

Swim Practice without Water

In this fast-paced, working world a fair number of us travel as part of our job responsibilities. I know I sure do. When I travel, I always bring a set of stretch cords to get me through a workout even in the absence of a gym or pool. My (once) business partner and friend Dave Scott showed me several excellent exercises that simulate a quality swim workout. I've used these techniques throughout the winter months to keep my swim form in shape even when I have no intention of getting in the water until late spring.

Stretch cords can be purchased just about anywhere. Even Wal-Mart (Bally's brand for under \$10.00) and Loblaw's (President's Choice for just over \$12.00) have these tools, so you do not need to invest a small fortune. Stretch cords come in different colors representing different levels of resistance. Find a resistance that matches your best bicep curl weight. For me, 10 to 15 pounds of relative resistance is more than enough to make this work out a challenge.

Next, find a stable anchor to secure the centre of the cord. I tie mine around a closed door's knob. Make sure you have equal length of cord on either side to ensure a consistent workout for each side. You will be working your back muscles (Latissimus Dorsi, Trapezius, Rhomboids), your triceps and biceps, rotator cuff (Infraspinatus, Teres minor and major) and shoulders. Your core is also engaged through much of this work. If you want to challenge yourself further, perform these exercises standing on one leg (and every further, standing on a wobble cushion with that supporting leg). Just don't forget to switch legs in between exercises.

These exercises are best performed after a warm up, such as a run or bike. If you are stuck in a hotel room, start the routine slowly until the muscles have had a chance to warm up i.e. first circuit at half effort, next two at full effort.

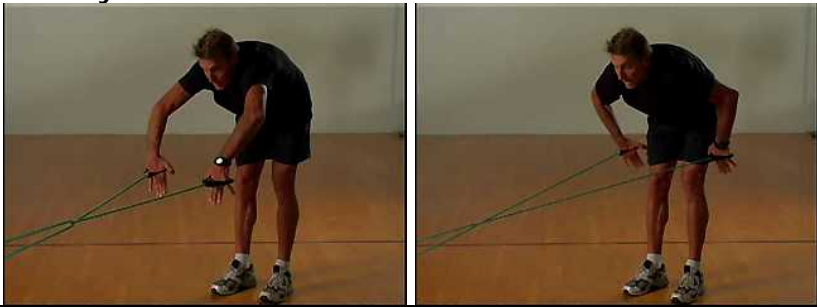
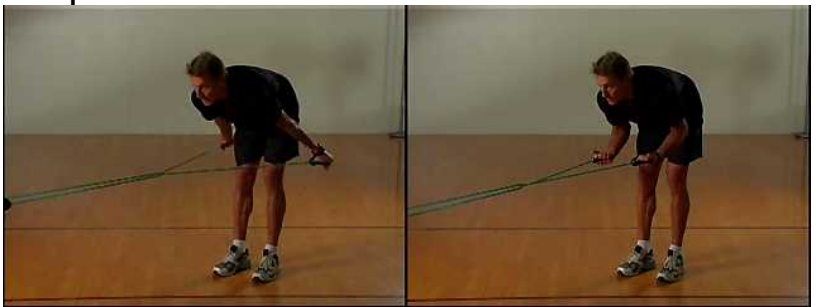
This exercise routine is best performed in a circuit (i.e. one exercise after another without rest, stopping to rest for 1 full minute at the end of each circuit). Assuming you are starting warm, developing athletes should complete two full circuits, while advanced athletes can do three. You should find your last circuit a challenge to complete while maintaining good form. This workout will take you about 20 minutes to finish, including a good post workout stretch (which I highly recommend).

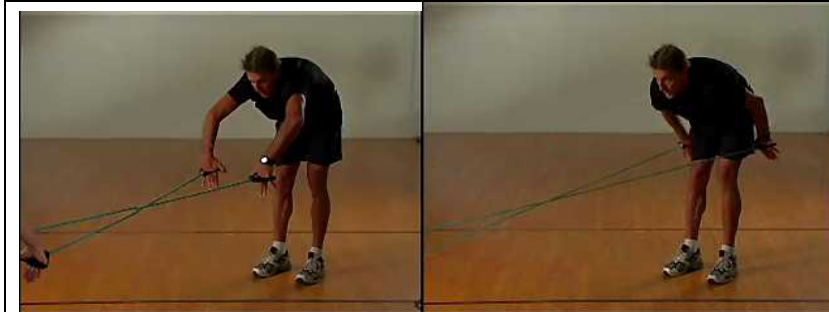
Position yourself so that the cords are moderately taught, but not pulling against you, during the rest phase of the motion. At full extension you should feel the resistance of the cords to near maximum effort (i.e. it should be sufficiently hard, but not so hard that you cannot complete the repetitions).

Your workout:

1. Butterfly half pull (work up to 20 repetitions)
2. Tricep kickbacks (work up to 8 repetitions each of 3 different hand positions)
3. Full Butterfly (work up to 30 repetitions in fast succession)
4. Upward row (work up to 20 repetitions)
5. Hitch hikers (work up to 20 repetitions)
6. Lumberjack twists (work up to 20 repetitions each side)
7. Rest 1 full minute
8. Repeat the full circuit 2x for developing athlete, 3x for advanced

Photo's pulled from my personal Dave Scott library. To see more Dave Scott products visit www.davescottinc.com.

<p>Butterfly Half Pull</p> 	<p>Tips: Ensure you are bent 70° at the waist, knees are soft, elbows are high (you are mimicking your swim stroke). Draw hands to come even with your waist. Ease the cords back to centre.</p>
<p>Tricep Kick Back</p> 	<p>Tips: Ensure you are bent 70° at the waist, knees are soft. Your hands change position 3x in this exercise: 1) palms up, 2) thumbs up, 3) palms down. Fully extend arms in each movement. Do not rest in between hand position changes. 8, 8, 8. Do not bounce. Control the movement on extension and flexion.</p>
<p>Full Butterfly Pull</p>	<p>Tips: As per the above exercise,</p>



but you fully extend your arms to come parallel with the floor. Ease the cords back to centre. You want to do this exercise at a relatively fast tempo, but still in control of the movement.

Upward Row



Tips:
Standing upright, with knees soft, pull the cord back toward your waist with thumbs up, squeezing shoulder blades together. Ease the cords back to centre.

Hitch Hikers



Tips:
Standing upright, with knees soft, pull the cord up toward your chin with thumbs up, at shoulder height. Squeeze shoulder blades together as you do so. Ease the cords back to centre.

Lumberjack Twists



Tips:
Standing upright, with knees soft and arms held straight out at shoulder height, elbows locked. In one motion, step lunge to the right and twist your body so that your arms follow. Keep elbows locked. Step back to centre. Repeat other side.