

CARMEN'S FAVE FOUR BY FOUR ('4 x 4')

WORKOUT 1

Warm-up

1. 5-10 minutes of calisthenics or full-body cardio like skipping rope
2. Perform 10 minutes of joint mobility and specific dynamic exercises
3. Perform one set of each exercise in the circuit at a lighter load for the full-minute. Slow the tempo, or speed of movement for this warm-up run-through so joints can be adequately lubricated and muscles and connective tissue is taken to the intended ranges.

Workout

1. It is simple, yet VERY effective and takes only 20 minutes! ALWAYS do this work-out when you are well-rested, at the beginning of your training session.
2. The weights you select will be based on what you can handle for 60 seconds of continuous movement, but should feel fatiguing by the end of each set
3. Perform 60 seconds of each station (there are 4 stations = mini-circuit) 4 x 1min each. There is NO REST between stations, but at the end of each mini-circuit, REST passively for 60 seconds.
4. Your goal is to keep moving, even if you have to slow your tempo on each exercise to keep from prematurely fatiguing
5. See below for a description of each exercise station
6. Do not talk, just breathe and keep your mind focused on your workout.
7. Repeat each mini-circuit 4 times, resting one minute between each, so 4 * (4 x 60 sec)
8. Perform this only once or twice per week and follow with 15 minutes of active recovery, like jogging or flow joint mobility work to clear blood lactate faster.

Carmen's FAVE 4 X 4 workout combines these 4 primal movement patterns in a sequence:

1. Squatting
2. Pushing
3. Pulling

4. Unilateral Lower Body Strength

WORKOUT 1 - THE EXERCISES

Exercise 1: Barbell Back Squat

Step 1

Starting Position: Step under the bar in a split-stance position (one foot on either side of the barbell). Grasp the bar with a pronated grip (palms facing forward), positioning your hands slightly wider than shoulder width, and elbows fully flexed (bent). Position the bar behind your head either: High along the top of the trapezius (top of your shoulders) at the base of your neck while avoiding any shrugging of your shoulders upwards. Low across the posterior deltoids (back of the shoulders), requiring a slightly wider grip .

Step 2

Before loading your spine by un-racking the bar, stiffen your core and abdominal muscles (“bracing”) to stabilize your spine.

Step 3

Hold your chest up and out, tilt your head slightly up and dip slightly to unrack the bar, extending your hips and knees to lift the bar.

Step 4

Take a step backwards and position your feet shoulder-width apart, side-by-side, with your toes pointed forward or slightly outward. Shift your weight over your heels.

Step 5

Downward Phase: Start the downward phase by first shifting your hips backwards then downwards to create a hinge-like movement at your knees. As you lower your hips the knees will then start to shift forward slowly, but try to control the amount of forward translation

(movement) of the tibia (shinbone). Brace your core to keep your trunk stable and spine straight.

Step 6

Continue to lower yourself until your thighs are near, or parallel with the floor, or until your heels begin to lift off the floor, or until your torso begins to round or flex forward. Monitor your feet, ankles and knees, to maintain control of your feet and knees think about pushing the floor away from you while keeping your knees aligned over the second toe of each foot as you return to standing position.

Step 7

Lowered Position: From the front, the knees should continue to remain aligned over the second toe, the bar should remain parallel with the floor, and body weight should be evenly distributed over both feet. From the side, the position of the tibia (shinbone) and torso should be parallel with each other and the low back should appear flat or showing the beginning of some rounding.

Step 8

Upward Phase: While maintaining a straight trunk with a head-up position, exhale and extend the hips and knees by pushing your feet into the floor through your heels. The hips and torso need to rise together while keeping the heels flat on the floor and knees aligned over the second toe. Continue extending until you reach your starting position.

Step 9

At the end of the set, step forward into a split-stance position, dip down and re-rack the bar.



Exercise 2: Push-ups with Single Leg Raise

Step 1

Starting Position: Kneel on an exercise mat or floor and bring your feet together behind you.

Step 2

Slowly bend forward to place your palms flat on the mat, positioning your hands shoulder-width apart with your fingers facing forward. Slowly shift your weight forward until your shoulders are positioned directly over your hands. Reposition your hands as needed to allow full extension of your body without any bend at the hips or knees. Stiffen your torso by contracting your core and abdominal muscles ("bracing") and align your head with your spine. Place your feet together with your ankles dorsiflexed (toes pointed towards your shins).

Step 3

Downward Phase: Slowly lower your body towards the floor while maintaining a rigid torso and head aligned with your spine. Do not allow your low back to sag or your hips to hike upwards during this downward phase, contract your glutes (butt) and quadriceps (thigh) muscles to create stability for your core. Continue to lower yourself until your chest or chin touch the mat or floor. Your elbows should remain close to the sides of your body or be allowed to flare outwards slightly.

Step 4

Upward Phase: Press upwards through your arms while maintaining a rigid torso and head aligned with your spine. As your press upwards, extend your left hip to lift your left foot off the floor, keeping the knee extended. Attempt to avoid rotation in your hip as you raise the left leg off the floor. Do not allow your low back to sag or your hips to hike upwards. Continue pressing until the arms are fully extended at the elbows and your left leg is extended off the floor. Hold this position briefly before returning to your starting position. Repeat with your opposite leg

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Exercise 3: Jumping Pull-ups

Being able to pull your entire body-weight is a great way to build upper body strength. Unfortunately, pull-ups are a tough exercise, and it can be difficult to actually progress to be able to do just one of them.

So how do you get better at pull-ups, if you can't even do one?

Below are two video examples of how to perform jumping pull-ups. They are great to do because you are able to incorporate your legs and use momentum to pull yourself upwards. Also, even if you do regular pull-ups, jumping ones are always good for a change up.

<http://www.athlete365.com/2008/11/jumping-pull-ups.html>

Exercise 4: Side Lunge

Step 1

Starting Position: Stand with your feet parallel facing forward and hip-width apart. Position your hands where comfortable to help you maintain your balance during the exercise. Stiffen your torso by contracting your core and abdominal muscles ("bracing"). Keep your head facing slightly upwards and shift your weight onto your heels.

Step 2

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Inhale and gently unload your right leg, slowly stepping to the right while keeping your weight over your heels and both feet facing forward. Once your right foot is firmly placed on the floor, bend at the hips, pushing them backwards while simultaneously shifting your weight towards the right foot. Continue shifting your weight over the right foot until your tibia (shinbone) is vertical to the floor and your right knee is aligned directly over the second toe of your right foot. Your left leg should be near, or at full extension at the knee and your body weight should still be distributed into the right hip. The heels of both feet should stay flat on the floor. Keep your left foot flat on the floor as you allow your weight to shift into your right hip and alternate. Feel free to position your arms where necessary to help maintain your balance, reaching for your right foot with your left hand will emphasize hip flexion (alternate with the right hand reaching for the left foot).

Step 3

Exhale and push off firmly with your right leg, returning your body to your starting position. Repeat the movement for the opposite side. Continue alternating sides.

*recommend holding dumbbell for this, or racking a bar on your back



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