



GOLD MEDAL BODIES
Flexibility Module

GMB Flexibility Module

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Ryan C. Hurst, Jarlo L. Ilano, PT, MPT, OCS, & Andy Fossett

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations and welcome to

Gold Medal Bodies Floor One!

Floor One (**F1**) is a program designed to improve your total Body Control. Specific exercises in a progressive plan will increase your strength, balance, coordination, and flexibility. All leading to the goal of performing a routine that demonstrates your newfound skills and abilities. This bodyweight-only training program provides step-by-step daily instruction in everything you need to perform impressive skills such as handstands, rolls, jumping, and arm balancing stunts

In this course, we will lead you gradually from your current level and abilities and show you a strenuous, but fun, method of learning some serious gymnastic skills. With correct practice and due diligence, you will move your body through a variety of calculated motions, and in the process develop high levels of strength, grace, and poise.

These detailed programs were designed to take you from the most basic starting point to impressive skills that you will hardly believe you can do in just a few short months. From warm-up, to the main program exercises, to the cool-down, you will be engaging in serious training for serious results.

ELEMENTS OF BODY CONTROL

GMB training has the primary goal of full Body Control.

The acrobats, gymnasts, dancers, and other athletes you see in shows and games that everyone admires and enjoys watching all have one thing in common, and that's this total control over their body and its movements. They often perform stunts and feats that we can only dream of, and that's what makes them so impressive.

How do these people achieve this? Are they born with special skills and talents? Well, truthfully, they most likely do have some genetic advantages that put them ahead of most people who play their sport. That's just the reality of it. However, it's not just inborn talent that gets these athletes where they are at, but also specialized and consistent practice.

And this is where GMB comes in: we show you ways to train that are efficient and effective in promoting Body Control.

We aren't guaranteeing you the gold medal in the next Olympic Games, but we are betting that you'll be amazed at your condition and skills at the completion of the program.

Let's talk about what Body Control consists of, and how combining these attributes in the correct progression can take you to higher levels of skilled performance.

Understanding these details will help you understand how each step of the process gets you closer and closer to your goals.

WE BREAK DOWN BODY CONTROL INTO FOUR ATTRIBUTES:

- ★ Strength
- ★ Balance
- ★ Coordination
- ★ Flexibility

Think about watching your favorite athletes and performers do their thing, and you'll realize that you are watching the interplay between all of these four attributes as they combine to help the athlete perform at the highest levels.

Let's take a look at what we mean by each of these.

STRENGTH

Strength is much more than just lifting the heaviest weight off of the ground or how much you can bench press. Our definition of strength involves how easily and smoothly we can move our body around in space. We need strong arms and shoulders for handstands and other holds. We need strong legs and hips to jump high. But we also need to know how to connect the strength of our arms and legs to the strength of our torso. GMB training will give you the tools to develop practical strength to control your body in all planes of motion.

BALANCE

Standing on your hands obviously requires strength, but it of course also requires specific balance skills. Not many people, if any!, can go upside down and stand on their hands for the first time without any training at all. At GMB we separate balance into upper body and lower body balance performance. Improving your comfort level in these various balance activities is a big part of achieving Body Control.

COORDINATION

Here at Gold Medal Bodies, we define coordination as being able to perform specific body movements that result in specific actions. It is a delicate interaction between strength and balance along with body awareness. When people talk about “hand eye coordination”, it’s really about this ability to connect your desired outcome to what you are doing with your body.

You aim for a target and you toss a ball at it in the hope and expectation that your shoulder, elbow, wrist, and hand move in the right way to make it happen. It’s the same thing with picking a spot on the ground and wanting to land right on it with one foot. This is coordination, and GMB helps you to improve yours.

FLEXIBILITY

Can you tie your shoes without bending your knees? Or simply reach behind to the back seat when you are in the driver’s seat? These simple activities demonstrate the need for flexibility in your daily life, and how important it is for the feats of skill that you are working towards in this program. The GMB Stretching Module will improve your flexibility and allow you to move your body smoothly in all of your ranges of motion.

BALANCING WARM UP, WORK, AND RESTORATION

Warm Up

One of the hallmarks of intelligent training is a proper warmup routine. Our joints and muscles move much more smoothly when they are loosened up and primed for exercise. Optimally, you should have a warmup specific to the main exercises in your workout session, rather than a random “stretch whatever feels tight” routine.

A proper set of warmup exercises is specific to the movements you will be performing in your training. The various ranges of motion, along with what part of the body will bear the most strain in the activity, should be taken into consideration.

This type of specificity is not only the most beneficial, it is also very efficient. You won't be wasting time on warmup activities that don't match what you will be doing in your workout.

Restorative Movements

While many programs out there now recognize the need for a specific warmup before a vigorous training session, there are still quite a few that either neglect a cool-down or just toss in a few arbitrary stretches for a couple of minutes here and there.

This neglect can lead to increased resting muscular tone, often felt as the sensation of being “tight” after a hard workout. This increased tension can accumulate and cause chronic muscle shortening and postural changes.

The GMB Flexibility Module is introduced here to provide you with the movements you need to gain overall body flexibility and to recover properly during and after the intense training regimen in this course.

It is incredibly important to perform these restorative movements regularly during and after your workouts to both enhance your performance and prevent injuries. If you are injured then you can't progress!

FLEXIBILITY EXERCISES

We've chosen 9 specific stretching exercises to target the essential flexibility needed to perform not just the exercises in this course well, but in all athletic activities. Flexibility is often an afterthought in training, either tacked on at the end of the workout or lazily done in the beginning. But it really should be a staple in your regular training.

So many times, an exercise or movement is made that much harder simply because a person isn't flexible enough to perform it properly. Here we provide you with the tools you need to be agile and smooth in everything you want to do.

Floor Stretches

1. Forward Fold
2. Pancake
3. Side Bend Pancake
4. Shoulder L Stretch
5. Shoulder Lounge Chair
6. Butterfly Stretch
7. Glute Stretch
8. Half Lunge Stretch
9. Front Split Progression

How To Perform The Stretches

1. The protocol for these stretches is to start by rocking into and out of the portion of the stretch that is just uncomfortable.
2. Do this about ten times, and on the tenth time hold that position for at least thirty seconds and as much as two minutes. This allows a nice easing into the stretch, rather than a jarring change that can shock your muscles.
3. Before you exit the stretch, contract the stretched muscles gently and then more firmly as you go back to your starting position. Just like easing into the stretch prepares your muscles better, the muscle contraction eases you out of that stretched position and gives your muscles a smoother transition, especially if you've been holding the stretch for over a minute.

Forward Fold

This seated exercise is a wonderful way to relieve tension throughout your entire spine. The focus should be on opening your back from the base of your skull all the way to the tailbone. This is why we say it's acceptable to bend your knees as needed. Allow yourself to reach your toes and work on opening your back, rather than be limited by the length of your hamstrings. As you improve you can straighten your knees and hinge at the hips to fold your body like a jackknife.

Pancake

This classic gymnastic stretch releases the inner hips and thighs, along with the hamstrings and lower back. Bring your feet apart as wide as you can, and then use your hands to shift your hips forward and side to side until you reach the desired stretch. Work on keeping your chest up and upper body tall to direct the stress more in your legs than your back. You may find that a support such as a stool or small box is helpful as you start leaning forward into the full pancake position. Remember to ease into and out of the stretch.

Side Bend Pancake

An often neglected part of flexibility training, even in those that train regularly, is the side of our bodies, particularly our waist and back. This exercise solves this dilemma very well. We recommend starting in a "half pancake" or "hurdler" stretch, with one leg straight and the other folded in. The primary cue in this exercise is to keep your back locked and straight, any bit of forward bend takes away from the full value of this stretch. Work on fully opening that area between your ribs and hips and you'll notice a nice effect in your posture and movement.

Shoulder L Stretch

This is an interesting stretch, and again an often neglected area of the body, though very important for a limber shoulder girdle. The important point of form here is to work on keeping your chest and shoulders squarely facing the ground so you can place the correct pressure and angle on your elbow.

Shoulder Lounge Chair

Another great shoulder girdle stretch, this movement opens up your chest, the front of your shoulders, and even your biceps. But we have to be careful that we do this correctly, so as to stretch our muscles, but not overstretch the shoulder ligaments and cartilage. Keep your chest and ribs up to place the stretching force on the muscles and less on your shoulder joints. Don't force this stretch at all, and it is a safe and effective shoulder and chest opener.

Butterfly Stretch

This is a very common stretch for the hips and groin muscles, but is often performed incorrectly. As with the other movements presented here, we are keeping our upper body straight as we work on stretching our lower body. This targets the chosen area correctly and protects other areas from being overstretched. Use your elbows to assist, and focus on leaning forward hinging at the hips and you'll get the most out of this stretch.

Glute Stretch

Most people need some work in opening their hips up and stretching out the muscles that rotate the hips outwards. We name this a "glute" stretch because you'll probably feel this deep in your butt muscles! But it affects a lot of different areas. This is another stretch to be extra careful with, as you'll want to avoid straining your lower back. If you aren't quite so flexible, and you try to keep your "sit bones" flat on the ground (as recommended by some trainers), you may end up over-stretching ligaments in your low back and creating more harm than benefit from the exercise. Just focus on the proper positioning and hugging your knee in tight to your body and worry less about sitting flat on the ground.

Half Lunge Stretch

Tight hip flexors and quadriceps are responsible for many back and knee pain complaints, as well as interfering with many athletic movements. This stretch will help you keep these areas from becoming a problem. Be aware of the position of your front knee, keep the knee from going past the toes (your shin should be close to straight up and down). If you feel you need more of a stretch, slide your other knee backwards. Don't worry about grabbing your trailing leg's foot to bring up and bend the knee right away. If you attempt this before you are ready, you'll end up arching the lower back to complete the motion rather than it being from more flexible hips. Just like the rest of these stretches, take your time, be consistent, and you'll get where you need to be.

Front Split Progression

Considered by many to be the ultimate test in lower body flexibility, "splits" require great flexibility in your hip flexors and hamstrings, and also look impressive! Though it is quite a difficult stretch, the progressions we show you here will get you towards your goal of full front splits sooner and with less strain and pain. Focus on keeping your hips facing square ahead and your upper body locked nice and straight. In this movement, slide your front heel forward to progress in the stretch. Remember that it's easier to lean your body forward, so start there if you feel like the stretch is too much.

We'd like to emphasize that it is much better to be consistent and perform these stretches regularly than to attempt and stretch "hard" and only do them every so often. These stretches form the core group of flexibility exercise for GMB and we believe that consistent performance will improve your overall athleticism and quality of movement.