Agility Training in the Gym for Sport-Specific Results

Over the past decade, the notion of athletes leaving the practice field and heading to the gym for diversification in training has become common place. However, most athletes focus on the universal big three results for gym training of getting bigger, stronger, and faster. But a new term is emerging that transcends nearly all sports and all positions within sports: agility.

Agility is the ability to rapidly change the body’s position without losing balance; and requires a combination of coordination, speed, reflexes, strength, endurance, and stamina. In sports, agility is described in terms of response to an opposing player or moving target. As with other fitness components, agility is specific to a particular movement pattern. (1)

Benefits of Agility Training

Agility training improves quickness, reaction time, acceleration, proprioception, balance, and coordination. Moreover, as it strengthens the muscles and tendons of all major joints it will aid in preventing injuries by improving body control through repetition of proper movement mechanics.

Two multifunctional pieces of gym equipment for agility training are the agility ladder and the half dome stability ball. Below are sample agility exercises to jumpstart your agility training in the gym.

Agility Ladder Exercises

Lateral Shuffle
Start at the end of the ladder with your hips square facing perpendicular to the ladder. Shuffle through the ladder by ensuring both feet touch the inside of each square. As you shuffle, pump your arms to mimic a running motion. Keep tall and don’t look down while performing drill.

Single Foot In and Outs
Start at the base of the ladder and hop on one foot outside of the ladder and then back inside of the ladder into the subsequent steps to the end.

2 In 2 Out
Start at the base of the ladder and bring each foot individually into the square then outside of the square individually. Continue this sequence as you move up the ladder.

Half Dome Stability Ball Exercises

Alternating Plyo Lunge On Half Dome Stability Ball
Begin with one foot on top of the device, the other foot lunging back. Jump up and switch so that the other foot lands in the middle of the device and the other foot lunges back. Repeat for desired repetitions.

Side to Side Shuffle Over Half Dome Stability Ball
Begin beside the device with one foot and the other foot to the side. Laterally jump up so that the foot on the side lands on top of the device and the foot on top of the device lands on the opposite side. Reverse direction and repeat for desired repetitions.

Toe Touches On Top of Half Dome Stability Ball
Start facing the device with the ball of one foot on top of the device and the other to your side. Jump and switch foot positions and repeat for desired repetitions.