

SpineGym

instructions for use and safety

SpineGym[®] *core exerciser*



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**Thank you for getting the SpineGym core exerciser.
SpineGym is a verifiably effective tool for the wellbeing
and strengthening of the midbody and it is a particularly effective
core muscle activator.**

**Read carefully the exercise instructions on the following pages.
For more exercise instructions and other information,
please visit our Internet site: www.spinegym.fi**

We wish you rewarding moments with SpineGym.

**With kind regards,
Creaforce Ltd**

If, for some reason, SpineGym does not seem to suit you, kindly contact
the equipment dealer or Creaforce Oy.

If, due to the length of your body, when using Spine Gym, the shoulder pad
stays above your shoulder (or for especially tall persons, under the shoulder),
for instance, shorter bars or additional padding are available.

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SpineGym *core exerciser*



THERAPEUTICS FINLAND

Although, when used properly, SpineGym is a very safe exercise tool, similar to starting to use any other exercise equipment, before starting to do exercises with Spine Gym, it is advisable to consult a back treatment specialist for individual instructions and for making sure the exercises suit you. Especially during the first weeks, be careful when doing exercises with SpineGym. If you have an acute back or other muscular organ problem, be careful when doing the exercises.

Be extra careful when performing the body rotation exercise, especially if you have an acute back or musculoskeletal organ problem.

Do the body rotation movement only to the extent your body easily and naturally rotates.

If you are not sure of the correct way to use it, do not use SpineGym.

If you experience increasing pain as a result of using it, do not use SpineGym.

Make sure the base on which you use SpineGym is even and stable. For instance, a soft carpet can make SpineGym unstable. Make sure there is enough free room around SpineGym.

Do not let children play with SpineGym. Danger of falling down!

Do not allow a person, who does not know how to use it, to use SpineGym.

If you give SpineGym for use by another person, make sure that the user receives instructions for its use and that this Instruction Booklet accompanies SpineGym.

In gyms, workplaces, and other facilities, where persons not having received user instructions may use SpineGym, a size A3 Instruction Panel (may be ordered from Creaforce Oy or your retail dealer), for instance fastened on the wall, and preferably also this Instruction Booklet, must be in SpineGym's immediate vicinity.

If, due to its lightness, you or some other person finds it difficult to fit the body into SpineGym, or if you are afraid that SpineGym might fall, ask SpineGym's retail dealer or Creaforce Oy for an additional base or for a weighed base available as an optional extra.



1. Push the bottom bars all the way down into the holes in the base.
2. Pull the upper bar through the sleeve of the other belt half and connect the upper and lower bar onto each other.
3. Do the same with the other upper bar and the other belt half.
4. Adjust with Velcro the belt length to fit you properly.
5. Ready!



Be careful when starting the SpineGym exercises. With SpineGym, already very small movements activate the deep muscles, many already when you place your body in the exercise position in SpineGym.

As the basic exercise, do one series of 20-30 repeat movements of each of the six basic exercises as explained in the following pages.

According to clinical studies, already this basic, approximately 5 minute daily exercise is enough to effectively improve the core muscle response time and to improve the back and midriff muscle performance.

You can change from one exercise to another without taking any break in between the series.

Especially during the first weeks, do the exercises slowly, only exerting slight strength. During the first week, do the exercise series only every other day. After your back gets used to the exercises (after about one week's exercising), start to do your exercises on a daily basis.

After your back becomes stronger, you may want to start doing the exercises several times a day.

If you need more challenge to the exercise, you may also increase the number of series you do (but, do take a 1-2 minute break between the exercise series) and intensify the strength you use when exercising.

For additional exercises and instructions on the use of SpineGym, please visit our Internet site: www.spinegym.fi. See also the instructional videos from the same site.

With the six basic exercises introduced here, you can effectively activate and strengthen your back and midriff muscles.

After an exercise period of 1 to 2 weeks, you will notice the following changes in your body:

- The deep back and abdominal muscles essential to the wellbeing of your back will become stronger and their speed and ability to react will increase, and they will be able to better protect your back against injuries.
 - Your back will become stronger and it will not get tired so easily during your daily activities and chores.
 - As your circulation improves and your muscles become stronger, you will also notice changes in the shoulder and neck area as a reduction in tension.
 - As the transverse abdominal muscle becomes stronger, your whole abdominal area gets more toned.
 - The exercises also effectively improve your posture.
- Although we here concentrate on explaining the exercises' impact on the back and midriff area, according to studies, these SpineGym exercises activate the body's muscle chains and their innervation from the calves all the way up to the chin.

These basic exercises take a total of about 5 minutes to complete.

As your muscles get used to the SpineGym workout, you can preferably daily do these exercises.

In an ideal situation, people working in a posture which strains the back and people working at desk ought to do these 6 basic exercises (or at least the arching of the back + the upper back exercise + transverse muscle activation) a couple of times during a work day. (These three exercises take only a total of only 2 to 3 minutes.)

SpineGym basic exercises - back exercises

back arching



This is an exercise especially for the lower back, and it effectively activates the small muscles supporting and controlling the vertebrae and the back muscles in general. Even though the effect of the exercise can be most intensely felt in the small of the back, the back is activated from the bottom all the way up to the shoulders.

With the support belt in front of you and the padded bar ends behind your shoulders, stand in an upright position on the base.

Adjust the support belt to the pelvis height. The belt length is right when you can stand upright and erect in the starting position and the belt is snugly against your front. Keep your hands relaxed beside the bars or in front of you.

Push you pelvis forward against the support belt and slowly bend your back backwards into an arch. Keep you abdominal muscles slightly tensed throughout the whole exercise.

Keep your ankles and knees straight. Do not rock your body but, instead, keep your legs straight. Do not lean backwards to be supported by the bars but, instead, do the exercise by arching only your back.

The bars bend just a few centimetres. Feel the tension in your back muscles.

Slowly return to the starting position and repeat the exercise 20 to 30 times.

Remember the right breathing technique: exhale slowly throughout the arching stage (while tensing your muscles against the bars' resistance), and inhale slowly while returning to the starting position.

Tip: If desired, you can vary the exercise by taking your elbows back while arching your back (keep your arms down because otherwise you work your upper back more). This way, at the same time, you activate your broad back muscles.

SpineGym basic exercises - back exercises

upper back exercise



This exercise effectively trains your neck and shoulder area. The starting position is the same as in the previous exercise; remember to check the tightness of the belt so that, when you stand upright, it is snugly against your front. This gives the bars the tension needed for the exercise and, as, this way, the pelvis is tensed against the belt, the lower back is active during the exercise, thereby intensifying the effect on the whole back region.

Raise your arms to shoulder height in front of you. Move your elbows backwards and your shoulder blades together as much as you can. Remember to keep your pelvis tensed against the belt.

Feel the tension in your shoulders and in your whole upper back area. Return to the starting position and repeat the exercise 20 to 30 times.

Tip: You can intensify the exercise by holding your arms bent in a 90-degree angle pointing upwards during the exercise (see picture on the right).



SpineGym basic exercises - back exercises

rotating the back



This exercise activates the rotator muscles and improves the mobility of the vertebrae.

If you have a spinal disc problem, be extra careful doing this exercise! Never try to forcefully rotate farther than to the extent your body can effortlessly rotate.

Steadily rotate your upper body to the side. Feel how the bar's resistance increases the farther the rotational movement advances. Hold your body upright.

Slowly continue the movement as far to the side as your body easily rotates to. Maintain the movement steady and slow all the way to the end.

Continue the exercise straight to the opposite side in a similar manner, still with the slow rotational movement.

While keeping your legs as straight as possible, also during this exercise, try to centre the movement on your upper body.

Repeat the exercise 20 to 30 times.

SpineGym basic exercises - abdominal exercises

transverse abdominal muscle exercise



The transverse abdominal muscle is the innermost of the deep abdominal muscles, and, for a good reason, it can be said to be the most important of them. It plays a key role in controlling the entire midriff and in the wellbeing of the back. Like a corset, the muscle circles around the midriff and supports the body like a thin-walled pillar. The muscle in question is difficult to perceive and train, but one of SpineGym's finest features is its ability to effectively and easily work this important muscle.

With the support belt tightly against the small of your back and the upper ends of the padded bars in front of your shoulders, stand on the base. The belt length is right when, with the bars already very slightly tensed, you can stand in the starting position in an upright position. Keep your arms straight beside you and your palms turned to face straight forward.

Try to keep your shoulders steady. Do not bend forwards; instead, concentrate on squeezing your back against the belt as if trying to push your buttocks backwards. Intensify the exercise by simultaneously pushing your hands forward, with your palms the whole time facing forward as if pushing an invisible object in front of you. Slowly exhale during the exercise. Feel the tightening force around your abdomen.

While maintaining the tension in your abdominal muscles, return to the starting position and inhale calmly at the same time.

Repeat the exercise 20 to 30 times.

Tip: Try the exercise also with the belt in a lower position, behind your buttocks.

SpineGym basic exercises - abdominal exercises

straight abdominal muscle exercise



The straight abdominal muscles are the outermost abdominal muscles and their effect on the back is not as important as that of the deeper abdominal oblique muscles and especially that of the transverse abdominal muscle. However, they are an important part in the control of the midsection of the body, and the strong straight abdominal muscles form the “six pack” pursued by many. Regardless of your size, build, and muscle strength, with SpineGym’s carbon fibre bars, you get as much resistance for your exercise as you need.

With the support belt behind the small of the back, place yourself in a standing position on the base. The upper ends of the padded bars are in front of your shoulders. When you are able to stand upright and erect in the starting position and the belt is tightly placed against the small of your back, the belt length is right.

Calmly bend your upper body forward by tensing your abdominal muscles. Try to keep your pelvis steady. Imagine the exercise as if, bending down, you were trying to take your elbows towards a point in front of you at a distance of about 1-1.5 metres.

While retaining the tension in your abdominal muscles, calmly return to the starting position. Repeat the exercise 20 to 30 times.

Especially when you are just at the beginning stage of this exercise or when your back is hurting, do not use too much force! Due to an unbalanced use of the midriff or after exercising, compared to your back’s actual condition, the straight abdominal muscles may be too strong and, hence, vigorous tension force may strain your back too much. This exercise also simultaneously activates the important transverse abdominal muscle. But, the activation is most effective when less force, i.e., about a quarter of the maximum force, is used.

Also during this exercise, keep your ankles and knees straight. The exercise is done from the pelvis upward in the upper back. The lower body stays as straight as possible. A few centimetres’ bending of the bars is enough. Feel the resistance in your abdominal muscles but do not yank.

SpineGym basic exercises - abdominal exercises

oblique abdominal muscles (abdominal rotation)



The oblique abdominal muscles are obliquely located on both sides of the abdomen, on two cross-wisely located layers between the more superficially located straight abdominal muscles and the deeper transverse abdominal muscle. Even though their role in the wellbeing of your back is not quite as important as that of the transverse abdominal muscle, nevertheless, they play an important role in supporting your midriff and are essential for body rotation.

If you have an intervertebral disc problem, be extra careful when doing this exercise! Never try to forcefully rotate your body any farther than where it easily rotates to.

With the support belt behind the small of your back and the padded upper ends of the bars in front of your shoulders, stand on the base.

Calmly rotate your upper body to one side. As the rotating movement advances, you can feel how the resistance from the bars increases. Keep your body upright. Do not bend.

Calmly continue the movement to the end where the resistance stops it. Do not try to pull or yank any farther; instead, maintain an even and calm movement to the very end.

In the same way, continue the movement directly to the opposite side, still calmly rotating. Repeat the exercise 20 to 30 times.

Also during this exercise, try to focus the movement on the upper body, keeping your legs as straight as possible.

Tip: As in back rotation, also in this exercise, you can also stop the movement in mid-position for a moment. Compared to turning immediately from one side to the other side, this way, you can maintain the rhythm of the movement, and the movement stays more controlled.

SpineGym

The base of the newer SpinGym is equipped with the fastening points for elastic resistance bands.

By using elastic resistance band exercise as part of the SpineGym exercise, you can enormously expand your basic workout.

Also, when doing exercises with dumbbells and weights, try to combine SpineGym stabilisation thereto.

Compared to mere elastic resistance band exercise or weight exercise, by adding SpineGym thereto, you gain significant benefits:

- For instance, as a bonus for doing arm exercises, with the same effort, you will also get a back and deep abdominal muscle workout
- During the workout, your back is supported, protected, and in an anatomically right position
- As your body is more stable, the movement paths are 'cleaner'
- Improved effect of the exercise on practical activities
- As your body is supported firmly, you can better concentrate on a cleaner performance, and the exercise feels much nicer and easier.

For more information on the lengthwise adjustable elastic resistance bands available as additional equipment, please, contact Creaforce Oy.

tips for additional training





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