



LEVEL 1

The Crab Bridge

As you work your way through Level 1 movements, you should be sensing a recurring theme. A theme that revolves around the basic skill of creating basic and foundation core stability, while also restoring authentic movement skills to the body.

If you've been battling an injury, chances are you're also experiencing compensation in various parts of the body, and as a result you'll need to change to an even greater degree how you're moving at that most basic level.

So now is a good time to simply say, embrace learning. Embrace this process. And as you move into more movements and exercises and begin to progress your skills, remember to stay true to the basic and fundamental skills you're now deep into learning. Everything you'll do moving forward will be built upon these foundational skills. Your ability to translate these basics directly into how you're moving in your chosen sports, will depend on your level of mastery of these basics, combined with progressing them steadily and consistently throughout your training.

The most important recurring theme is?

Of course, that "theme" we've been reviewing and learn here in Level 1, is what the words "core stability" mean for our training, as well as how we go about learning to develop it at a foundational level. And then progress it!

Remember, the definition of stability is to stop or control motion in one location, in the presence of motion somewhere else. For us right now, the stillness should be around the middle – our pelvic girdle and especially, our low-back or lumbar spine.

The Level 1 Crab Bridge continues with this theme.

In this exercise our objective is to challenge core stability by moving from a symmetric support system for our body (2 arms and 2 legs) to an asymmetric support system.

Think of it a bit like a wheelbarrow:

We're focusing on setting up on 4-points (simply referred to as a 4-point stance) while establishing and maintaining a neutral and still pelvic girdle...so that we can then carefully **unload one foot at a time, to a 3-point stance.**

In other words, a sort of wheelbarrow. 😊

Why different exercises to learn what is essentially the same skill?

Core stability and strength, like just about every other skill we might learn, is position dependent. And velocity dependent. As a result, we need to explore a variety of positions in order to learn which positions are the easiest or most difficult for us to perform.

Our goal is to develop dynamic and reactive core stabilization in all our activities as a human. Subsequently, we need to train it from as many different positions as is practical and challenge it in a variety of ways.

In Level 1, our only goal is lifting a leg, while everything else remains still. In Level 2, we will move to a more challenging arm lift, as you'll see. Master your leg lift before moving on.

How frequently should you practice this?

All of the movements in Level 1 are primarily “brain training.” It’s neurological. I’d argue that the joints are also contributing and “learning.”

The key here is that these movements shouldn’t place any undue loads or stress on your muscles or connective tissue. And since we already know that the more often you practice a skill, the better you’ll get at it, the answer to the above question is, lots!!

Practice these movements as often as you can. As soon as you see your concentration waning, however, take a break and come back to it a bit later on. It’s much better to “chunk it,” breaking your practice time into 4 to 8 short segments of 2-5 minutes, then it would be to do one single practice session of 15 to 20 minutes.

Quality over quantity. Learning. Change. Quality repetition.

And keep it fun!