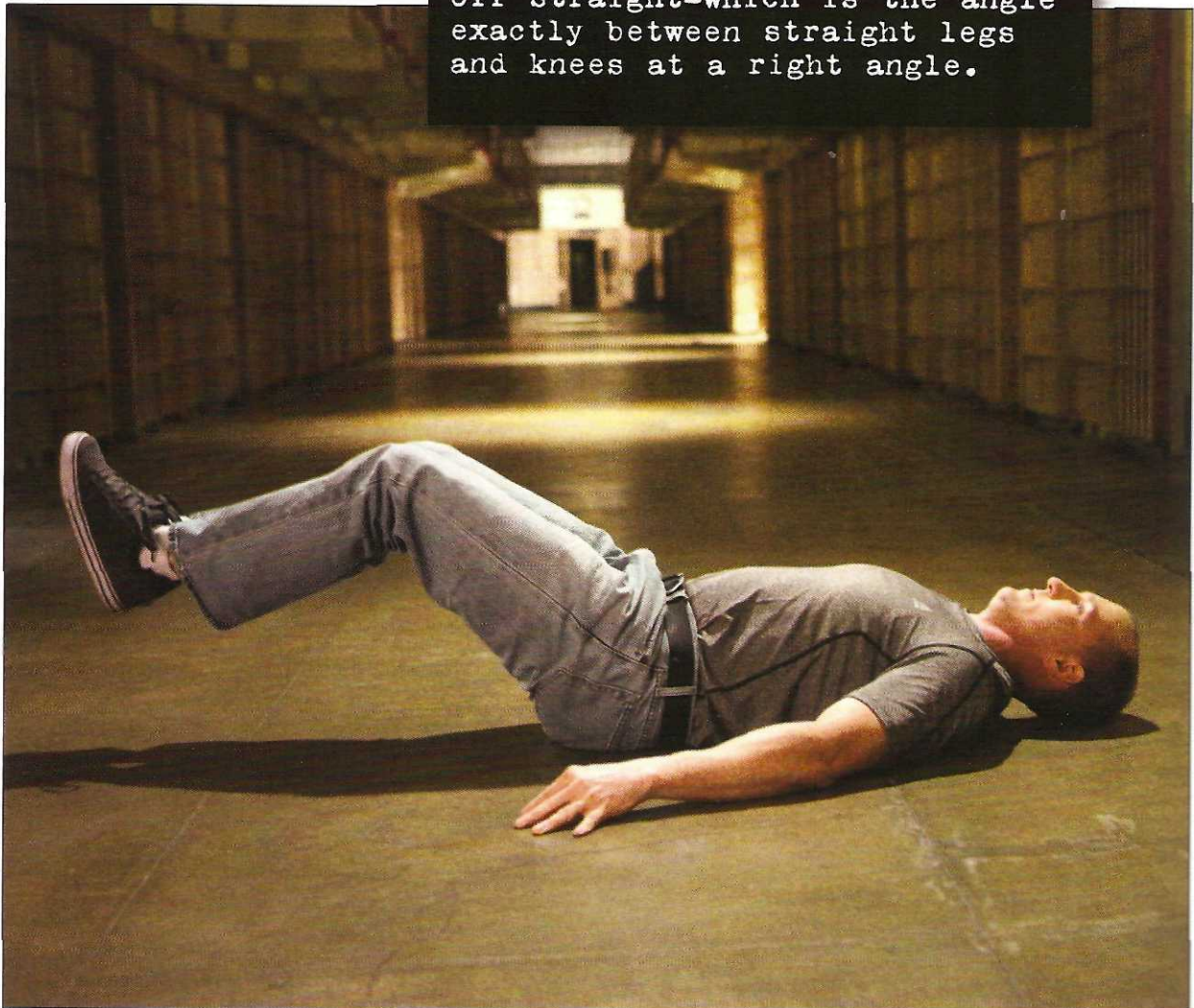
OVERVIEW

The step we're about to look at is a beautiful example of the elegance and simplicity of bodyweight training. When you lift weights, you usually have to make the exercise harder over time by adding more and more weight to the bar. Apart from the need for extra equipment, this approach poses various problems. But when you use bodyweight, you are fixed in the weight you can use—your body. So one option for making exercises harder is *increasing leverage*. You'll probably see this principle at work in its purest form during midsection training and the leg raises series. We'll start now. A bent leg raise is basically a knee raise with the legs straightened a little bit. It's simple, but effective, which is why it's a classic waist drill used by military men and martial artists the world over. Let's take a look at how to do it correctly.

BASIC POSTURE

- Lay on the floor with your arms by your sides and your feet together.
- Bend your knees so that they are at approximately 45 degrees off straight—which is the angle exactly between straight legs and knees at a right angle.
- Press down through your palms and lift your feet an inch or two off the floor.
- Keep your stomach tucked in.

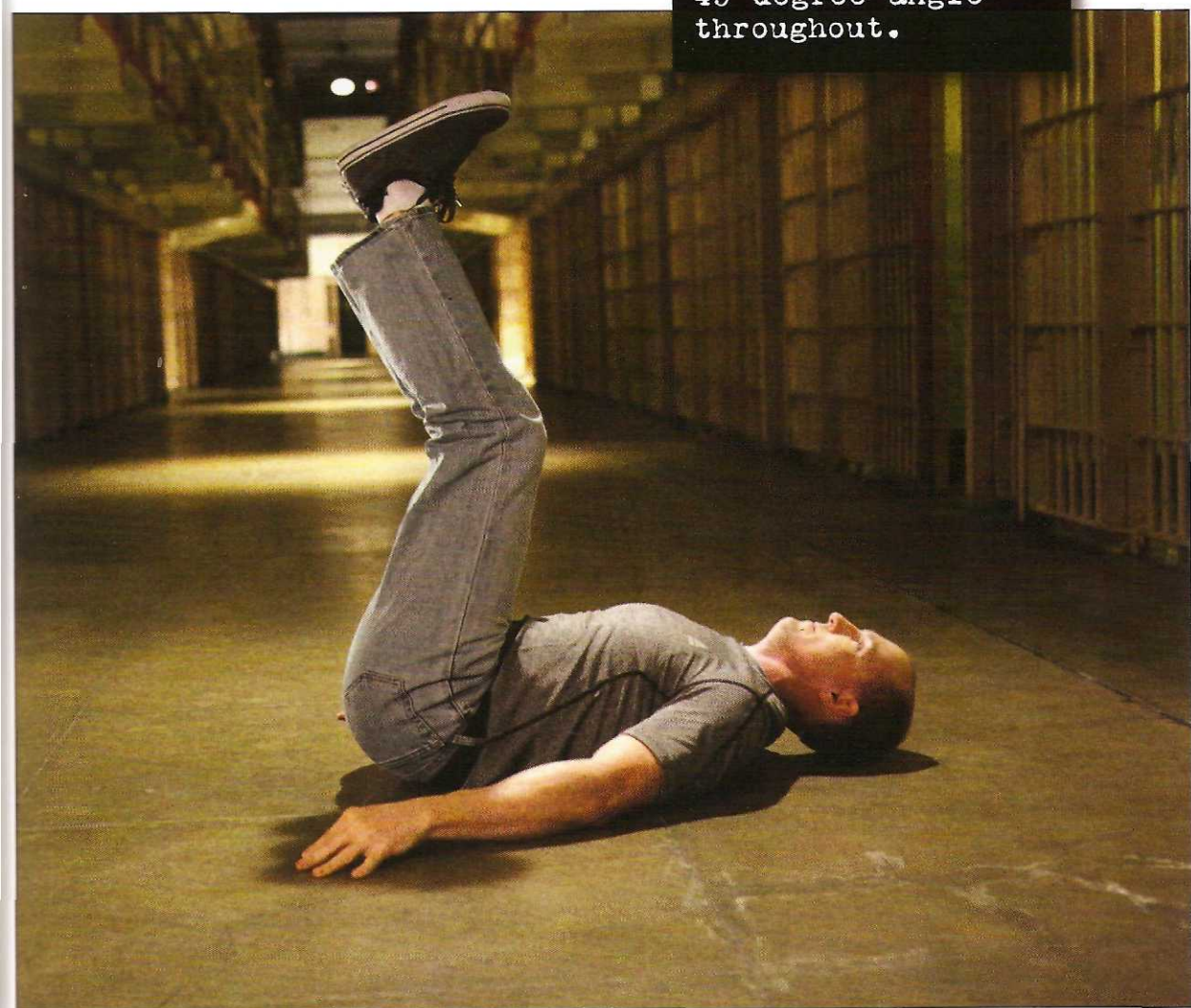
Bend your knees so that they are at approximately 45 degrees off straight—which is the angle exactly between straight legs and knees at a right angle.



POSITIVE

- Smoothly lift your feet up and towards your body.
- Exhale as you lift up.
- Keep your knees locked at the same 45 degree angle throughout.
- Continue lifting until your feet are directly over your hips.
- Pause in this position for a one count.

Keep your knees locked at the same 45 degree angle throughout.



NEGATIVE

- Reverse the movement and slowly lower your legs back to the start position.
- Inhale as you lower.
- Stop when your heels are just a few inches from the ground again, and repeat the technique.

“HIDDEN STEPS” FLAT BENT LEG RAISES

- If this exercise is too tough, bend your knees a little more
- As you get stronger, gradually straighten your legs from workout to workout, until your legs are 45 degrees from straight

If the 45 degree knee bend on flat bent leg raises seems too tough, lessen the leverage. You can do this by bending your knees a little more; but use less than 90 degrees or you'll be back doing flat knee raises. As your waist gains power, gradually straighten your legs.

PROGRESSION LEVELS FLAT BENT LEG RAISES

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| • BEGINNER STANDARD: | 1 set of 10 reps |
| • INTERMEDIATE STANDARD: | 2 sets of 15 reps |
| • PROGRESSION STANDARD: | 3 sets of 30 reps |

Begin this exercise with one set of 10 reps, and gradually add reps from workout to workout. When you can perform a strict set of 15, add a second set of 10. Build up to two sets of 15, then add a third set of 10. From there, work up to three sets of 30 before moving to Step 4.

STEP 4: FLAT FROG RAISES

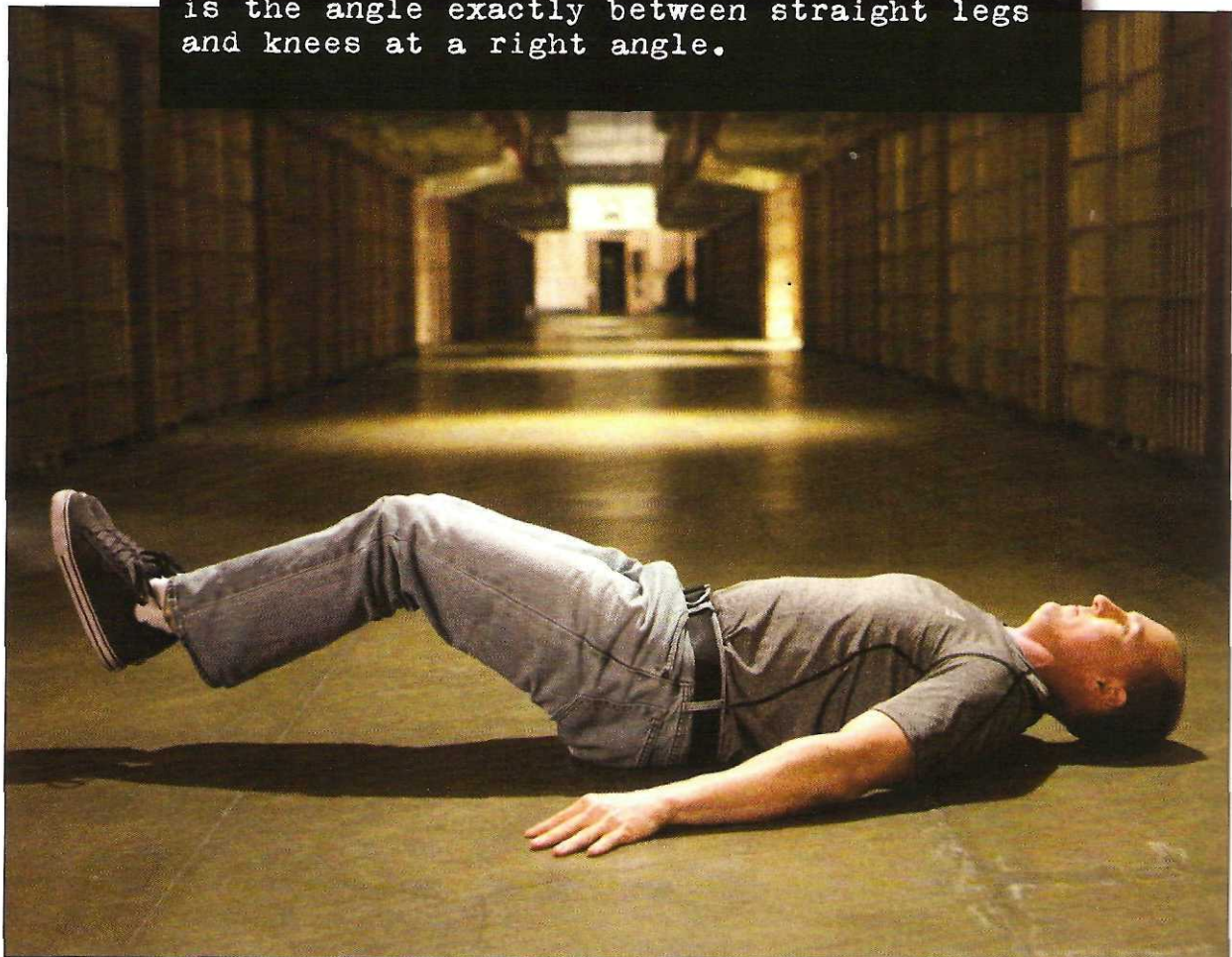
OVERVIEW

During the previous step, we talked about the importance of progressively applying leverage to your midsection movements. Long story short; the exercise will be easier if your legs are bent, harder if you straighten them. So once you've mastered flat bent leg raises, the next logical step would be to do your leg raises with straight legs. But doing leg raises with perfectly straight legs requires a very strong waist, plus a solid core and a flexible lower back. For this reason, a lot of athletes need a little help making this jump. Frog techniques are just the help these athletes need. For frog raises, you lift your legs while they are bent, just the same as for a bent leg raise, but straighten them out before the way back down. Straightening your legs at the top position will add the tension-flexibility you need in the waist and back, without overtaxing your soft tissues.

BASIC POSTURE

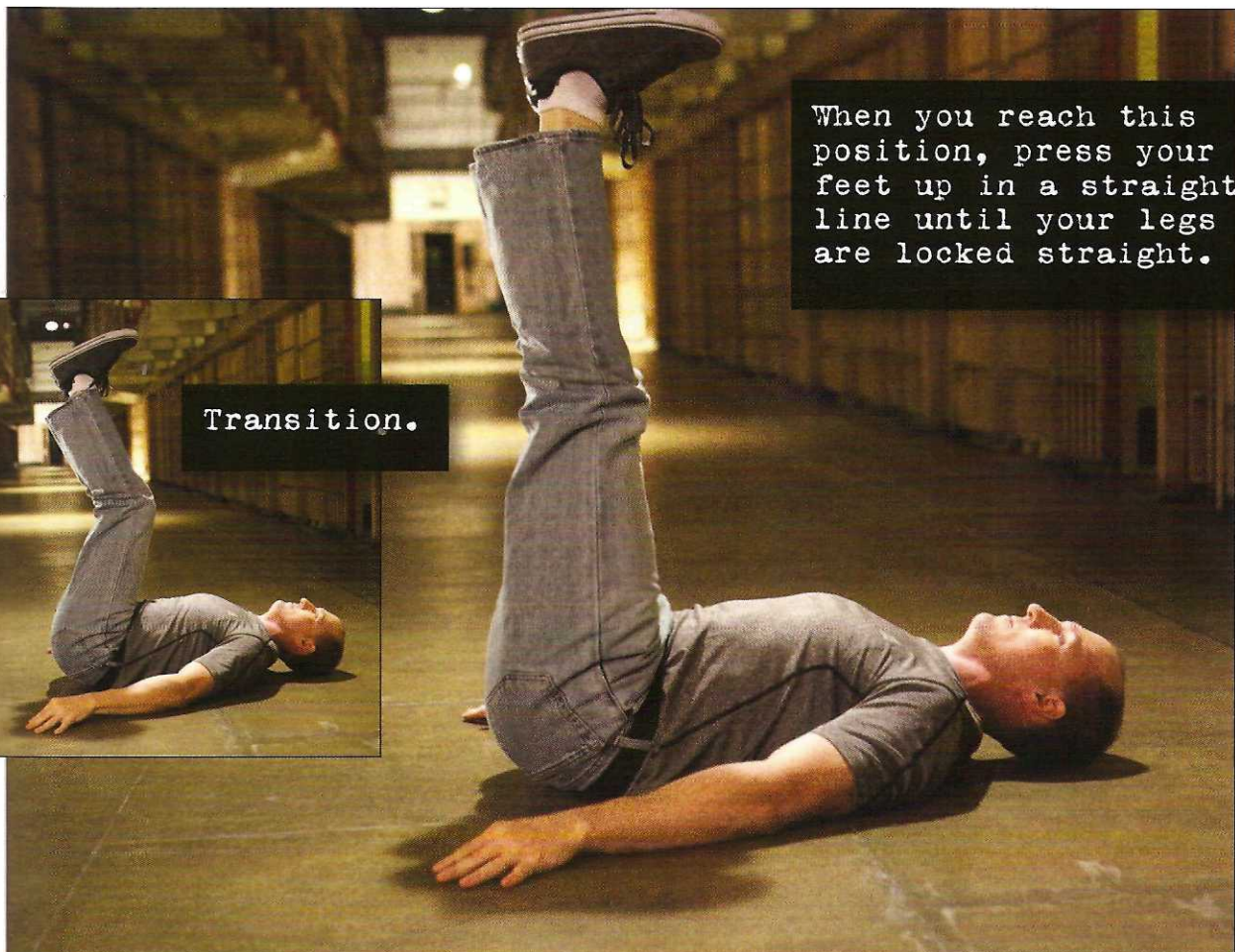
- Lay on the floor with your arms by your sides and your feet together.
- Bend your knees so that they are at approximately 45 degrees off straight—which is the angle exactly between straight legs and knees at a right angle.
- Press down through your palms and lift your feet an inch or two off the floor.
- Keep your stomach tucked in.

Bend your knees so that they are at approximately 45 degrees off straight—which is the angle exactly between straight legs and knees at a right angle.



POSITIVE

- Smoothly lift your feet up and towards your body.
- Exhale as you lift up.
- Keep your knees locked at the same 45 degree angle throughout.
- Continue lifting until your feet are directly over your hips.
- When you reach this position, press your feet up in a straight line until your legs are locked straight.



NEGATIVE

- Keeping your knees locked straight, slowly lower your legs until your heels are an inch or two from the floor again.
- Inhale as you go, taking at least four seconds to fully lower your legs.
- At this point, bend your knees again until they are fixed at 45 degrees, and repeat the technique.

“HIDDEN STEPS” FLAT FROG RAISES

- Due to leverage, this exercise is hardest when the feet are closest to the floor. If this exercise is too tough, focus on the transitional frog movement near the top of the rep
- As you gain waist strength, increase your range of motion

If getting through your frog raises is causing you trouble, ease into the movement by focusing on the valuable top portion, especially where you straighten your legs.

PROGRESSION LEVELS FLAT FROG RAISES

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| • BEGINNER STANDARD: | 1 set of 8 rep |
| • INTERMEDIATE STANDARD: | 2 sets of 15 reps |
| • PROGRESSION STANDARD: | 3 sets of 25 reps |

Begin this exercise with one set of 8 reps, and gradually add reps from workout to workout. When you can perform a strict set of 15, add a second set of 8. Build up to two sets of 15, then add a third set of 8. From there, work up to three sets of 25 before moving to Step 5.

STEP 5: FLAT STRAIGHT LEG RAISES

OVERVIEW

Once you've mastered the flat leg raise with legs bent—and spent time getting everything you can out of that exercise—you can probably guess where to go next. That's right; you need to straighten your legs out. Doing your leg raises this way will give you incredible abdominal power as well as great strength in the hips. It also keeps the lower back and hamstrings loose; not in a flaccid, relaxed-body way that some yoga guys look for, but in a way that meshes with the powerful muscular contractions in your core which leg raises require. This kind of active “tension-flexibility” really enhances functional power.

BASIC POSTURE

- Lay on the floor with your arms by your sides and your feet together.
- Your legs should be locked straight, so that your entire body is extended in a straight line.
- Press down through your palms and lift your feet an inch or two off the floor.
- Keep your stomach tucked in.

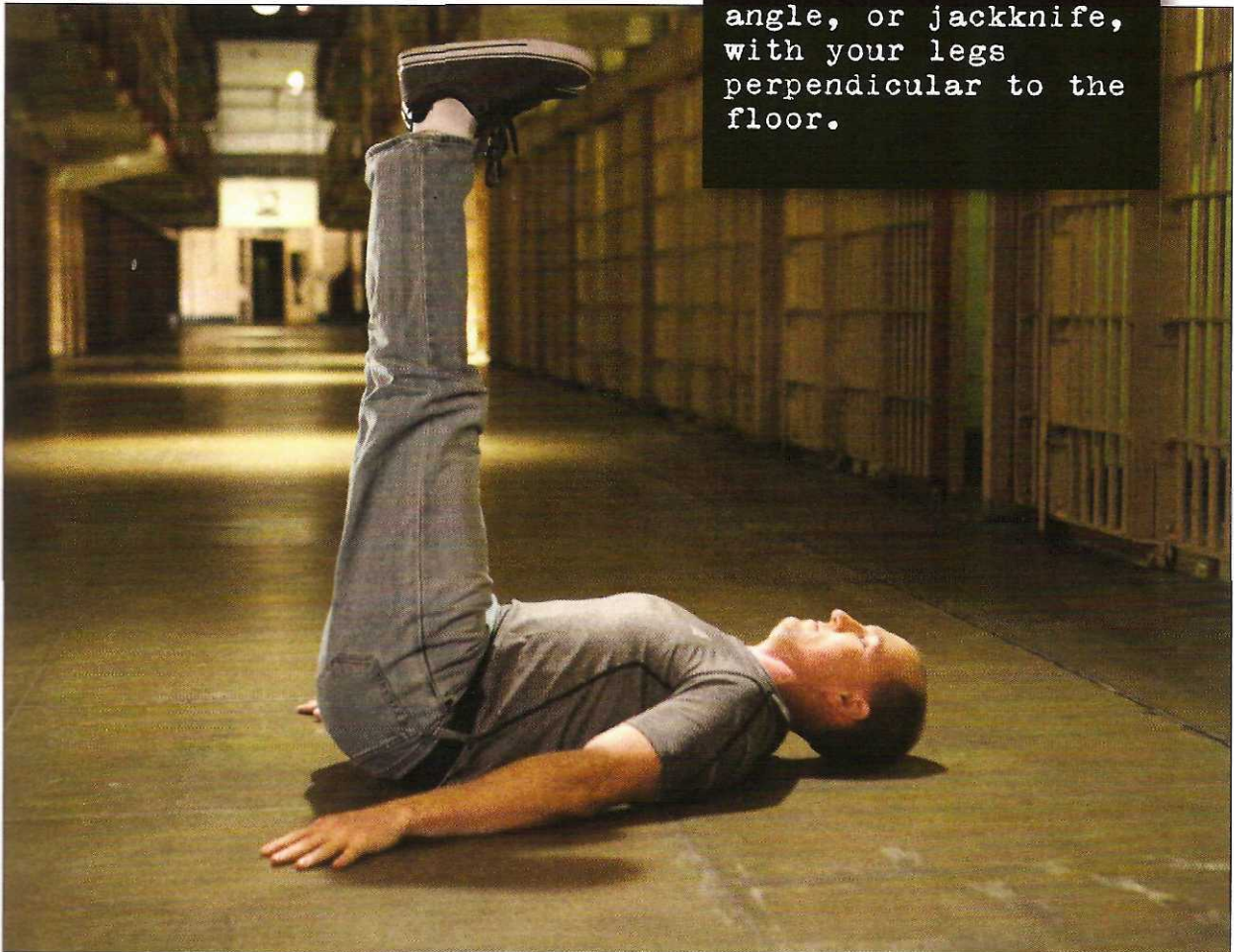
Your legs should be locked straight, so that your entire body is extended in a straight line.



POSITIVE

- Smoothly lift your feet up and towards your body.
- Exhale as you lift up.
- Keep your knees locked so that your legs are perfectly straight throughout.
- Continue lifting until your feet are directly over your hips.
- Now your body will now form a right angle, or jackknife, with your legs perpendicular to the floor.
- Pause in this position for a one count.

Now your body will now form a right angle, or jackknife, with your legs perpendicular to the floor.



NEGATIVE

- Reverse the movement and slowly lower your legs back to the start position.
- Inhale as you lower.
- Stop when your heels are just a few inches from the ground again, and repeat the technique.

“HIDDEN STEPS” **FLAT STRAIGHT LEG RAISES**

- If the full range of motion is too tough, focus on the range of motion closest to the top, the jackknife position
- Workout by workout, gradually take your straight legs lower until your heels are ultimately an inch or two from the ground

If you can do frog raises, you can do straight leg raises in the top position. If you need to, start using only the top middle range of motion and extend your movement depth over time.

PROGRESSION LEVELS **FLAT STRAIGHT LEG RAISES**

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| • BEGINNER STANDARD: | 1 set of 5 reps |
| • INTERMEDIATE STANDARD: | 2 sets of 10 reps |
| • PROGRESSION STANDARD: | 2 sets of 20 reps |

From now on you'll be dropping volume and focusing more on strength. Begin this exercise with one set of 5, and gradually add reps from workout to workout. When you can perform a strict set of 10, add a second set of 5. Build up to two sets of 20 before moving on to Step 6.

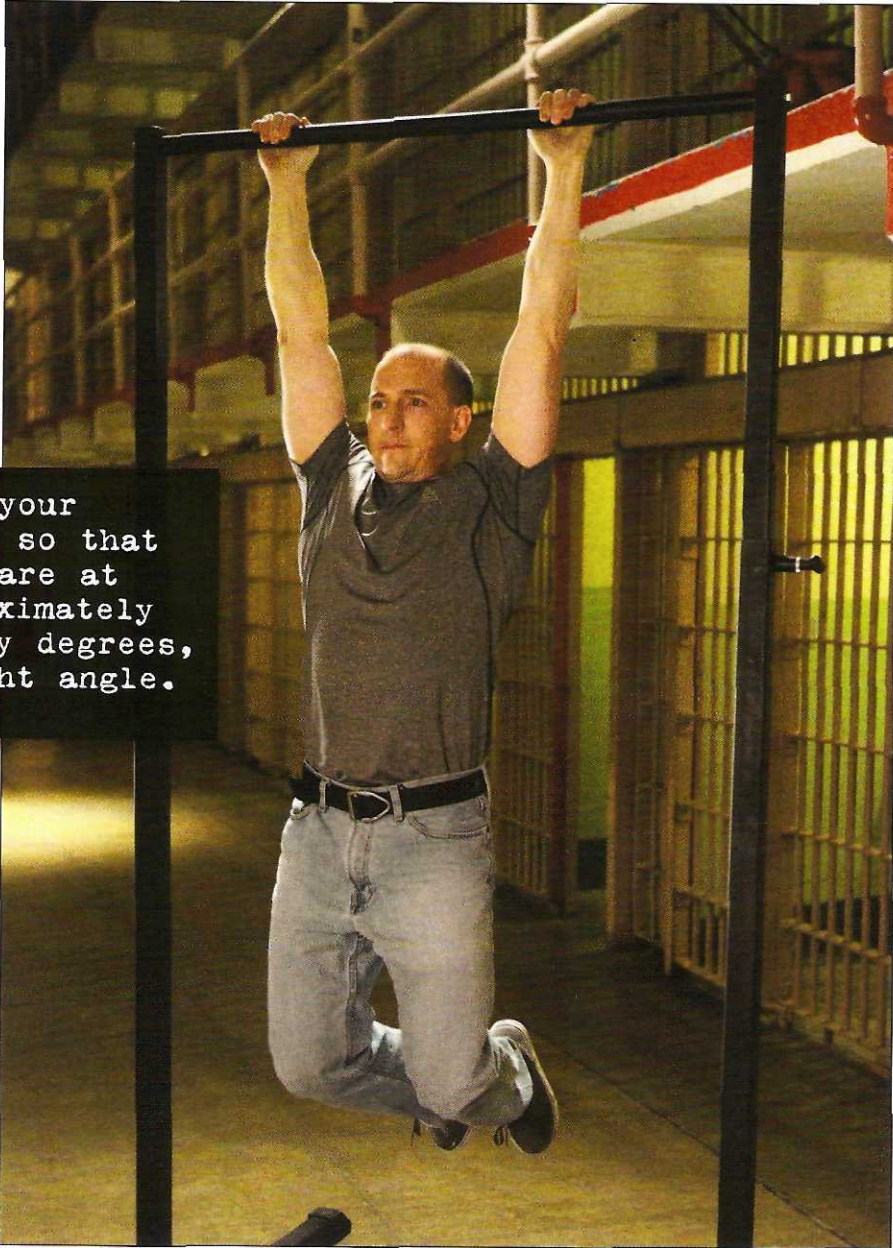
STEP 6: HANGING KNEE RAISES

OVERVIEW

Once you can perform flat straight leg raises correctly for sets of twenty reps, you've gone about as far as you can with this movement on the floor. You can experiment with other floor movements like L-holds and sit-ups, but if you want to get stronger using bodyweight leg raises, you need to add a little more gravity to the mix to make things harder. If you have one of the long, old school sit-up boards, you can do this very gradually. Just grab the top of the board, and do your flat leg raises on it. Over time, start inclining the angle against various objects and a wall until it's vertical. Unfortunately you don't see many of the old-style sit-up boards these days. They've been replaced by crunch machines and electrical stimulation gizmos and all other kinds of useless junk. Don't panic if you don't have an incline board. Just find an overhead bar. It doesn't matter whether it's a pullup bar, a branch, or whatever. The gravity is the same! Just make sure it's high—we want your feet to be clear of the floor.

BASIC POSTURE

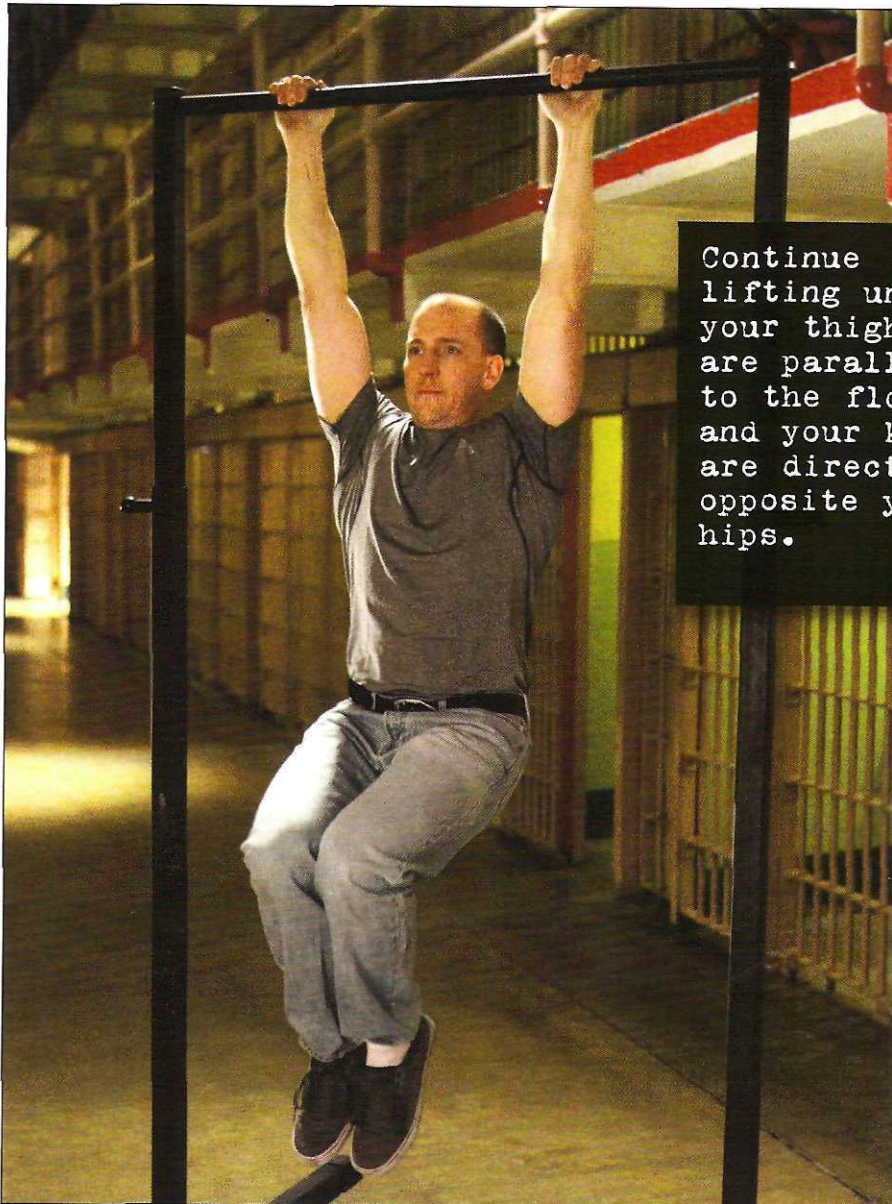
- Jump up and grab an overhead bar with an overhand grip.
- Your hands should be approximately shoulder width apart.
- Bend your knees so that they are at approximately ninety degrees, a right angle.
- Your feet should be clear of the floor.
- Keep shoulders tight and body braced with the stomach tucked in.



Bend your knees so that they are at approximately ninety degrees, a right angle.

POSITIVE

- Smoothly lift your knees up.
- Exhale as you lift.
- Keep your knees locked in a right angle throughout.
- Continue lifting until your thighs are parallel to the floor, and your knees are directly opposite your hips.
- Pause in this position for a one count.



Continue lifting until your thighs are parallel to the floor, and your knees are directly opposite your hips.

NEGATIVE

- Reverse the movement and slowly lower your knees back down.
- Inhale as you lower.
- Continue until you have reached the starting position again, and repeat.

“HIDDEN STEPS” HANGING KNEE RAISES

- If at first this exercise is too hard on your hips, bring your feet in closer to your butt
- As you gain strength, bring your feet out a little each workout until they are in the correct 90 degree position

If you can't perform this exercise properly, improve your leverage by bending your knees more and bringing your feet closer to your body. Over time, perform the exercise correctly.

PROGRESSION LEVELS HANGING KNEE RAISES

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| • BEGINNER STANDARD: | 1 set of 5 reps |
| • INTERMEDIATE STANDARD: | 2 sets of 10 reps |
| • PROGRESSION STANDARD: | 2 sets of 15 reps |

Begin the hanging knee raise exercise with one set of 5 reps, and gradually add reps from workout to workout. When you can perform a strict set of 10, add a second set of 5. Build up to two sets of 15. When you can perform two strict sets of 15, move on to step 7.

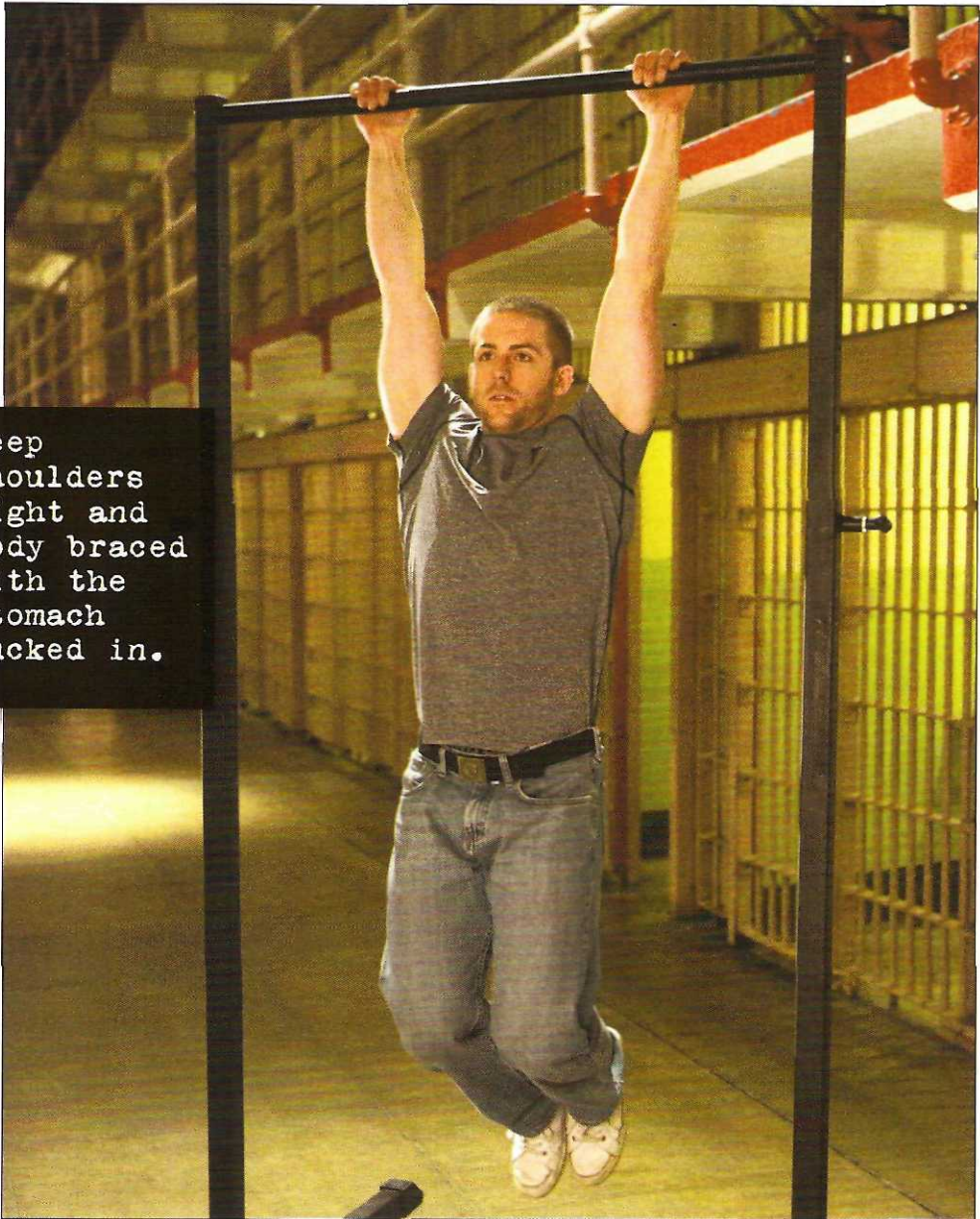
STEP 7: HANGING BENT LEG RAISES

OVERVIEW

By now you've probably figured out that we're applying the same progression variable to hanging leg raises as we did to the flat variety. We're extending the legs out each time, so the hanging exercises mirror the floor exercises; however the added gravity will make things harder, strengthening the hips and thickening your abdominal musculature. But the rest of your body benefits, too. Locking your knees will train your frontal quad muscles, particularly the deeper muscles of the thigh. Doing your leg raises hanging also forces the hard-to-reach muscles which connect the shoulder girdle—the serratus and intercostals of the ribcage—to fire strongly and assist the movement. Even the grip and forearms are getting a solid workout here.

BASIC POSTURE

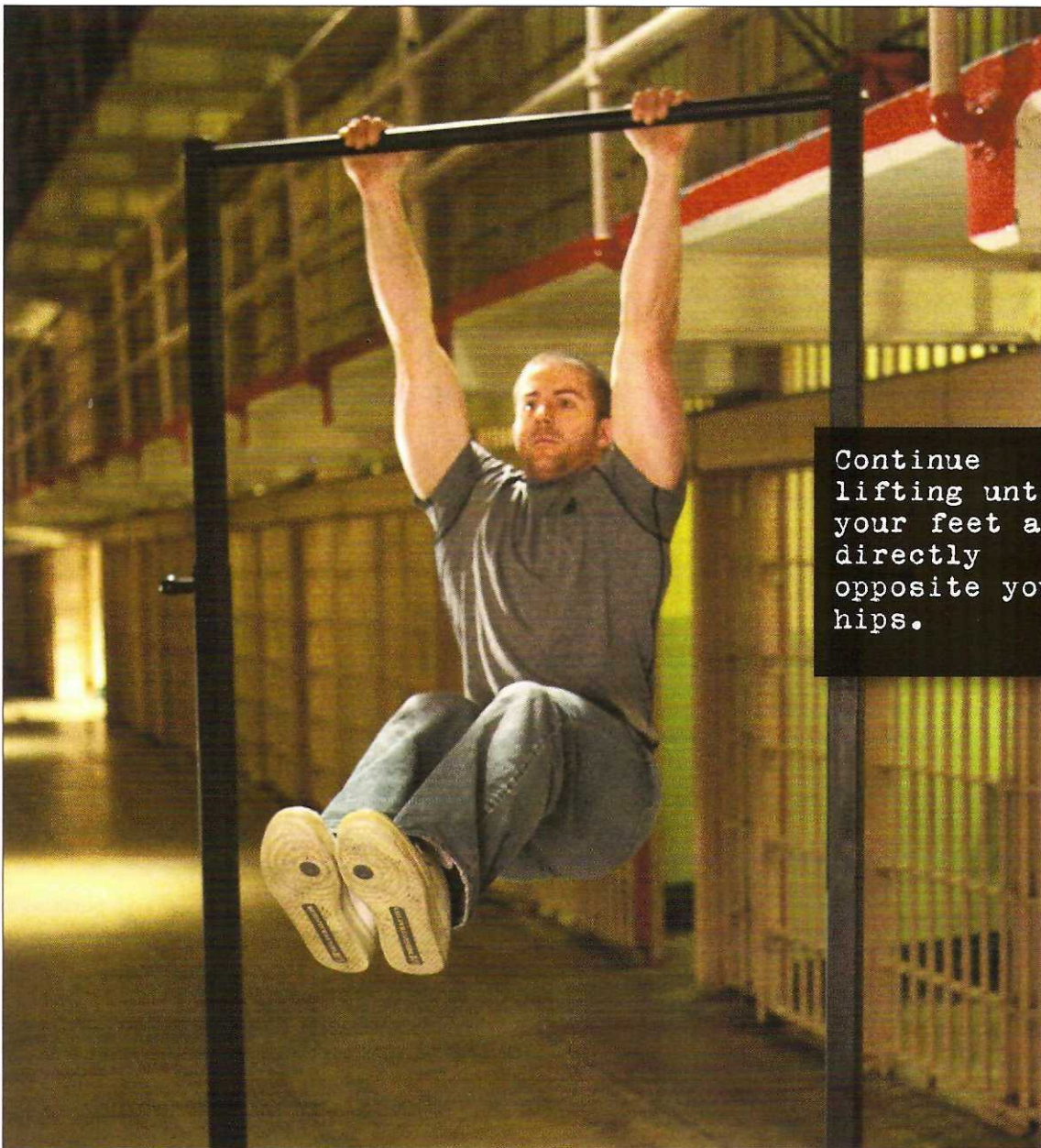
- Jump up and grab an overhead bar with an overhand grip.
- Your hands should be approximately shoulder width apart.
- Bend your knees so that they are at approximately 45 degrees off straight—which is the angle exactly between straight legs and knees at a right angle.
- Your feet should be clear of the floor.
- Keep shoulders tight and body braced with the stomach tucked in.

A man in a grey t-shirt and blue jeans is hanging from a black overhead bar in a prison gym. He is holding the bar with an overhand grip, and his legs are bent at a 45-degree angle. The background shows prison cell doors and a wooden wall.

Keep
shoulders
tight and
body braced
with the
stomach
tucked in.

POSITIVE

- Smoothly lift your knees up.
- Exhale as you lift.
- Keep your knees locked at the same 45 degree angle throughout.
- Continue lifting until your feet are directly opposite your hips.
- Pause in this position for a one count.



Continue lifting until your feet are directly opposite your hips.

NEGATIVE

- Reverse the movement and slowly lower your legs back down.
- Inhale as you lower.
- Continue until you have reached the starting position again, and repeat.

“HIDDEN STEPS”

HANGING BENT LEG RAISES

- To make hanging bent leg raises easier, just increase the angle of your legs (somewhere between hanging knee raises and hanging bent leg raises)
- Over time, decrease your leg angle back to 45 degrees off straight

You can make this exercise easier by bending your legs a little more—by a few degrees, or to something just a little straighter than hanging knee raises. Straighten your legs over time.

PROGRESSION LEVELS

HANGING BENT LEG RAISES

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| • BEGINNER STANDARD: | 1 set of 5 reps |
| • INTERMEDIATE STANDARD: | 2 sets of 10 reps |
| • PROGRESSION STANDARD: | 2 sets of 15 reps |

Begin the hanging bent knee raises with one set of 5 perfect reps. Gradually add reps from workout to workout until you can perform a strict set of 10 repetitions. When you achieve this goal, add a second set of 5 and build up to two sets of 15 before moving to Step 8.

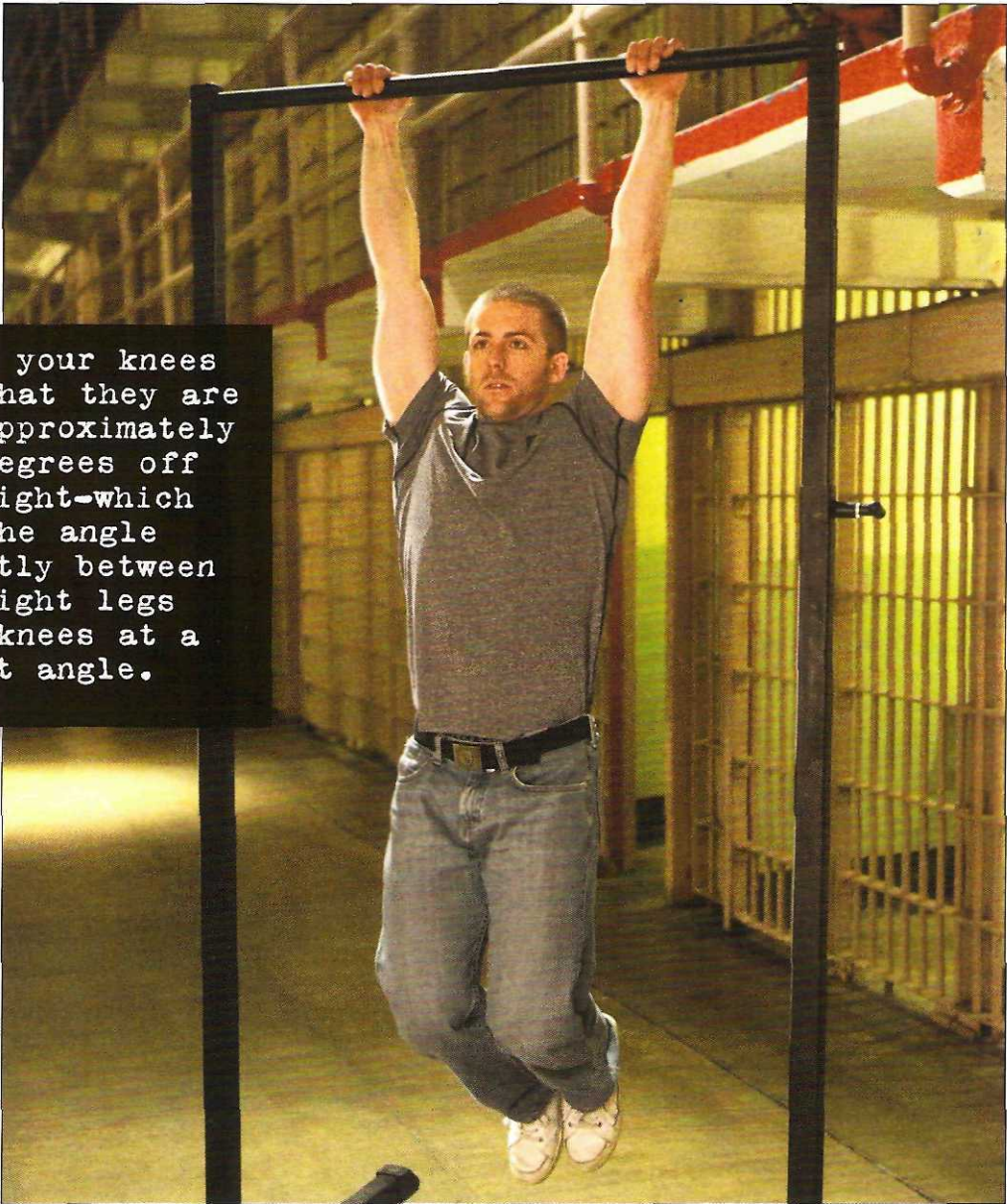
STEP 8: HANGING FROG RAISES

OVERVIEW

Your next goal is to gain the ability to straighten your legs fully as you do leg raises. This not only requires strength, but also suppleness in the back of the body—the hamstrings, the rear hips, the lower back and spine. The best way to gain this kind of flexibility, once you already have a good level of waist strength, is by applying *frog* transitions. In prison training, a frog transition means straightening your bent legs in the top leg raise position. You already learned this in Step 4, when you were flat on the ground. Now we're going to be doing the hanging version.

BASIC POSTURE

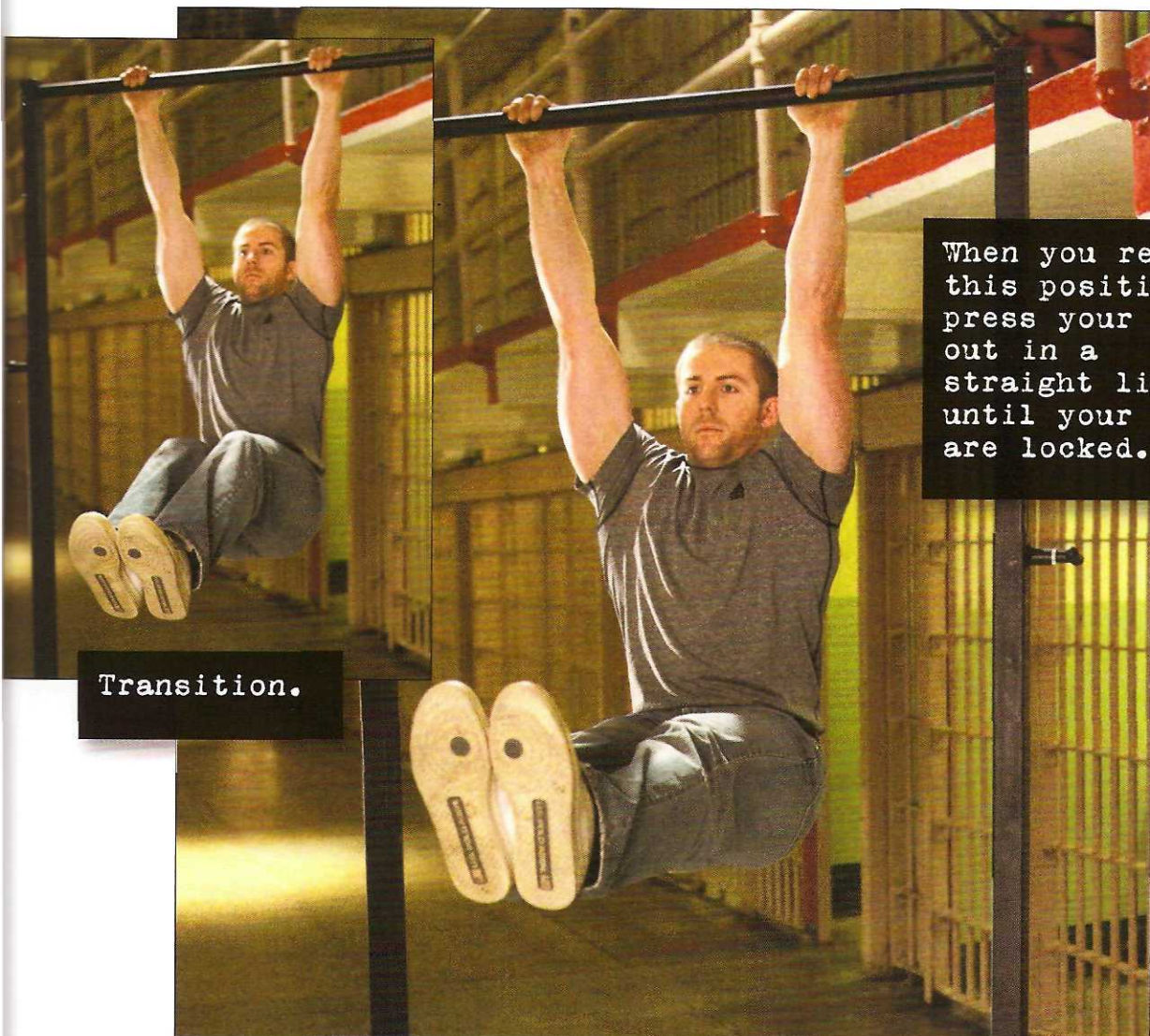
- Jump up and grab an overhead bar with an overhand grip.
- Your hands should be approximately shoulder width apart.
- Bend your knees so that they are at approximately 45 degrees off straight—which is the angle exactly between straight legs and knees at a right angle.
- Your feet should be clear of the floor.
- Keep shoulders tight and body braced with the stomach tucked in.

A man in a grey t-shirt and blue jeans is performing a leg raise on a black pull-up bar. He is hanging from the bar with his arms fully extended, and his legs are bent at a 45-degree angle. The background shows a gym with wooden floors and metal railings.

Bend your knees so that they are at approximately 45 degrees off straight—which is the angle exactly between straight legs and knees at a right angle.

POSITIVE

- Smoothly lift your knees up, and exhale as you lift.
- Keep your knees locked at the same 45 degree angle throughout.
- Continue lifting until your feet are directly opposite your hips.
- When you reach this position, press your feet out in a straight line until your legs are locked.
- Now your body will now form a right angle, or jackknife, with your legs parallel to the floor.
- Pause in this position for a one count.



When you reach this position, press your feet out in a straight line until your legs are locked.

Transition.

NEGATIVE

- Keeping your legs locked straight, slowly lower your legs back down.
- Inhale as you go, taking at least four seconds to fully lower your legs.
- At this point, bend your knees again until they are fixed at 45 degrees, and repeat the technique.

“HIDDEN STEPS” HANGING FROG RAISES

- To increase your flexibility in this exercise, practice entire sets consisting of only the “frog” transition point; straighten your legs then bend them at the top position
- After a few sessions of this, begin gradually adding in some range of motion

When athletes struggle with hanging frog raises, the problem is usually lack of strength-flexibility in the posterior chain. Working the top frog transition exclusively will cure this.

PROGRESSION LEVELS HANGING FROG RAISES

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| • BEGINNER STANDARD: | 1 set of 5 reps |
| • INTERMEDIATE STANDARD: | 2 sets of 10 reps |
| • PROGRESSION STANDARD: | 2 sets of 15 reps |

Begin the hanging frog raises with one set of 5 perfect reps. Gradually add reps from workout to workout until you can perform a strict set of 10 repetitions. When you achieve this goal, add a second set of 5 and build up to two sets of 15 before moving to Step 9.

STEP 9: PARTIAL STRAIGHT LEG RAISES

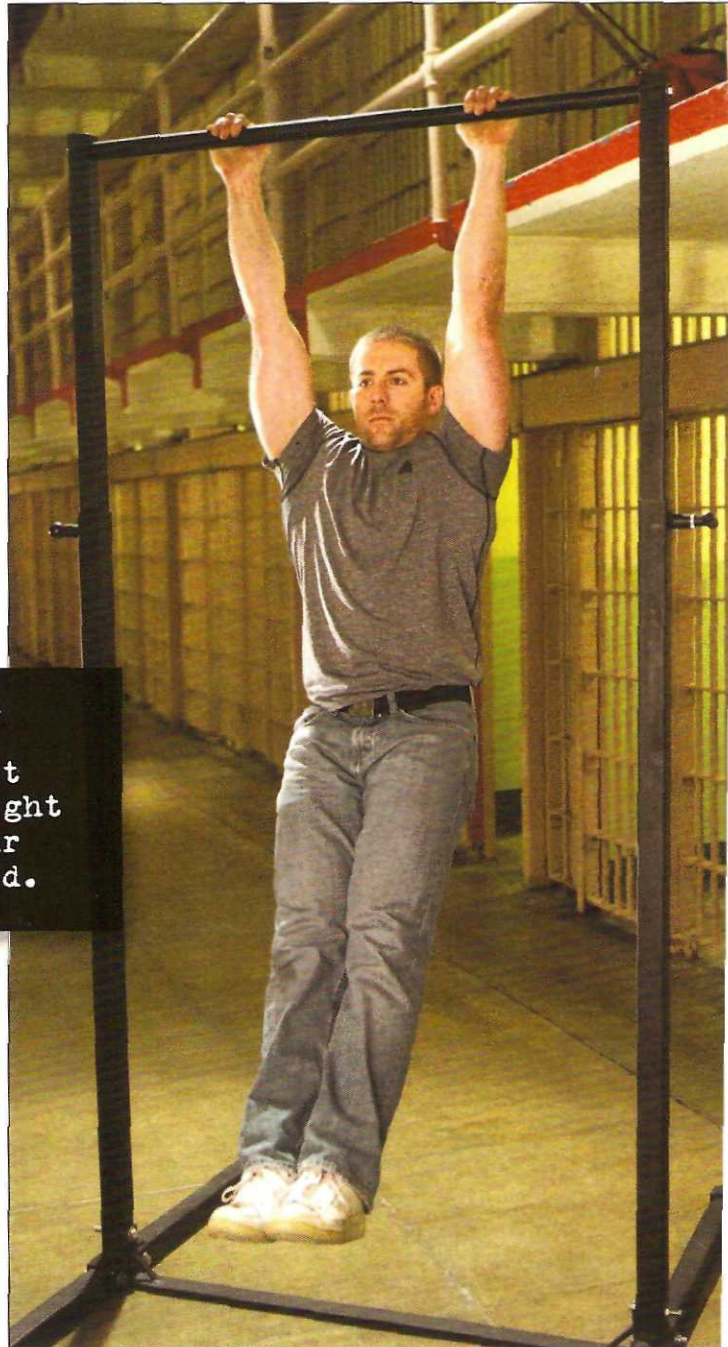
OVERVIEW

When you worked the earlier phase of the leg raise sequence, off the floor, I had you go directly from lying frog raises to full lying straight leg raises. Now that you're hanging, things are a lot harder, so it will be beneficial to athletes to insert an extra stage, an added technique, into the series at this point. Instead of moving straight to full hanging leg raises with perfectly straight legs, I want you to ease towards the Master Step with the partial version of hanging straight leg raises. Because lowering your legs all the way to vertical makes the exercise more demanding, partial straight leg raises will help an athlete gradually add strength and energy to the straight leg raise, while continually improving tension-flexibility and protecting the lower back. This is a fantastic but underrated movement which will help prepare an athlete for full leg raises by simultaneously building flexibility and core strength. Don't ignore this great technique!

BASIC POSTURE

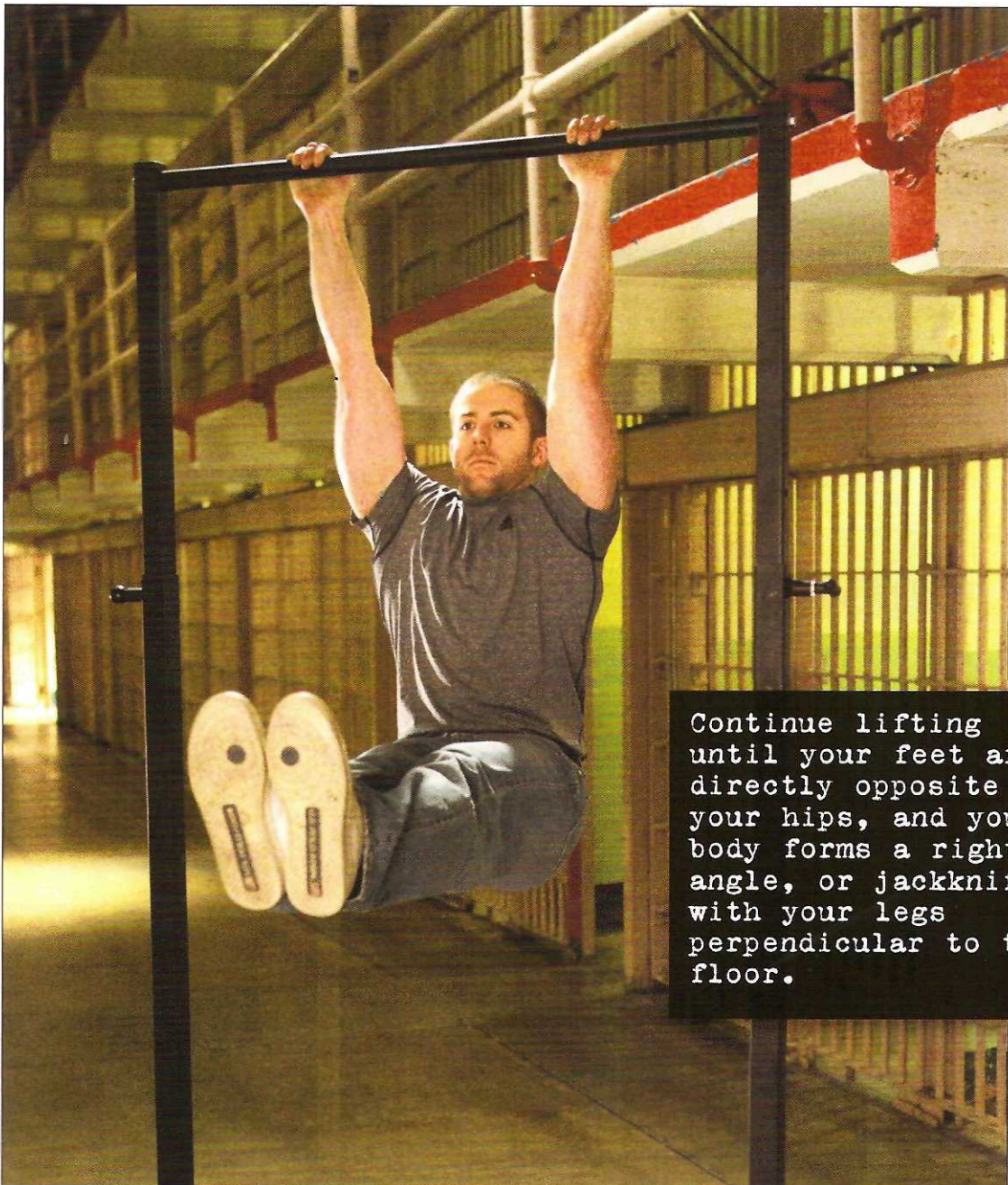
- Jump up and grab an overhead bar with an overhand, shoulder width grip.
- Bend your knees so that they are at approximately 45 degrees off straight.
- Keep shoulders tight and body braced with the stomach tucked in.
- Smoothly lift your legs, keeping your knees locked at the 45 degree angle throughout.
- Continue lifting until your feet are directly opposite your hips.
- When you reach this position, press your feet out in a straight line until your legs are locked.
- Now lower your locked legs until they are pointing diagonally to the ground, and hold the position there. This is the starting position.

When you reach this position, press your feet out in a straight line until your legs are locked.



POSITIVE

- Exhale as you smoothly raise your straight legs up.
- Keep your knees locked so that your legs are perfectly straight throughout.
- Continue lifting until your feet are directly opposite your hips, and your body forms a right angle, or jackknife, with your legs perpendicular to the floor.
- Pause in this position for a one count.



Continue lifting until your feet are directly opposite your hips, and your body forms a right angle, or jackknife, with your legs perpendicular to the floor.

NEGATIVE

- Inhale as you reverse the movement and slowly lower your legs.
- Stop when your legs are in the diagonal starting position again, and repeat.

“HIDDEN STEPS”

PARTIAL STRAIGHT LEG RAISES

- Focus on perfect reps with locked legs; to make things easier, begin this exercise at the top position, and limit your range of motion
- As you become stronger, increase your depth until your legs descend to the diagonal position

If you can do hanging frog raises, you will be able to control the top movement of partial straight leg raises. If you need to, just increase the range of motion over time.

PROGRESSION LEVELS

PARTIAL STRAIGHT LEG RAISES

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| • BEGINNER STANDARD: | 1 set of 5 reps |
| • INTERMEDIATE STANDARD: | 2 sets of 10 reps |
| • PROGRESSION STANDARD: | 2 sets of 15 reps |

Begin this exercise with one set of 5 perfect reps. Gradually add reps from workout to workout until you can perform a strict set of 10 repetitions. When you achieve this goal, add a second set of 5 and build up to two sets of 15 before moving to Step 10—the Master Step.

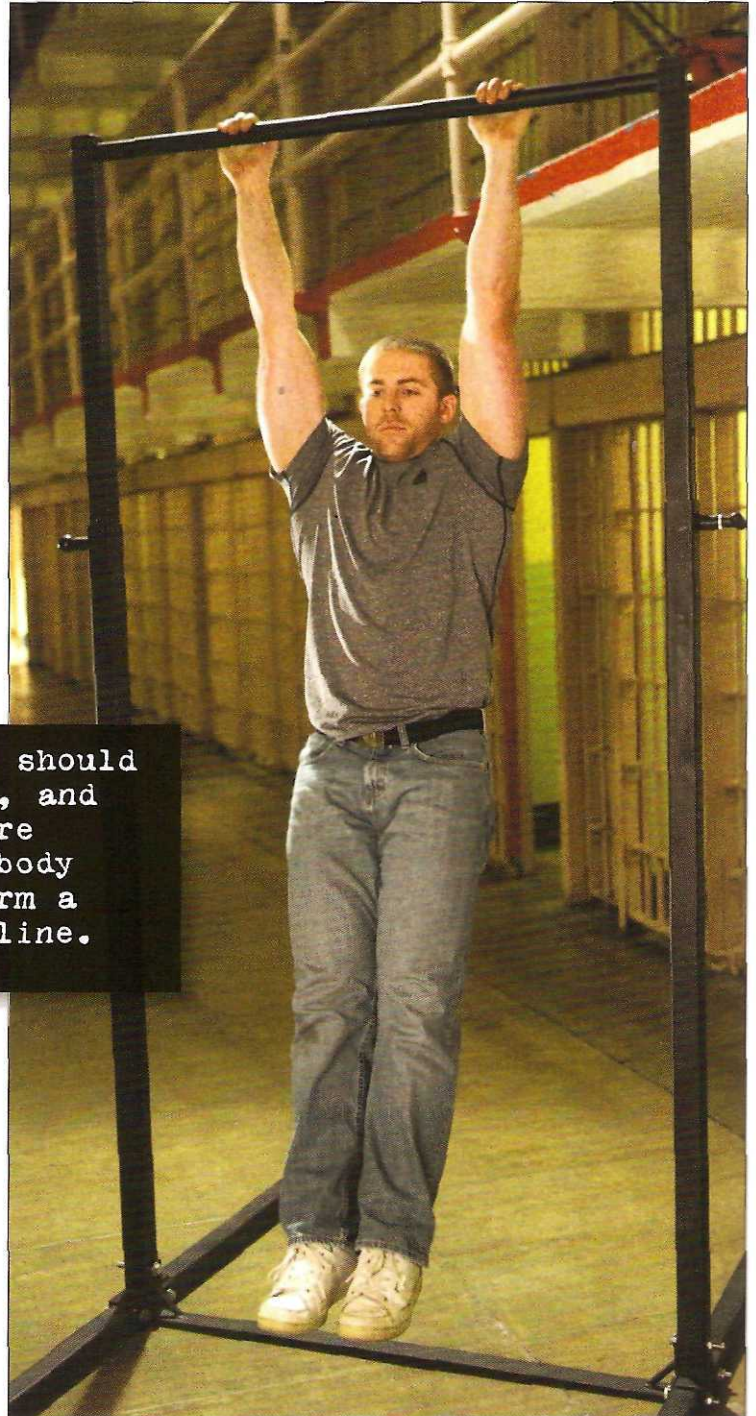
STEP 10: MASTER STEP HANGING STRAIGHT LEG RAISES

OVERVIEW

So we've come to the Master Step of the leg raise series. The hanging straight leg raise, performed strictly and for reps, is the Gold Standard of abdominal strength techniques. Once you're at the level where you can throw out sets of twenty to thirty rock solid reps of this exercise, your abs will be thick and strong, but more importantly, they'll be *functional*—not just a pretty six-pack, but a real monster of an athletic core, which is capable of developing high levels of force. Hanging will work your serratus and intercostals, making these muscles stand out like fingers, and your obliques and flank muscles will be tight and strong from holding your hips in place. Your lumbar spine will achieve a gymnastic level of flexibility, like fluid steel, and your chances of back pain will be greatly reduced. The bottom line: If you want to be stronger and more athletic than the next guy, you need the edge that straight leg raises can give you.

BASIC POSTURE

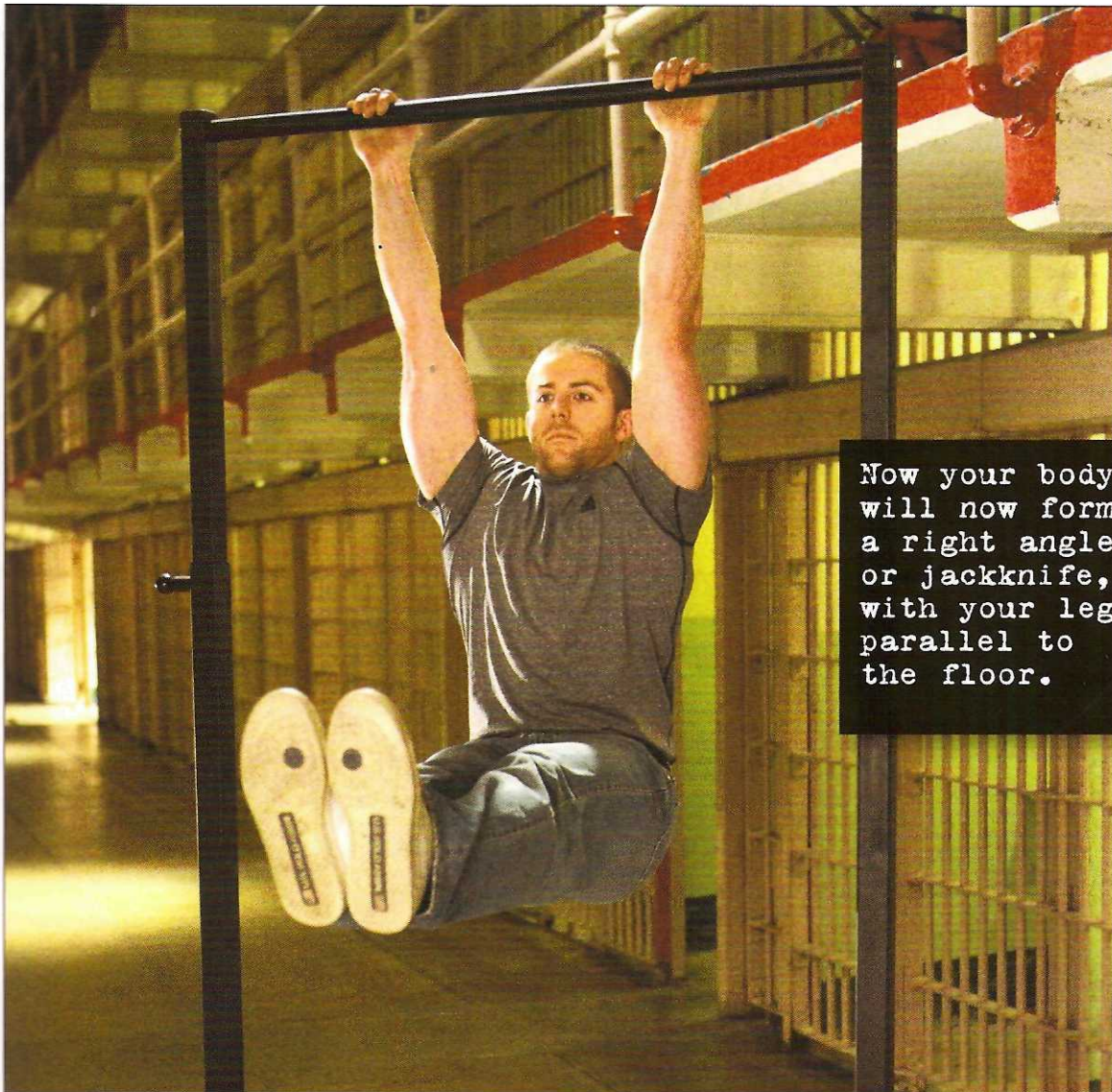
- Jump up and grab an overhead bar with an overhand grip.
- Your hands should be approximately shoulder width apart.
- Your legs should be locked, and your entire extended body should form a straight line.
- Your feet should be clear of the floor.
- Keep shoulders tight and body braced with the stomach tucked in.



Your legs should be locked, and your entire extended body should form a straight line.

POSITIVE

- Smoothly lift your legs up.
- Exhale as you lift up.
- Keep your knees locked so that your legs are perfectly straight throughout.
- Continue lifting until your feet are directly opposite your hips.
- Now your body will now form a right angle, or jackknife, with your legs parallel to the floor.
- Pause in this position for a one count.



Now your body will now form a right angle, or jackknife, with your legs parallel to the floor.

NEGATIVE

- Reverse the movement and slowly lower your legs back down.
- Inhale as you lower.
- Continue your body forms a perfectly straight line again, and repeat.

LEG RAISE SERIES SUMMARY

For ease of reference, let's take a look at the ten steps of the leg raise series all together.

STEP 1: KNEE TUCKS

Step one: Knee tucks. Build to three sets of forty. Then begin;

STEP 2: FLAT KNEE RAISES

Step two: Flat knee raises. Build to three sets of thirty-five. Then move to;

STEP 3: FLAT BENT LEG RAISES

Step three: Flat bent leg raises. Build to three sets of thirty. Then begin;

STEP 4: FLAT FROG RAISES

Step four: Flat frog raises. Build to three sets of twenty-five. Then move to;

STEP 5: FLAT STRAIGHT LEG RAISES

Step five: Flat straight leg raises. Build to two sets of twenty. Then begin;

STEP 6: HANGING KNEE RAISES

Step six: Hanging knee raises. Build to two sets of fifteen. Then start;

STEP 7: HANGING BENT LEG RAISES

Step seven: Hanging bent leg raises. Build to two sets of fifteen. Then move to;

STEP 8: HANGING FROG RAISES

Step eight: Hanging frog raises. Build to two sets of fifteen. Then go to;

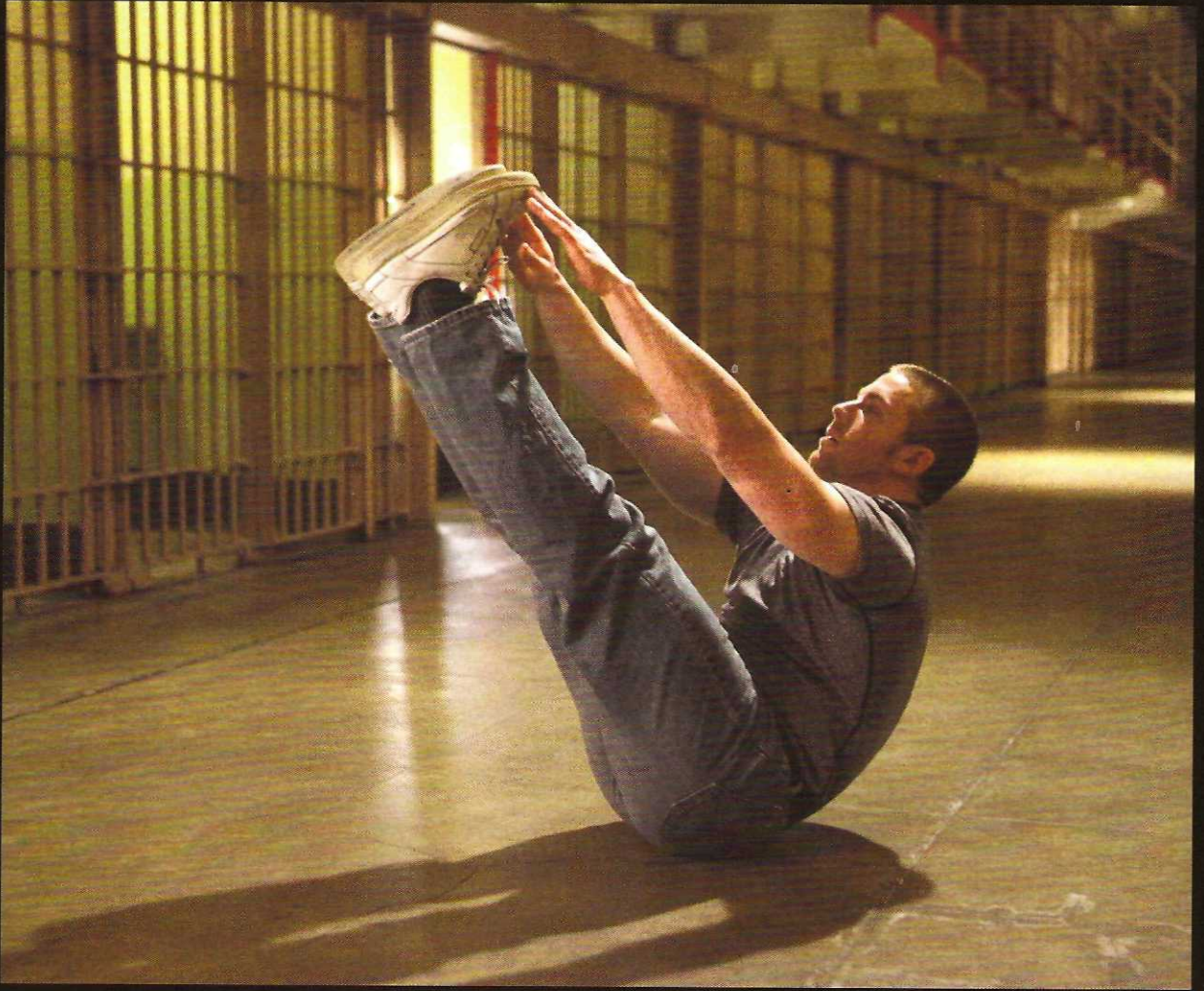
STEP 9: PARTIAL STRAIGHT LEG RAISES

Step nine: Partial straight leg raises. Build to two sets of fifteen. Then finally advance to;

STEP 10: MASTER STEP HANGING STRAIGHT LEG RAISES

Step ten, you've reached the Master Step: Hanging straight leg raises.

CELL 3:
THE
VARIANTS



CELL 3: THE VARIANTS

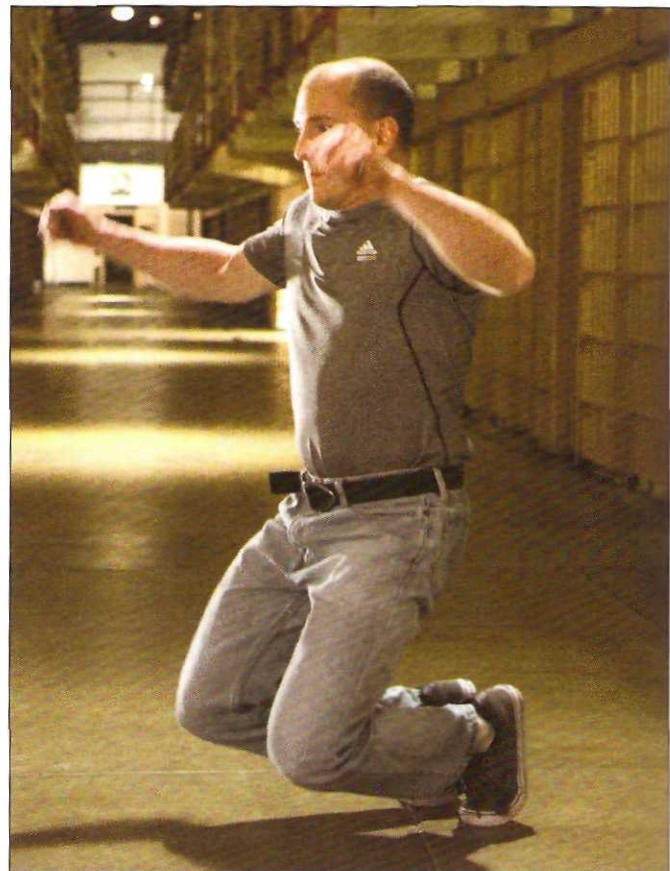
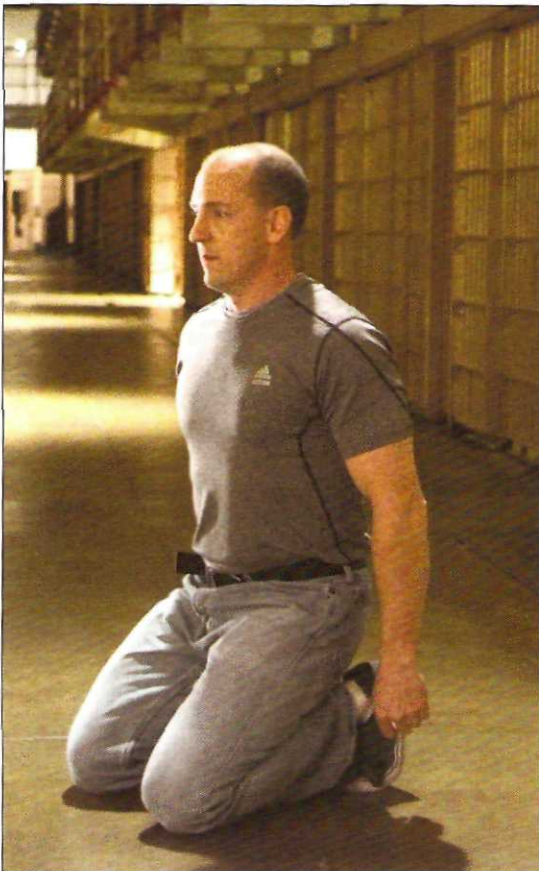
If you pick up any fitness magazine, you'll see hundreds of slightly different ab exercises. But despite the apparent variety, most of these exercises follow the same boring principles, and are pretty useless for building thick muscle or a functional midsection. Most people would be better off sticking to some brutally painful leg raises.

But if you feel like some variety and you really want to squeeze maximum strength and power out of your abs, there are a few good extra exercises you can use to help you do that. None of them are crunches, and none of them require expensive machines or those little electric shock gizmos. Instead, we're going to show you the way convicts have done it—using old school exercises which work by harnessing pain and sweat. Let's do it.

SITTING KIPS

OVERVIEW

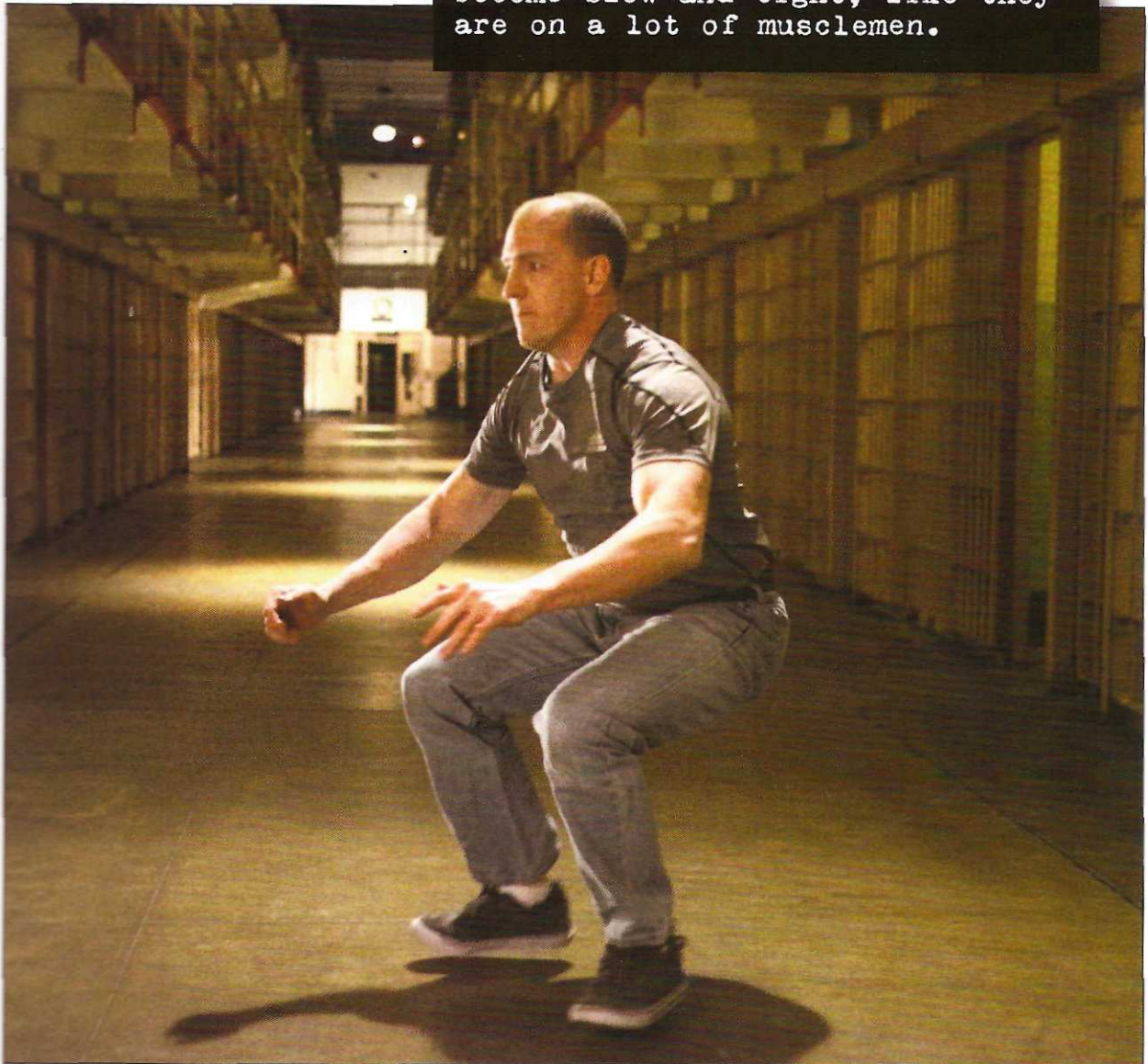
Sitting kips are a great exercise for putting some explosive “snap” back into tight hip flexors. Many great abdominal exercises build muscle and power, but they are performed with quite a slow cadence. This does nothing for your hip flexor speed and power, but sitting kips are the solution. If you combine sitting kips with bridges to keep your hip flexors supple your hips will never become slow and tight, like they are on a lot of musclemen. You begin sitting kips by sitting in a kneeling position, on your shins and instep. With an explosive upwards movement, you flip your knees up and out and land on your feet. An athlete who adds seated kips to his or her routine will always have hip flexors with the “snap” needed for explosive agility.



TRAINING IDEAS

Once you get good at doing kips efficiently, they don't take much out of the body, so you can practice them anytime. You might want to add them to your current workout, or put them in a separate agility workout. You can do kips anytime, but they work particularly well as a drill after bridges when the hips are loose. To stay sharp, you don't need to do more than a set of ten. If this gets too easy, try doing seated kips with less arm swing, so the power comes entirely from the hips. When you get really explosive, you'll be able to do kips with your arms folded on your chest.

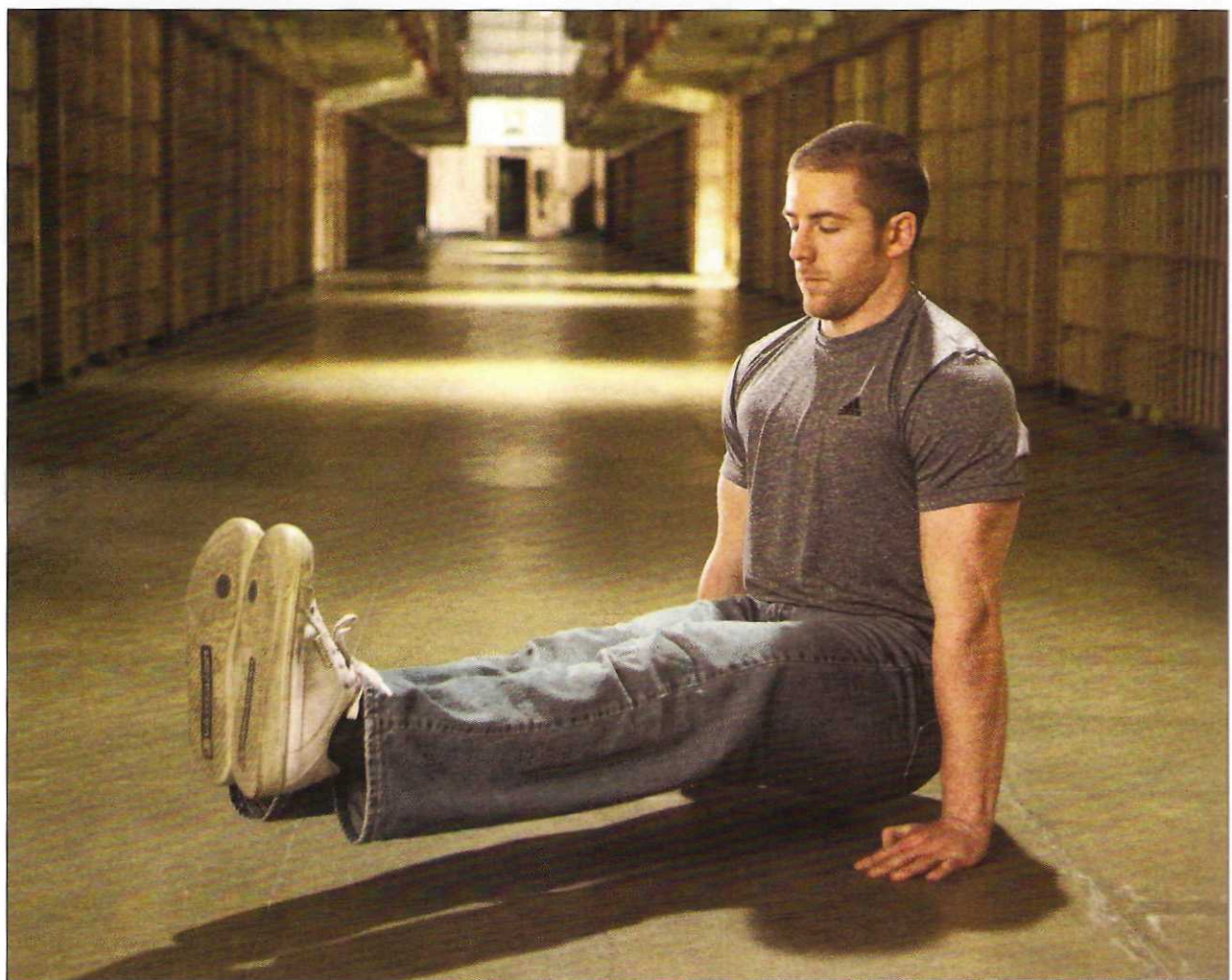
If you combine sitting kips with bridges to keep your hip flexors supple your hips will never ever become slow and tight, like they are on a lot of musclemen.



L-HOLDS

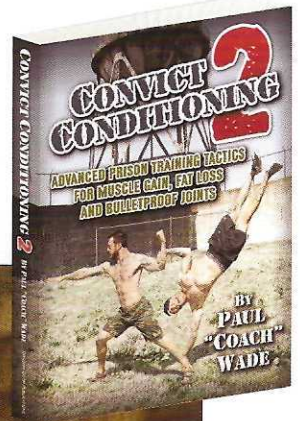
OVERVIEW

L-holds are an old gymnastics strength exercise, but they're also popular with advanced martial artists who want to develop steely midsections. You might have seen pictures of Bruce Lee doing this exercise. L-holds work similar muscles to the straight leg raise, but whereas leg raises are dynamic, they involve moving strength, L-holds are static. They are, essentially, the top position of a straight leg raise, but done with the arms holding you off the floor instead of hanging.

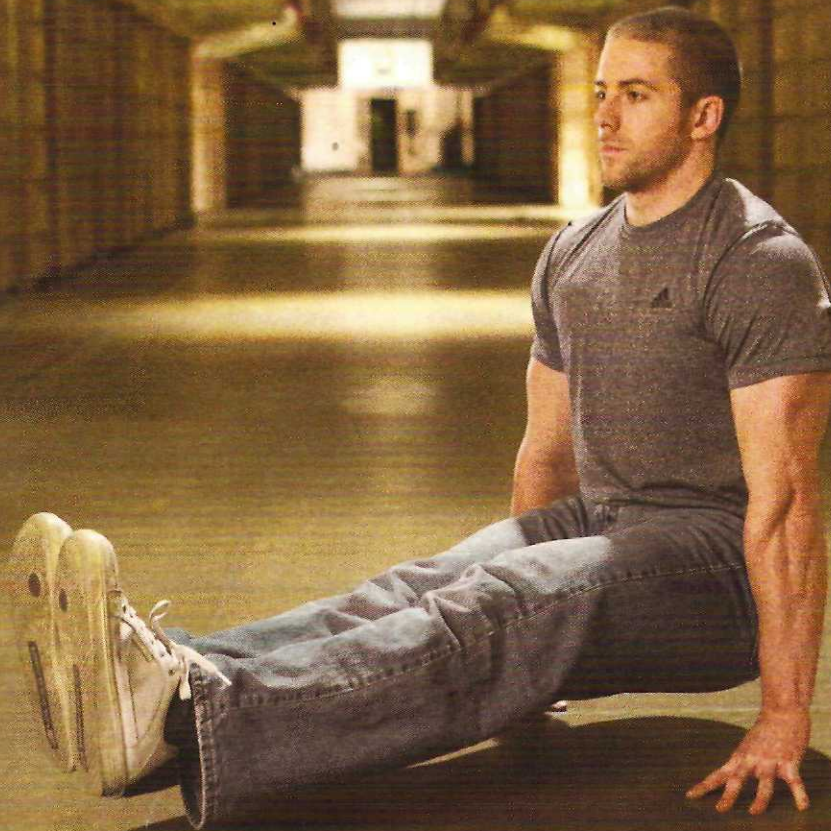


TRAINING IDEAS

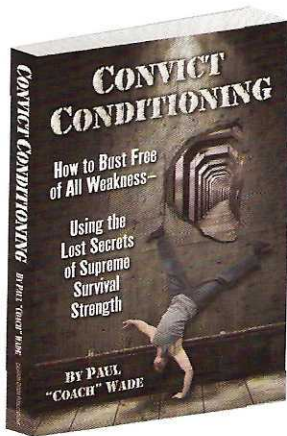
It looks simple, but holding your legs off the floor while they're perfectly straight takes great hip and abdominal strength, plus a strong quads and a supple lower back. Compared to hanging raises, you also need greater arm strength to press your bodyweight off the floor. Just like leg raises, you can learn this technique progressively, by beginning with bent legs and straightening them out as you get stronger. L-holds are not superior to leg raises, because they don't build functional, dynamic strength where the muscles and limbs have to move. But they are a great alternative to leg raises, maybe when you can't hang off something. They're also good maybe if you have a nagging hip injury, because you can train all the muscles of your midsection isometrically, without having them rub up and down over the joints. The bodyweight manual *Convict Conditioning 2* contains a full set of progressions for L-holds, plus lots of extra training advice for this great exercise.



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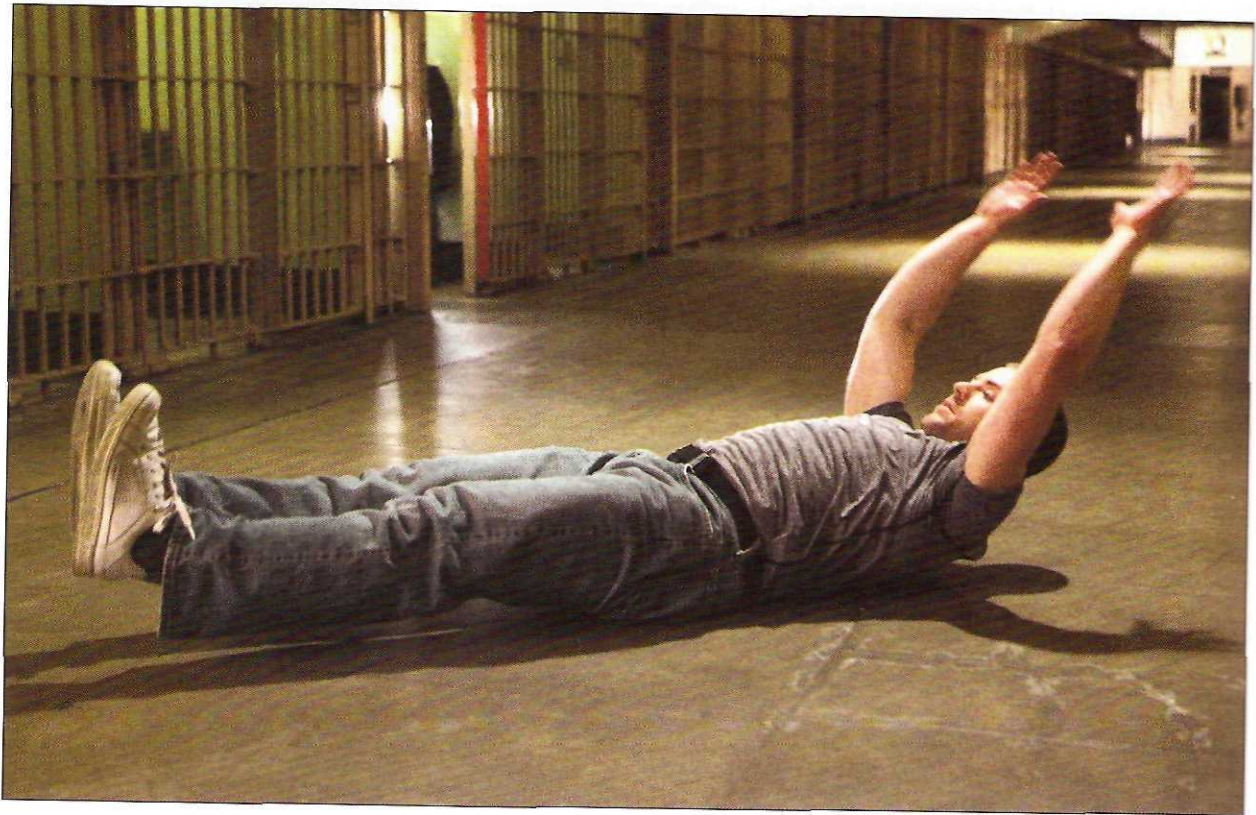


JACKKNIFE SIT-UPS



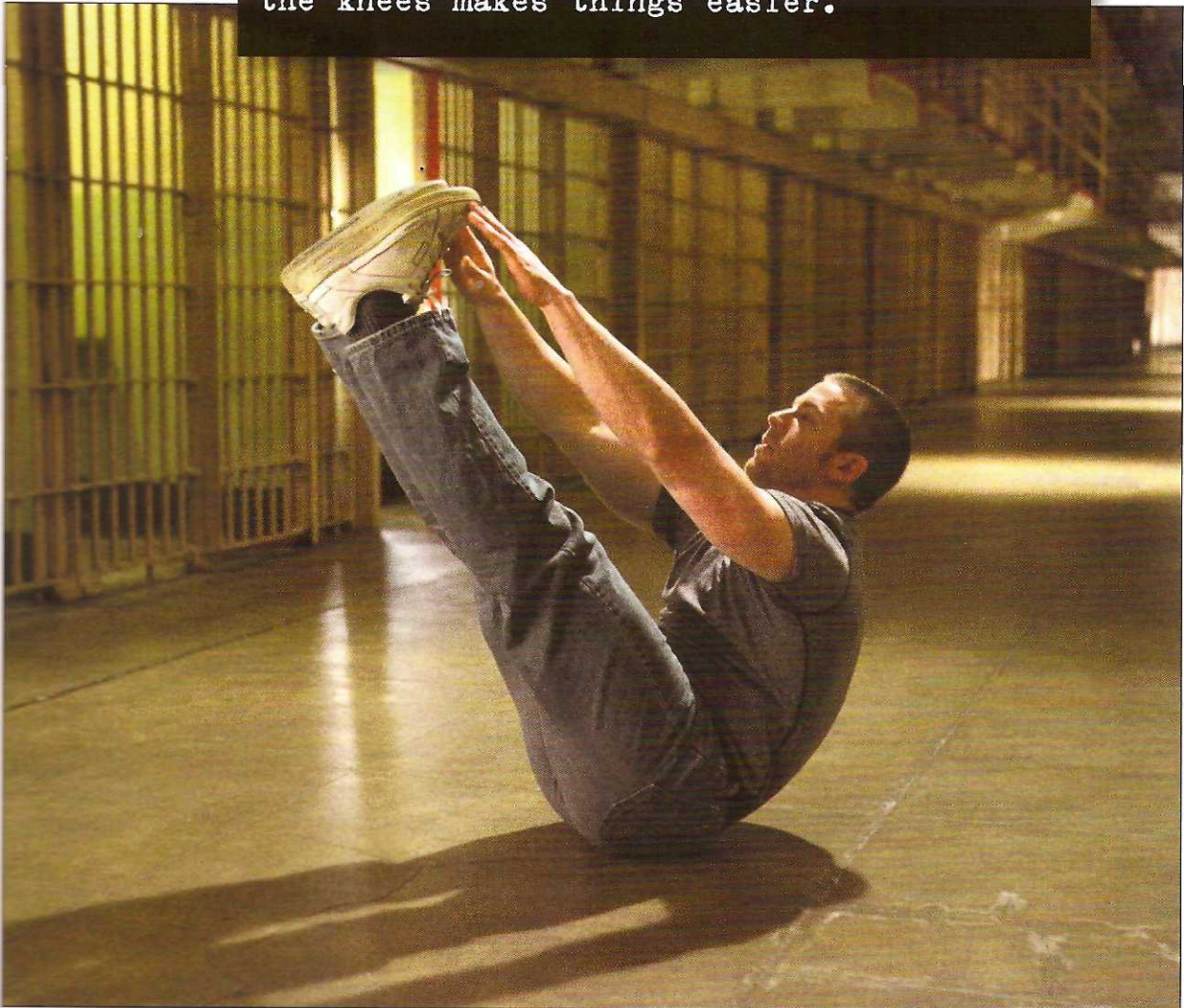
OVERVIEW

We've just shown you the ten steps of the leg raise series, and if you've read the *Convict Conditioning* book, you'll know how to perform sit-ups correctly too. Jackknife sit-ups are an interesting exercise because they form a missing link between these two exercises; they are a combination of a leg raise and a sit-up.



Start lying on the floor with your arms straight out behind your head. Raise your trunk and legs at the same time, and bring your arms up to touch your toes or instep. Only your butt should be on the floor at the top of the movement. Reverse the motion for the negative and complete your reps. Try to keep your legs fairly straight throughout the exercise. Bending the knees makes things easier.

Only your butt should be on the floor at the top of the movement. Reverse the motion for the negative and complete your reps. Try to keep your legs fairly straight throughout the exercise. Bending the knees makes things easier.



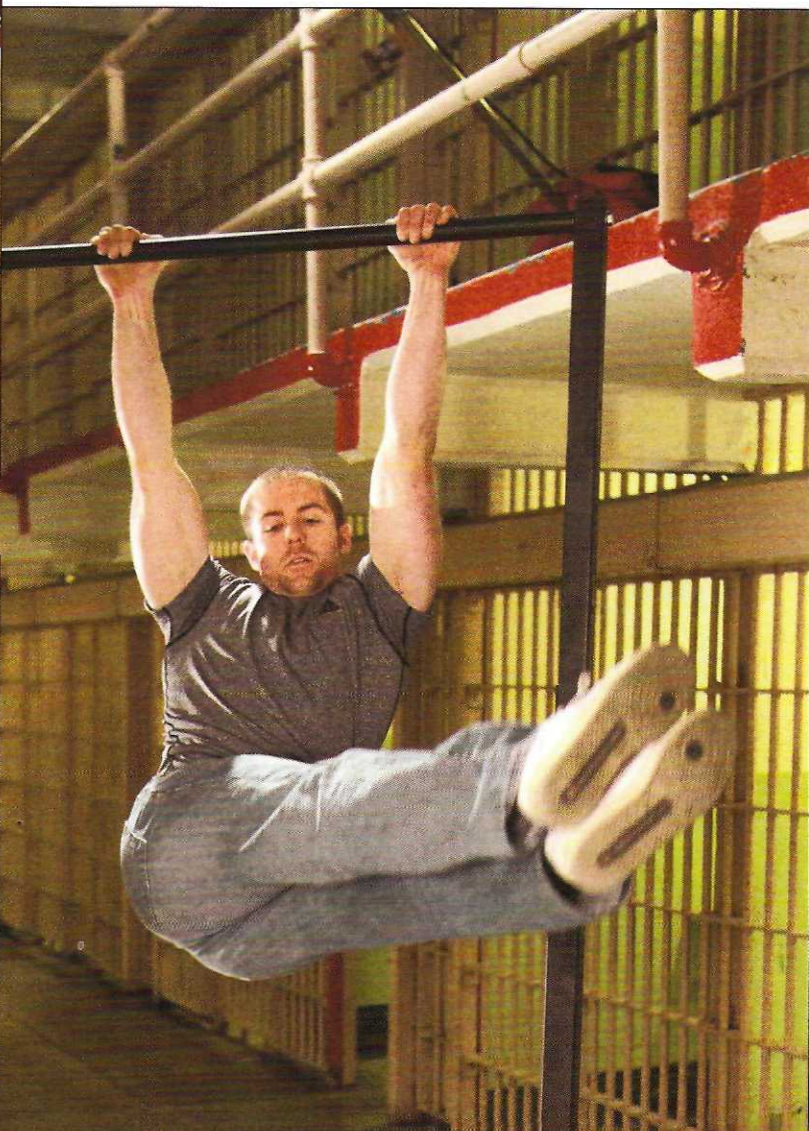
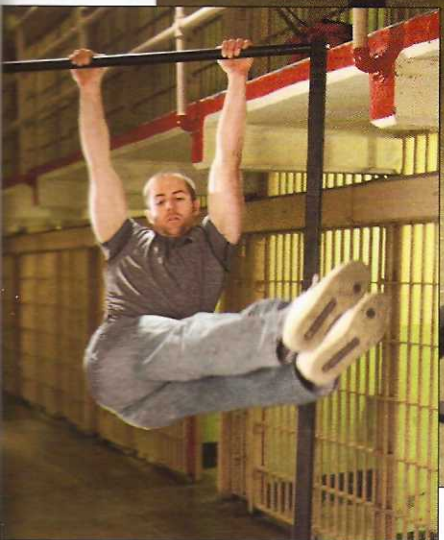
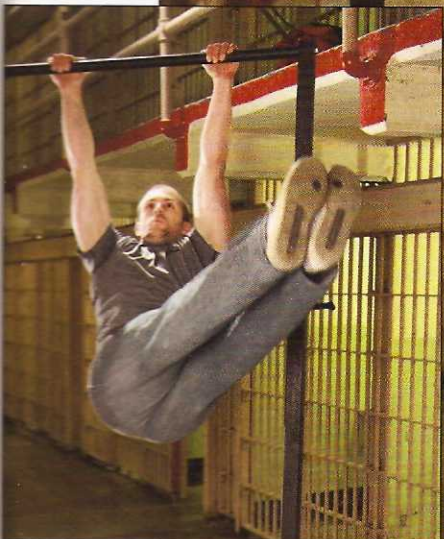
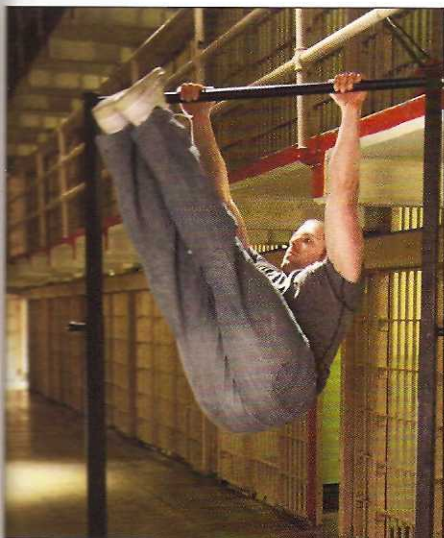
HANGING CIRCLES

OVERVIEW

Hanging circles are a very powerful exercise which activates all the muscles of the waist, abdomen and ribcage. Whereas in hanging leg raises you lift your legs up and down, for hanging circles you swing your legs in as wide a circle as possible, first clockwise, then anti-clockwise, and so on. This circle motion does a lot to activate the obliques and flanks of muscle at the side of the waist, as well as all the little hip and inner and outer thigh muscles which may not get worked as dynamically by standard leg raises. Circles are an advanced exercise, and should be practiced with some body English, to help activate the entire midsection.

TRAINING IDEAS

This is a demanding exercise if you do it as shown. You need to be quite expert at leg raises already if you want to attempt this variant. Like all bodyweight exercises, you can make things easier by reducing leverage; you can simply bend the legs. But unless you are at least halfway through the ten steps of the leg raise, there's no point adding extra work like this anyway. Just focus on the basics and get stronger and stronger.



Like all bodyweight exercises, you can make things easier by reducing leverage; you can simply bend the legs.





OUTRO

We hope you enjoyed this DVD, but more than that, we hope you'll put the lessons in here into practice. Nobody ever got a six-pack from Hell by just watching a DVD. You need to get started with these exercises. Not knowing where to start isn't an excuse anymore—go back to the DVD and start step one, knee tucks. Do it tonight. If you have any extra questions, go to the forum at dragondoor.com or grab yourself a copy of the *Convict Conditioning* book.





Demonic Abs Are a Man's Best Friend —Discover How to Seize a Six-Pack from Hell and OWN the World...

Paul Wade's *Convict Conditioning* system represents the ultimate distillation of hardcore prison bodyweight training's most powerful methods. What works was kept. What didn't, was slashed away. When your life is on the line, you're not going to mess with less than the absolute best. Many of these older, very potent solitary training systems have been on the verge of dying, as convicts begin to gain access to weights, and modern "bodybuilding thinking" floods into the prisons. Thanks to Paul Wade, these ultimate strength survival secrets have been saved for posterity. And for you...

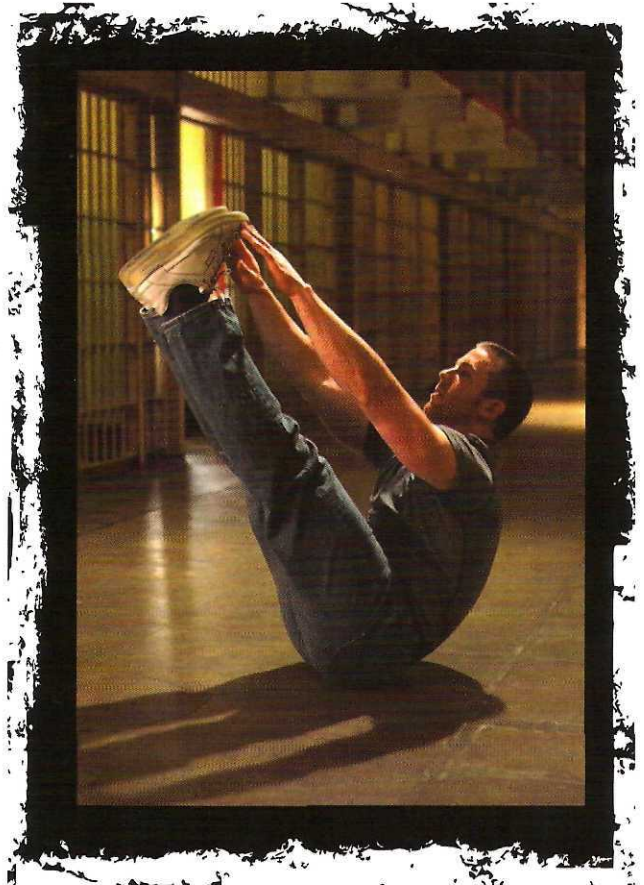
Filmed entirely—and so appropriately—on "The Rock", Wade's *Convict Conditioning Volume 3, Leg Raises: Six Pack from Hell* explodes out of the cellblock to teach you in absolute detail how to progress from the ease of a simple Knee Tuck—to the magnificent, "1-in-1,000" achievement of the Hanging Straight Leg Raise. Ten progressive steps guide you to inevitable mastery of this ultimate abs exercise. Do it, seize the knowledge—but beware—the Gods will be jealous!

This home-study course in ultimate survival strength comes replete with bonus material not available in Paul Wade's original *Convict Conditioning* book—and numerous key training tips that refine and expand on the original program.

Prowl through the heavily and gorgeously-illustrated 80-plus-page manual and devour the entire film script at your animal leisure. Digest the brilliant, precise photographs and reinforce the raw benefits you absorbed from the DVD.

Paul Wade adds a bonus Ten Commandments for Perfect Leg Raises—which is worth the price of admission alone. And there's the additional bonus of 4 major Variant drills to add explosivity, fun and super-strength to your core practice.

Whatever you are looking for when murdering your abs—be it a fist-breaking, rock-like shield of impenetrable muscle, an uglier-is-more-beautiful set of rippling abdominal ridges, or a monstrous injection of lifting power—it's yours for the progressive taking with *Convict Conditioning, Volume 3, Leg Raises: Six Pack from Hell*.



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