

OPERATION LEAPS AND BOUNDS

Power and Plyometrics, Part 1 of 2

By SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert



Q: SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert, Hello. I am 19 years old. I just started to try your workouts on 1-800-GO-GUARD.com, and my recruiter gave me the last issue of GX magazine. The workouts are great! I am trying to join the California National Guard, but I am 20 pounds overweight. I was a pretty good athlete in high school but fell off the bandwagon after I graduated. I have been jogging for a few months, and my endurance is increasing slowly. How can I build endurance faster, so I can cut these pounds and qualify for the Guard? Any advice is greatly appreciated! Thanks!
Jason

A: Jason, Thanks for making the choice to serve your state and country! Regarding endurance and weight loss, we like to use power and plyometric drills to increase strength and endurance. Be advised that plyometric drills are not for the basic athlete, or for anyone with a weak or injured back, knees, hips or ankles. Plyometric drills are considered intermediate to advanced exercises. If your joints can handle leaps and jumps, then you will see outstanding results after using Operation Leaps and Bounds. We tried power and plyometric drills with several Soldiers.

Here is what one had to say about the program: "The hard part about losing weight is getting started and figuring out what to do. With SGT Ken's program, it tells you exactly what to do and for how long. I joined the Guard, and I knew I was overweight. I contacted SGT Ken, and he sent me his workout routine. Within the first two weeks, I lost 10 pounds and could feel that I was getting stronger. I have done a lot better on my APFT scores and have had nothing but success from SGT Ken's workout routine."—PFC Mark M., Arizona Army National Guard

Here is your challenge:

- Use the 30-day workout calendar in Operation Pushing for Points from GX 5.6.
- Add Operation Leaps and Bounds to the exercises in the calendar for every Monday and Thursday.
- Reduce the running interval training listed on Thursdays, so that you will not exceed 60 minutes of training.
- Follow our diet plan, Operation Diet Dissection, posted on 1-800-GO-GUARD.com/fitness.
- Get plenty of rest at night, and take two days off from training every week so your muscles and joint tissue can rest and recover.
- Keep us informed of your progress, and let us know when you qualify for the Army National Guard. Be safe, and have fun!

HOOAH!

—SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert



“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn’t do than by the ones you did do.”

—Mark Twain

WARM-UP PHASE

Aerobics: *Examples:* Running in place; side-straddle hops; jumping jacks; High steps/knees (5 minutes)

Stretching (5 minutes)

MUSCLE TARGET PHASE

Half Sit-ups

START: Lie down on your back with legs together and bent 90 degrees at your knees. Place your heels on the ground and point your toes upward. Interlock your fingers, and place your hands behind your head.

ACTIONS: Tighten your abdominal muscles, and raise your upper body until your shoulder blades come off of the ground, return to the start position and repeat.

Note: Do not pull on your neck with your hands. Keep your elbows wide and your chin pointing upward.

Basic: 1–30 repetitions

Intermediate: 31–60 repetitions

Advanced: 61–90 repetitions

Basketball Drill

START: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Position your arms at your sides, elbows slightly bent and palms facing inward.

ACTIONS: Step forward and slightly laterally with one leg into a lunge, bending your forward leg until it reaches 90 degrees at the knee, back leg slightly bent. Maintain your balance in the center, shoulders aligned with your hips. Return to the start position. Jump vertically as high as you can, arms extended overhead and land with knees slightly bent. Quickly, switch directions and repeat. Continue until your goal is reached. Performing the actions in both directions once equals one repetition.

Fit Tip: Challenge yourself by holding a set of dumbbells or a medicine ball during the exercise!

Basic: 1–10 repetitions

Intermediate: 11–20 repetitions

Advanced: 21–30 repetitions

BASKETBALL DRILL



SINGLE-LEG LATERAL LEAPS



Single-Leg Lateral Leaps

START: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Position your arms at your sides, elbows slightly bent and palms facing inward.

ACTIONS: Shifting your balance to your right, thrust your left leg to the left, leaping between three and five feet and elevating your arms to the sides at shoulder-height. Land and balance your body on your left leg, bending your left knee, and arms returning to your sides. Quickly, switch directions and repeat. Continue until your goal is reached. Performing the actions in both directions once is one repetition.

Note: You can perform this exercise without leaping (basic level).

Basic: 1–10 repetitions (no leaping)

Intermediate: 10–20 repetitions (with leaping)

Advanced: 21–30 repetitions (with leaping)

JUMPSQUATS



A



B



C

Jump Squats

START: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Position your arms at your sides, elbows slightly bent and palms facing inward.

ACTIONS: Bend forward at your hips and bring your arms behind you. Jump vertically as high as you can, arms extended overhead. As you land, squat until your knees bend 90-degrees and hips move back as if sitting on a chair.

Maintain your weight directly over the middle of your feet and heels. Keep your knees aligned with your feet. Quickly, repeat until your goal is reached.

Note: You can perform this exercise without jumping (basic level).

Warning: Do not let your knees to bend beyond your toes.

Basic: 1–20 repetitions (no jumping)

Intermediate: 10–20 repetitions (with jumping)

Advanced: 21–30 repetitions (with jumping)

SKI JUMPER DRILL



A



B

Ski Jumper Drill

START: Stand with your feet together, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Position your hands on your hips and elbows to the sides.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, bend your knees and thrust your body laterally 2 to 3 feet, landing with knees slightly bent. Quickly, switch directions and repeat. Continue until your goal is reached. Performing the actions in both directions once equals one repetition.

Basic: 1–20 repetitions

Intermediate: 21–40 repetitions

Advanced: 41–60 repetitions



If you don't step forward, you're always in the same place."

—Nora Roberts

FORWARD LEAPING SQUATS



Forward Leaping Squats

START: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Position your arms at your sides, elbows slightly bent and palms facing inward.

ACTIONS: Bend forward at your hips and bring your arms behind you. Leap forward as far as you can, arms in front of you. As you land, squat until your knees bend 90-degrees and hips move back as if sitting on a chair. Maintain your weight directly over the middle of your feet and heels. Keep your knees aligned with your feet. Quickly, repeat until your goal is reached.

Basic: 1–10 repetitions

Intermediate: 11–20 repetitions

Advanced: 21–30 repetitions

“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.”

—T.S. Elliot

JUMPING SWITCH LUNGES



Jumping Switch Lunges

START: Place one leg in front and the other straight behind you, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Align your shoulders with your hips. Position your arms at your sides, elbows slightly bent and palms facing inward.

ACTIONS: Lower your body by bending both legs at the knees until your forward leg achieves 90 degrees of knee flexion. Jump vertically as high as you can, arms extended outward, switching leg positions in midair and landing in a lunge. Maintain your balance in the center. Quickly, repeat until your goal is reached.

Note: You can perform this exercise without jumping (basic level).

Warning: Do not let your forward knee to bend beyond your toes.

Basic: 1–10 repetitions (no jumping)

Intermediate: 1–10 repetitions (with jumping)

Advanced: 11–20 repetitions (with jumping)

Flutter Kicks

START: Lie flat on your back with your hands under, or slightly outside your buttocks, palms down. Raise your feet 6–12 inches off the ground.

ACTIONS: Flutter kicks are a four-count exercise where you raise your left leg to a 45-degree angle for position one, keeping your right leg stationary. Next, raise your right leg to a 45-degree angle while, at the same time, moving your left leg to the start position. Counts three and four are repetitions of the same movements. Quickly, repeat until your goal is reached.

Fit Tip: The lower your legs are positioned, the more back muscles you engage for this exercise. Keep your back flat against the floor with your arms supporting

the sides of your body. If you experience discomfort in your lower back, raise your legs to a higher position.

Basic: 1–10 repetitions

Intermediate: 11–20 repetitions

Advanced: 21–30 repetitions

COOL-DOWN PHASE

Stretching (5 minutes)

Equipment Needed:

None

Breathing techniques applied to Operation Leaps and Bounds: Exhale through the mouth and inhale through the nose for each exercise.

STAMINA STOPWATCH

Muscle Target Phase:

Rapid Response: 1 full set = approximately 30 minutes

Double-Time: 2 full sets = approximately 45 minutes

Max Load: 3 full sets = approximately 60 minutes

Note: The warm-up and cool-down phases are performed only once.

For more health and fitness information, go to 1-800-GO-GUARD.com/fitness or email sgtken@GXonline.com.

SSG KEN AND STEPHANIE WEICHERT



EVAN BAINES

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, founded 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.

Warning: 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.