

Home Training for Backs

Ideas for how to improve your game at home with nobody around

Universal Skills for Forwards and Backs

- Passing
- Shooting
- Ball Control

Passing

- From the ground and from the air
- Stick, hand, and foot

Bullseye Passing

- Set up a target on the ground. It can be anything: a bucket, a jacket, a shoe, a twig that you've stuck into the ground.
- Step away to a reasonable passing distance
- Pass and try to make the ball hit the target
- Work through a progression of passing types. Don't let yourself get bored-keep switching up the type of pass you attempt!

Wall passing

- Find a vertical wall. It should be a hard, sturdy surface, like brick. There should be no windows nearby.
- Stand relatively close to the wall- closer than you would usually pass to a teammate.
- Flick the ball into the air at the wall with your stick. Wait for it to come back- it can bounce off the ground first, or you can get it out of the air. The goal is to have a consistent rhythm so that you can complete the drill for a long time
- See how long you can go

Keepy-Uppy

- Keep the ball up in the air with your feet and legs
- If the ball gets away from you, use your hands or stick to control it and bring it back to your feet
- Try and see how many keep-ups you can do
- Try and practice to the point that you can do tricks- any trick is a good way to practice your kicking control, but a trick that follows the two-touch rule is one you could use in a game

Shooting

- Face-up and post-up
- Stick, foot, and hand

Accuracy Shooting

- Set up a goal. It doesn't need to be regulation sized: a smaller goal is better for this drill than a bigger one.
- Choose a spot to aim for: a corner, a post, a target that you have set up in the goal

Turn and Shoot

- Set up a goal
- Face away from the goal with the ball
- Practice different ways to elevate the ball, turn to be side-on to the goal, and shoot
- Be creative! What works for someone else may not be the thing which works for you

Long shot on the run

- Set up a goal- ideally it is regulation size, but a smaller goal will make the drill harder and improve your skills more
- Place the ball some distance away from you and from the goal
- Run towards the ball, lift it, and shoot at the goal. Try lifting with your stick and kicking, lifting with your stick and striking with the stick, and lifting with the foot and striking with the stick.
- Try running at the ball from different angles and pushing yourself to shoot from farther and farther away

In-Close Finishing

- This drill works best if you have more than one ball and a regulation goal.
- Place multiple balls at approximately crease distance from the goal in a line.
- Work your way down the line, shooting your balls quickly at a dangerous part of the goal
- Practice a shovel shot to the top of the goal, a kick with the inside of the foot at the low corner of the goal, lifting and swatting into the low corner, and lifting and spiking into the low corner of the goal
- If you don't have multiple balls, try shooting the ball at a wall instead of a goal to give yourself multiple shots.

Ball Control

- Receiving passes
- Lifting the ball
- Protecting the ball
- Carrying

Sky control

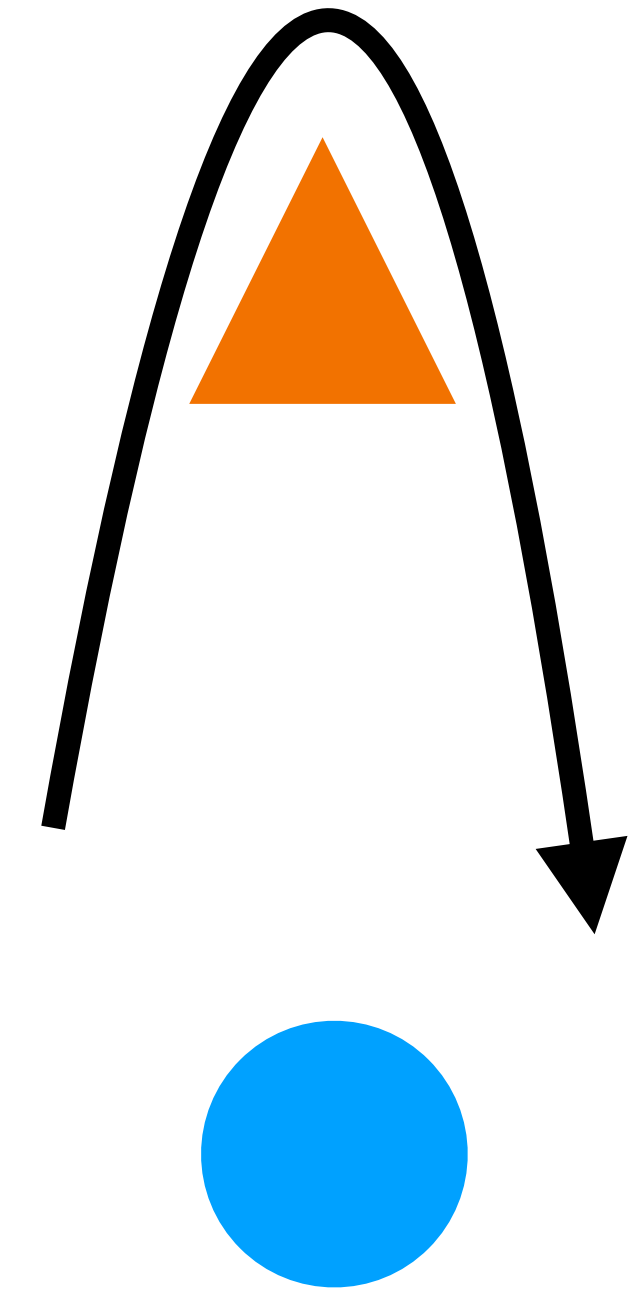
- Fling, throw, or kick the ball as high as you can
- Try and control the ball different ways
 - A soft touch with your foot that puts the ball into shooting position
 - Catching the ball directly with your stick
 - Deflecting the ball to the ground and catching it off the bounce with your stick
 - Slowing the ball with your hand and then catching it with your stick
 - Deflecting the ball to your foot with your stick

Wall control

- Kick or throw the ball against a wall
- When it comes back, try to control it as it hits the ground
 - Trapping the ball with the bottom of your foot
 - Controlling the ball with the inside of your foot
 - Controlling the ball with the outside of your foot
 - Trapping the ball with your stick
 - Chopping the ball into the air with your stick

Scoop on the run

- Set up an obstacle (cone, chair, garbage bin, etc) and a ball moderate distance from the ball
- Run around the obstacle, turning around to run at the ball
- As you run at the ball, scoop it up to carry it. Drop it, then turn and run around the cone again



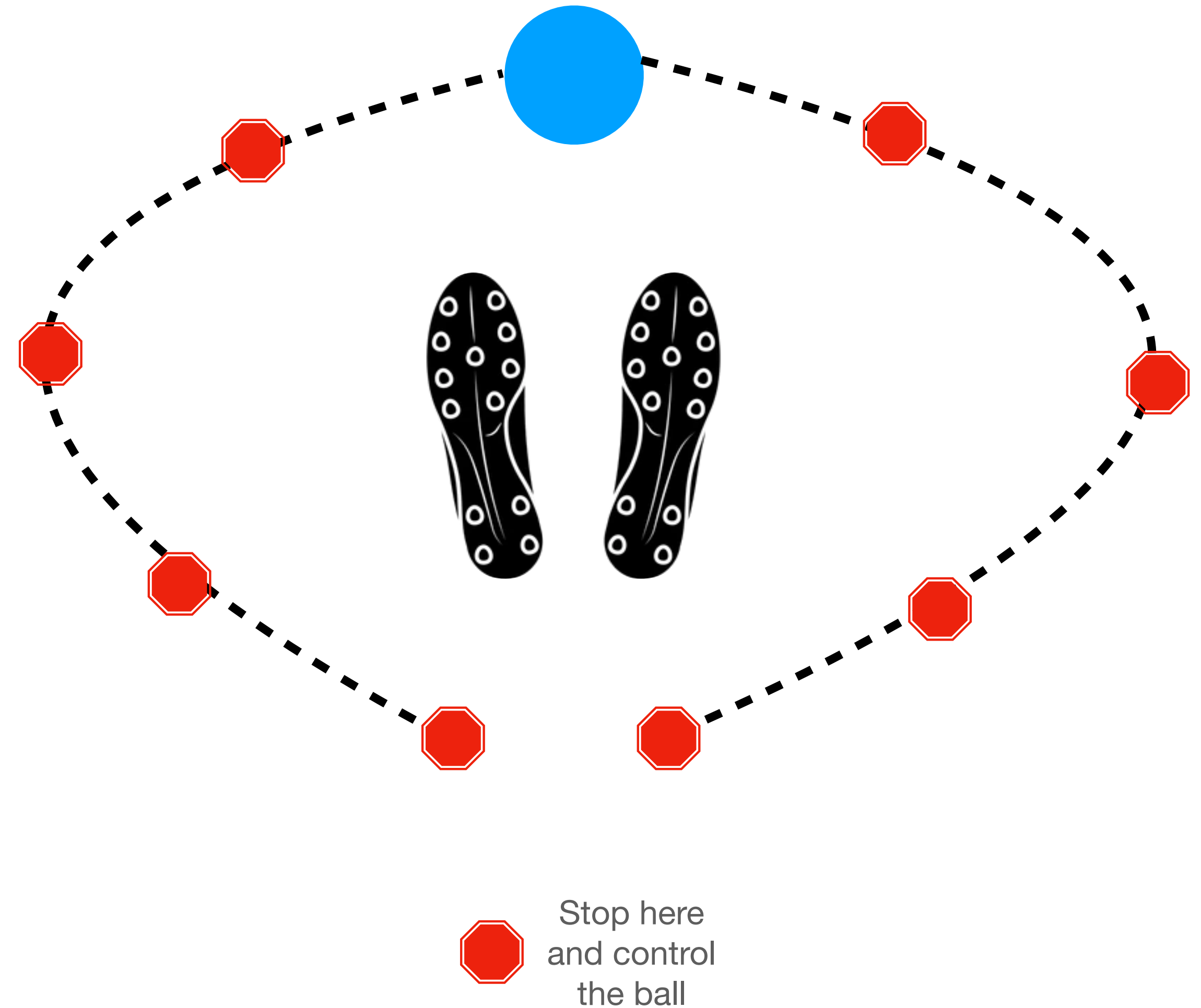
Dog ball

- This only works if you have a dog who likes to play ball and a ball which you don't mind if your dog will pop (consider using a different ball from your usual oarball)
- Play oarball with your dog, trying to keep the ball away as long as possible
- Be sure not to hurt your dog with your stick! Good practice for not fouling
- Dogs are not fooled easily by tricks- the best way to protect a ball from a dog is to put your body between the dog and the ball and shield it. This is also the best way to protect the ball against defenders!



Rotating control

- Start with the ball on the ground in front of you.
- Use your stick to move the ball all the way around your body to one side
- Then control the ball all the way around your body to the other side
- Try to have good control of the ball- be able to manipulate it in any direction no matter where it is. This is easier if you keep your hands away from your body.
- Add in extra stick-handles or tricks at each point to make sure you're still in control of the ball and to challenge yourself



Carry course

- Set up an obstacle course for yourself- cones to go around, obstacles to step over, whatever you can think of
- Scoop the ball up onto your stick and try to keep it there while you go through the course
- Go through the course once walking, just trying to keep the ball. If you can do that, try again running. If you can do that, make the course harder and start again

Dribble course

- Make an obstacle course for yourself- cones to go around, hoops to put the ball through, walls or trees to bounce the ball off of
- Control the ball along the ground through the course. Follow the two-touch rule- count it as a pass if you send the ball off a wall, tree or other rebounding obstacle
- Try different ways to challenge yourself
 - keep the ball on your forehand
 - only use the outside of your foot
 - run very fast through the course

Core Phases of Back Play

- Free Hit
- Shot Stopping
- 1v1 Defense
- Breakout

Free Hit

- Long hits- kicking
- Short hits- sticking

Long Kick Accuracy

- Mark out a square (with cones, sticks in the ground, chairs, etc) where you want the ball to land
- Start a reasonable kick's distance away
- Try and make the ball land in the square
- Challenge yourself!
 - Move farther from the square
 - Shrink the square
 - Practice in windy or rainy conditions (as long as there is not lightning)

Stick strike accuracy

- Find a wall near a flat patch of grass or dirt
- Start with your ball a short distance away- about as far as you want your hit to go
- Try and get the ball as close to the wall as possible without touching

Shot Stopping

- Reactions
- Agility
- Rebound Control

Wall Stopping

- Find a wall. The wall should be a hard surface like brick, with no windows or breakable parts. You want a patch of grass next to the wall where you would be comfortable diving
- Take the ball and punt it against the wall. When the rebound comes back, save it
- Challenge yourself!
 - Kick the ball far enough away that you have to dive for it
 - Set up obstacles on the ground in front of you so that the ball will bounce unpredictably
 - Set up a goal or target (such as a bucket or crate) to your side and try to parry the ball into the goal

Ladder and Dive

- Set up an agility course (agility ladder, cones, tires, hula-hoops, sidewalk chalk, etc) either on grass or on a hard surface next to grass (where you would be comfortable diving).
- Put a ball a moderate distance away from the course, where you would have trouble reaching it if you dove.
- Go through the agility course. Focus on technique first, then foot speed. At the end of the course, dive and try to reach the ball.
- Challenge yourself!
 - Go through the course faster
 - Put the ball farther away
 - Put the ball on top of a bucket or chair so you have to swat it out of the air with your stick

Stair Stopping

- Find a set of stairs where there is no risk of your ball causing damage or being lost
- Throw a small bouncy ball (tennis ball, racquetball, super-bouncy ball) at the top of the stairs. Wait for it to come down, then make a save and stop it.
- Try to operate with just one touch- block and clear in the same motion
- Challenge yourself!
 - Use multiple balls
 - Buy a “reaction ball” which will bounce unpredictably
 - Force yourself to do exercises (push-ups, sit-ups, squats, leg raises, lunges, etc) while the ball is coming down, then recover to make the block

Wall Juggling

- Take three small, soft bouncing balls (tennis balls, racquetballs, etc)
- Toss one ball at a wall. Before it returns, toss another. Try to have all three balls moving at the same time

1v1 Defense

- Stick discipline
- Holding ground
- Interceptions

Safe stick steal

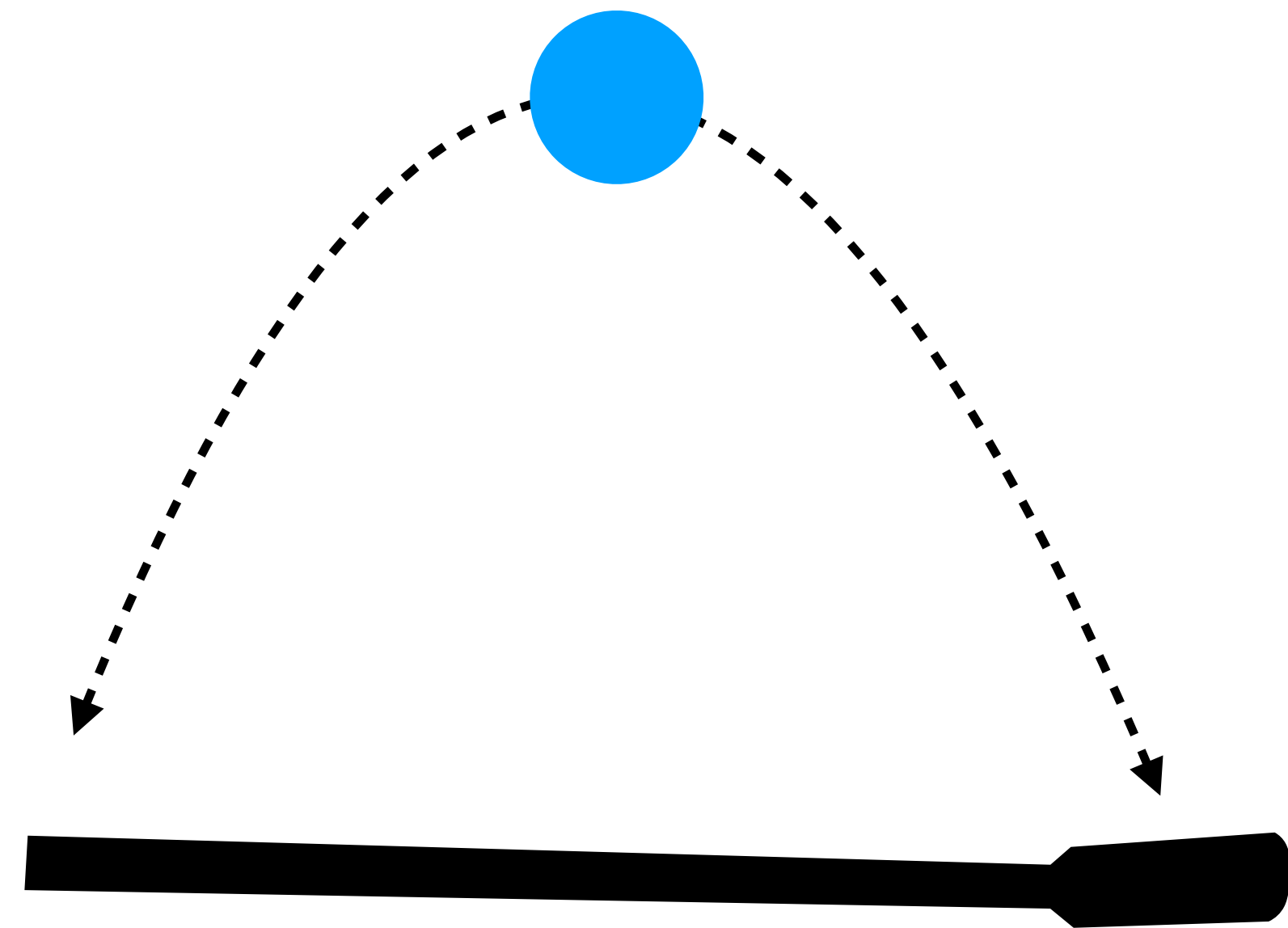
- Put the ball underneath a chair
- Shuffle to the chair, then reach under the chair with your stick. Try to steal the ball without your stick touching the chair
- Challenge yourself!
 - Run past the chair instead of shuffling and stopping
 - Put additional obstacles around the chair to avoid, such as tarps, sticks, or cones

Wall Sit

- Lean against a wall with your feet away from it.
- Slide down until your legs are bent at a 90 degree angle
- Try to hold the position as long as possible
- Try to work on stick work at the same time

Stick Juggling

- Scoop the ball up into the air with your stick
- Alternate between hitting the ball with the paddle end and the handle end, trying to keep the ball in the air as long as possible



Breakout

- Both short and long passes
- Avoiding pressure from forecheckers

Short and Long Pass

- Find a wall. Set up a target (bucket, chair, garbage bin, etc) a long distance away from the wall.
- Start the drill just like a wall passing drill, bouncing the ball off the wall with your stick.
- After three wall passes, take one touch with the stick, then kick the ball into the target
- Challenge yourself!
 - Both left and right foot
 - Make the wall passes faster
 - Make a longer kick

Figure Eight

- Set up two obstacles (cones, sticks, shoes, gloves, etc) a short distance apart
- Take the ball and dribble it between the obstacles in a figure-eight
- Challenge yourself!
 - Try making just one continuous touch
 - Try running at full speed
 - Scoop the ball and lift it when you turn around

Key Elements of Back Fitness

- Endurance
- Agility
- Flexibility

Endurance Training

- Moment to Moment Endurance: lung capacity, lactic acid tolerance
- Shift to Shift Endurance: recovery, energy capacity

Beep Test

- Find a video on the internet of the PACER test. Play it on something loud enough for you to hear at distance
- Set up cones or obstacles 20 meters apart
- When the video tells you to go, run from one end of your course to the other. If you fail to make it in time, that is one “miss.” The test ends when you have two “misses.”
- Push yourself to make it farther than you did previously

Low Intensity Interval Training

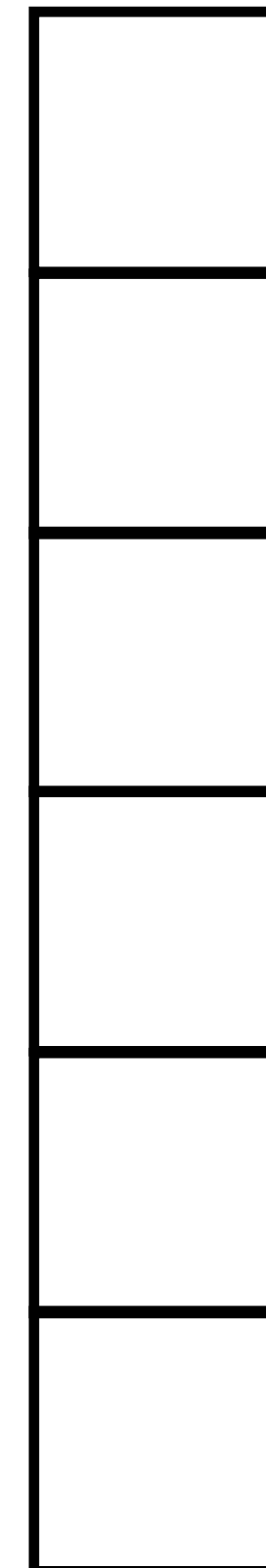
- Find a good place to jog- this can be the beach, a running track, a trail, or just sidewalk near you.
- Set a timer to go off every two minutes
- Each time the timer goes off, alternate between walking and jogging at a low speed.
- The goal is to go as far as possible, not as fast as possible. Push yourself to last longer than you did your previous time.

Agility Training

- Foot Speed
- Change of Direction
- Master all Gaits

Agility Ladders

- Set up an agility ladder. If you don't have access to one, make one! Use two long ropes and attach sticks to them, or draw one out of chalk on the sidewalk
- Use the agility ladder for different footwork exercises
 - Lateral in and out
 - Face sideways, run left or right
 - Both feet start in the box. Both feet step out, then both feet step into the next box
 - One foot step
 - Face forwards, offset from the ladder: one foot in, one foot out
 - Run one step forward. Inside foot takes one step into the box, then back out, then run another step forward
 - Hopscotch
 - Face forwards, centered on the ladder.
 - Jump forwards with both feet. Alternate between both feet inside the ladder and both feet outside the ladder



Toe Taps

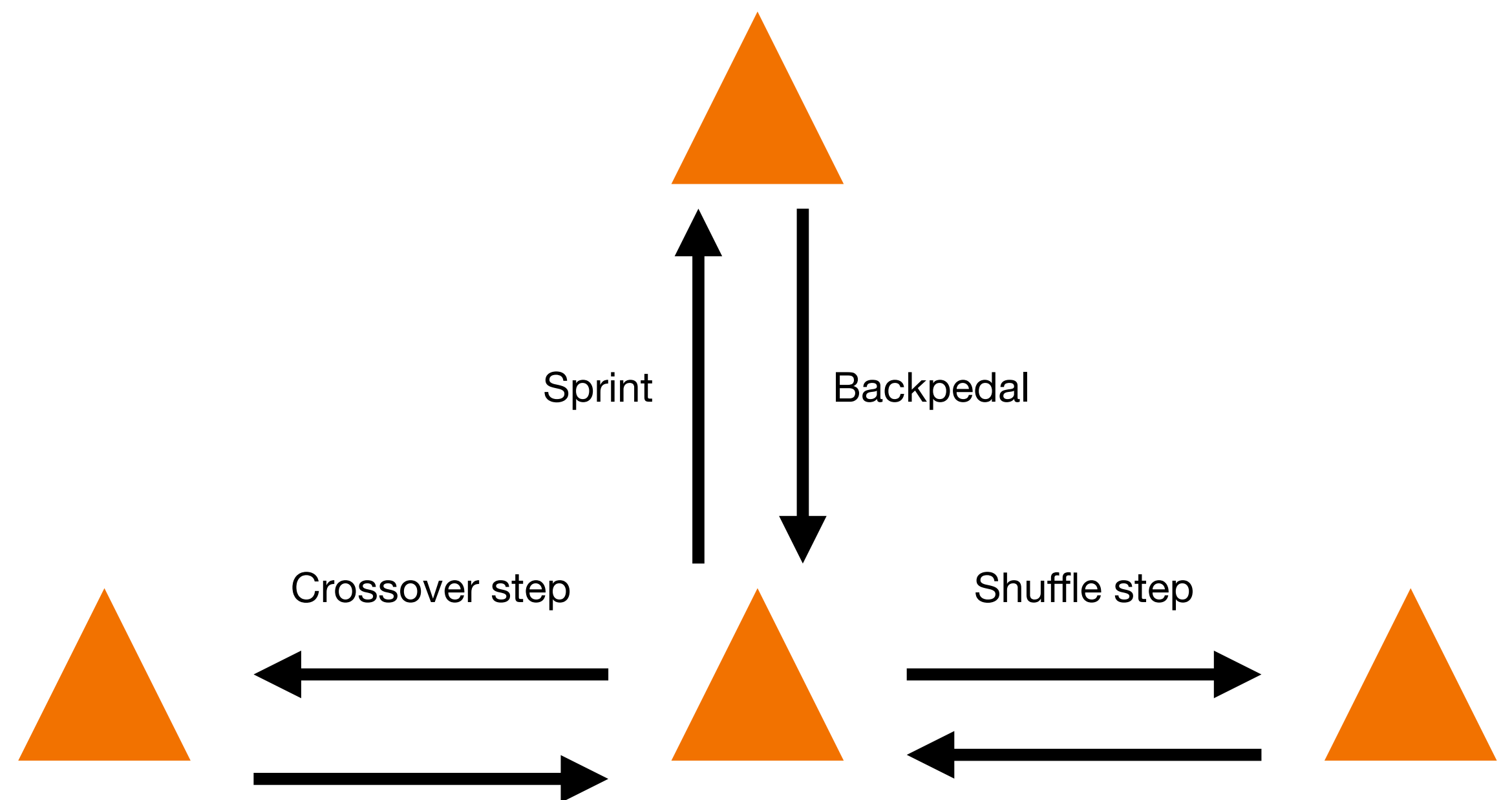
- Start with one foot on top of your ball and the other on the ground
- Switch feet
- Try to go as quickly as you can without disturbing the ball

Jab Steps

- Start at a running pace. Plant one foot into the ground and make a ninety-degree turn away from that foot
 - Plant the right foot, turn left
 - Plant the left foot, turn right
- To practice driving off of your plant foot, run next to a small hill. Run on the flat area, but plant your foot on the incline

The T

- Set up four cones (or other obstacles) in a “T” shape. Start at the bottom of the T.
- In any order, work through all 3 parts of the “T”. Always face forwards!
 - Sprint forwards
 - Backpedal: run backwards, facing forwards)
 - Shuffle step: run sideways, feet do not cross
 - Crossover step: run sideways, trailing foot (right foot if running left, left foot if running right) crosses over the front of leading foot

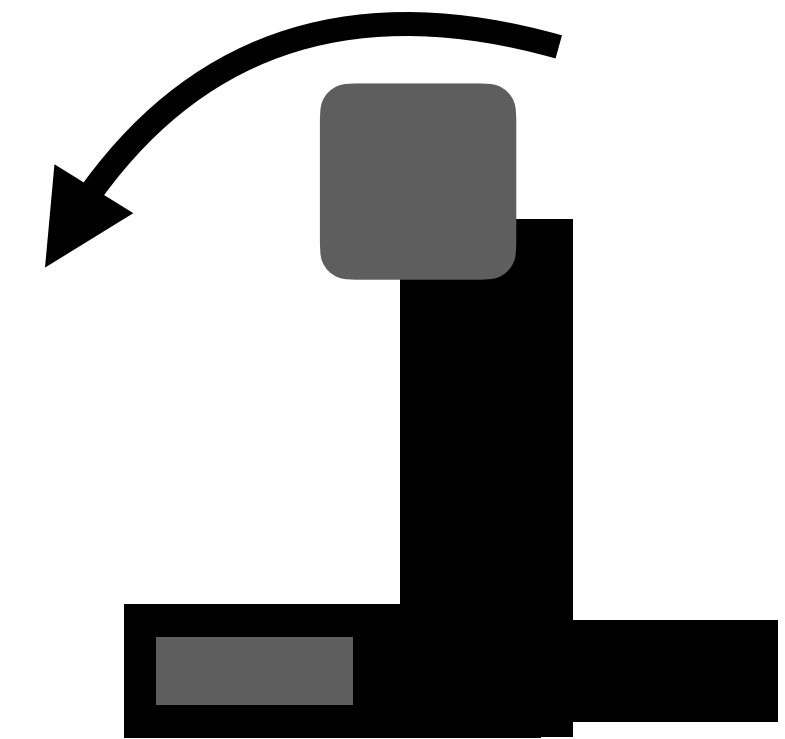
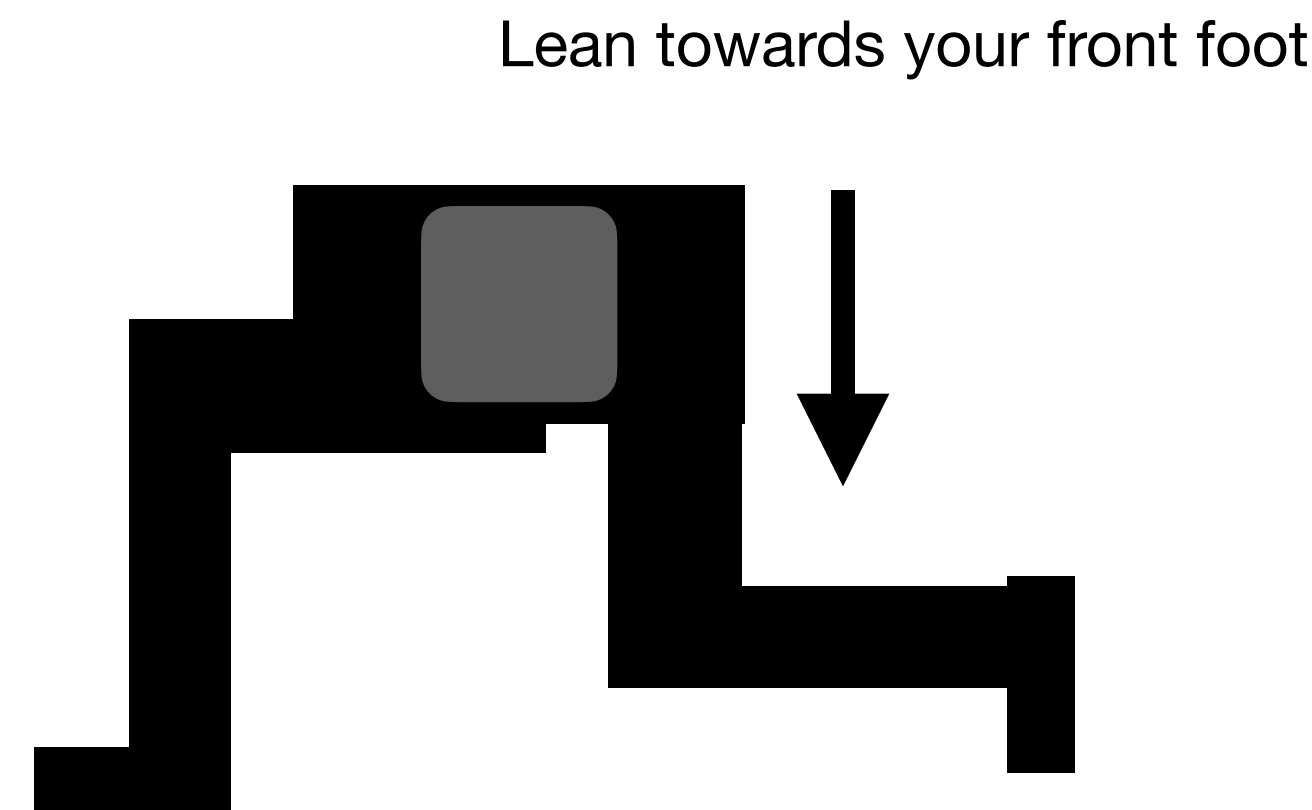


Flexibility Training

- Hip rotation
- Extensor flexibility
- Flexor flexibility

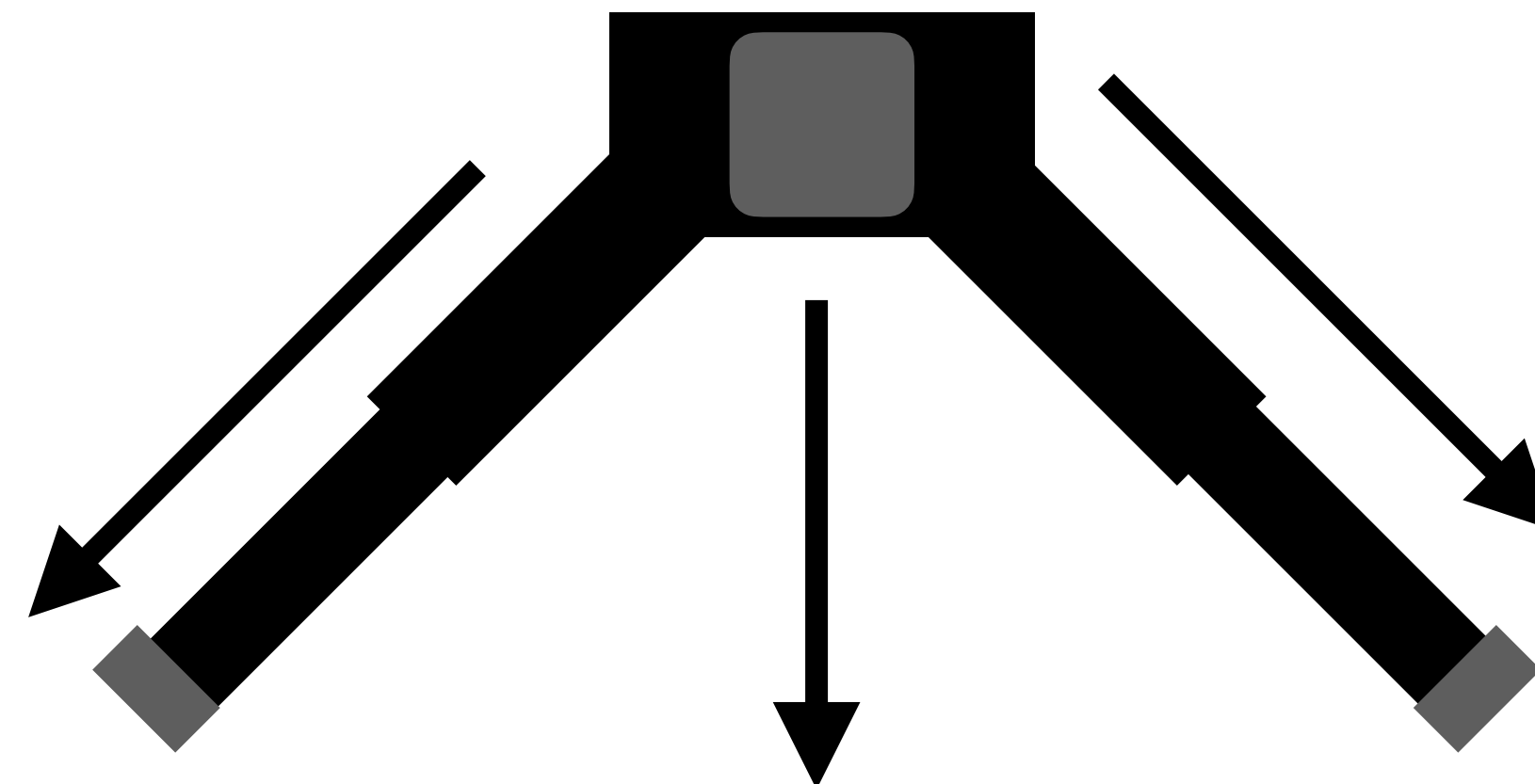
90-90 Hip Stretch

- Sit on the floor
- Place one foot in front of you, and one to your side, with both knees flat on the floor and bent at 90 degree angles
- Lean forward as far as is comfortable
- Hold the stretch for 10 seconds at a time
- Stretch both sides



Reaches

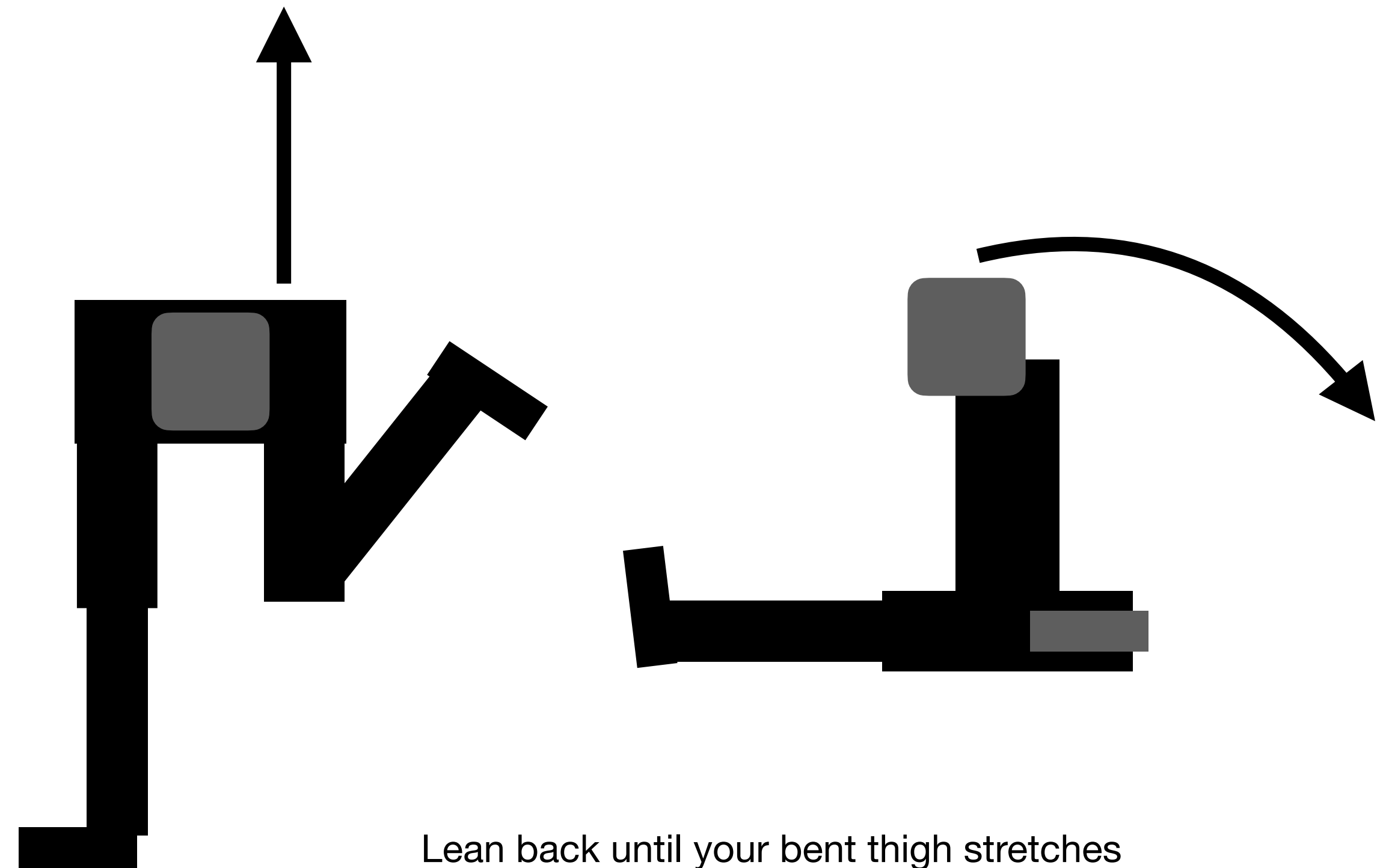
- Sit on the floor with the feet spread apart and legs straight
- Reach as far as you can with both hands in all three directions:
 - Left foot
 - Down the middle
 - Right foot
- If you can't reach your feet, just reach as far as you can- keep your legs straight
- If it's too easy to touch your feet, try bending down to make your torso touch your leg



Reach as far as you can with both hands in all 3 directions

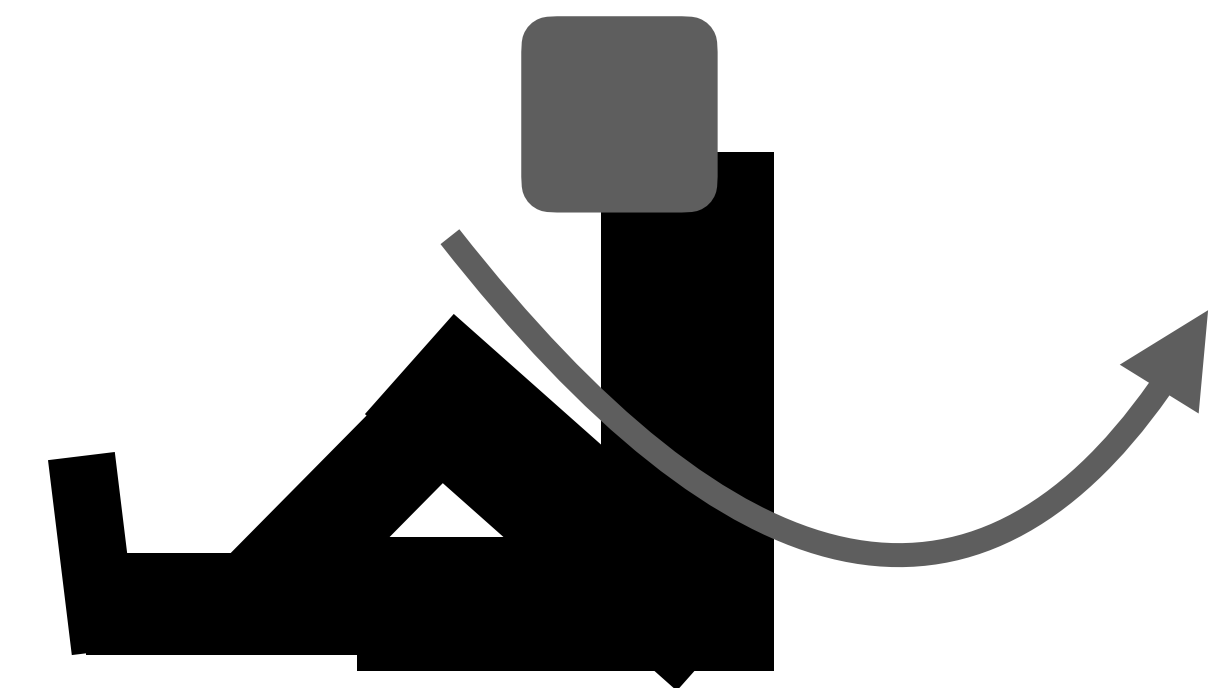
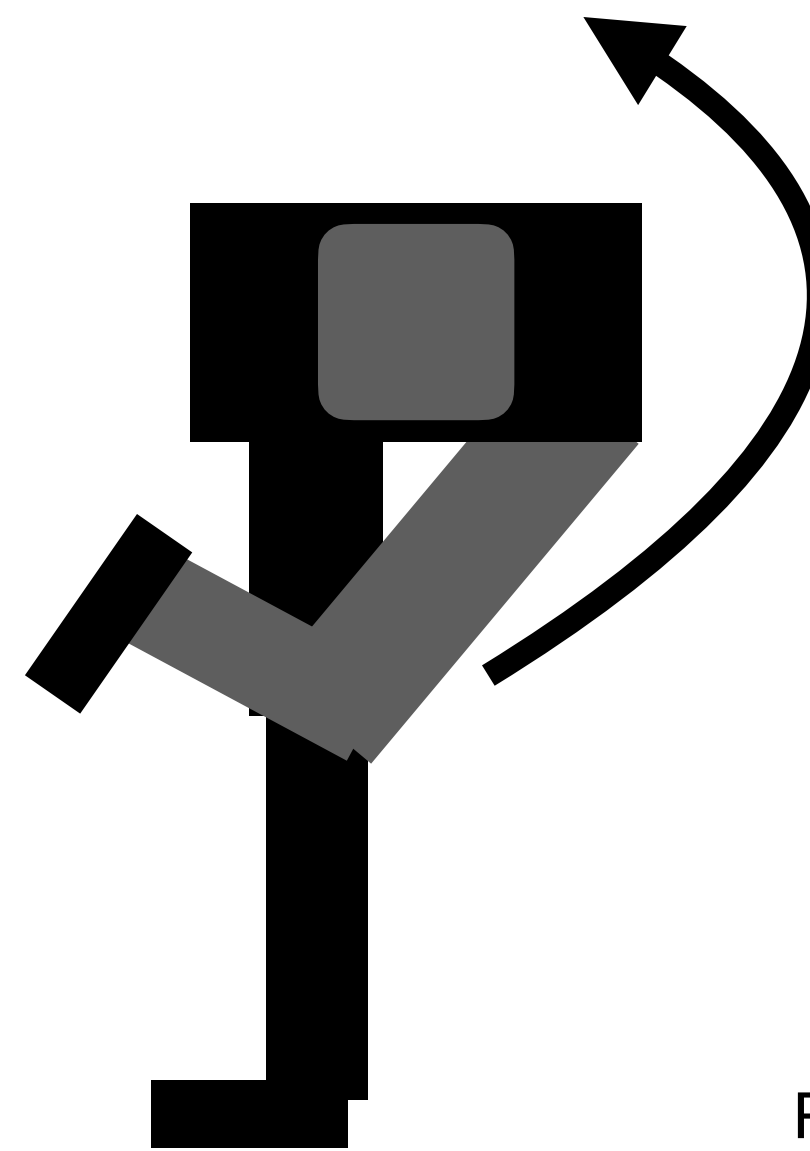
Quad Pulls

- From a sitting position, extend one foot and bend the other, keeping the bent shin and thigh flat on the floor
- Lean back until you feel a stretch in the front of your thigh, then hold for 10 seconds
- Stretch both sides



Back Twists

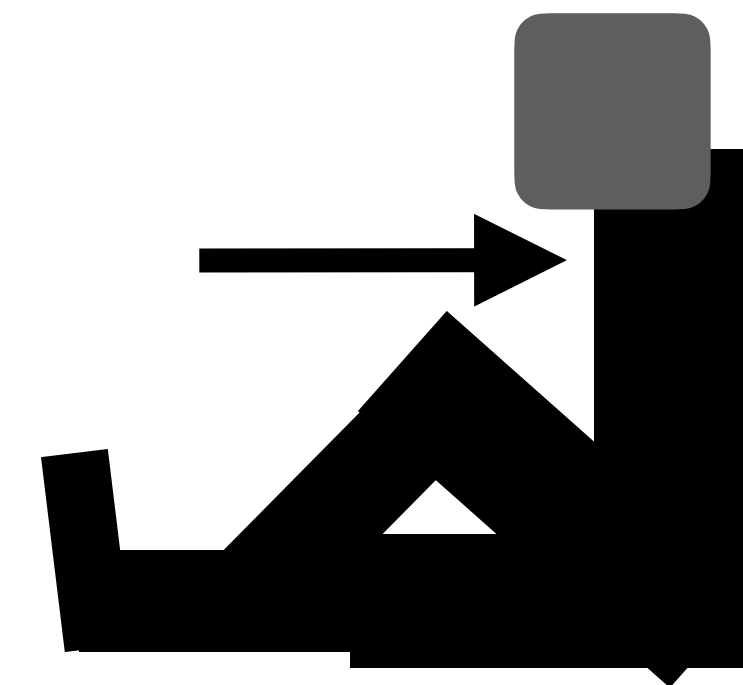
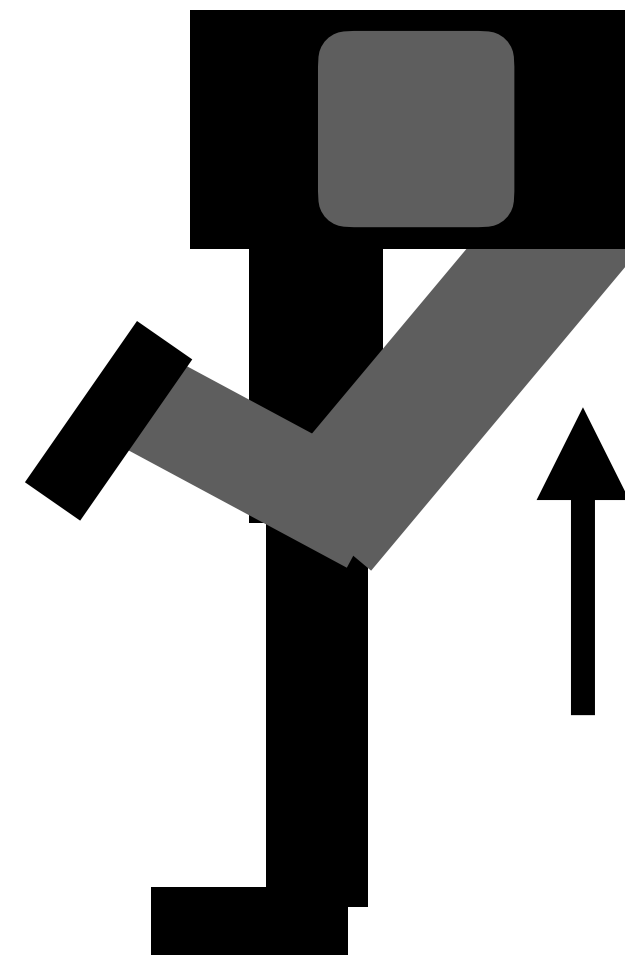
- From a seated position, extend one leg. Bend the other, and bring your foot onto the floor on the far side of your extended leg with your knee bent
- If your left leg is bent, press your right elbow against your thigh and twist your torso until you feel a stretch in your lower back, then hold for 10 seconds
- Stretch both sides



Rotate towards the side of the bent leg

Glute Pulls

- From a seated position, extend one leg and bend the other
- Hug the knee of your bent leg towards your chest
- Pull until you feel a stretch in your buttock area and hold



Pull the leg to the chest

Good Cross-Training Sports for Backs

- Hockey (ice, inline): stick skills, tactics
- Lacrosse: lifting the ball, defending 1v1
- Football/Soccer as an outfielder: foot skills, endurance
- Football/Soccer as a goalkeeper: shot stopping, free hit kicking
- Tennis: stick skills, agility
- Volleyball: hand skills, shot stopping
- Baseball/Softball: shot stopping, stick skills
- Hockey (field): stick skills, endurance
- Minigolf: free hit taking
- Yoga: flexibility
- Jogging: endurance
- Bicycling: endurance
- Swimming: endurance
- Dancing: agility