

Functional training involves mainly weight bearing activities targeted at core muscles of the abdomen and lower back. Most fitness facilities have a variety of weight training machines which target and isolate specific muscles. As a result the movements do not necessarily bear any relationship to the movements people make in their regular activities or sports. Functional training attempts to adapt or develop exercises which allow individuals to perform the activities of daily life more easily and without injuries.



## Functional Training – Not Just A Catch Phrase

Photographed at  
The Sentosa Resort Gym

### Cable Pull Patterns

Below are pictures for how to perform cable chops.

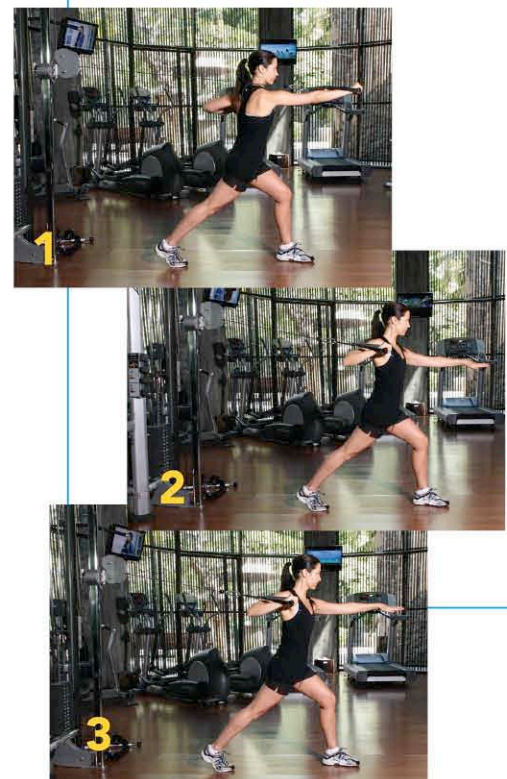
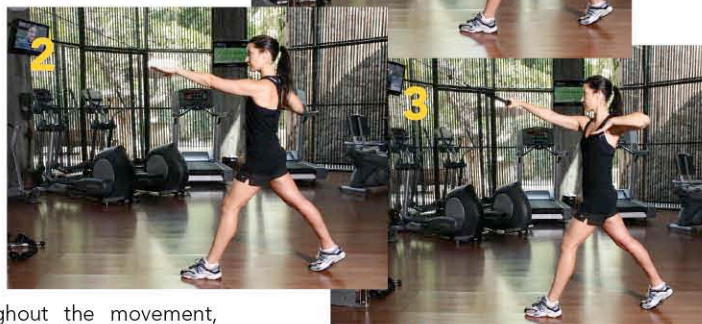
Stand facing the cable column that has been adjusted to shoulder height.

Take a split stance, one leg forward and the other behind you; keep knees soft, not locked.

Take the cable handle using the arm on the same side as the rear leg.

Draw in your belly button and initiate the movement with your trunk, gently draw in belly button toward your spine and rotate your trunk toward the rear leg while pulling the cable toward your shoulder.

Keep your forearm in exact alignment with the cable throughout the movement, do not let the elbow drop below or rise above the line of the cable, reach along the cable with your opposite arm as you pull.



## Benefits Of Functional Training

Functional training may lead to better muscular balance and joint stability, possibly impacting the number of injuries sustained and individual's performance in a sport. The benefits may arise from the use of training that emphasizes the body's natural ability to move in three anatomical planes of motion. In comparison, though machines can often be safer to use, they restrict movements to a single plane of motion, which is an unnatural form of movement for the body and may potentially lead to faulty movement patterns or injury.

## Combining The Inner And Outer Unit

Outer unit muscles are like the engine in your car and the inner unit muscles are like the suspension system and the bolts that hold the frame together and the wheels on; it does not matter how strong your engine is if your frame breaks your wheels will fall off! By assuring that your brain is working properly with your inner unit and that your inner and outer units work synergistically together you can safely move into a primal pattern exercises.

## Functional Training With Cable Machines

Cable machines, also known as pulley machines, are large upright machines, either with a single pulley, or else a pulley attached to both sides. They are extremely useful for functional training as they allow the athlete to recruit all major muscle groups while moving in multiple planes. Cable machines also provide a smooth, continuous action which reduces the need for momentum to start repetitions, provide a constant tension on the muscle, peak-contraction is possible at the top of each rep, a safe means of performing negative repetitions, and a variety of attachments that allow great flexibility in the exercises performed and body parts targeted.

Cable chops or wood choppers are one of the best core strength and functional exercises using the cables. Wood Choppers are also good functional training exercises for the core muscles. Functional training is simply a philosophy that says that the exercises that you include in your workout should prepare your body for everyday function and activity.

Our spines must move in many different directions, so it is important to perform core exercises in a variety of positions and with a variety of movements.

We are most vulnerable to injury when our body twists or rotates, so by including twisting, rotational, and lifting movements in your workout you can prepare your body for everyday activities or athletic activities.

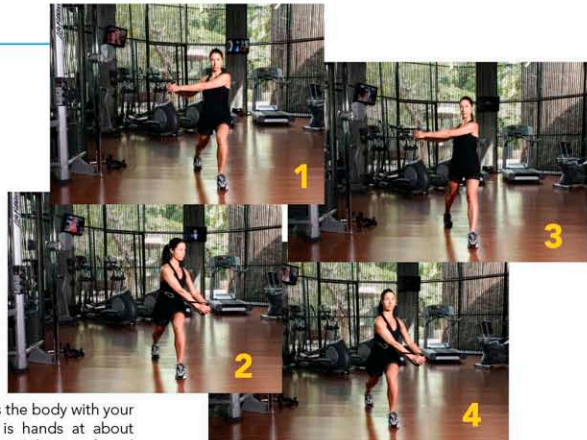
## Cable Push Patterns

Follow the same instructions as the pull cable pattern.

## Cable Woodchopper

Stand as shown with side of body in a upright lunge position to the cable stack, rope attachment on pulley or handle. Keep arms straight and abs tight. Exhale and pull the rope out in front of and across the body in an arc, as though you were chopping wood across the body with your "rope axe." Finished position is hands at about knee level, legs slightly bent weight transferred into the front leg. Complete the desired number of repetitions, ( Usually 10 – 15 ) then repeat to the other side. Make the movement explosive as you rotate down, control as you release the weight back down and hands up.

Load the machine with sufficient weight to provide moderate resistance. If you struggle to move the handle or if you can only move it slowly, the weight is too heavy.



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