

mobility exercises for basketball

mobility exercises for basketball are crucial for enhancing performance, preventing injuries, and ensuring longevity on the court. Basketball demands explosive movements, quick changes of direction, and sustained athleticism, all of which rely heavily on a player's range of motion and joint health. This article delves into the essential mobility exercises tailored for basketball players, covering the importance of dynamic warm-ups, targeted routines for key body areas, and strategies for recovery and maintenance. By integrating these movements into your training regimen, you can unlock greater agility, power, and resilience, ultimately elevating your game and reducing the risk of common basketball-related injuries.

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The Importance of Mobility for Basketball Players

Mobility, often used interchangeably with flexibility but referring more to active range of motion, is a foundational pillar for any basketball player's success. Unlike static stretching, which is best performed post-workout, mobility exercises prepare the body for the demands of the game by moving joints through their full, functional range of motion. This active preparation increases blood flow, activates muscles, and improves neuromuscular control, all vital for explosive jumps, sharp cuts, and effective defensive stances. A player with good mobility can execute complex movements with greater efficiency and less strain.

Furthermore, inadequate mobility can be a direct precursor to various basketball injuries. Tight hips can lead to lower back pain and hamstring strains. Poor shoulder mobility can limit shooting range and increase the risk of rotator cuff issues. Ankle stiffness compromises the ability to absorb landings, potentially leading to sprains. By consistently incorporating targeted mobility work, players build resilience, enabling them to withstand the repetitive stress and high-impact nature of basketball, thereby extending their playing careers and maintaining a competitive edge.

Dynamic Warm-Up Routines for Basketball

A dynamic warm-up is non-negotiable before any basketball practice or game. It's designed to gradually increase heart rate, elevate body temperature, and prepare the muscles and joints for the specific movements encountered on the court. A well-structured dynamic warm-up should be progressive, starting with lighter movements and moving towards more sport-specific actions. The goal is to activate the neuromuscular system, improve coordination, and enhance joint lubrication, setting the stage for optimal performance and injury prevention.

The duration of a dynamic warm-up can vary, but typically 10-15 minutes is sufficient. It should incorporate movements that mimic basketball actions such as running, jumping, and changing direction, but in a controlled manner. This approach ensures that the body is not shocked by sudden, intense activity but rather systematically prepared for it. A typical sequence might involve light cardio followed by a series of joint rotations and dynamic stretches targeting major muscle groups.

Lower Body Dynamic Movements

The lower body is the engine of a basketball player. Dynamic movements for the legs and hips are paramount for generating power, stability, and agility. These exercises prepare the ankles, knees, and hips for the explosive demands of jumping, landing, cutting, and sprinting.

- **Leg Swings (Forward/Backward and Side-to-Side):** These help improve hip flexor, hamstring, and glute mobility, as well as adductor and abductor flexibility.
- **Walking Lunges with Torso Twist:** This engages the hip flexors, quadriceps, glutes, and also promotes thoracic spine rotation.
- **High Knees and Butt Kicks:** These are excellent for dynamically stretching the hip flexors and quadriceps, respectively, and preparing the hamstrings and calves.
- **Carioca (Grapevine):** This lateral movement enhances hip mobility, coordination, and agility, mimicking defensive slides and quick changes of direction.

Upper Body and Core Dynamic Movements

While the lower body is crucial, upper body and core mobility are equally important for shooting mechanics, passing, rebounding, and maintaining balance. These dynamic movements prepare the shoulders, arms, and trunk for the various actions required in basketball.

- **Arm Circles (Forward and Backward):** These are fundamental for warming up the shoulder joint and improving range of motion in the rotator cuff.
- **Torso Twists:** Standing with feet shoulder-width apart, rotate the torso from side to side, engaging the obliques and improving thoracic spine mobility.
- **Cat-Cow Stretch:** Performed on all fours, this yoga-inspired movement enhances spinal mobility and flexibility in the upper and lower back.
- **Shoulder Pass-Throughs (with a band or towel):** Holding a band or towel, move it from behind your back to your front and back, opening up the chest and improving shoulder joint mobility.

Key Mobility Exercises for the Lower Body

Beyond the dynamic warm-up, dedicated mobility work for the lower body is essential for addressing specific limitations and enhancing overall athletic function. Basketball players frequently experience tightness in the hips, hamstrings, and ankles, which can significantly impede performance and increase injury risk. These exercises, often performed during a cool-down or as part of a separate flexibility routine, focus on improving active and passive range of motion.

Hip Mobility Drills

The hips are central to power generation in basketball, affecting jumping, cutting, and shooting. Tight hips can lead to compensatory movements elsewhere, often resulting in back or knee pain. Improving hip mobility involves addressing both internal and external rotation, as well as flexion and extension.

- **90/90 Hip Stretch:** This stretch targets both internal and external hip rotation, crucial for lateral movements and avoiding knee stress.
- **Deep Squat Hold:** Holding a deep squat position for an extended period helps improve ankle dorsiflexion and hip flexion, mimicking the athletic

stance.

- Pigeon Pose: A classic yoga pose that effectively stretches the hip flexors and glutes, promoting greater range of motion in the hip joint.
- Cossack Squat: This lateral lunge variation significantly improves hip adductor flexibility and ankle mobility.

Ankle and Foot Mobility

Ankles are the first point of contact with the ground and absorb significant impact. Limited ankle mobility, particularly in dorsiflexion (flexing the foot upwards), can negatively affect squat depth, jumping mechanics, and increase the risk of ankle sprains and plantar fasciitis.

- Ankle Circles: Simple yet effective for warming up the ankle joint and improving range of motion in all directions.
- Calf Stretches (Gastroc and Soleus): Essential for loosening tight calf muscles, which can restrict ankle dorsiflexion.
- Foam Rolling the Calves and Ankles: Releasing fascial restrictions in the lower leg and around the Achilles tendon can greatly improve ankle mobility.
- Toe Raises and Heel Walks: These exercises actively strengthen and improve the control of the muscles around the ankle and foot.

Hamstring and Quadriceps Mobility

Tight hamstrings and quadriceps can limit stride length, affect shooting form, and contribute to lower back pain. Dynamic and static stretches targeting these muscle groups are vital for maintaining optimal leg function.

- Supine Hamstring Stretch with Strap: Allowing for controlled stretching of the hamstrings without overextending the lower back.
- Standing Quad Stretch: A straightforward stretch to improve flexibility in the front of the thigh.
- Dynamic Hamstring Sweeps: Kicking the leg forward and backward while

maintaining a slight bend in the knee to dynamically lengthen the hamstrings.

Essential Mobility Exercises for the Upper Body

A strong, mobile upper body is critical for shooting accuracy, passing velocity, defensive intensity, and overall court presence. Restricted shoulder, thoracic spine, and wrist mobility can lead to a reduced range of motion, less power, and an increased susceptibility to injuries such as rotator cuff tears or impingement.

Shoulder Mobility and Stability

The shoulder joint is highly mobile but also prone to instability. Exercises that promote both active range of motion and controlled stability are crucial for basketball players. This includes movements that address flexion, extension, abduction, adduction, internal and external rotation.

- **Thread the Needle:** This exercise improves thoracic spine rotation and shoulder mobility by reaching one arm through the space between the other arm and knee.
- **Wall Slides:** Performed against a wall, this movement helps to improve scapular upward rotation and posterior tilt, crucial for healthy overhead mechanics.
- **Band Pull-Aparts:** Excellent for strengthening the rhomboids and posterior deltoids, improving posture and counteracting the forward pull of many basketball movements.
- **Dislocates (with a band or broomstick):** Performed carefully, this exercise opens up the chest and improves overall shoulder girdle mobility.

Thoracic Spine Mobility

The thoracic spine, or mid-back, plays a vital role in rotational power for shooting and passing. Stiffness in this area often forces compensation from the lower back or shoulders, leading to pain and reduced efficiency. Exercises that promote rotation and extension in the thoracic spine are

highly beneficial.

- Thoracic Rotations (on all fours): This classic exercise targets rotational mobility in the mid-back.
- Foam Rolling the Thoracic Spine: Gently rolling over a foam roller can help release tension and improve spinal extension.
- Quadruped Reach-Unders: Mimicking the Thread the Needle, this helps improve spinal rotation and shoulder mobility simultaneously.

Wrist and Forearm Mobility

The wrists and forearms are constantly engaged in dribbling, shooting, and passing. Maintaining flexibility and strength here can prevent common issues like wrist sprains or tendonitis.

- Wrist Circles: Gentle rotations of the wrist to improve lubrication and range of motion.
- Prayer Stretch and Reverse Prayer Stretch: These stretches target the flexor and extensor muscles of the forearm.
- Grip Strengthening Exercises (e.g., with a stress ball): While not strictly mobility, maintaining balanced strength helps support mobility.

Core Mobility for Basketball Performance

A mobile and stable core is the powerhouse of a basketball player. It connects the upper and lower body, allowing for efficient force transfer during movements like jumping, shooting, and cutting. Core mobility refers not just to abdominal strength but also to the ability of the trunk to rotate, extend, and flex effectively, contributing to balance and injury prevention.

A strong, mobile core enhances a player's ability to rotate their torso quickly and powerfully, which is fundamental for shooting mechanics and driving to the basket. It also allows for better shock absorption upon landing from jumps and provides stability during rapid changes of direction. Neglecting core mobility can lead to a disconnect between the upper and lower

body, reducing power output and increasing the likelihood of strains and sprains.

- Bird-Dog: This exercise strengthens the core while promoting stability and controlled movement through spinal extension and flexion.
- Dead Bug: Excellent for developing core control and coordination, this exercise trains the body to maintain a neutral spine while limbs move.
- Russian Twists: Performed with or without weight, this targets the obliques and improves rotational power.
- Side Plank with Hip Abduction: Enhances oblique strength and stability while also working hip mobility.
- Child's Pose with Lateral Reach: A restorative pose that gently stretches the obliques and promotes thoracic mobility.

Integrating Mobility into Your Basketball Training

The effectiveness of mobility exercises hinges on their consistent integration into a basketball player's overall training regimen. Simply performing them sporadically will yield limited results. A strategic approach ensures that mobility work complements strength training, skill development, and conditioning, leading to a well-rounded athlete.

Consider incorporating mobility exercises at different points in your training week. Dynamic mobility should always precede on-court activity or strength training sessions. Static stretching and more intense mobility drills are best reserved for post-workout recovery or as dedicated flexibility sessions on off-days. The key is consistency and listening to your body's signals, adjusting routines as needed based on fatigue or soreness.

Pre-Practice/Game Warm-Up

As detailed earlier, a dynamic warm-up is the critical first step. It should include a progressive series of movements that gradually prepare the entire body. This ensures that muscles are warm, joints are lubricated, and the nervous system is activated for the specific demands of basketball. Focus on movements that mimic game actions, but at a lower intensity.

Post-Practice/Game Cool-Down

Following intense physical activity, static stretching and targeted mobility work can aid in muscle recovery, reduce stiffness, and improve long-term flexibility. Holding stretches for longer durations (20-30 seconds) is beneficial here. Focus on areas that felt particularly tight or fatigued during the session, such as hips, hamstrings, and shoulders.

Dedicated Mobility Sessions

Beyond pre- and post-workout routines, scheduling dedicated mobility sessions can significantly enhance range of motion and address chronic tightness. These sessions, perhaps 2-3 times per week, can be longer and more comprehensive, allowing for deeper exploration of difficult areas. Incorporating foam rolling, fascial release techniques, and more advanced yoga-inspired poses can be highly effective during these sessions.

Recovery and Maintenance of Mobility

Mobility is not a static achievement; it requires ongoing effort for maintenance and improvement. The demands of basketball are constant, and neglecting recovery and regular mobility work can lead to a regression in range of motion and increased vulnerability to injury. A holistic approach to recovery is essential for sustained performance and health.

Active recovery methods, such as light cardio, foam rolling, and gentle stretching, can be performed on rest days or after lighter training sessions. These techniques help to reduce muscle soreness, improve circulation, and prevent the buildup of adhesions in soft tissues. Prioritizing sleep and proper nutrition also plays a crucial role in the body's ability to repair and adapt, indirectly supporting mobility.

Foam Rolling and Self-Myofascial Release

Foam rolling is an invaluable tool for athletes to release muscle tension and improve tissue extensibility. By applying pressure to specific points, players can address knots and trigger points that restrict movement. Areas that commonly benefit from foam rolling for basketball players include the quads, hamstrings, calves, glutes, and upper back.

Hydration and Nutrition

Adequate hydration is fundamental for muscle function and joint health. Dehydrated muscles are more prone to tightness and cramping. Similarly, a diet rich in anti-inflammatory foods can help reduce overall bodily inflammation, which can contribute to joint stiffness and muscle soreness. Proper nutrient intake supports tissue repair and recovery, crucial for maintaining and improving mobility over time.

Listen to Your Body

Perhaps the most critical aspect of mobility maintenance is learning to listen to your body. Pain is a signal that something is wrong. While some discomfort is expected during stretching and mobility work, sharp or persistent pain should not be ignored. Recognizing the difference between beneficial stretching and harmful stress allows players to adjust their routines and seek professional guidance when necessary. This self-awareness is key to a long and healthy basketball career.

Q: What are the most important mobility exercises for basketball players?

A: The most important mobility exercises for basketball players focus on the hips, ankles, thoracic spine, and shoulders. Key examples include dynamic leg swings, walking lunges with twists, deep squat holds, pigeon pose, thread the needle, and wall slides. These target the range of motion crucial for explosive movements, changes of direction, and shooting.

Q: How often should basketball players perform mobility exercises?

A: Basketball players should perform mobility exercises daily, with dynamic warm-ups before every practice or game, and static stretches or dedicated mobility routines post-workout or on rest days. Consistency is key to seeing improvements and preventing injuries.

Q: Can mobility exercises help prevent common basketball injuries?

A: Yes, absolutely. Improved mobility in areas like the hips and ankles can significantly reduce the risk of common basketball injuries such as ankle sprains, hamstring strains, ACL tears, and lower back pain by ensuring proper biomechanics and reducing compensatory movements.

Q: What is the difference between mobility exercises and static stretching for basketball?

A: Mobility exercises are dynamic movements that take joints through their full range of motion to prepare the body for activity, improve blood flow, and activate muscles. Static stretching involves holding a stretch for a prolonged period and is best performed when muscles are warm, typically after a workout, to improve flexibility.

Q: How can I improve ankle mobility specifically for basketball?

A: To improve ankle mobility for basketball, focus on ankle circles, calf stretches (gastroc and soleus), deep squat holds, and exercises like the Cossack squat that promote dorsiflexion. Foam rolling the calves and surrounding areas can also be highly beneficial.

Q: Is core mobility as important as lower body mobility for basketball?

A: Yes, core mobility is equally as important as lower body mobility for basketball. A mobile and stable core acts as the link between the upper and lower body, enabling efficient force transfer for shooting, jumping, and cutting, while also contributing to balance and injury prevention.

Q: Can I do mobility exercises at home, or do I need a gym?

A: Most essential mobility exercises can be performed effectively at home with minimal or no equipment. Bodyweight movements, simple household items like a towel or broomstick, and a yoga mat are usually sufficient for a comprehensive mobility routine.

Q: How long should I hold a static stretch during my cool-down?

A: During a cool-down, static stretches should typically be held for 20-30 seconds per side. Focus on feeling a gentle stretch, not pain, and aim for 2-3 repetitions for each muscle group.

Q: What are the benefits of incorporating a thoracic spine mobility routine for basketball?

A: A mobile thoracic spine is crucial for basketball players as it allows for

greater rotation of the trunk, which enhances shooting power and accuracy, improves passing mechanics, and helps prevent excessive rotation or strain in the lower back.

Mobility Exercises For Basketball

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mobility exercises for basketball: Hoops Smarts: Unlocking Your Basketball Potential

Barbara Carter, 2024-11-27 Hoops Smarts: Unlocking Your Basketball Potential is the ultimate guide for aspiring basketball players who seek to elevate their game. This comprehensive resource empowers readers with the knowledge and techniques to identify weaknesses, develop solutions, and ultimately maximize their potential on the court. Targeted at Problem Identification: Hoops Smarts meticulously analyzes common challenges faced by basketball players, breaking them down into specific areas of improvement. It equips readers with a structured framework for assessing their strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to pinpoint areas that require attention.

Solution-Oriented: This book goes beyond problem identification by providing practical and actionable solutions. Each area of improvement is addressed with proven strategies and drills, allowing players to translate theory into tangible progress. Content That Captivates: Hoops Smarts captivates readers with its engaging and informative style. The writing is clear and accessible, making complex concepts easy to understand. Vivid illustrations and real-life examples bring basketball principles to life, creating a highly immersive learning experience. Special Features That Stand Out: Interactive Assessment Tools: The book includes online assessment tools that help readers track their progress and monitor improvement over time. Expert Interviews: Hoops Smarts features insights from renowned basketball coaches and players, providing valuable perspectives and proven strategies. Game-Specific Strategies: The book offers tailored guidance for different playing positions, covering essential skills, strategies, and tactics for each role. Educational Value: Hoops Smarts serves not only as a practical guide but also as an educational resource. It promotes a deep understanding of basketball fundamentals and fosters a growth mindset. By emphasizing the importance of continuous learning and improvement, the book empowers players to reach their full potential and excel in the game.

mobility exercises for basketball: Complete Conditioning for Basketball National Basketball Strength & Conditioning Association (NBSCA), Bill Foran, 2025-02-03 In this age of “positionless basketball,” players are expected to have a diverse set of abilities that allow them to perform capably in multiple roles on the court. This diverse skill set must be supported by multidimensional athleticism. Complete Conditioning for Basketball explains how to achieve just that. Members of the National Basketball Strength & Conditioning Association (NBSCA), the foremost basketball training experts in the world, present this comprehensive, science-based training manual to maximize the physical performance potential of today’s players. With their combined 350 seasons of working with athletes at the college and professional levels, the 14 authors add insights, activities, and plans that optimize results for each player. An entire chapter is devoted to player assessment, with test protocols and accompanying normative scores provided to identify physical deficiencies and establish baseline scores to use for gauging future improvement. These are followed by proven training exercises and drills to improve mobility and flexibility, upper- and lower-body strength, core

strength, power and explosiveness, and speed and agility. On-court conditioning activities ensure that the gains made in the training room transfer to game time, preparing players to navigate the court swiftly, explode with power to the basket, and reach rebounds quicker than the opposition. Also included are guidelines and recommendations for nutrition, sleep, and rest to stay fresh and primed for every physical and mental challenge. In the event of an injury, there is invaluable guidance for safely and responsibly returning to training and competition. Plus, you'll find a complete training program consisting of 16-week off-season strength and conditioning plans—for either three or four days per week—as well as programming guidance for the preseason, in-season, and postseason to make progressive improvements throughout the year. Let the winners of 10 NBA Strength & Conditioning Coach of the Year awards be your guides to getting players into the best basketball shape possible. Complete Conditioning for Basketball will not only elevate player's fitness and athleticism but also take their performance to the highest level.

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and a great way to foster a love for the game and its history. Get ready to be inspired by the ultimate basketball book for kids!

mobility exercises for basketball: Basketball IQ: The Ultimate Guide To Thinking And Playing Smarter On The Court Keith Carter, 2025-03-26 Basketball IQ: The Ultimate Guide to Thinking and Playing Smarter on the Court is an essential resource for players and coaches looking to elevate their game through strategic thinking and intelligent play. This comprehensive guide explores the nuances of basketball strategy, providing readers with the tools and insights needed to make smarter decisions on the court. This book delves into the key elements of basketball intelligence, from game awareness and anticipation to decision-making and teamwork. Readers will learn how to read the game, anticipate opponents' moves, and make quick, effective decisions under pressure. The book covers a wide range of topics, including offensive and defensive strategies, situational play, and the mental aspects of the game that often determine success. The content is designed to captivate readers with practical advice, real-life examples, and drills that can be easily incorporated into training sessions. Whether you are a beginner looking to understand the fundamentals or an experienced player aiming to refine your skills, this guide offers valuable insights that can be applied at any level of play. Each chapter builds on the previous one, creating a cohesive learning experience that enhances both individual and team performance. Target readers include players of all ages and skill levels, coaches seeking to improve their team's strategic play, and basketball enthusiasts who want to deepen their understanding of the game. The book is particularly beneficial for those who are committed to continuous improvement and are looking for a competitive edge. By focusing on the mental aspect of basketball, readers will develop a sharper, more analytical approach to the game. The reason why readers should buy this book lies in its unique approach to enhancing basketball IQ. Unlike other guides that focus solely on physical skills and techniques, this book emphasizes the importance of strategic thinking and game intelligence. It provides a holistic view of what it means to be a smart player, offering practical advice that can be immediately applied to real-game situations. In summary, Basketball IQ: The Ultimate Guide to Thinking and Playing Smarter on the Court is a must-read for anyone passionate about basketball. It equips readers with the knowledge and skills to think and play smarter, ultimately transforming their approach to the game and leading to greater success on the court.

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mobility exercises for basketball: Boost Your Basketball IQ: Essential Skills, Smart Moves, And Winning Strategies Alyssa Townsend, 2025-03-25 Basketball is a game of skill, strategy, and intelligence. Understand the nuances of the game can elevate your performance from good to exceptional. This book serves as a comprehensive guide to help you develop a deeper understanding of basketball, focusing on essential skills, smart plays, and strategies that lead to success on the court. This book covers a wide range of topics essential for any basketball player looking to improve their game. It begins with fundamental skills such as dribbling, shooting, and passing, providing detailed explanations and drills to hone these skills. As you progress, more advanced techniques and tactics are introduced, including defensive strategies, offensive plays, and situational awareness. Each section is designed to build upon the previous one, ensuring a holistic approach to mastering basketball. One of the key challenges many players face is applying their skills effectively during a

game. This book addresses common problems players encounter, such as decision-making under pressure, reading the opponent's defense, and executing plays flawlessly. Solutions are provided through practical advice and real-game scenarios, helping players to think quickly and make smart moves that can turn the tide in their favor. Whether you are a beginner looking to understand the basics or an experienced player aiming to refine your technique, this book is designed for anyone passionate about basketball. Coaches will also find valuable insights that can be applied to training sessions, ensuring their teams are well-prepared and strategically sound. Readers will gain a thorough understanding of the game's intricacies, from individual skills to team dynamics. Practical exercises and tips are provided to enhance both physical performance and mental sharpness. By the end of this book, you will be equipped with the knowledge to make smarter decisions on the court, improve your overall game, and develop a winning mindset. In conclusion, mastering basketball requires more than just physical prowess; it demands a sharp mind and strategic thinking. This book provides the tools and knowledge needed to boost your basketball IQ, enabling you to play smarter, not just harder. Elevate your game, outthink your opponents, and achieve success with the insights and strategies presented in this comprehensive guide.

mobility exercises for basketball: *The Mobility Workout Handbook* William Smith, David Kirschen, Michael Volkmar, 2016-12-27 BETTER PERFORMANCE, BETTER RESULTS—WITH MOBILITY! From golf to tennis, swimming to running, cross training to strength training, everyday athletes everywhere can benefit from mobility training. Essential for promoting better performance and reducing risk of injury, mobility refers to how well your body moves through a given movement pattern. The Mobility Workout Handbook is your complete guide to incorporating this critical aspect of fitness into your workout routines. Exercise, paired with proper mobility training, is what enables professional athletes to work to their fullest potential without fear of injury or burnout...and now you can too! Fitness experts Will Smith, David Kirschen, and Mike Volkmar have brought their decades of experience together to provide an effective and easy-to-follow series of sports-specific mobility routines. Designed to help increase range of motion and allow for better performance at all levels of the fitness spectrum, these cutting-edge training routines bring the leading concepts in injury prevention and mobility development to the everyday athlete. The Mobility Workout Handbook includes: • 100 mobility routines, with endless possible variations • Expert-designed workouts of the day (WODs), tailored to a variety of sports and fitness activities • Detailed, easy-to-understand exercise descriptions to help you master each movement • Tips on how to supplement your existing workout regimen and completely customize your fitness experience to your needs • Everyday Tracker journal pages to help you keep track of your progress Revamp your body and revitalize your routines with all-in-one mobility workouts!

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exercises, each with step-by-step descriptions and full-color anatomical illustrations to show the muscles in action. Basketball Anatomy goes beyond the exercises by placing you on the court and into the throes of competition. Illustrations of the muscles involved in pivoting, rebounding, and shooting show you the exercises are fundamentally linked to basketball performance. You'll also step off the court and into the athletic training room to explore the anatomy of the most common injuries to the ankle, knee, and shoulder as well as exercises for minimizing and recovering from such setbacks. Basketball Anatomy is a must-have for all who appreciate the artistry and athleticism of the game—whether player, coach, trainer, or spectator.

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