

TRX Training

TRX is a clever bit of kit that allows very functional movement patterns under resistance. Its biggest fan, **Charlene Hutsebaut**, shares her favourite exercises with you.

Are you looking for an excellent, versatile and fun piece of fitness kit? The TRX suspension trainer should be your equipment of choice. Before I start gushing about this particular fitness apparatus, let me say that I am not employed by TRX, nor am I directly related to them. So, let the gushing begin!

As a personal trainer of more than twenty years, I have seen equipment of all shapes, sizes and concepts come and go. Some stick, some fade away. Does anyone remember the ab roller? Total waste of space! Or the vibrating belt machines? These may not have been effective pieces of equipment, but perhaps the upside was that they inspired some people to move.

Reasons to use TRX

When buying fitness kit, you will want value for money, durability and of course effectiveness. The TRX easily delivers on all of these. Using one as a personal trainer has opened up my exercise repertoire, especially when outside with clients. Being in a park has always been tricky when wanting to include back, biceps or core exercises, especially if the ground is soaking wet.

The nature of how the TRX functions allows for self-resisted body work. An example of doing this without equipment is a press-up, which can be performed against a bench or on the ground. A back-pulling type exercise cannot be done in the same way without equipment: the TRX allows positions where the back-pull can be performed because when a TRX is set up, the user simply pulls themselves towards its anchor (a pole, tree or playground equipment). In this way, the back muscles, arms and core can be engaged.

Use at Home, in the Park or at the Gym

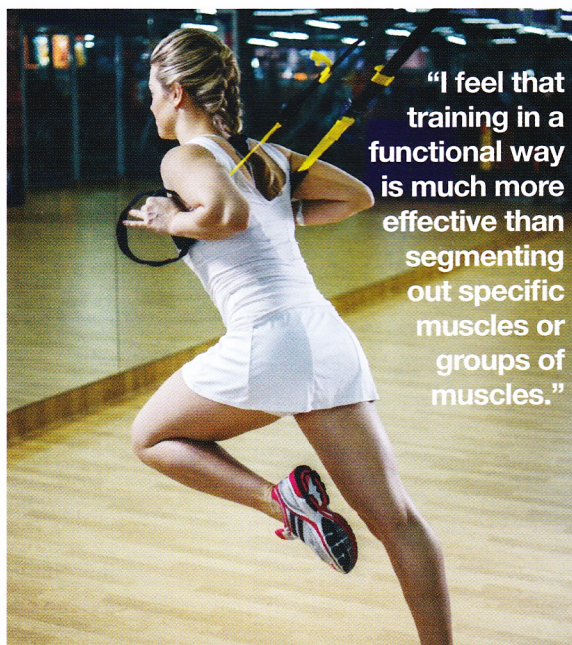
TRX comes with two different attachments. One is a loop with a

strong climbing carabiner; the other is a door stop-type pad. The former can be wrapped around a pole, tree, playground structure or anything strong enough to take more than the weight of the participant. It is always recommended to gently test the structure before doing any major moves. The latter attachment is a clever hard-type pad with a soft, protected outer surface which can be hooked at the top of a closed door: this pad lies on the other side of the door to where the participant is working. It's best to work to the outside of the door (the direction to which it closes). TRX also makes a variety of door and ceiling mounts if you have the space and strong walls to accommodate (www.trxtraining.com/shop/anchoring-accessories).

TRX Working the Myofascial Lines

In one of my previous *TSN* articles about pilates and resistance training (Aug-Sep 2012), I introduced you to the concept of myofascial lines. If you remember, I explained myofascial lines in this way: "Myofascial lines could be said to have the core area as their foundation, running through the middle of most lines." They are in fact lines of connective tissue that run through the body. I like to think of them as lines that run across muscle groups, connected by fascia (sticky, web-like stuff).

The old way of talking about



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The reasons you may want to purchase your own TRX, attend a small group training or work one-to-one with a trainer, are the following:

- Versatility - use inside or outside on a door, tree, pole or anchor.
- Core engagement - every move requires the core muscles to be engaged for stability and balance.
- Works all major body movements - flexion, extension, side lateral flexion, twisting.
- Move through all planes - frontal, sagittal, transverse.
- Ability to include movements not always possible without weights or machines.
- Functional - moves can be performed standing, seated, kneeling and lying.
- Useable for any fitness level.
- Excellent for rehab exercises.
- Realistic with any age group.
- Portable - fits in a small mesh bag, weighing under a kilo.

working muscles was to think of them as individual muscles or groups of muscles: this is still the way anatomists will explain muscles and their locations because there does need to be a baseline of understanding. Myofascial lines just bring a new view to how we can utilise our muscles effectively and efficiently. Due to the freedom of movement that TRX allows, it becomes a very functional exercise and the body can be trained according to this new principle of myofascial lines. To read more about myofascial Lines, see *Anatomy Trains* by Thomas W. Myers.

Why Work Functionally?

Many of you will have read some article or definition about functional training. My easy explanation of this is that it is similar to everyday movements. I feel that training in a functional way is much more effective than segmenting out specific muscles or groups of muscles. The functional training more readily allows our bodies to be long, lean and strong.

About the Author



Charlene Hutsebaut
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20 years' experience
in the fitness
industry. Her background
lies in sports

science and athletic therapy, with her strengths being biomechanics and anatomy. She runs her own personal training consultancy in London, www.charlenehutsebaut.com, is founder of online health and fitness membership site www.positivelyslim.ning.com and is the contributing exercise specialist for the new book, *The De-Stress Diet* www.de-stressyourlife.com, Huggies Diapers - Little Swimmers Campaign and for UK online food company www.healthysupplies.co.uk. Charlene has written for *UK Fit Pro*, *Can Fit Pro*, *Fitness Life New Zealand* and has been featured in *London*, *Fabric*, *Grove* and *Natural Health* magazines, as well as *The Daily Mail*.

My Favourite Exercises

I must say that it is difficult to narrow down my favourite TRX exercises. I love that it allows for all of the major movement patterns of the body. Anyway, here are some of my favourites:

• Chest Press

Similar in nature to an actual press-up, because of the direction one will be facing.
More functional than a lying chest press with a bar or dumbbells, because the rest of the body must work as well, thus integrating more areas.
Very good for rotator cuff, shoulder stability and core work.



• Standing Row

Allows any level of participant to move through a rowing-type move with safe shoulder joints.
Feels smooth and straightforward for any level.
Can be modified easily for advanced participants wanting a challenge.

• Lunge with Side Lateral Flexion

Works several of the myofascial lines beautifully (running from the back foot, up the front of that leg, through the hip area, across the abs to the other side of the torso, up under the arm and ending at the fingers).
Works body in flexion, extension, side lateral flexion and a twist (all major movements).



• Shoulder Flexion

Great full body plank in the air.
Excellent use of all abdominal muscles, chest, back and arms.

For more ideas on exercises, stretches and stabilisations with the TRX check out their broad range of instructional videos on their YouTube channel *TRXTraining*. (www.youtube.com/user/TRXtraining/featured).