

220 TRIATHLON

**DAVE SCOTT'S
STRENGTH & CONDITION
FOR TRIATHLETES**

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The movements below will teach you to engage your transverse abdominus and fire your glutes – two of the key things that Dave Scott recommends to help your performance in all three disciplines.

He advises working on strength and conditioning at least **twice a week**, for **20-24mins** per session. All of the exercises described here can be done at home, with minimal equipment making them easy to fit around a busy schedule.

EXERCISE 1

ACTIVATE YOUR TA

The transverse abdominus (or TA) is a slow-acting deep corset-like muscle that lies underneath your internal obliques. To find it, stand up tall and draw your belly in, like you've got tight pants on. Find your navel and move 4-5 cm off to each side, where it hollows out and that's where you'll find it. The TA helps stabilise your pelvis and fire your glutes, so you can generate more power out of your glutes as opposed to your lateral quads. Keep the gap between your ribs and hip bones open too, don't close it.

PERFORM
2 sets of 90secs to 3mins

EXERCISE 2

SINGLE-LEG SOARING SEQUENCE

A. Pull in your TA and stand on your left leg. Shift all your weight to that leg, tighten your glutes and then shift your right leg back. Then lift it off the ground and soar, like a bird and move your arms out to the side. Once you are holding your body weight out in front, you'll feel that TA activate. Repeat on the other leg.

PERFORM
3 sets of 12 reps - Pause on even reps for 3secs

B. Repeat the above exercise, but holding 2-5kg dumbbells. Stand on one leg, contracting your glute and quad. Swing the other leg back and raise it off the ground, keeping your ankle dorsi-flexed. Hips are square. With thumbs pointing forward, initiate the row by squeezing your shoulder blades tight and rowing up as high as possible. Lower the weight and repeat.

PERFORM
2 sets of 12 reps - Pause on even reps for 3secs

C. Repeat exercise (b) again, but this time hold the soaring position for three seconds, then swing the soaring leg forward simulating a bent-knee running position while standing tall. Add arm movement simulating an exaggerated running movement. Repeat on the other leg, remembering to keep the TA, stance leg, quad and glute very tight.

PERFORM
2 sets of 12 reps - Pause on even reps for 3secs

EXERCISE 3

BENT-OVER ROW WITH DUMBBELLS

Stand up tall and get two dumbbells (or bags of beans). Lightly retract your shoulder blades, keep your elbows in nice and tight and bend over about 45°, keeping your TA nice and tight, and do a rowing motion with both arms. This is a really good exercise not only for your TA but also for your back, as it works your mid to low traps and those are generally weak. Don't tuck your shoulders up to your ears – you want to keep those soft and work your mid to upper back.

PERFORM
3 sets of 12 reps - Pause on even reps for 3secs

EXERCISE 4

GLUTE EXERCISE SEQUENCE

A. Start on all fours, with your hands under your shoulders and knees under your hips. First exercise is a lateral dog lift – so externally rotate one knee out to the highest possible contraction, keeping hips level. Bring it back down and repeat.

PERFORM
2 sets of 8 - 12 reps - Holding for 2 - 3secs every third rep

B. From the same start position, next perform a lateral straight leg swing. Again engaging the glutes, swing your straight leg out to the side at 30°, keeping your pelvis tucked underneath. Bring it alongside you to the side, tap the floor with your instep then bring the leg back and repeat. Follow this with a series of lateral up and down movements, where you bring the straight leg to 30° again, before bringing it further up behind you to 60°.

PERFORM
2 sets of 8 - 12 reps

C. Next up are mule kicks. From your same start position, pelvis level, draw one knee up under your chest and then kick the leg straight back, tightening the glute throughout. Next flex the knee and kick it up behind you, before taking it back to neutral.

PERFORM
2 sets of 8 - 12 reps - Holding for 2 - 3secs every third rep

D. Finally, are glute circles. In this exercise we extend the leg back behind and rotate it, making circles that focus on the up and outward motion. Squeeze the glute throughout and repeat in the opposite direction.

PERFORM
2 sets of 8 - 12 reps

EXERCISE 5

PLANK AND PUSH-UP SEQUENCE

A. Start in a plank position, with your legs straight and with your weight supported on toes and forearms, with 90° flexion at shoulder and elbow. Support your body alignment by contracting your TA, glutes and quads. Allow your chest to drop downwards, releasing the tension between your scapulas. Then contract all the muscles noted above and come back to a rigid plank position.

PERFORM
2 sets of 10 reps - Pause on plank position for 3secs

B. In a push-up position (hands and toes), support your body alignment by contracting your TA, glutes and quads. Maintain a straight arm position, contract your rectus abdominus and come up to a high hip V position ('downward dog'). Lower yourself back down to push-up position and repeat.

PERFORM
2 sets of 12 reps

C. Start in the same push-up position, TA, glutes and quads contracted. Drop your left forearm to the ground, then your right forearm (so you're now in plank). Push up with your left arm back to push-up position, then with your right.

PERFORM
2 sets of 12 reps