

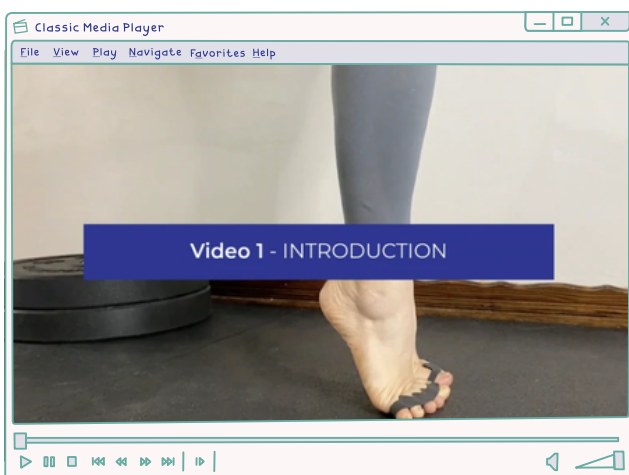


HOW-TO & EXERCISES

PREPARING TO EXERCISE.

The information presented in this work is by no way intended as medical advice or as a substitute for medical counselling. The information should be used in conjunction with the guidance and care of your physician. Consult your physician before beginning exercises as you would with any exercise and nutrition program. If you choose not to obtain the consent of your physician and/or work with your physician throughout the duration of your time using the recommendations in the program, you are agreeing to accept full responsibility for your actions.

By continuing with the exercises you recognize that despite all precautions on the part of The Toe Spacer Ltd, there are risks of injury that can occur because of your use of the aforementioned information and you expressly assume such risks and waive, relinquish and release any claim which you may have against The Toe Spacer Ltd, or its affiliates as a result of any future physical injury incurred in connection with, or as a result of, the use or misuse of the program and its products.



We would encourage you to watch our free introduction to foot health and restoring your feet. The first couple of minutes explain our foot course, and at the 2:00 minute mark, we cover foot anatomy, foot mobility, and how the feet work.

<https://thetoespacer.com/pages/video>

FAQ

We believe increasing mobility and strength training your lower body from the ground up should be simple to incorporate throughout your day. Our mobility and recovery tools are perfect to use around the house, home-gym, and or office. Our tools can be used as part of your recovery session, pre-workout, post-workout or barefoot training.

Please consult your health practitioner if you are experiencing pain or discomfort before using our tools.

I've never trained barefoot - how do I start?

The key is starting off slow. Generally, feet become weak from years of depending on cushioned and padded shoes for support. It's important to improve foot and ankle strength and mobilization to be successful in barefoot training.

The muscles in the feet lay dormant and inactive so work on spending time barefoot when you're at home and doing simple stretches and exercises to prepare for a full barefoot workout.

Why do I get cramping/pain when I'm barefoot?

It's normal to have a bit of cramping when you first start spending more time barefoot since the muscles in the feet are not used to being activated.

Reduce the activity and reassess to see whether the activity is too much or too soon for your feet. Use the E18HTBALL to release any tension and recovery balm to soothe any pain.

Should I wear my toe spacers when training barefoot?

If you're new to wearing toe spacers, we recommend using the toe spacers passively while seated or laying down. If seated, ensure your feet are planted on the ground to allow for better circulation. Start with 10-15 minutes and increase the timeframe as you feel comfortable.

Once your feet have adapted and feel comfortable, feel free to increase the time and add movement.

How do I incorporate the products into my daily routine?

The Toe Spacers, E18HTBALL, and Rock Mat can be used daily. Please see the individual product pages for more information. The Toe Mobility Band, Mobility Wedge, and Stability Board can be used 2-3 times per week depending on your training session.

For example, the Toe Mobility band is perfect for foot strengthening sessions, Mobility Wedge for lower leg exercises, and Stability Board for balance training.

FIVE TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND.

01

Ease into barefoot training

Generally, our feet become weak from years of having artificial support from shoes and the muscles have been accustomed to being inactive. It's important to slowly introduce barefoot training to avoid injury and over straining the muscles.

Start by introducing more time barefoot, foot stretches, and simple foot strengthening exercises such as toe lifts, tip toe walking, and big toe activations.

02

Spend time barefoot

A simple way to strengthen feet is to spend more time barefoot and out of shoes that are restrictive. Nature intended we move barefoot; the more physical activities you can do like this the better prepared your feet and ankles will be for those activities and life in general.

Walking barefoot activates the muscles in the feet and help strengthen the arches. It's also a great way to see whether there's an issue with your gait. Do you find you put more weight on the outer edges of your feet or inner? Do your ankles roll in when you walk?

Knowing how you distribute your weight will help when it comes to barefoot training since you will have to make adjustments to ensure your body is balanced.

03

Work out your feet like you would other muscles

Strengthening feet takes time, just like training other muscles in the body. Taking a few minutes out of your normal training session to focus on foot exercises will help strengthen and mobilize your feet. This can be done as part of your warm up or accessory training.

Improving foot and ankle strength, along with mobilization will set you up for success and a stronger foundation.

04

Take notice of how your upward joints feel

Flexible, strong feet will aid optimal hip function and mobility and ultimately overall well-being. Everything is connected and often the feet are overlooked when it comes to training or assessing an injury. Feet have a big impact on the upward joints such as the knee, low back, and hip. You may find that after you've started strengthening and mobilizing your feet, there is a positive effect to your upward joints.

05

Reassess your footwear

Wearing toe spacers, strengthening and mobilizing your feet will do wonders for your body, however, continuing to wear footwear that is restrictive and compresses the feet will counteract all the positive work that has been done. Work towards transitioning to a barefoot shoe that is flexible, with a wide toe box and has a zero drop (no elevation with padded cushioning). This type of footwear allows the feet to move as nature intended.

TOE SPACERS

When and How to Wear

If you're new to wearing toe spacers, it's important to start wearing them passively either seated or laying down. If you are wearing them seated, keep your feet grounded to allow for better circulation. You can wear them daily for about 5-15 minutes depending on how comfortable you feel.

Once your feet have adapted, add movement and increase the timeframe. You will find you have the most benefit from wearing the toe spacers when active. Wearing them as part of your warm-up, barefoot training session, or post workout adds the most benefit to the body.



Barefoot & Mobility Training

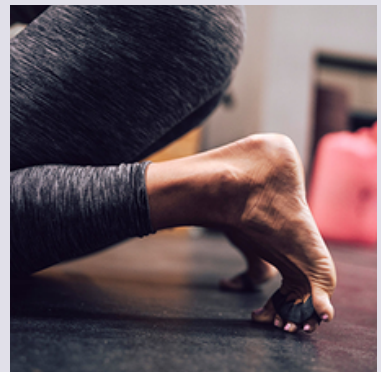
Any exercise that is done barefoot is technically a foot strengthening exercise. Working on lower body exercises with the toe spacers will help mobilize and strengthen the muscles in the foot. Please check our website under the learn tab for more exercises that you can do to strengthen the lower body or skip to page 11.



Simple Foot Stretches

This is one of our favorite and easy stretches that relieves tension in the arch and improves big toe range of motion. It can be done quickly and anywhere you may be.

Start in a kneeling position with your toes tucked under. Gently sit back while pressing your weight onto your toes. Stay in that position for 2-5 minutes. If there is too much pressure, lean forward and release the weight and pressure.

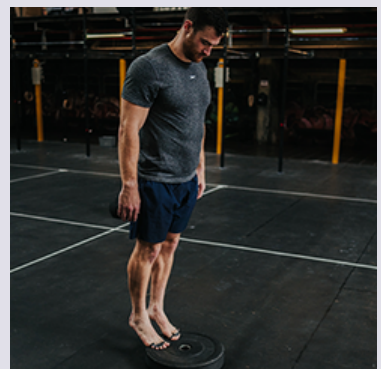


Calf Raises

We love calf raises because it helps strengthen the calves, big toe range of motion, and arch muscles. Start on a flat level and try 3 sets of 5-10 reps.

Once you're comfortable there, you can look at playing with elevation by using a plate as shown, mobility wedge or stairs. Please ensure there is a stable area such as a wall or rail to help support balance.

If you want to take it another level, you can try negative calf raises or single leg. A negative calf raise focuses on the downward part of the raise. As you lower yourself down, do it slowly and focus on activating the muscles.



EI8HTBALL

Feet

The EI8HTBALL is flexible yet firm which allows you to press down and control the amount of pressure on your feet. As a start It's always a good idea to begin seated, standing only as you get used to rolling and any discomfort. Remember to always carefully test how much pressure you can handle before applying more to the spot you are working on.

The more weight you can apply on your feet while standing the better shape and the stronger your feet are. You can do a pin and hold which is finding a spot that is tender and pressing down and holding for 15-30 seconds. Or you can move your feet in different angles and roll back and forth to release the tissues. This can be done daily, but do be mindful to slowly build up the pressure.



Forearm

Releasing forearm tension can help increase grip strength, relieve stiffness in hands, help with tennis elbow symptoms, and assist with any discomfort in the thumb and palm area.

You're going to love this release if you work on a computer or often find yourself texting.

Place the EI8HTBALL on the floor, table, or against a wall and roll your forearm forward and backwards. Rotate your arm to cover the entire forearm.



Shin

Rolling the shin promotes blood flow, increases circulation, relieves tension, and maximizes recovery. You can roll several times per week, even daily if time allows and you tolerate it well. Try to coordinate it with your running days (or other effective shin splint exercises) to maximize your recovery. If you are only using the EI8HTBALL for your shins, it should only take you 5-10 minutes maximum.

Start on all fours and place the EI8HTBALL under one shin. Then, lean into your hands as you roll the one leg forward on the roller, moving up and down across the entire shin.



Calves

An alternative to rolling out your calves is to pin and hold to release tightness and tension. Tight calves can increase the chances of foot pain because they'll pull your heel off the ground quicker as you stride forward.

Place the EI8HTBALL on your calf and sit back for 1-2 minutes or as long as you can tolerate. Move the ball further up or down the calf to find tender areas and slowly sit back once again.



ROCK MAT

Daily Habits

An easy way to incorporate the Rock Mat into your daily routine is to place it in areas around the house or office that you find yourself standing. It's the perfect size to place beneath the kitchen or bathroom sink, standing desk, or even by the stove or counter.

Simply standing on it helps wake up and stimulate the thousands of nerve endings in the feet.



Single Leg Exercises

Incorporating single leg exercises with the rock mat is an excellent way to improve balance and proprioception. The nerve endings in the feet send hundreds of quick messages to the brain to keep the body upright and balanced. The Rock Mat challenges the nervous system by giving the bottom of the feet an uneven and rocky surface.

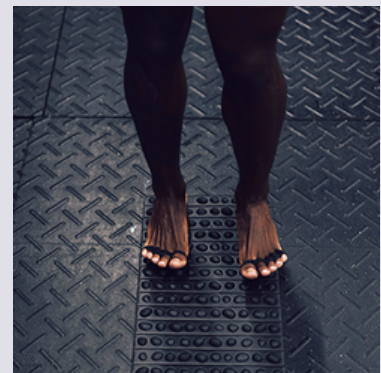
The quicker the body can adapt to these small imbalances and keep the body upright will help with stability and agility.



Stationary Walking

Targeting acupressure points by walking on rocks or cobblestones can help with pain relief, better sleep, and improved physical and mental well-being. The Rock Mat is a convenient and compact way of achieving this in the comfort of your own home.

It's a great mat to do foot exercises on. Try stationary walking, calf raises, toe lifts, side shuffles, and toe splays.



Good Mornings

Once you feel comfortable standing on the Rock Mat, you can add strength training exercises with weights if you wish. Good Mornings are a favorite exercise to increase the pressure at the bottom of the feet.

Stand upright, brace your core and pull your shoulders back. Take a breath and hinge forwards from your hips, not your waist, allowing a slight bend in your knees but keeping your back flat. Lean forwards until you feel a slight stretch in your hamstrings (but don't go beyond horizontal), then, as you exhale, reverse the move to stand up straight. Add a barbell or band if you want to increase the difficulty of the exercise.



TOE BAND

Big Toe Push Out

This exercise helps with big toe abduction and realigns the toe in its proper position. You can either place one end under a weight or wrap the entire band around each big toe and have your feet hip distance apart.

Think about spreading your toes and pushing your big toe towards the midline of your body. Relax your feet and push your big toe out again. 10-15 reps



Big Toe Lunge

Place one end of the band under a weight or heavy object. Stretch the band out and place your big toe on the other end of the band to hold it in place. Step your other leg back and lower into a lunge position while engaging your arch.

This exercise trains you to keep your big toe down and not to roll your ankle and knee outwards. The band will snap out from under your big toe as soon as your weight moves to the outside of the foot.



Big Toe Calf Raise

Place the band around the big toe and step apart to allow the big toes to abduct. Slowly raise onto your tip toes and lower back down. 10-15 reps

Please keep in mind not to come up too high to ensure your ankles are not rolling outwards.



Big Toe Lifts

Place the band around the big toe and step apart to allow the big toes to abduct. Keep your little toes down and raise your big toes up. Lower the big toe back down. 10-15 reps



STABILITY BOARD

Basic and Single Leg Balance

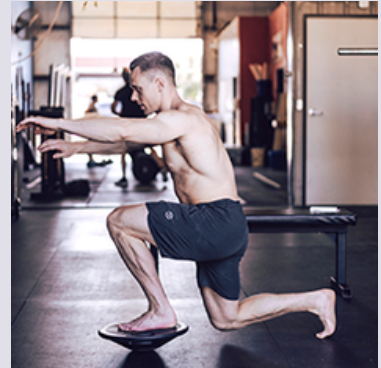
Start by doing a basic balance sequence as a warm-up. Begin by standing on the balance board with both feet hip-distance apart. Your feet should be on the outer edges of the board. Keep your posture upright and maintain a neutral spine. Pick a focal point in front of you to focus on. Shift your weight so the edges of the board don't touch the floor. Your arms can be in front of you or at your sides. Balance in this position for 30 second. Next tilt the board until the edge touches the ground side to side, and front to back.

Amplify this by doing it on a single leg.



Single Leg Lunge

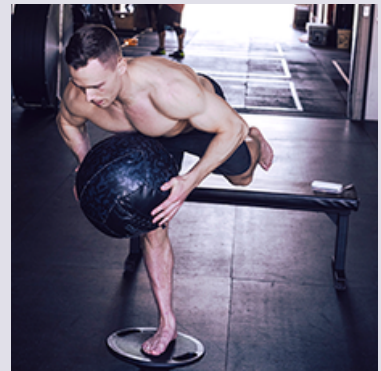
Single leg lunge works your feet, glutes, core, and quads. Keeping your left foot planted in the middle of the board, slowly perform a reverse lunge. Take your right foot back and drop your right knee down to the floor. Aim for the right knee to touch the ground while keeping all sides of the balance board off the floor. Try 10 reps per side and then alternate leg.



Single Leg Dead Lift

Grab a medicine ball and place your left foot across the center of the Stability Board. Bend forward at your hips, and slowly lower your body as far as you can, using the gravity of the medicine ball to stretch toward the platform.

Simultaneously, bring your right foot out behind you so it is parallel to the floor. Pause, then slowly straighten your body back to starting position. Repeat for desired number of repetitions. Switch legs. **As you come up, use your glutes to push your hips forward instead of lifting from your back. Keep core engaged and chest up during the entire movement*



Pistol Squats

One Leg to Pistol Squat is a fast & effective exercise for toning legs & improving ankle mobility. Start with your left foot across the center of the Stability Board with your right leg raised in front of you. Stand holding your arms straight out in front of your body at shoulder level, parallel to the floor. Push your hips back and lower your body as far as you can. Pause, then push your body back to the starting position. Aim for three sets of ten repetitions on each leg, with a 20-second rest in between sets.



MOBILITY WEDGE

Goblet Squat

Elevating the heel is a great way to optimize the squat, but it can also be a great way to add variation. For example, if we want to execute a squat that activates more of the quad and less of the hips/hamstring, simply elevate the heels more, naturally pushing the knees to move forward, which results in quad activation.

Place the mobility wedge underneath your heels while holding onto a load up against your chest. Perform a squat while trying to keep your trunk upright. Don't arch your back forward and keep yourself in an upright position. Play with your feet width and see which is more challenging. Try 3 sets of 10 reps.



Slow Eccentric Calf Raise

With your toes positioned on the top of the wedge, bring your heels up and slowly let them sink down to the ground. This exercise will warm up the ankles as well as dynamically stretch out the calves and relieve some tightness.



Achilles Stretch

The Achilles pulls on the heel every time the calf muscle flexes like when we run, jump or maintain our balance when standing still. Its constant use means it can be prone to injury so stretching and strengthening can help to reduce this risk. Place both feet on the board. Begin to slowly lean forward and bend at the knee. You will feel the stretch in your heel (i.e. Achilles tendon). Hold the position for 30 seconds or more.



Ankle Rockers

Kneeling ankle rockers is an exercise to increase ankle mobility- specifically in dorsiflexion. Dorsiflexion is vital in sprint and squat mechanics to ensure muscular recruitment and enhance force application.

Place one leg back and one leg forward with your forward leg flexed on the mobility wedge. Keeping your heel down, rock forward as far as you can on the front foot. Rock back and forth for 10-20 reps for 1 set. Optional weight to increase the pressure as your rock forward.



MORE BAREFOOT EXERCISES

- 01 Heel Walks
- 02 Marble Pick-ups
- 03 Towel Curls
- 04 Big Toe Abduction with Mobility Band
- 05 Short Foot
- 06 Toe Splays
- 07 Little Toes Lift
- 08 Towel Calf Stretch
- 09 Toe Points (Dorsiflexion & Plantarflexion)
- 10 Top of the Foot Stretch

03



05



10

MORE STABILITY BOARD EXERCISES

- 01 Push-ups
- 02 Planks
- 03 Side Planks
- 04 Airplanes
- 05 Barbell lunge

02



04



MORE EI8HTBALL EXERCISES

- 01 Roll out lats (under each armpit and under shoulder blades)
- 02 Pin and hold traps (upper back next to shoulder blades)
- 03 Calf raises with EI8HTBALL between heels
- 04 Occipital release (base of the skull)
- 05 Roll out the calves
- 06 Roll out the glutes
- 07 Pin and hold lower back
- 08 Pin and hold chest (between shoulder and pec)
- 09 Roll quads
- 10 Roll and release hamstrings

01



02



04



MORE MOBILITY WEDGE EXERCISES

- 01 Wrist support in downward dogs or planks
- 02 Big toe extension
- 03 Lower back support for crunches
- 04 Arch stretch for plantar fasciitis
- 05 Calf stretch

02



05



WANT MORE?

We've partnered with Hali and Calum from Flow Motion Fitness UK and we've put together follow-along videos for your feet, lower legs, hips and a comprehensive bonus Q&A where they answer questions about barefoot training, barefoot shoes, and more.

These videos are available for \$19.95 and can be found on our website.

<https://thetoespacer.com/pages/video>



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