



**::REVEILLE::** SSG Ken Weichert leads Tennessee National Guard Soldiers through morning physical training.

By SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert

**SSG Ken Weichert,**

How is everything going? I have to tell you that we [my unit] just got back from Iraq. The entire advanced party did your "Operation Living Fit" DVD series before we left. We could see a big difference, and we all improved our PT scores. That's an awesome program!!

The biggest reason I'm writing is after I [returned from Iraq] the high school weight [training] coach asked if I would be interested in helping him coach. He does all the weight training, and I do the endurance training. I started with the "Living Fit" program and put in some other things like stair steps, lunges, 20-foot side shuffle, and we do laps in the gym with variations of hopping and jumping rope. But I think that teenagers may get bored with the same routine. I was wondering if you had any other suggestions [of] what we can do? Any suggestions would be greatly appreciated!

Looking forward to hearing from you and your wife.

Stay strong,  
SSG Gregg Wolff

**SSG Wolff,**

Hello! It is great to hear from you! You are right about the need to provide challenging and exciting programming in order to prevent boredom. We have found that multi-station fitness circuits are a great way to challenge the newest as well as the most advanced students. In fact, our START Fitness™ studio in San Francisco performs fitness circuits twice each week.

A typical week looks like this:

- Monday: "Operation Living Fit" indoor workout
- Tuesday: Outdoor long-distance running followed by abdominal exercises
- Wednesday: Indoor multi-station fitness circuit
- Thursday: Outdoor sprints and stairs day, followed by abdominal exercises
- Friday: Indoor and outdoor multi-station fitness circuit

This circuit should serve as a fresh start to a healthier lifestyle and help combat boredom! Please refer to the articles in issues 4.10 and 4.11 of GX for more information about weight training and body weight circuit training.

We hope your team enjoys the fresh material! Keep up the great work, SSG!

**HOOAH!**

SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert

PHOTO BY EVAN BAINES / ILLUSTRATION BY SEAMAS GALLAGHER, NICOLE SYLVESTER

“The most effective way to cope with change is to help create it.”

—Anonymous

## WARM-UP PHASE

*Note: If you're leading group exercises, perform warm-up phase prior to dividing up groups into smaller teams.*

“Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each year find you a better man.”

—Benjamin Franklin

**1. Aerobics (3 Minutes):** Includes running in place; side straddle hops, jumping jacks and high steps/knees.

**2. Push-ups (1 Minute):** The number you do depends on your fitness level and experience. Here's a quick guide:

- Basic: 1–10 repetitions
- Intermediate: 11–20 repetitions
- Advanced: 21–30 repetitions

**3. Aerobics (4 Minutes):** See the options above.

**4. Stretching (4 Minutes):** See cool-down exercises for examples.

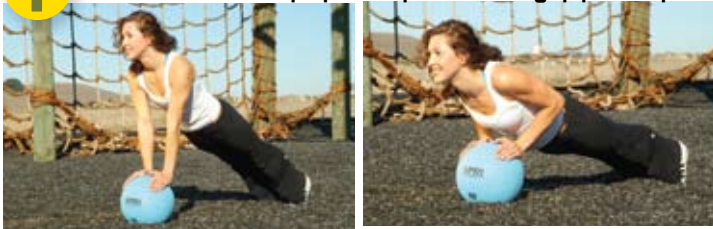
## MUSCLE TARGET AND SUMMIT PHASES

*Note: Some of these exercise instructions are included in past issues. Please go to [GXonline.com](http://GXonline.com) and visit "Past Issues" in "START Fitness™" for any exercise instructions not listed in this issue.*

“Here is a chance to change your life. Change your life by changing your body!”

—SSG Ken Weichert

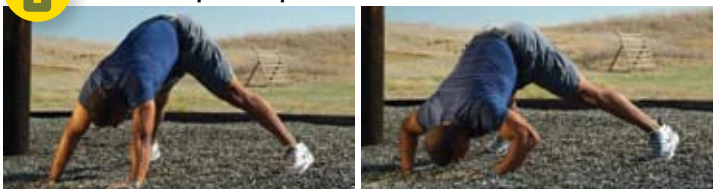
### 1 Medicine ball triceps push-ups or close-grip push-ups



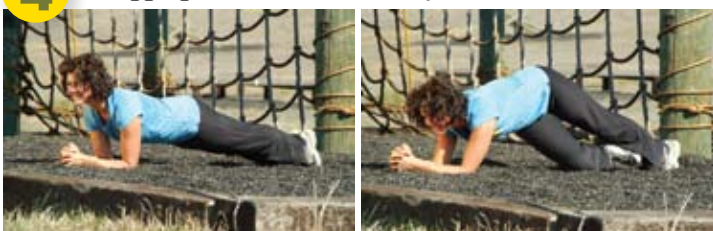
### 2 Dive-bomber push-ups



### 3 Shoulder push-ups



### 4 Dragging knee thrusts in the plank



PHOTOS BY JONATHAN MILLER

### 5 Medicine ball Russian twists



### 6 Medicine ball scoop squats



**Instructions for medicine ball scoop squats:**

- Stand with your feet a shoulder width apart.
- Hold a medium heavy medicine ball or dumbbell in front of your abdomen with arms straight and elbows slightly bent.
- Lower your body by bending your knees. Stop when your knees are at 90 degree angles or before you lose the natural arch of your back.
- Stand up by contracting your gluteus muscles and legs while stabilizing your body with a strong torso. Do not lock your knees.
- Repeat steps 3–4 until you have reached your goal.

**Breathing tip:** Inhale through your nose while lowering your body and exhale through your mouth while standing up.

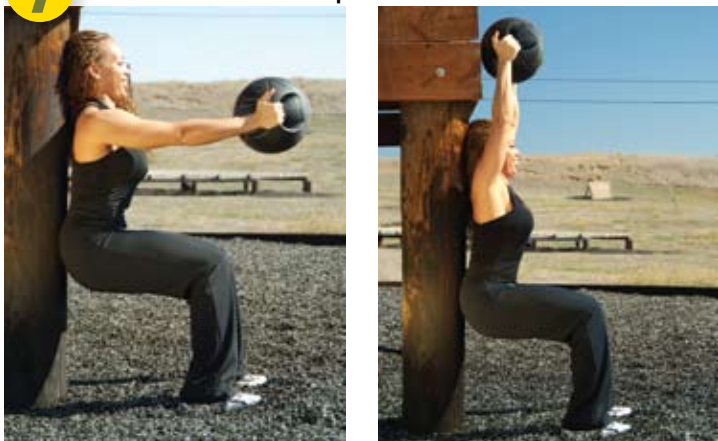
**Warning:** Never allow your knees to exceed your toe line. Prevent this by bringing your rear end back while lowering your body.



“The only way of finding the limits of the possible is by going beyond them into the impossible.”

—Arthur C. Clarke

## 7 Medicine ball wall squat



Hold the squat position until you have reached your goal or until you lose proper form.

## 8 "T" Push-ups with dumbbells



The "T" push-up variation offers all of the benefits of the standard push-up, plus the added benefit of training for balance and coordination.

### Instructions for the "T" push-up:

- A. Begin the exercise in a standard push-up position with a light set of dumbbells.
- B. Lower your body by bending both elbows while maintaining a neutral spine, tilting your chin up slightly and looking forward.  
*Tip: Looking forward improves posture and opens the airway to allow for better breathing.*
- C. Push away from the ground by extending your arms, tighten your abdominal muscles, balance on your right side, raise your left arm and point your knuckles upward until your body forms a leaning "T."  
*Tip: Much like a side plank, this requires stabilization through the shoulder girdle and spine.*
- D. Hold the "T" position for a couple of seconds before returning to the start position. Keep a wide arc on the way down. Perform the actions on the other side of your body.
- E. Repeat steps 2-4 until you have reached your goal.

**Alteration note:** Another way to perform this exercise is to repeat the actions on one side before performing the actions for the other side.

**Breathing tip:** Inhale through your nose while lowering your body and exhale through your mouth while pushing away from the ground.

## 9 Plank pose on forearms



## 10 Jumping rope or running for 90 seconds

### Stamina Stopwatch

Each station should be performed for 90 seconds. Rotation time between stations should not exceed 15 seconds. Here's a guide to keep your times in check:

**Quick Fix:** 1 full set = approximately 15 minutes

**Full Metal Jacket:** 2 full sets = approximately 30 minutes

**Max Load:** 3 full sets = approximately 45 minutes

“Live up to the best that is in you: Live noble lives, as you all may, in whatever condition you find yourselves.”  
—Henry W. Longfellow

## OPERATION FINDING FLEXIBILITY™

### Keep Reaching:

Staff Sergeant Ken Weichert leads Tennessee National Guard Soldiers through a series of stretching exercises.



PHOTO BY EVAN BAINES

## COOL-DOWN PHASE

*Note: Each stretching exercise should be performed for 30 seconds.*

### 1 Gluteus stretch



### 2 Trunk stretch



“The tree that is unbending is easily broken.”

“Thus, an Army without flexibility never wins a battle.”

—Lao Tzu

PHOTOS BY JONATHAN MILLER

“Stay committed to your workouts, and stay flexible in your approach!”

— SSG Ken Weichert

**3** Straddle stretch



**4** Standing quad stretch



**5** Hamstring stretch



Perform this exercise twice.

**6** Sidebends



PHOTOS BY JONATHAN MILLER, CHRIS KISSLING

**Final fitness formula:**

**PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER:**

**WARM-UP PHASE:**

**12 MINUTES**

**MUSCLE TARGET AND SUMMIT PHASES:**

**15, 30, 45 MINUTES**

**COOL-DOWN PHASE:**

**6 MINUTES**

START Fitness™ is a group exercise and hiking business based in San Francisco where Soldiers and civilians can experience the thrill of military-style drills performed in cadence or with music. START Fitness™ now trains and certifies basic, senior and master instructors. We encourage you to send your questions or requests for additional information to [askthetrainer@STARTfitness.com](mailto:askthetrainer@STARTfitness.com). You can experience our workouts at home with our “Operation Living Fit™” DVD series available on sale at [www.STARTfitness.com](http://www.STARTfitness.com) or [www.americansoldier.com/skwoor.html](http://www.americansoldier.com/skwoor.html).



**SSG KEN AND STEPHANIE WEICHERT**



A six-time Soldier of the year and veteran of both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm, SSG Ken Weichert and his wife, Stephanie, a certified personal trainer, run the START fitness program, a San Francisco-based group exercise and hiking business that delivers military-inspired, boot-camp style workouts to Soldiers and civilians. The program now trains and certifies basic, senior and master instructors.

Always seek the advice and guidance of a qualified health provider with any questions or concerns you may have prior to commencing a fitness program. This article should not be relied on or substituted for professional medical diagnosis or treatment. The exercises presented are for suggestion only. Participate at your own risk. Stop if you feel faint or shortness of breath.

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