

START
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WORKOUT FOR TWO: SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert gear up at the National Guard Training Center in Smyrna, TN.

OPERATION TAKE TWO™

By SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert

FEBRUARY 14TH

Large heart-shaped boxes of center-filled chocolates, bouquets of fragrant red roses and syrupy Hallmark cards are often what we associate with February 14th.

This Valentine's Day, we propose a heartfelt expression of love in the form of none other than a couple's workout. Consider it a gift of health that you give to each other. Perhaps your Valentine's Day will be spent solo. If so, simply follow the modifications in order to maximize this workout by yourself. It's just as intense!

This year, Stephanie and I landed in a hanger in order to give our new workout wings. It was an enjoyable the time together! We hope you're one step closer to giving your mate (and yourself) a gift of a healthier you. By the way, this Valentine's Day marks our 5th wedding anniversary.



EVAN BAINES / ILLUSTRATION BY SEAMUS GALLAGHER, NICOLE SYLVESTER

WARM-UP PHASE

1. Aerobics (5 Minutes): Suggested exercises include running, biking, jump rope.

2. Hip crossovers (10 seconds on each side; alternate sides 10 times; one set)

- Lie face up on the floor on a gym mat with your legs together in a 90-degree angle, your feet on the floor and your arms held perpendicular to your sides.
- While keeping both legs together and your feet on the floor, lower your legs down to one side while maintaining a 90-degree angle.
- Switch sides.

Warning: Do not stretch beyond your comfort level.

“Gravitation is not responsible for people falling in love.”

—Albert Einstein

3. Scorpion (10 seconds on each side; rotating 8-10 times; one set)

- Lie face down on the floor on a gym mat with your legs together and your arms held out perpendicular to your sides.
- From the starting position, lift your right foot up behind you, over and across your body, as if you are trying to touch your toe to your left hand.
- Allow your left hip to lift off the floor, but keep your palms and your left leg down on the mat. You should feel the stretch in the front of your right hip, along the sides of your torso, and in the front of your right leg.
- Switch legs.

Warning: Do not stretch beyond your comfortable level.

4. Crunches, hooking feet with partner (90 seconds; one set)

- Put your fingertips on the side of your head and keep your navel in without holding your breath.
- Keep your heels on the floor and lift your toes off of the ground.
- Hook your legs with your partner’s legs by flexing your foot underneath your partner’s calves.
- Your legs will form a 90-degree angle at your knees.
- Lift your chin up toward the sky without pulling on your neck and return to the starting position.
- Repeat.

Warning: Keep your lower back on the floor throughout the exercise.

5. Crunches, legs at a 90-degree angle with feet up and touching (90 seconds; one set)

- Maintain similar form to crunches.
- Elevate your legs, placing the bottom of both your feet together.
- Your legs will form a 90-degree angle at your knees

6. Box, reach, and touch (1 minute; one set)

- Lie in face up position and extend legs toward the sky.
- Reach toward the left side of your body with both hands, while your partner reaches toward the right, so your hands will touch.
- Switch.

Warning: It’s normal to experience some tightening in the front of your neck.

7. Superman and reach (1 minute; one set)

- Lie in a face down position, and lift your arms and legs off of the mat.
- Extend your arms forward.
- Bring your arms into a 90-degree angle while squeezing your shoulder blades together.



MUSCLE TARGET PHASE

8. Partner-assisted push-ups (1 minute of continuous push-ups; three sets each)

- Use a long towel wrapped around the abdomen of the person performing the push-up.
- While one person is in the push-up, the person holding the towel is in the squat, standing over and around the person performing the push-up.
- Working together, as the arms bend for the push-up, the standing person squats.
- The squatter using the towel assists the push-up performer only a little; enough to accomplish the goal.



9. Glute and ham raise, and lower with medicine ball (30 seconds; two sets each)

10. Alternating push-up and crawl race (1 minute)

11. Partner-assisted military press (1 minute; two sets each)

- The seated partner sits cross-legged on ground, and the standing partner places right ankle against seated partner. The seated partner uses the standing partner's leg for back support.
- The seated partner raises his or her hands into the air and makes a fist, interlocking hands with the standing partner.
- The standing partner places his or her hands over the fist, placing resistance on the seated partner throughout the exercise.

12. Wall hold and medicine ball pass (1 minute; two sets)

- Rest on your heels, switch places and repeat.

Warning: Do not allow your knees to cross over in front of your toes.

13. Repeat alternating push-up and crawl (1 minute)

14. Seesaw squats or alternating squats (1 minute; one set)

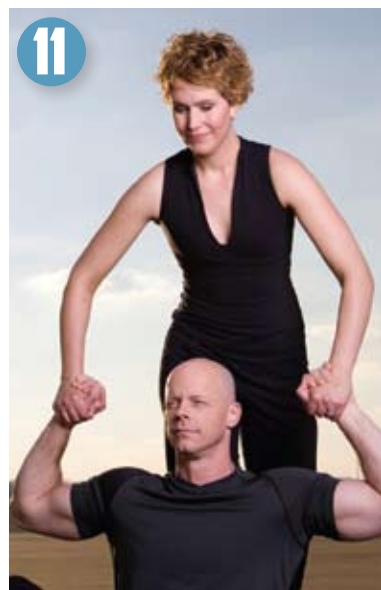
- One person is up, while the other is down.

Warning: Do not bend more than 90 degrees at the knees.

15. Mirrored traveling lunges (3 minutes)

- Face each other while one person travels backward and the other forward.

Warning: Keep your body centered and never allow your forward knee to bend beyond your toes.



16. Tubing sprints (1 minute; two sets each)

- Run across floor with a thick piece of tubing.
- Like the partner-assisted military press, make it difficult for your partner but not impossible.

17. Last Man Up jogging drill around track (5 minutes)

- While jogging around the track, pass your partner.
- Continue to pass your partner until the goal is reached.



18. Leaping plyometric seesaw squats (90 seconds)

- Like standard seesaw squats, one partner jumps in the air as soon as the other lands in the squat position.
- One person is up, while the other is down.

Warning: Do not bend more than 90 degrees at the knees.

“The best proof of love is trust.”
—Dr. Joyce Brothers

“The art of love is largely the art of persistence.”

—Albert Ellis



19. Partner-assisted pull-ups (1 minute; two sets each)

- Spot your partner by holding his or her ankles while he or she stands on your thighs.
- Repeat.

Warning: Stand in proper squat position while assisting your partner with pull-ups.

REPEAT

20. Last Man Up jogging drill around track (5 minutes)

- While jogging around the track, pass your partner
- Continue to pass your partner until the goal is reached

21. Crunches, hooking feet (90 seconds)

22. Crunches, keeping legs at a 90-degree angle with feet up and touching (90 seconds; one set)

23. Box, reach and touch (1 minute; one set)

COOL-DOWN PHASE

24. Partner-assisted seated straddle stretch (30 seconds; four sets each with feet touching and holding forearms)

25. Scorpion (10 seconds on each side; rotating 8-10 times; one set)

26. Hip crossovers (10 seconds on each side; alternate sides 10 times; one set)

We encourage you to send your questions or requests for additional information to askthetrainer@STARTfitness.com.

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.

PHOTO BY CHRIS KISSLING

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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