

I Challenge Myself Inc.

Building Blocks Users' Guide

Welcome to the *I Challenge Myself* Building Blocks! The “Blocks” is a resource library of resistance training exercises that have been selected and designed to empower ICM coaches and students to be able to have an engaging and effective workout, in any environment. The Building Blocks are an assortment of body-weight exercises that include simple and important information you need to incorporate resistance training into any group workout.

The Building Blocks system has been created to address the basic needs of any ICM school-based workout.

- Workouts need to be able to happen in any kind of room or environment, without any equipment.
- Workouts need to be challenging for the students who are extremely athletic, and for those who are just starting to develop their athleticism.
- Workouts need to be quick to put together and easy to understand, for students and coaches.
- Workouts need to be able to have a design and purpose to make them engaging and goal-oriented.

In order to address these needs, the Building Blocks system provides a finite selection of 45 bodyweight exercises to use throughout an entire semester. While each Building Block is a single exercise, once pieced together, and integrated with activities they can become a fun and challenging circuit routing that can make any ICM group sweat!

Each Building Block comes with 3 indicators that help coaches and students build effective and mindful workouts. While all of the exercises in this library will work out a students' the body, the 3 pieces of information that accompanies each Building Block helps coaches and students realize **how** it exercises the body.

1. The **difficulty level** in performing the exercise
2. The **body part** that the exercise targets
3. The **category** of athleticism that exercise develop

Example: Superman

Level: 2

Body Part: Core

Category: Stability

Difficulty: *Level 1, Level 2, & Level 3*

ICM coaches know that every semester of students is diverse and wide-ranging in strength and fitness abilities. In order to create a workout for such a diverse group of athletes, workouts need to have variations and modifications built-in so that the beginner students don't give up and the advanced students don't feel bored.

Each Building Block is assigned a level of difficulty: Level 1 is beginner, Level 2 is intermediate, and Level 3 is hard. All building blocks will give anyone a great workout, but attempting a Block that is too difficult can lead to injury. The exercises are progressive in nature, so as a beginner, you would want to start with the level 1 workouts and then progress to the level 2, then move to level 3 when you have mastered those.

Tip: If a student is struggling to perform a level 2 workout safely and/or correctly, they can quickly switch to the level 1 workout of the same type.

Body Part: *Upper Body, Core, & Lower Body*

While many of the Building Blocks work many parts of the body, each has been selected to ultimately target and develop either the upper body (shoulders, back, chest, and arms), the core (oblique's, abs, and lower back), and the lower body (legs and glutes). This is important to know when choosing the exercises for a workout in order to focus on a certain area of the body for that day, or intentionally have a full body workout, across all body parts.

Category: *Strength, Stability, & Flexibility*

When done correctly, all of the Building Block exercises will help make students more fit and healthy. But I Challenge Myself workouts are about working towards a specific goal, each and every day. Rather than a vague workout that works to make a student more athletic, the category of each Building Block helps determine how the student is becoming more athletic. *Strength* Building Blocks develop the ability to exert force, sustain power, and endure through fatigue. *Stability* Building Blocks develop coordination, agility, and intentional movement. *Flexibility* Building Blocks develop range of movement, stretch out the muscles, and fend off pain and injury.

These three categories allow their incorporation in workouts to either focus on developing a type of athleticism (a full stability workout) or have a workout that builds all categories of athleticism for a certain body part. Moreover, these categories help students and coaches create workouts that mindful and intentional in reaching their goals.

The Building Blocks

Strength Exercises

	Upper Body	Core	Lower Body
Level 1	-1 Arm, 1 Side Pushups -Plank Arm Walk	-Bicycle Crunch -Flutter Kicks	-Squat -Front Lunge
Level 2	-Downward Dog Pushup -YTWL	-Mason Twist -Double Leg Raise	-Squat Thrust -Squat Jump
Level 3	-Dolphin Pushups -Military Pushup	-Windshield Wiper -Scissor Kicks	-Jumping Squat Thrust -Skaters

Stability Exercises

	Upper Body	Core	Lower Body
Level 1	-High Plank -Reverse Table Pose	-Elbow Plank -Side Plank	-Chair Pose -Bridge
Level 2	-Plank Up/Down -Inch Worm	-Bird Dog -Superman	-Donkey Kick -Marching Bridge
Level 3	-Frog Stand -Hindu Pushup	-Reverse Elbow Plank -Dead Bug	-Rear Foot Dead Lift -Split Squat

Flexibility Exercises

	Upper Body	Core	Lower Body
Level 1	-Childs Pose	-Cobra Stretch	-Hamstring Stretch
Level 2	-Standing Side Bend	-Standing Abs	-Quad Stretch
Level 3	-Spinal Twist	-Cat-Cow Pose	-Pidgeon Pose

Using the Building Blocks Videos

These videos have been created to help I Challenge Myself students and coaches perform the Building Blocks exercises correctly, confidently, and safely. Each video in this series demonstrates one of the Building Block exercises and includes the name of the exercise, visual demonstration, audio instruction, and the 3 indicators of that exercise (level, body part, and category).

As an I Challenge Myself Coach, everyone's skillsets and strengths are very diverse. While we believe that each coach brings their own individual talents to their team, we want every coach to feel confident in their ability to teach students how to perform exercises with correct technique and safely. The Building Block videos are created as a reference to be used while preparing for a class/workout, as an in-class demonstration model, and as a tool for students to use at home.

How to Setup a Circuit Style Workout:

Circuit training is the most easy and simple way to create a workout using Building Blocks. A circuit workout is basically made up of selected exercises that you move through in succession. You just need to decide how long your total workout will be, how many stations you'll include, and what exercises you'll do at those stations. Circuit workouts can be setup in almost any environment, all that's needed is enough open space for everyone in the group to have a full range of movement. Your selection should be informed by the indicators of each Building Block and the goal of that day's work out. Designate a spot in the room for each exercise to be performed - these are called stations. They should be placed so that they're 5-10 feet apart; a circle or square can work, as long as you have enough room to walk through the circuit while students are exercising to provide feedback and critique. After placing the exercise stations in your space, you can either decide on the amount of time for each station rotation, assign each exercise a certain amount of reps to be performed, or assign the amount of time that exercise is held, like a plank.

***Here are a few tips to add even more variety and diversity to your workouts:**

1. Perform them **unilaterally**, meaning remove a leg or arm from the workout (turn a plank into a one-arm plank). This makes the exercise work different muscles and increases the difficulty.
2. Do them **in an elevated position**, meaning if you can put your legs or hands on a chair or step to change your center of gravity for that workout.
3. **Alternate your rep tempo**, meaning some exercises should be done fast and explosive while others done more slowly and controlled.
4. Do **supersets**; which mean completing a station and then going directly to the next without any break in between.

Sample Workouts Using Building Blocks:

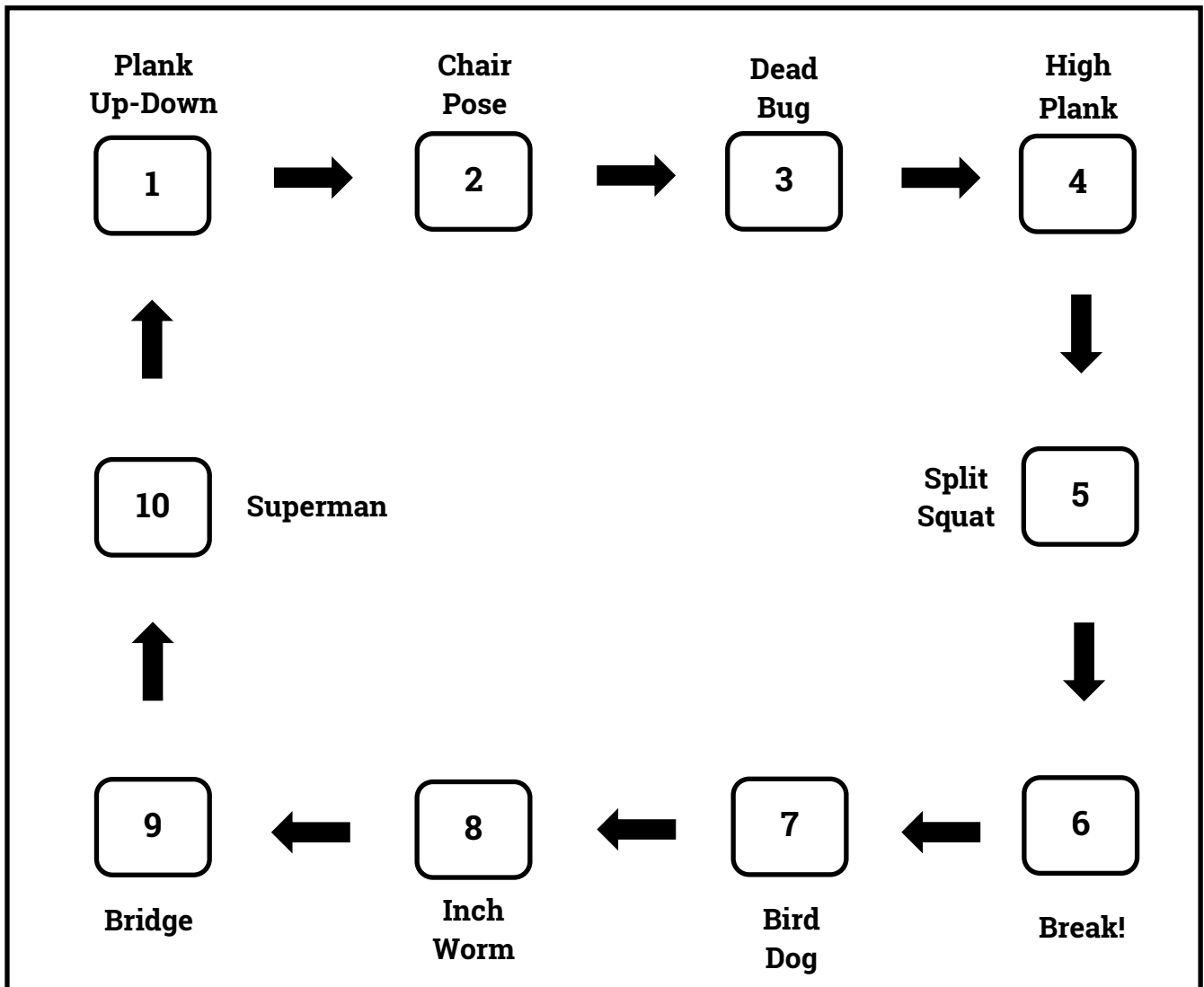
Low Intensity Circuit Workout

Time Length: 30 minutes / rotate every 3 minutes

Group Size: 10-40 students

Building Blocks: Variety of stability exercises

Location: Empty Room/Gym



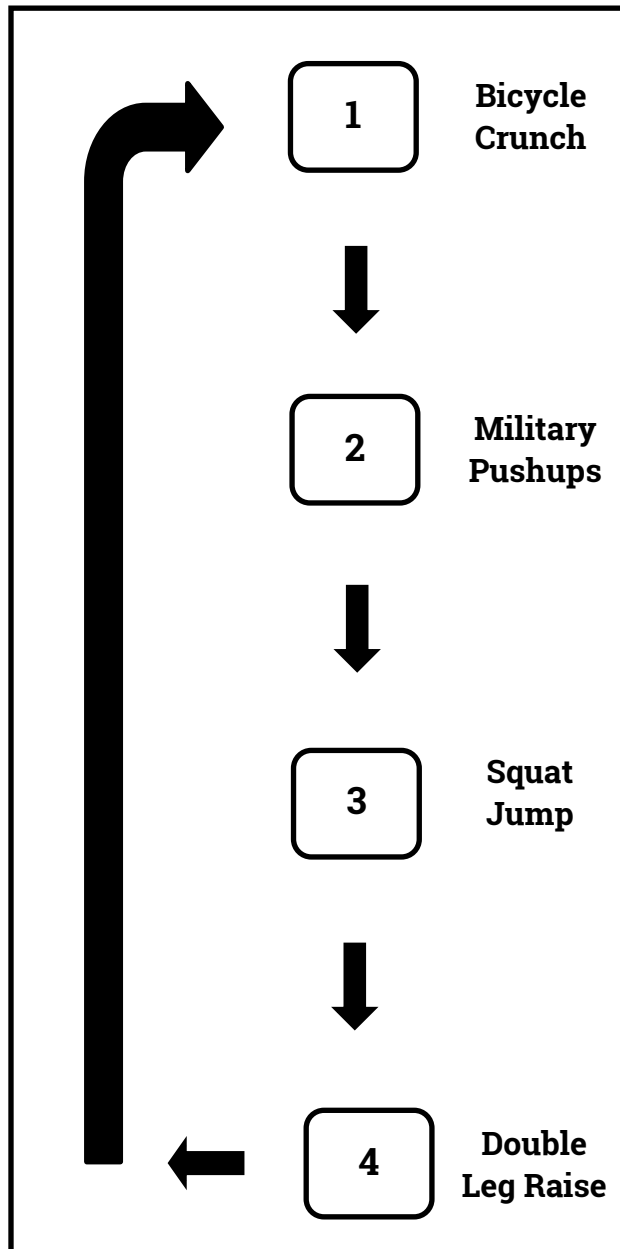
High Intensity Circuit Workout

Time Length: 30 minutes / rotate every 1 minute

Group Size: 10-20 students

Building Blocks: Variety of strength exercises

Location: Hallway



Interval Training Circuit Workout

Time Length: 30 minutes

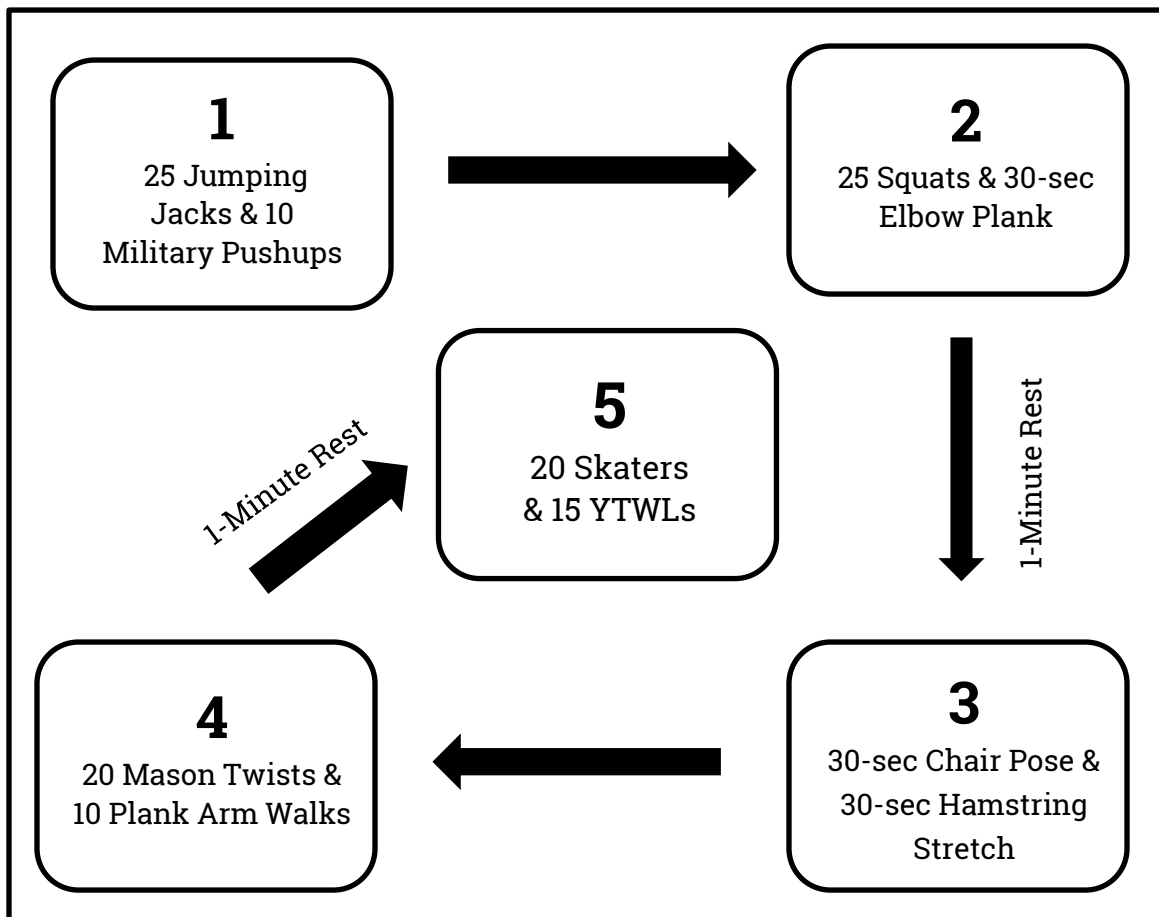
Group Size: 10-20 students, each student is paired

Building Blocks: Variety of stability exercises

Location: Empty Room/Gym

Instruction: Each pair should complete the full interval circuit 3 times, resting after every 2 stations.

Tip: Complete the full set at each station OR do multiples of 5 with proper form. 25 sets of 1 done correctly are better than 25 bad reps.



Large Group Game: Ultimate Ball

Time Length: 30 minutes

Group Size: 10-40 students / split into two teams

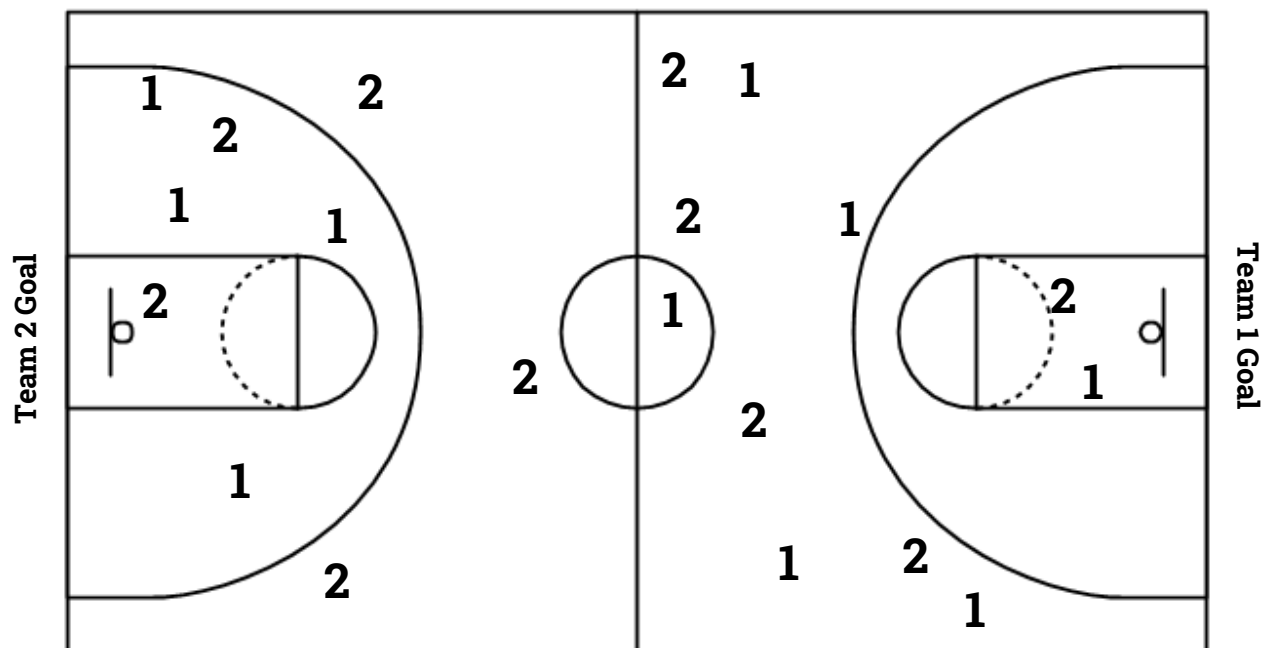
Building Blocks: Variety of stability exercises

Location: Gym/Basketball Court/Outside

Instruction: The point of the game is for your team to score as many points as possible. A team scores by landing their ball in the opposing team's goal (similar to basketball or soccer). When you have the ball, you can only pivot, pass, or shoot. The opposing team may steal/block passes, but cannot take the ball out of someone's hands. The game begins when the coach throws/drops/passes the ball into play.

Possible Building Blocks Incorporation

- If your team gets scored on: the whole team does _____.
- If you turn over the ball by throwing a pass: you do _____.
- If you walk with the ball, you do _____.



Small Group Game: Building Block Dash

Time Length: 30 minutes

Group Size: 10-20 students, split into two teams

Building Blocks: Variety of stability exercises

Location: Gym/Basketball Court/Outside

Instruction: Two teams will gather on opposite far ends of a basketball where their “team base” is located. Each “team base” will have 2 dice and a bucket. The center court line will have 6 marked stations (numbered 1-6) that will have a different Building Block. In turns of 2, the students will roll a 6-sided dice at their “team base” and will run to the Building Block station that corresponds to the number they roll in the middle of the gym and must complete the designated amount of reps or hold time for that station’s Building Block exercise. After completing the exercise, the student will rub back to the team base and tag their next teammate. The first team to fully cycle through all teammates 10 times wins.

