

5 Shoulder and Back Exercises Every Surfer Can Benefit From

Story by Jake Howard

Want to surf longer and catch more waves? Work on your back and shoulder fitness. As surfers, we spend more of our time paddling than we do standing and driving down the line. Strong shoulder and back muscles will keep you paddling harder, duck diving deeper and staying out in the lineup for longer periods of time. And while there's much that can be done to mitigate fatigue and soreness, there are a few simple exercises that surfers of every ability level can benefit from. Treat your thoracic zone right and your surfing will be better for it. Here are five exercises you can do to keep you moving and grooving even after a full day on the aquatic treadmill:

Short-Seated Wall Reach

Sit on the floor with your legs bent and heels pressed into the ground. Press your back and hips against a wall until they're flush. Take a deep breath in then exhale and reach forward with straight arms. Your lower back should remain on the wall as your arms extend between your legs. Focus on trying to feel your shoulder blades trying

to wrap around to the front of your ribs. Pause for three seconds at the end of each breath. Repeat for 2-3 sets of 3-4 breaths.

<https://youtu.be/nUbd2EXZcXU>



Thoracic Windmill With Towel

Using a rolled-up towel, place it on the floor perpendicular to your body. Lay on the towel on your back at the thoracic level (close to your nipple line). With your arms outstretched so you're in a "T" shape, anchor your left hand to the ground and, keeping a straight arm, bring your right arm over to meet it. Now open your arms back up until you are back in the "T" shape. You should feel the stretch through your mid-spine, shoulder

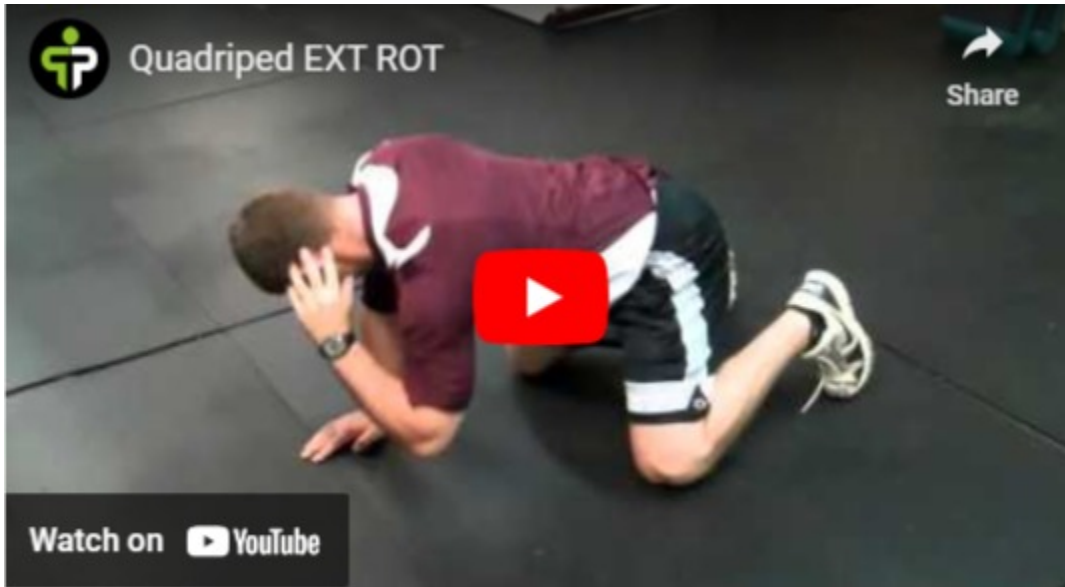
blades and shoulder girdle. Perform 8-10 reps on each side.

https://youtu.be/eFkblREf_5w



Quadruped Thoracic Rotation

Position yourself on all fours. Bring your right arm and to your right ear. You should now be in a tripod position with your right elbow bent and your hand on your head. Rotate your right elbow to try and touch your left arm. Then open up your chest and shoulders, bringing your right elbow up to the sky. Perform 8-10 reps on each side.



https://youtu.be/e8xAFf_oAa4

Band-Resisted Thoracic Rotations

You're going to need a physioball and stretch bands for this one. Focusing on your horizontal abductors and the external rotators of the shoulder, sit on the ball with a band in each hand to that there's a bit of tension in it. Starting with your right arm, circle it backward behind you. Pause at 180 (straight behind you) before completing a full rotation. Repeat on the left side. Try for 2 sets of 10 reps on each side. Be mindful of your lower back and hips. Be sure to stabilize this area so you don't get any unwanted rotation.

<https://youtu.be/Fgvp6kbwTsA>

