

The Ultimate Abs Guide

[@DOMWELLSPT](#)

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, I've noticed more and more clients come in with shallow abdominal development.

What I mean by this is even when their body fat is low, their stomach just appears 'flat' as opposed to having a six-pack. And I think the main reason for this is the increasingly sedentary lifestyle we're all living.



There are typically two schools of thought when it comes to having abdominal development that really ‘pops.’

1. Abs are made in the kitchen.

2. Abs are made in the gym.



If you asked me five years ago, I'd have said number one every time. The problem is, even if you diet your body fat off, many people can be left with nothing much to show unless they really attack their abs in the gym.

Like any other muscle group, genetics play a part in it too, and we're both prime examples of this. When dieting down in the past, I've typically done zero direct abdominal work, yet judging by the picture below, you would think otherwise.



On the other hand, Someone else has to slave away to have any real resemblance of abdominals when stage lean.

However, what is proven is that with consistent hard ab training it's possible to reverse this. And I've found this true with a number of City clients too

(the population that really suffer from this 'shallow' ab syndrome).



HOW TO PROGRAMME AB TRAINING

The key is persistence. You need to treat your abdominals like any other weak body part and understand that you will need to train them with effort, frequency and most importantly, consistency.

The best strategy I've found is to use a 2-4 week 'intro' phase (especially for those not used to training their abs), then train them really hard for 4-6 weeks, before backing off and using longer term approach.



FOR THE 'INTRO' PHASE, I'D START BY ADDING ONE AB EXERCISE TO THE END OF YOUR WORKOUTS 3-4 TIMES A WEEK.

An example could be simple rotating between the following two exercises:

Day 1:

Swiss Ball Crunch 3 sets of 10-15 2121 tempo*

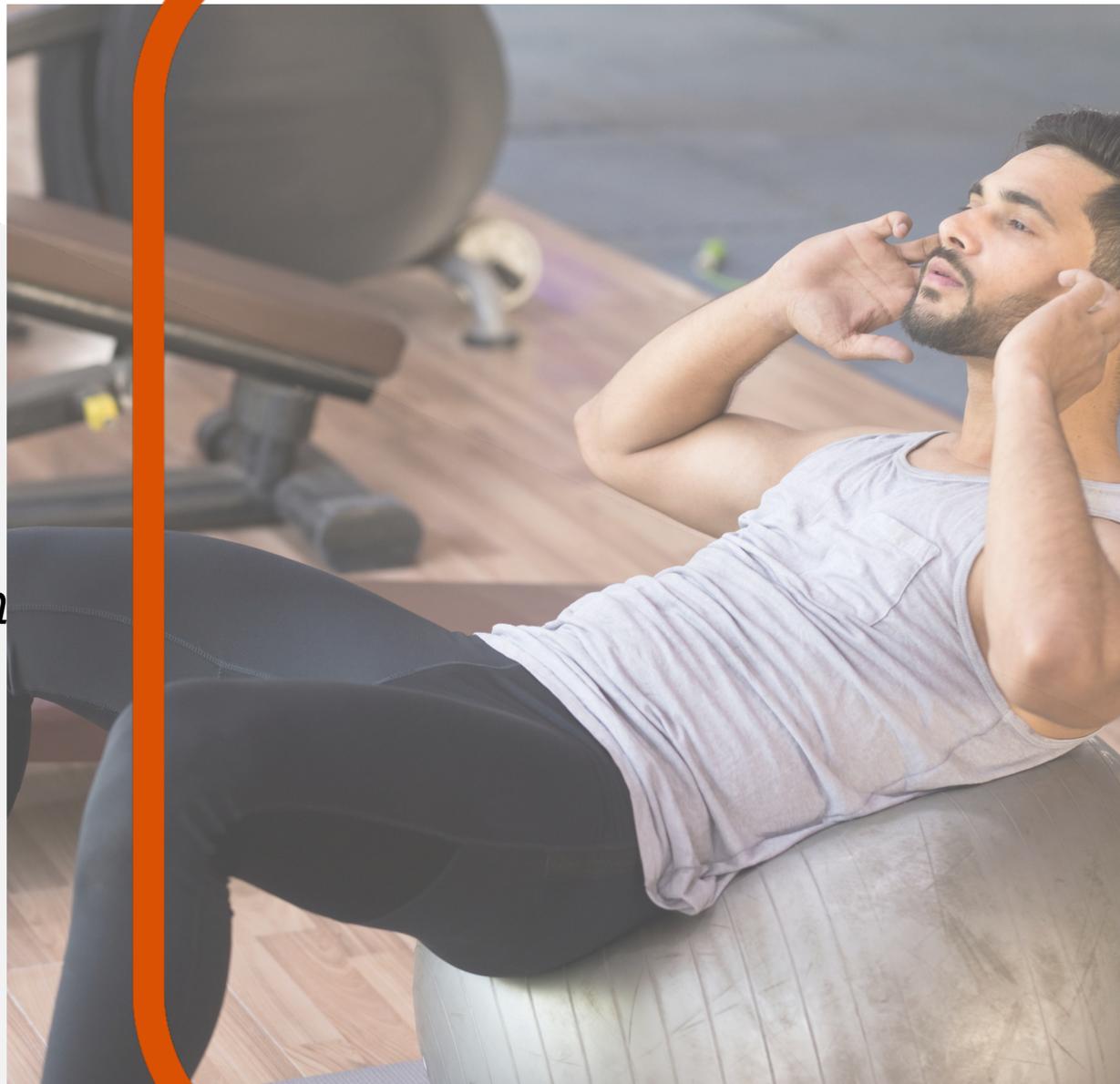
Day 2:

Decline Garhammer Raise 3 sets of 10-15 2011 tempo*

Day 3&4:

Repeat

**Going slower in tempo in this phase will help establish mind-muscle connection*



After this, you can start adding more volume, like so:

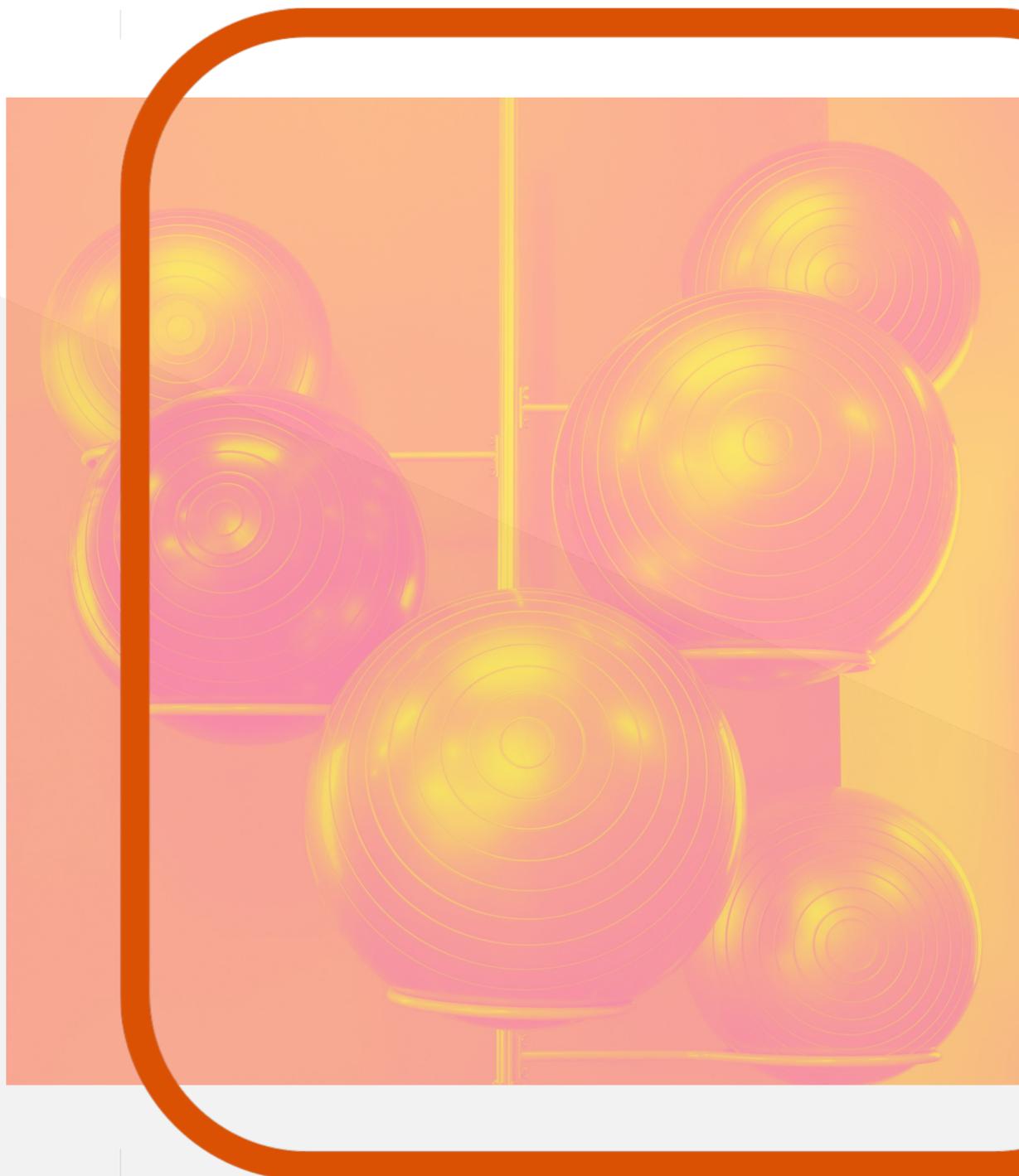
WORKOUT 1:

| EXERCISE | SETS | REPS

1 | Decline Garhammer Raise | 3 | 8-12

2 | Rope Crunch | 3 | 8-10

3 | Swiss Ball Stir the Pot | 3 | 30s



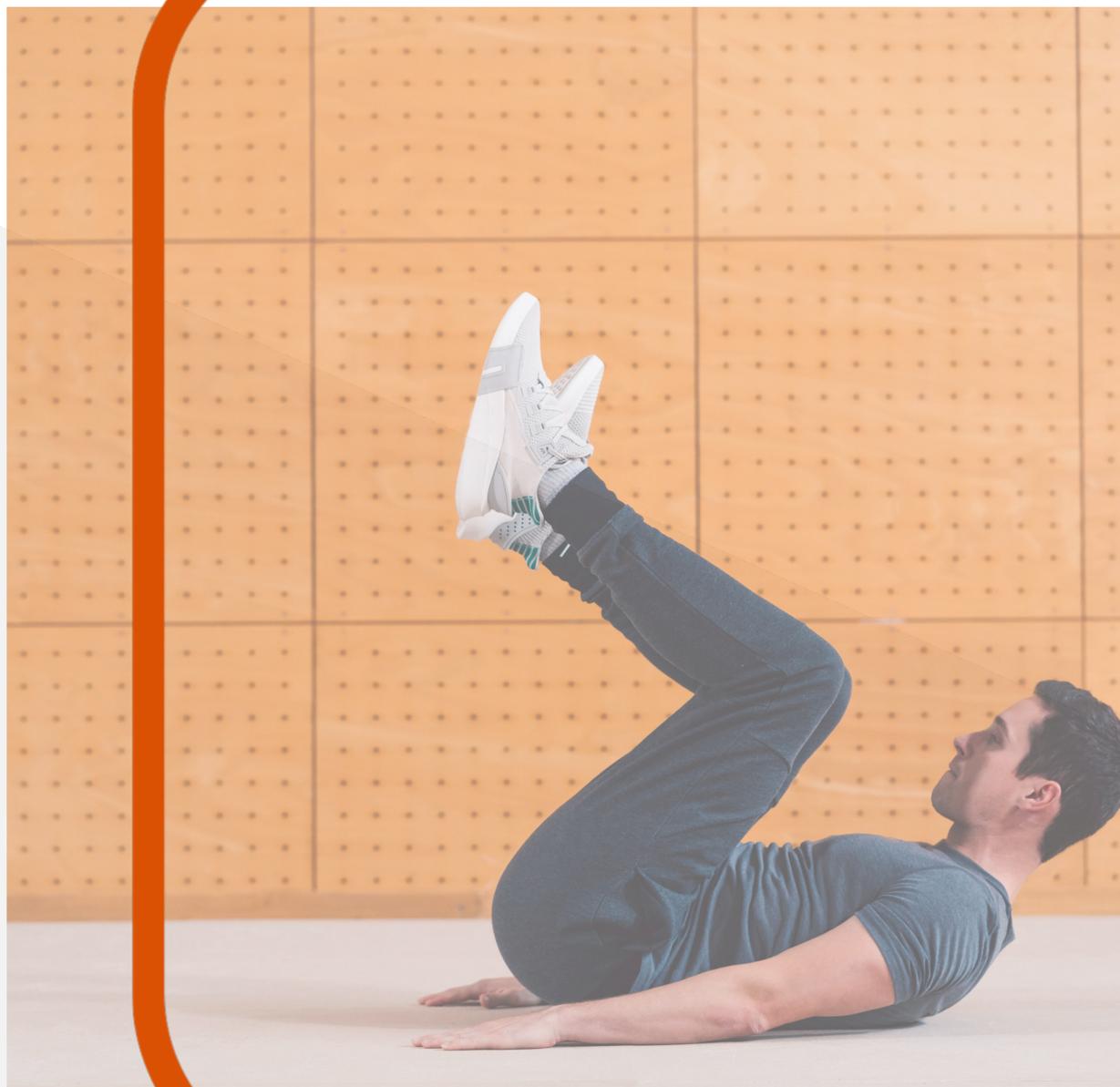
WORKOUT 2:

| EXERCISE | SETS | REPS

1 | Reverse Crunch | 3 | 10-15

2 | Swiss Ball Crunch | 3 | 8-10

3 | V Up | 3 | 10-15



WORKOUT 3:

| EXERCISE | SETS | REPS

1 | Hanging Knee/Leg Raise | 3 | 8-15

2 | Incline Sit-Up | 3 | 8-10

3 | Prone Jack Knife on Swiss Ball | 3 | 10-15



AFTER A FEW WEEKS OF THE ABOVE, START GIANT-SETTING THE MOVEMENTS, SO YOU'RE DOING THE THREE EXERCISES BACK TO BACK.

Once this 4-6 week phase is up, the way I like to set up long term ab training plans is in the following format:

Day 1:

Any Crunch Movement 3 to 4 sets of 8 to 12

Day 2:

Any Leg Raise Movement 3 to 4 sets of 10 to 15

Day 3:

One Crunch, One Leg Raise, One 'Complete' Abdominal Move
3 to 4 rounds of
8 to 15 reps in
circuit fashion

Over the course of time, work on adding reps, weight (where you can) and increasing the difficulty of the exercises.



TECHNIQUE TIP

When training abs, the most bang for your buck technical cue is controlling the breath.

The best way to breathe during abdominal training is to take a deep breath when you extend the spine and breathe out when you flex.

For example, when doing a Swiss ball crunch, you'll want to breathe in as you go back, and then forcefully exhale slowly as you crunch up.

As you come up, push every bit of air out of you. Once you've exhaled fully, exhale more. You'll be surprised how hard your abs contract when you do this.



CONCLUSION

Everyone can benefit with some ab training. But if you're part of the growing number of people that sport very little ab development you need to take it more seriously and dedicate time to it.

Abs are like any other muscle group, and while genetics do play a part, an intelligent long-term approach can pay real dividends for when you're next lean.

It's not just about doing a good job in the kitchen!



EAT WELL

LIVE

WELL BE

WELL

WELLS
FITNESS