**Strength Training – Technical Development Exercises** –(To be performed 3 times weekly)

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| **Exercise** | **Picture** | **Key Points** | **Reps** | **Sets** | **Rest** |
| Squat |  | * Start with feet shoulder width apart and hands on hips; * Heels remain on the floor; * Back straight, chest out, head up; * Lower until thighs are parallel with the floor; * Knees should not travel forward past the toes. | 10 | 2 | 60 Seconds |
| Press Up |  | * Lie face down with hands slightly wider than shoulder width; * Keep legs and back straight throughout movement; * Push up using your arms and chest until arms are almost straight; * Lower until chest is 3-4 inches from the floor. | 10 | 2 | 60 Seconds |
| Lunge |  | * Start with both feet together, no more than shoulder width apart; * Step forward **with one leg**, leaving the other in starting position; * Lower your back knee towards the floor without touching down; * Back straight, chest out, head up throughout; * Do not allow your front knee to pass your toes when you lower. | 10 | 2 x Each Leg | 60 Seconds |
| Back Extensions |  | * Lie face down with hands clasped behind the lower back; * Place forehead on the ground; * Raise upper back, shoulders and head 6-8 inches off the ground; * Lower slowly to starting position | 10 | 2 | 60 Seconds |
| Sit Ups |  | * Lie with back and head flat on the mat; * Feet should be flat, with knees bent; * Keeping hands touching ears, raise head and upper back slowly; * Keep head steady, with eyes fixed on a point above. | 10 | 2 | 60 Seconds |

**Core Stability & Basic Conditioning Exercises** – (To be performed at least 3 times weekly)

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| **Exercise** | **Picture** | **Key Points** | **Reps** | **Sets** | **Summary** |
| The Plank |  | * Start with forearms flat on the mat, and raised on to the toes; * Body should be steady on the forearms and toes, with core muscles working; * Hold for 20 seconds initially, progressing 5 seconds per week; | 1 | 2 | This exercise promotes development of the deep stomach and lower back muscles which will significantly improve balance and overall strength; both crucial in Gaelic games. |
| Single Leg Squat |  | * Use a solid box / bottom stair / step and start in position A; * Lower slowly keeping the raised leg off the ground; * Back straight, chest out, head up; * If need be, use support for balance; | 10 | 2 x Each Leg | This exercise will strengthen the muscles of each leg equally. This can help to reduce imbalances that otherwise won’t be addressed, but may lead to injury in the long term. It can help to strengthen the muscles responsible for stability of the knee and ankle joints. |
| Front Raise > Lateral Raise |  | * Start with hands by the side, palms facing inwards; * Raise arms to shoulder level to the side of the body; * Lower to start position; * Raise arms to shoulder level to the front of the body; | 10 | 2 | This exercise will strengthen many of the smaller muscles of the shoulder that are responsible for the stability of the shoulder joint. |
| Single Leg Ball Throw |  | * Stand with feet shoulder width apart, 2-3 feet from a wall; * Raise one foot and throw the ball against the wall catching the rebound; * Repeat on opposite foot; * Try to complete without bouncing / moving standing foot. | 10 | 2 x Each Leg | This exercise will help develop co-ordination, but more importantly will strengthen the muscles of the ankle joint, increasing the stability of the joint. |
| Box / Bench Step Ups  (Approx 1 foot high) |  | * Start with both feet together facing the box / step / bench; * Lift foot and move in a controlled way placing foot flat on box; * Move the body up to finish standing with feet together on box; * Repeat with opposite leg. | 10 | 2 x Each Leg | This exercise will help develop good technique while also strengthening major legs muscles. |

**Flexibility Exercises** – (To be performed at least 3 times weekly, preferably immediately after a session, when still warm)

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| **Exercise / Muscle Stretched** | **Picture** | **Key Points** | **Hold For** | **No. Of Reps** |
| Calf |  | * Both feet flat and pointing forwards, with 1 further forward than the other; * Press the heel of the back foot into the floor; * Avoid pushing against the wall, use for support only; * Feel the stretch on the back of the lower leg; * Repeat on the opposite leg. | 20-30 seconds | 1 x Each Leg |
| Hamstring |  | * Lie flat on back, raise one leg until stretch is felt on the back of the upper leg; * Hold just above the knee joint; * Keep head relaxed and resting on the floor; * Repeat on opposite leg. | 20-30 seconds | 1 x Each Leg |
| Quad |  | * Lie face down; * Take one foot towards the backside and hold; * Hold when stretch can be felt on the front of the upper leg; * Repeat on opposite leg. | 20-30 seconds | 1 x Each Leg |
| Groin |  | * Sit upright, with the soles of both feet touching; * Take hold of both feet with the hands; * Press the elbows against the knees until a stretch is felt on the inner thigh. | 20-30 seconds | 1 |
| Gluteal |  | * Lie on back; * Take knee of one leg in the hands and pull towards the chest; * Keep opposite leg flat; * Hold when stretch is felt in the backside muscle; * Repeat on opposite leg. | 20-30 seconds | 1 x Each Leg |

**General Rules That Apply to All Exercises**

* All exercises must be performed in a steady, controlled manner. Speed of performance is not important;
* No exercises require use of anything more than bodyweight. If you want to progress exercise you can use small hand weights / water bottles / small rocks etc;
* An exercise mat for the floor might make some exercises more comfortable, even a mat / carpet;
* These exercises are not designed to increase muscle size, so don’t expect them to;
* They will strengthen smaller muscles that are crucial to long term strength development and injury prevention. These muscles are overlooked in normal training;
* **Do not over train** – allow the body time to recover in between sessions.
* Building a top athlete is similar to building a house;
  + Without good foundations a house can only be built so high, and will only last so long before it crumbles;
  + A house will be better if the bricklayer has practiced and improved all the skills needed before he starts building.
  + Your physical condition is the same with regard to putting in place good foundations and practicing the right skills to build what is required.