CRAB WALK

Technical points:

Begin with the feet hip width apart, lower yourself into a full squat and place your hands on the ground behind you, facing upwards (supine) with evenly distributed weight on all 4 limbs.



[Fig 31: Crab Walk]

Lift your hips as high as you can above the ground and lengthen your head out of your shoulders (not lifting your chin, but lengthening from the crown), or lower your shoulders. As a shoulder shrug down rather than up. This activates the latissimus dorsi muscles and stabilise the shoulder joint.

Activate your core, belly button pulled in and point your fingers in the same direction as your toes, forwards.

To move first shift the body weight on 3 limbs and then take a step with one foot, placing the balls of your feet on the ground first, then the heels. To move you first need to shift the body weight; if there is weight on a limb you cannot move it without falling or jerky movements.

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[Fig 32: Crab Walk]

Allow your shoulders to freely rotate in their sockets as the hands move forward, relaxing from the shoulder every time you lift the hand off the ground. Place your hands and feet gently on the ground.

Movement should be soft and fluid. This is achieved through efficient body weight distribution.

Benefits:

Toning upper body, particularly triceps, and stabilising and mobilising the shoulder joint.

Improving posture and open the chest.

Mobilising wrists, hip and ankles

Toning and strengthening core and stability muscles in your feet, ankles, knees and hips for better balance, stability, control and general movement reducing risk of injury

Common errors and/or weaknesses to be aware of:

- Sinking head into the shoulders. It looks like the space between the ears and the shoulders is smaller. Use the piece of string to pull or lift the head out of the shoulders or lengthen the space between the ears and the shoulders. You can also think about lowering the shoulders.

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[Fig 33: Crab Walk]

- Everything else is good but hips are very low. Hips should be as high as you can whilst keeping all the other elements of the form. Compromise on hip height if the shoulders lift too high for example. Try to keep the hips about mid height all the time though. (Fig 33: CrabWalk)

- Stepping with the heels and/or not placing the toes down before taking the next step. This keeps the body weight on the arms and makes the movement inefficient; you should step with your toes first (this also helps mobilise the ankle joint).

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[Fig 34: Crab Walk]

- High impact when placing the hand down. This is common as the triceps and general upper body strength may not be able to support the weight in this position. In this case you can either work with other movements and come back to the Crab Walk later or can use the Supine Body Weight transfer exercise to strengthen or keep trying to move as you can, one step at a time, struggling for a while until you gain strength.

- Fingers not pointing the same way as the toes. This is common as the wrists can feel very painful. We don't stretch the wrists and forearms as much as other parts of the body and the position is especially painful on the inside of the wrist. In this case point your fingers in a direction you feel comfortable until they mobilise and strengthen and then slowly guide them to the desired end position, facing the same way as the toes.

  When fingers point a different way there is also less shoulder stability. You will notice the shoulders lifting.

Notes:

When going uphill use/tense the hamstrings to pull your body forward or up inclines. Use them as biceps.

You can perform the Crab Walk forward, backwards as well as to the side.

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