ANIMAL FLOW

L1

WORKSHOP

STUDENT MANUAL

ANIMAL FLOW®

LEVEL ONE WORKSHOP STUDENT MANUAL

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WELCOME FROM MIKE FITCH

Welcome to the Animal Flow® Level 1 Workshop!
Over the next two days, our primary goal is to impart an understanding of the Pillars and Components that make up the Animal Flow® program. Throughout the workshop, we'll emphasize the underlying concepts in this system including kinetic chains, fascial lines, functional movement, and the diverse benefits of quadrupedal exercises. We will provide insight into the purpose and intention of each movement in order to help you better apply them within your practice or profession.

My inspiration for creating this practice arose from the time I've spent with different bodyweight training disciplines inclusive of gymnastics, parkour, breakdancing, and hand balancing. While I thoroughly enjoyed these movement styles, I wanted to create a program that was easily digestible and applicable to the average person's fitness training. I leaned on principles from these bodyweight practices along with my own years of experience in the fitness industry to create what I hoped would help improve the function and resilience of the "human animal" while helping participants become better and more connected movers.

I by no means take credit for inventing the use of animal locomotion patterns or the concept of Flow itself. Such parallels exist between movement modalities extending back thousands of years: They are a testament to the exploration of the human body as an incredible tool. While there are some visual similarities to practices such as Yoga and Capoeira, those are not among the systems I studied. As such, the specific elements and the ways in which we teach and apply the movements are quite different.

It is important to keep in mind that Animal Flow® is a versatile practice that can be used however it best serves you: It is what you choose to make of it. At the end of two days, you'll have learned how to execute the techniques, how to identify when regressions/progressions are needed, how to coach and Call Out to others, and where to begin your practice.

It is a pleasure to invite you to our global community and I hope you'll enjoy this style of training as much as I do.
Let's get started!

MIKE FITCH
Creator, Animal Flow

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO ANIMAL FLOW

WHAT IS ANIMAL FLOW®?

At its very core, Animal Flow is a system that bridges the gap between all other physical practices, in pursuit of previously unknown levels of physical proficiency. It is built on four pillars: Connection, Performance, Resilience, and Community.

PILLAR #1: CONNECTION

The most common misconception is that Animal Flow is about acting like animals. While there is an animal component in Animal Flow, the overall goal of the system is to improve the connection, communication, and function of the human animal. Being ground-based facilitates the process of making the experience someone has in their human body a much better one. When a person's hands and feet are in contact with the ground, discovering new motor tasks, their attention is immediately directed inward to their body. As such, we can use "connection" interchangeably with "communication" as we are inviting them back into their bodies and encouraging them to take ownership for how they move their vessel through space. Ultimately, this ability to connect will drive up mindfulness, cognition, and proprioception.

PILLAR #2: PERFORMANCE

When looking at the demands of any sport or activity, it is beneficial to look at the physical requirements that may be needed: We can describe these necessary attributes as "biomotor abilities" which essentially means physical abilities. A few that may come to mind are strength, power, coordination, balance, speed, endurance, flexibility, mobility. Most individuals will preferentially bias one or two of the abilities listed when solely focused on a sport or type of practice. For example, we may have a soccer player who works on their ability to have speed and endurance, a weightlifter who chooses to focus on strength and power, or a yoga practitioner who exhibits the abilities of flexibility and balance. If we then consider the concept of building a more complete and high-functioning human animal, it encourages us to look at all the biomotor abilities that may not be addressed. In this case, can we make the soccer player stronger and more coordinated, the yogi more dynamic (speed/power), and the weightlifter more pliable (mobile/flexible). Animal Flow was designed as a way to fill in the gaps in one's training; we use it as an adhesive to pull the biomotor abilities together.

PILLAR #3: RESILIENCE

The human body is an adaptation machine. It can recover from or adjust easily to change, is constantly figuring out ways to become more efficient at any consistent task and can endure repetitive stressors. Being adaptive in this fashion allows us to build our capacity for sports, workouts, and life alike. That said, the stressors must be consistent, not too much and not too little, and most importantly, they have to be specific. This law of specificity is also know as the *SAID* principle.

SAID (Specific Adaptations to Imposed Demands) is the basic principle behind all exercise: It states that the type of exercise stimulus (the stressors) placed on the body will determine the expected physiological outcome. Every system in the body (e.g neural, endocrine, muscular, skeletal, etc) will respond and adapt to the specific physical demands applied. Keep in mind, however, that this repetitive stress could very easily lead to a negative scenario within the musculoskeletal system over time if an individual performs the same movements, in the same ***planes of motion***, at the same joint positions, day after day.

In order to make our joints, muscle and connective tissue more resilient with the aim of potentially lessening the likelihood of injuries, we add variety. To do so, we break the patterns of repetitive stress in singular directions and add good mechanical stressors to the tissues of the body, in all directions, and at as many joint angles as possible. This is where Animal Flow is so advantageous for the resilience of the body as it imposes variable and novel loads in a quadrupedal position, encouraging all tissues to withstand stressors, bounce back, and perform longer. This ability to endure, without injury or degradation, is resilience.

PILLAR #4: COMMUNITY

Humans are wired to connect with each other and doing so can positively impact every aspect of health inclusive of improving the odds of survival when compared to social isolation. From the very first Animal Flow class in 2010, it became clear that the participants were forming a bond around their shared experience. As classes continued, Flowists were not only showing up for the movement but also to support, connect with, and positively challenge each other. Thanks in part to this, the cultivation of community was built on the concept of creating a space where everyone could feel safe to learn- and occasionally, fail. This self-focused practice benefits from being in the supportive company of others also seeking and moving towards a better understanding of their bodies. Over the past decade, the AF community has grown to a global scale spanning 42 countries and has a strong family dynamic. If this is your first experience with Animal Flow, welcome to the family.

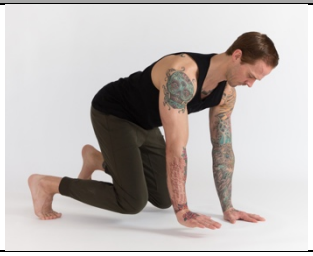
THE SIX COMPONENTS OF ANIMAL FLOW

Animal Flow includes a wide range of exercises and movement combinations that are grouped into Six Components, each designed to elicit specific results. The Six Components can be mixed and matched in many ways, allowing you to incorporate one, some, or all of them in your workouts. The six components include:

COMPONENT 1: WRIST MOBILIZATIONS	
	*WRIST MOBILIZATIONS* are simple yet effective movements used to prepare the hands and wrists for the challenges of Animal Flow. Healthy wrists are so important to the success of both novice and experienced Flowists, that it's always our first component.

Wrist Mobilizations:

- are mobility drills performed before, during, and after Animal Flow practice
- are primarily passive exercises
- may increase the flow of blood, oxygen and nutrients to the soft tissue in and around the wrists
- provide an opportunity to gauge any pain, discomfort or restrictions that may be present; and
- prepare the wrists for the demands of quadrupedal movement, and minimize the development of performance-reducing inflammation and discomfort.

COMPONENT 2: ACTIVATIONS	
	*ACTIVATIONS* are a way of "waking up" the body and encouraging it to communicate. The Animal Flow practice uses two activation positions, Beast and Crab, which are foundational forms in the overall program.

Activations are static/isometric holds that are systematically progressed by decreasing the points of contact with the ground.

These positions focus on "setting the system" for movement. They can be used to gather information or assess the body's global stability. Not only are they great assessment tools, but also can be used as part of a corrective exercise strategy. You'll notice these holds are intimately linked with the muscular subsystems and chains that make movement possible.

COMPONENT 3: FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES (FSS)	
	*FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES* are full body stretches that begin in a base animal position, then move through various ranges of motion. The goal of the FSSs is to encourage a combination of flexibility and stability (i.e. mobility) throughout the body's many articulations.

You'll find that the FSSs are not intended to be completely passive, as the goal is to create "strength through motion." However, you can hold them as an isometric position, or dynamically move into and out of them. FSSs can also be integrated into your flow design. Examples include: *APE REACH*, *CRAB REACH*, and *SCORPION REACH*.

COMPONENT 4: TRAVELING FORMS	
	*TRAVELING FORMS* are our animal locomotion movements. They represent the way we mimic animals to improve the function of the 'Human Animal'. We group these forms into the ABCs of animal movements: Ape, Beast, and Crab, along with their variations.

Although you may have experienced animal movements before, in Animal Flow they are taught with extremely precise parameters in order to improve upon the biomechanics of the human body.

The Traveling Forms are extremely versatile in their applications. They can be used as warm-ups, cool downs, metabolic conditioning, active rest, neural re-patterning, and more.

COMPONENT 5: SWITCHES AND TRANSITIONS (S&T)	
	*SWITCHES AND TRANSITIONS (S&T)* make up the bulk of the "flow" in the Animal Flow practice. These are dynamic movements that can be linked together to form endless combinations or can stand alone as a powerful exercise or drill.

In the Level 1 workshop, you'll learn each of the four categories of S&Ts, as well as their variations. The four categories are *UNDERSWITCH*, *SIDE KICKTHROUGH*, *SCORPION* and *FRONT KICKTHROUGH*.

COMPONENT 6: FLOWS	
	*FLOWS* are where all of the Animal Flow components come together. Flows can be performed in many ways, but there are 3 main styles: Choreographed, Call-Outs, and Free Flow. The potential combinations within each style are almost endless. In Level 1, flows are comprised of movements from the *FSS* and *S&T* components.

- A **Choreographed Flow** is designed with the intention of practicing it in order to become as seamless and fluid as possible. This would be similar to a dance or gymnastics routine.
- A **Freestyle Call Out** has the Instructor (or a fellow practitioner) calling out moves one after the other, while the Flowist follows along in real time. The focus in this case is on reaction time and precision. This can be very similar to a game of "Simon Says." Performing Call Outs correctly relies heavily on having a strong command of the Animal Flow Language which will be emphasized throughout the Level 1 course.

- **Free Flow** is just what it sounds like - you are free to practice a flow without pre-planning or listening to a call out. Your focus may vary depending on your goals that day - endurance, creativity, movement meditation, fluidity, improving the technical execution of the moves, and more.

At the end of Day 2, you will learn a choreographed flow, known as “The Beast Flow.” This flow is just one example of the infinite possibilities in flow design. It is a blueprint to show you how the FSS and S&T pieces can fit together. Understanding the correct way to design flows will be part of your test out and essential to you becoming an Animal Flow Certified Instructor.

CHAPTER 2

THE SCIENCE OF ANIMAL FLOW

The Animal Flow program certainly evokes a sense of fun and creativity, but it is still at its heart based solidly in science. It draws upon multiple, proven concepts within exercise science and kinesiology to formulate its overall approach to fitness and movement. The program is structured around several factors that contribute to its grounding in scientific research: It is entirely bodyweight training based, using closed-chain exercises to achieve goals; it emphasizes multi-planar and functional movement focused on anatomical subsystems; it is designed to integrate into a range of fitness programs and resistance training models; and it provides for assessment, regression, and progression with each step.

The specific exercises that comprise Animal Flow are themselves highly effective examples of various exercise modalities designed to increase mobility, flexibility, stability, power, endurance, skills, and neuromuscular development. Every movement included in the program has a specific function.

THE HUMAN BODY AND MOVEMENT

Before we dive into the specifics of Animal Flow and its benefits for the human system, it's relevant to begin with our view of the body.
If you've spent time studying anatomy in some form, then it's likely that you've been exposed (at the very least in the earliest stages of study) to a compartmentalized view of the human body. In this view, the skeletal system provides the foundations and scaffolding that supports the many various other systems (such as the muscular, circulatory, and respiratory systems) that contribute to human movement.

There is much that we don't know about the human body, yet literature now abounds in support of an integrated system approach, where no process or operation occurs in isolation. While it can be helpful to take a simplistic approach by looking at individual muscles and joints, it's vital to remember that we are infinitely more complex and integrated machines.

Animal Flow is comprised wholly of multi-joint movements that are based on the premise of known integrated patterns in the body. With that said, each movement is only as good as the sum of its parts.

MUSCLE SYNERGIES AND FASCIA

Muscle Synergies

In order to create movement, the Central Nervous System optimizes the selection of muscle synergies, not isolated muscles. Examples of these muscle synergies of movement, can be described as "global muscular systems" (NASM Corrective Exercise).

The global muscular systems are responsible predominately for movement and consist of superficial musculature that originate from the pelvis to the rib cage, the lower extremities, or both. Exercises that focus on working these groups through the entire sling provide excellent benefits for improving the way we walk, run, and move (Liebension 2004; Pool-Goudzwaard 1998).

The movement system muscles have been broken down and described as force-couples, working in four distinct subsystems (NASM):

- ***Deep Longitudinal***
- ***Anterior Oblique***
- ***Posterior Oblique***
- ***Lateral Subsystem***

These subsystems are intimately linked with the global flexion and extension synergies chains of the human body. These chains are typically known as the:

- ***Anterior (flexion) Chain***
- ***Posterior (extensor) Chain***

What is the Anterior/Flexion Chain?
Including the pectorals, abdominal musculature, hip flexors and quadriceps, the Flexion (or Anterior) Chain is responsible for spinal and hip flexion, assists to create pelvic stability, and eccentrically decelerates extension of the spine and hip.
What is the Posterior/Extensor Chain?
A direct counterpart to the Flexion Chain, the Extensor (or Posterior) Chain includes the spinal erectors, trapezius, posterior deltoids, gluteals, hamstrings and calves. This chain plays a critical role in keeping our bodies in their upright postures by facilitating hip and spine extension.

What is the Anterior Oblique Sling?

The Anterior Oblique Sling helps to create stability through the spine and hip, while also acting as a means of force transmission between the upper and lower limbs. It also opposes the Posterior Oblique Sling by decelerating the movements of spinal extension and rotation.

- Obliques
- Adductors
- Rectus abdominis
- Pectoralis major
- Serratus anterior

What is the Posterior Oblique Sling?

The Posterior Oblique Sling provides opposition to the flexion and rotation created through the body by the Anterior Oblique Sling. Movements that require us to pull and rotate are informed by the Posterior Oblique Sling, while spinal flexion, hip flexion, as well as hip internal rotation and adduction, are all decelerated by it.

- Gluteals
- Thoracolumbar fascia
- Contralateral latissimus dorsi
- Lower trapezius

What is the Lateral Subsystem?

Ever wondered how you manage to keep your hips steady when you walk up a flight of steps? That's the Lateral Subsystem. Largely responsible for stabilizing the pelvis and spine, the Lateral Subsystem plays a critical role in gait and single-leg movement.

- Gluteus medius
- Adductors
- Tensor fascia latae
- Contralateral quadratus lumborum

What is the Deep Longitudinal Subsystem?
This particular subsystem is all about stabilizing the body longitudinally, between the foot and ankle, and the torso, in both directions. - Erector spinae - Thoracolumbar fascia - Sacrotuberous ligament - Bicep femoris

While the explanations above provide a succinct and compartmentalized way to view muscle synergies, it's important to remember that all subsystems and chains contribute to all movement to varying degrees.

Fascia

The movement capabilities of the human body do not rely on the muscular systems alone. These subsystems would not be able to properly do their job without the vital role that fascia plays.

Remember that compartmentalized view of the human body that we mentioned before, with the skeleton acting like a continuous compression structure, similar to that of a house? We now understand that to be a somewhat limited perspective. Thanks largely in part to fascia, our bodies are tension-dependent structures – we're much more like a mobile but stable tensegrity ('tension' and 'integrity') model than the immovable foundations of a house. We're an intricate balance of tension and compression, with the fascia and muscles working together to suspend the skeleton. This means that rather than our bones holding everything up, they actually 'float' inside the soft tissue, resulting in our bodies acting to distribute strain across the entire structure.

Fascia is a type of soft tissue, but also an entire system that forms a whole-body, continuous three-dimensional matrix of structural support around our organs, muscles, joints, bones and nerves. This multidirectional, multidimensional fascial arrangement is also what allows us to move in multiple directions.

You can think of this continuous fascial net as our 'soft skeleton'.

> "…imagine a silvery-white material, flexible and sturdy in equal measure – a substance that surrounds and penetrates every muscle, coats every bone, covers every organ, and envelops every nerve. Fascia keeps everything separate yet interconnected at the same time." (Lesondak 2017).

To gain a visual image of how fascia is connected: picture the film or wrap that you cover your food up with when it goes into the refrigerator. What happens when the two sides accidently touch? It can be an impossible task trying to pull this stuff apart when those two surfaces stick to each other. This wrap is also very similar in principle to *fascia* within the body.

Lesondak, in his book *Fascia: What it is and why it matters* identifies four categories of fascia based on location.

1. **Superficial fascia**. This is the layer that sits between our skin and muscle, facilitating the 'slide and glide' action between the two. Superficial fascia plays a role in managing our body temperature, our circulation, and waste product removal (via the lymphatic system).
2. **Deep fascia**. This is the layer that is responsible for the transmission of myofascial force. The deep fascia is a "dense, well-organized fibrous layer that covers muscles" and helps to disperse muscular tension.
3. **Meningeal fascia** is the fascia that envelops the brain and nervous system.
4. **Visceral fascia** surrounds the heart, lungs, and organs in the abdominal cavity.

Fascia is incredibly important for health, movement, and athletic performance. Some of the most important points include:

- ✓ **Stress reduction**: Fascia helps reduce stress in a particular muscle, joint or bone, by spreading forces across the body.
- ✓ **Energy conservation**: Fascia also helps to conserve energy. By stretching and loading (like an elastic band) it helps harness momentum created from movement, so rather than using energy wastefully, energy can in effect be recycled thanks to the elastic properties of fascia.
- ✓ **Communication and reaction time**: Research suggests that connective tissue like fascia has a large proprioceptive input to the nervous system, i.e. it is sensitive and communicates! Indeed there may be up to 10 times more proprioceptors in fascia than in muscle (Stecco et al 2010). Proprioceptors effectively provide input to the CNS, which in turn provides information about what positions the joints are in, how fast the joints are moving, and how much stress or tension the joints are experiencing.

Therefore, the fascial matrix which covers the entire body helps us react to our environment faster than the conscious mind can respond.

Combining Muscular Subsystems and Fascia

Thomas Myers provides an excellent overview of fascia in his book Anatomy Trains (Myers 2001). He detailed a network of fascial lines that run in various directions, connecting the entire body. From an anatomical perspective, the muscular subsystems and chains described above also have distinct congruencies with the fascial lines he proposed.

The chart below demonstrates how Myers' fascial lines are similar to each of the muscular subsystems.

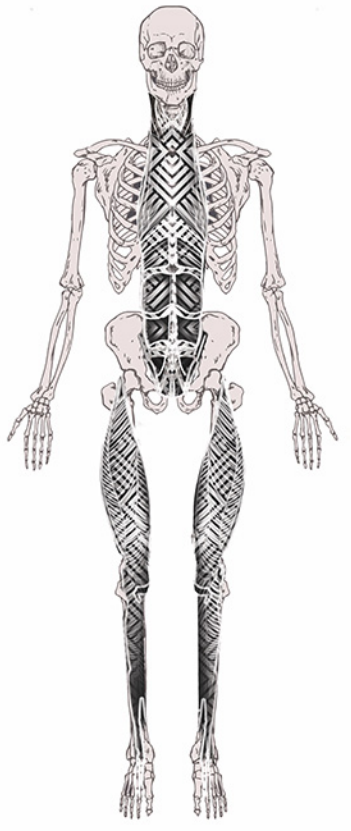
MUSCULAR SUBSYSTEMS	MYERS' FASCIAL LINES
Flexion Chain	Superficial Front Line
Posterior Chain	Superficial Back Line
Posterior Oblique Sling	Back Functional Line
Anterior Oblique Sling	Front Functional Line
Lateral Subsystem	Lateral Line

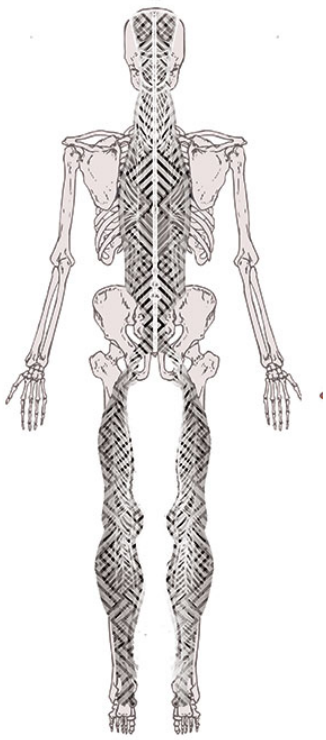
Both the muscular subsystems and fascial networks work simultaneously to produce complex movements that are effective and efficient, providing proprioceptive information and distributing/dissipating forces. Throughout the Animal Flow workshop, these concepts will be a staple part of the understanding and application of the AF movements.

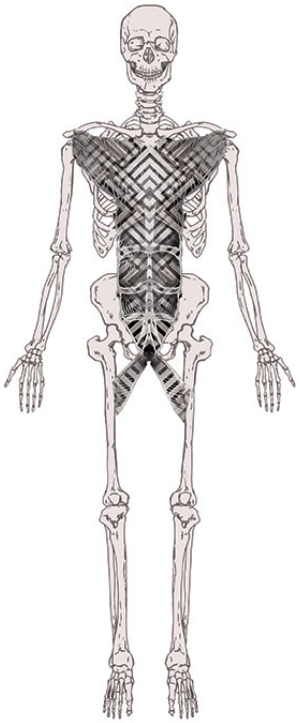
Over the course of the workshop, as you work through the movements covered in Chapter 3, consider each movement critically and try to identify the primary subsystem/fascial line that is emphasized. The following pages visually highlight the relationship between the fascia (as defined by Myers' Anatomy Trains), muscle synergies, and a movement from the Animal Flow library.

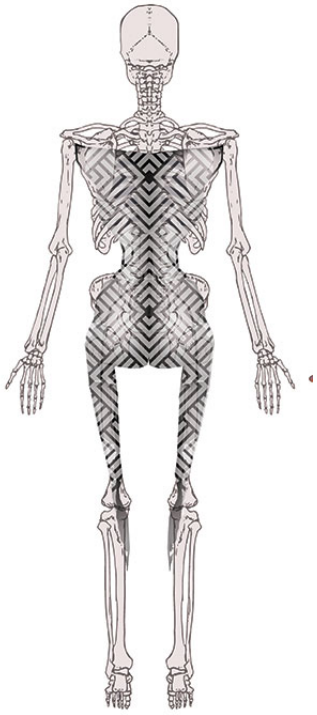
FASCIA, MUSCLE SYNERGIES, AND ANIMAL FLOW

In the diagrams below, we've displayed representations of the fascial lines (skeleton figures on left) and muscle synergies (figures in center), along with some sample corresponding Animal Flow movement that emphasises the line/chain/sling.

Superficial Front Line	Flexion Chain	AF Examples
		**STATIC BEAST**  **FRONT KICKTHROUGH** 

Superficial Back Line	Extension Chain	AF Examples
		**WAVE UNLOAD**  **STATIC CRAB** 

Front Functional Line	Anterior Oblique Sling	AF Examples
		**SIDE KICKTHROUGH**  **CONTRALATERAL BEAST ACTIVATION (LIMB LIFT)** 

Back Functional Line	Posterior Oblique Sling	AF Examples
		**FRONT STEP**  **CONTRALATERAL CRAB ACTIVATION (LIMB LIFT)** 

Lateral Line	Lateral Subsystem	AF Examples
		**UNDERSWITCH**  **LATERAL APE (V3)** 

BENEFITS OF QUADRUPEDAL MOVEMENT

The quadruped position, with both hands and both feet on the ground, is the base position for Animal Flow. There is growing evidence supporting the efficacy of movement based around this position.

> "The coordination between arms and legs during human locomotion shares many features with that in quadrupeds, including reliance on propriospinal connections." (Sylos-Labini 2014).

Crawling

Learning to crawl plays an important role in our early neurodevelopmental stages. A baby experiences the process of locomotion through both reptilian and mammalian crawling phases. These phases are incredibly important for developing neural coordination, while simultaneously building muscle synergies that will be the foundation for bipedal gait.

Crawling benefits include:

- ✓ Stimulating and organizing neurons to help cognitive processes like comprehension, concentration and memory
- ✓ Establishing hand/eye coordination important for reading, writing and sports activities
- ✓ Conditioning binocular vision, i.e. looking off into the distance and then back at the hands
- ✓ Strengthening both the left and right side of the brain by practicing cross-lateral movement, which allows increased communication between the two sides of the brain and enhancing learning

The benefits of quadrupedal movement are not just reserved for the young.

Lee Burton and Gray Cook (2012), developers of the Functional Movement Screen (FMS), emphasize the importance of what they call "primitive movement patterns," (i.e. rolling, pushing, quadruped, and crawling) in providing a strong foundation for developing effective functional movement. Referencing the long-standing usage of primitive patterns in physical therapy practices, they recommend that fitness professionals utilize these patterns to identify problem areas, and in particular to focus

on the stabilizers, rather than prime movers. Burton and Cook's primitive patterns are similar to some of the positions utilized in Animal Flow. For example, the Static Beast Activations are used to identify asymmetries and imbalances in one's rotary stability system.

There is much support regarding the benefits of stabilizing the body in a quadrupedal form; partly due to the closed-chain nature of the position as well as the requirement to actively engage the body's core. Research into the benefits of more complex quadrupedal movements for adults is still a newer field. There has, however, been at least one peer-reviewed published study documenting the cognitive benefits for adults using quadrupedal movement training (QMT). This study has specifically used Animal Flow movements for its four-week quadrupedal training program for participants.

The study, "*Quadrupedal movement training improves markers of cognition and joint repositioning,*" (Matthews et al, 2016) found the following conclusion:

> Performance of a novel, progressive, and challenging task, requiring the coordination of all 4 limbs, has a beneficial impact on cognitive flexibility, and in joint reposition sense, although only at the specific joint angle directly targeted by the training. The findings are consistent with other studies showing improvements in executive function and joint reposition sense following physical activity.

A second study also utilised Animal Flow movements for its eight-week quadrupedal training program to assess the impact of QMT on functional movement, dynamic balance, range of motion, and upper body strength and endurance.

The study, "*The Effects of a Novel Quadrupedal Movement Training Program on Functional Movement, Range of Motion, Muscular Strength, and Endurance*," (Buxton et al, 2020) came the following conclusions:

> The QMT group showed significantly greater improvements than the [control] group in FMS composite score, FMS advanced movements, and fundamental stability, along with hip flexion, hip lateral rotation, and shoulder extension Our results indicate that QMT can improve FMS scores and various active joint ranges of motion. Quadrupedal movement training is a viable alternative form of training to improve whole-body stabilization and flexibility.

**The full articles are available at animalflow.com > About > Science of AF*

Communication

Communication is one of the central benefits of the Animal Flow practice. This includes not only the communication that one has consciously with their body (sense of self/ spatial awareness) but also the interconnected communication throughout the human movement system (nervous, muscular and skeletal).

Proprioception

One of the ways that the body communicates with itself to produce safe movement is by relying on feedback from receptors that are constantly gathering information about both the internal body as well as the external environment. This information is considered proprioception.

Here's a useful description of proprioception from NASM:

> Proprioception is one form of sensory (afferent) information that uses mechanoreceptors (from cutaneous, muscle, tendon, and joint receptors) to provide information about static and dynamic positions, movements, and sensations related to muscle force and movement. Lephart defines proprioception as the cumulative neural input from sensory afferents to the central nervous system. This vital information ensures optimum motor behavior and neuromuscular efficiency. This afferent information is delivered to different levels of motor control within the central nervous system to use in monitoring and manipulating movement (NASM Essentials of Corrective Exercise).

Interlimb neural coupling

It may seem strange, but there's a fascinating neural connection that exists between your arms and your legs. If you've spent any time in a CrossFit box, it's likely that you've seen someone performing handstand walks, their legs moving in opposition to their arms. This example is interlimb neural coupling in action. Why does this happen?

In the 2016 paper titled *Neuromechanical interactions between the limbs during human locomotion: an evolutionary perspective with translation to rehabilitation*, Zehr et al. offer this:

> "Evidence accumulated in humans suggests that the basic neural elements controlling and coupling the arms and legs during coordinated rhythmic movements are similar to those in habitually quadrupedal animals."

It's believed that these shared neural networks known as central pattern generators have remained relatively untouched by evolution and are commonly shared by animals of all kinds. (Geurin 2013.)

Next time you're walking, take notice of how your arms move unconsciously, or go for a run and see how your leg turnover increases if you pump your arms faster – both of these are examples of the interconnected nature of the upper and lower extremities.

Sensory Information

Both the feet and hands have an incredibly high number of sensory receptors. This makes for a proprioceptively rich environment when the hands and feet are in contact with the ground, as in quadruped. But the information feed doesn't just stop there. As mentioned above, there are mechanoreceptors in muscle, tendon and joints that are sensitive to load. In the quadrupedal position, almost every articulation and its corresponding soft tissue is loaded by the body's own weight, as it resists the downward pull of gravity.

All of this information sets the stage for the body to communicate on a very high level. The hips must speak to the shoulders, through the spine, out to the limbs and vice versa.

This communication advantage is further explained in the concept of Closed-Chain Exercise

Vestibular perception

In addition, once you get into the practice of Animal Flow, you'll note that there are plenty of opportunities for repetitive rotations through movements such as Underswitches and Full Scorpions. For some new Flowists, repetitive rotary movements can induce dizziness, but the great news is that long-term training could possibly result in adaptations to the vestibular system. These include possible uncoupling of reflex and perception when exposed to a vestibular stimulus, and even changes in brain matter that correlates with vertigo resistance. (Nigmatullina et al. 2015).

Closed Chain Exercises

All movements within Animal Flow are closed-chain exercises, which means that limbs connect to the ground or another object in a constant, fixed position, and resistance is created by pushing or pulling against it, moving the body, rather than the object.

Closed-chain exercises can lead to greater motor unit activation and synchronization (NASM 2012), and controlled studies have documented enhanced performance when utilizing closed-chain form of weight training compared to open-chain (Augustsson et al 1998; Brindle 2006). The biomechanics of closed-chain exercises mean that multiple joints and multiple muscle groups are worked at once, making them a "functional" form of exercise likely to produce superior results. The multiple joint and muscle action is considered more functional because real-life daily activities and sports activities tend to require utilization of multiple muscles, rather than isolated muscles and joint actions.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF ANIMAL FLOW

Animal Flow is a truly 100% bodyweight-training program, which requires no equipment and utilizes only the individual's own bodyweight and gravity as resistance. Bodyweight training in general has long been accepted as an effective means of exercise, with numerous studies demonstrating that it is equal to or better than other forms of exercise (Harman et al 2008; McRae et al; NASM 2012; Ozer et al).

Multi-planar movements

Bodyweight training also includes multi-planar aspects that produce greater kinesthetic awareness (NASM 2012) and are functional in nature.

The benefits of multi-planar training are closely related to those described with closed-chain exercises. Just as with closed-chain exercises, the goal with multi-planar training is to utilize the entire body to move and/or stabilize instead of working an isolated muscle. Most day-to-day activities and resistance training programs are sagittal plane dominant. The lack of training in the transverse plane can lead to more injuries resulting from rotations and/or pattern overload, making it even more important to pay more attention to this area.

By involving all of the major muscle groups, multi-planar training provides a balanced training approach that helps increase overall function and decreases the risk of injury. As the movements are made more complex, the CNS is stimulated to create and refine motor engrams applicable to sport and life making it a particularly functional form of training (Quelch 2007). Going even farther, tri-planar movement, which incorporates all three of the sagittal, frontal, and transverse planes of motion, is considered a particularly progressive form of fitness training (Quelch 2007).

Animal Flow aims to engage in these complex, multi-planar movement patterns through the combination of movements, many of which are already multi-planar on their own, into longer "flows," where the body is constantly changing direction, tempo, and plane. Multi-planar, functional exercise attempts to reproduce the movements that the kinetic chain undergoes during normal activities of daily life and sport.

Leverage

The ability to regress or progress moves to meet the needs of individual participants without needing any additional equipment is an important component of Animal Flow. As with all bodyweight training disciplines, Animal Flow employs the concept of leverage as one of the primary means of increasing or decreasing the difficulty of specific moves. It is a basic tenant of bodyweight training that changes in body position

– i.e. leverage - have a direct and significant impact on the amount of force production, muscular activation, and myoelectrical activity (Cogley et al; Garcia Masso et al). A number of studies have used analysis of push-up position variations to measure how something as simple as hand position can significantly influence muscle activity (Gouvali and Boudolos 2005; Suprak et al 2011).

Understanding the role of leverage in affecting the requirements and results of any given exercise is integral to the Animal Flow® program; thus, much time is spent reviewing highly specific body positions for each movement. Emphasis is placed on understanding how altering body positions including hand placement, foot placement, and degrees of angles can make a move more or less difficult for a participant.

Ground Reaction Forces

"For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction." This is Newton's 3rd Law of Motion. Regardless of whether you're standing still or jumping up and down, you're dealing with ground reaction force – the reciprocal force relationship that is being exerted on, and by your body at all times. For every pound or kilogram of force that you express down into the ground, the same amount of force is being experienced by your system. In Animal Flow, we use these ground reaction forces to our advantage, helping us distribute strain, develop strength and experience healthy stress as a result of the neuromuscular response to press away from the ground. This mechanism occurs when we find ourselves fighting gravity while in a quadrupedal position.

CHAPTER 3

THE SIX COMPONENTS

WRIST MOBILIZATIONS

WRIST ROLLS - WRIST WAVES - LATERAL WRIST
WRIST ROCKS - MAGNETIC WRISTS - WRIST RELIEF

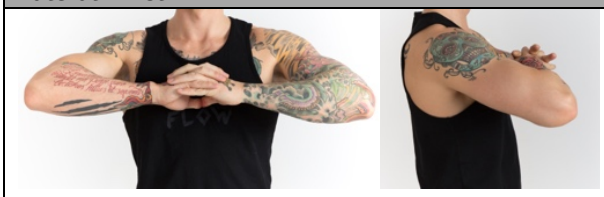
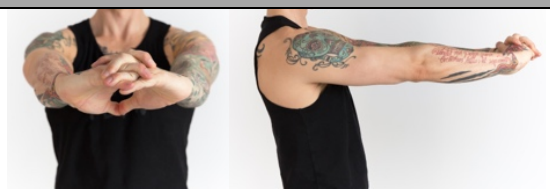
Wrist Rolls

- Clasp hands together at chest height, fingers intertwined
- Roll one hand over the top of the other, taking the top hand into wrist flexion and pronation while the base hand moves into wrist extension and supination
- Rotate the hands until the base hand repositions as the top hand
- Continue this pattern for 30 – 60 seconds
- Change direction for an additional 30 – 60 seconds.

Wrist Waves

- Interlace fingers at chest height, palms down and elbows directly out to the sides
- Initiate the movement by lifting one elbow
- Allow the elbow lift to transfer into flexion at the same side wrist, lifting it as the elbow drops down. The opposite wrist will be in extension
- Allow the lift of the wrist to transfer through the knuckles and into the opposite hand
- The opposite wrist lifts into flexion and the wave continues to lift the elbow
- Continue this pattern for 30 – 60 seconds
- Change direction for an additional 30 – 60 seconds.

Lateral Wrist

- Interlace fingers at chest height, palms down and elbows directly out to the sides
- Drive the thumbs together, extending the arms directly in front
- Fingers stay clasped, palms stay down throughout movement, allowing lateral aspect of wrist to open
- Return to start position and repeat for 30 – 60 seconds.

Wrist Rocks – Palms Up


- In a kneeling position, place the backs of your hands in contact with the ground, elbows straight, shoulders in front of the wrists
- Maintaining full contact with the back of the hands, gently rock backwards, allowing the shoulders to move behind the wrists, intensifying the stretch sensation through the forearm extensors
- Return to start position and repeat for 30 – 60 seconds.

Wrist Rocks – Palms Down


- In a kneeling position, place the palms of your hands in contact with the ground, elbows straight, shoulders in front of the wrists. Fingers point towards knees, thumbs out to the side.
- Maintaining full contact with the palms and fingers, gently rock backwards, allowing the shoulders to move behind the wrists, intensifying the stretch sensation through the forearm flexors
- Return to start position and repeat for 30 – 60 seconds.

Magnetic Wrists

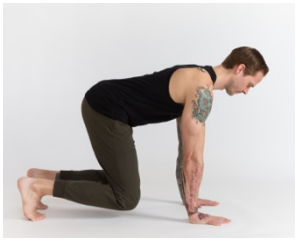
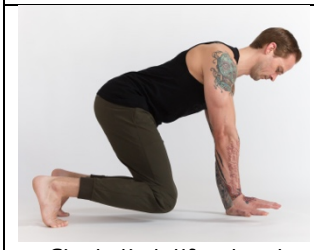
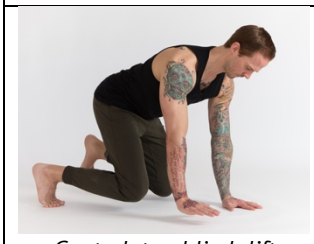
- Bring the hands up to shoulder height, base of the hands and wrists touching, wrists and fingers extended
- Begin to pronate the forearms bringing the base of the thumbs together, allowing them to transition through the hands
- Forearms pronate further, transferring contact to the medial aspect of the wrists
- Continuing the path of pronation, wrists move into flexion, transferring contact to the backs of the hands
- Forearms begin to supinate as the hands pass between the arms and chest, transferring from the backs of the hands to the lateral aspect of the wrists, and then back to the start position
- Continue this pattern for 30 – 60 seconds
- Change direction for an additional 30 – 60 seconds.

Wrist Relief

- Press the backs of the hands and fingers together at around umbilicus height
- Flex the elbows and draw the hands up to elbow height or above
- Maintain full contact with the backs of the hands as the elbows peel down, increasing the degree of flexion at the wrist
- Can be performed as a dynamic or static mobilization. If performing dynamically, return the hands to the start position and repeat the movement for 30 – 60 seconds. If performing statically, hold for 30 – 60 seconds.

ACTIVATIONS
STATIC BEAST ACTIVATIONS

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
STATIC BEAST	
 *Static Beast*	- Hands shoulder width, fingers forward - Knees and feet shoulder width - Knees in front of hip line but not in front of umbilicus - Ankles dorsiflexed, toes tucked - Spine neutral - Scapulae set at midpoint - Arms externally rotated - Eyes down, neck long, mouth closed, jaw relaxed, tongue on the roof of the mouth - Knees 1 inch/2-3 cm off floor.
LIMB LIFTS	
 *Single limb lift – foot*	- Set Static Beast - Maintaining perfect Beast alignment, lift the lower leg high enough to slide a piece of paper under the toes - Keep the ankle in dorsiflexion, toes in extension.
 *Single limb lift – hand*	- Set Static Beast - Maintaining perfect Beast alignment, lift the arm high enough to slide a piece of paper under the toes - Lift from the scapula, keep the elbow straight, wrist in extension.
 *Contralateral limb lift*	- Set Static Beast - Maintaining perfect Beast alignment, lift opposing hand and foot simultaneously (as per the instructions above).

Progressions

1. 6-point contact (Crawl position)
2. 4-point contact (Static Beast)
3. 3-point contact (single limb lift – foot)
4. 3-point contact (single limb lift – hand)
5. 2-point contact (contralateral limb lift)

Common errors

In Static Beast:

- × Elbows bending
- × Feet and/or knees too wide or too narrow
- × Knees too far forward or too far back
- × Head hanging towards ground
- × Spine sinking into extension
- × Anterior pelvic tilt
- × Shoulders elevated
- × Head hanging toward ground

In Limb Lifts:

- × Any of the above
- × Body shifting or rotating
- × Knees lifting or splaying open
- × Repositioning base of support (adjusting base limbs)
- × Plantarflexing the ankle in limb lift

Test Out guidance / Notes

ACTIVATIONS

STATIC CRAB ACTIVATIONS

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
STATIC CRAB	
 *Static Crab*	- Hands shoulder width or slightly wider, externally rotated from shoulders, fingers pointing behind - Bend the knees, plant feet hip width - Hips position halfway between hands and feet - Spread toes, grip ground with feet - Depress and retract scapulae peeling hips 1 inch/2-3 cm off ground - Retract head, posteriorly tilt skull, bringing eyes up to 'the rising sun' – approx. 30 – 40 degrees above horizontal.
LIMB LIFTS	
 *Single limb lift – foot*	- Set Static Crab - Maintaining perfect Crab alignment, lift the lower leg high enough to slide a piece of paper under the foot - Keep the ankle in dorsiflexion.
 *Single limb lift – hand*	- Set Static Crab - Maintaining perfect Crab alignment, lift the arm high enough to slide a piece of paper under the hand - Lift by elevating the shoulder, keep the elbow straight, wrist in extension.
 *Contralateral limb lift*	- Set Static Crab - Maintaining perfect Beast alignment, lift opposing hand and foot simultaneously (as per the instructions above).

Progressions

1. 5-point contact (hands, feet, hips)
2. 4-point contact (Static Crab)
3. 3-point contact (single limb lift – foot)
4. 3-point contact (single limb lift – hand)
5. 2-point contact (contralateral limb lift)

Common errors

In Static Crab:

- × Elbows bending
- × Feet and/or knees too wide or too narrow
- × Hips not centred between hands
- × Head protracting
- × Eyes forward or down
- × Spine sinking into flexion
- × Posterior pelvic tilt
- × Shoulders elevated

In Limb Lifts:

- × Any of the above
- × Body shifting or rotating
- × Hips lifting or dropping
- × Repositioning base of support (adjusting base limbs)
- × Plantarflexing ankle or bending elbow in limb lift

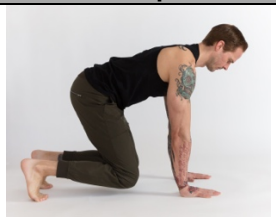
Test Out guidance / Notes

TRAVELING FORMS

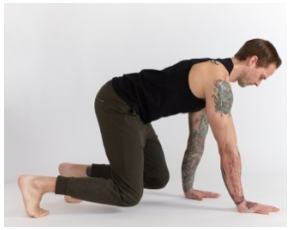
FORWARD and REVERSE TRAVELING BEAST (FTB / RTB)

Call Out	
Intent	

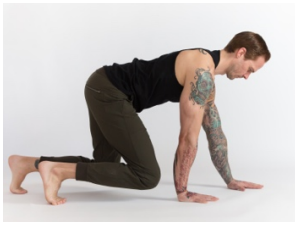
Movement Sequence



- Set Beast.



- Lift opposite hand and foot simultaneously – slightly bend elbow, keep ankle dorsiflexed
- With knees 1 inch/2-3 cm above the ground, stride equal distance with the hand and foot
- Hand and foot land at the same time
- As hand lands, corkscrew upper arm, creating tension driving forward
- As foot lands, drive through heel, creating tension driving backwards
- Traveling knee does not touch same side wrist
- Stride pattern maintained with one hand in front of shoulder line, while opposite is behind
- Stride pattern maintained with one knee in front of hip line, while opposite is behind
- Maintain neutral neck throughout by glancing through eyebrows when traveling forward
- Eyes stay down when traveling in reverse.



Common errors

- × Same side limbs move when traveling
- × Limbs lift and land at different times
- × Limbs travel unequal distances during stride
- × Knee touches or moves past same side wrist
- × Significant shift or rotation of shoulders or hips
- × Loss of neutral spine
- × Knees lifting more than 1 inch/2-3 cm, or touching ground
- × Over-striding the leg in Reverse Traveling Beast
- × Striding with elbows in extension

Test Out guidance

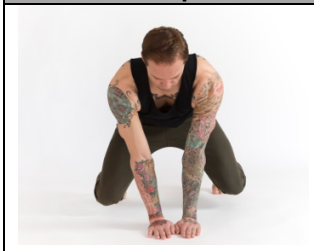
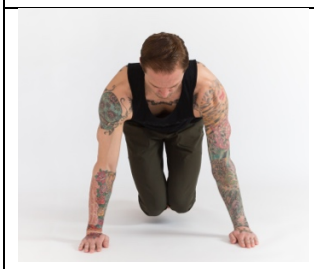
Extra Notes

Lift: opposing limbs at the same time
Stride: the same distance, at the same time
Land: limbs contact ground at same time
Set: corkscrew the arm

TRAVELING FORMS

LATERAL TRAVELING BEAST (LTB)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- From Static Beast, step feet wider than hip width bringing hands together - Thumbs and fingers are closed, thumbs of each hand touching the other.
	- In the direction of travel, move the same side arm and opposite leg, bringing hands wider than shoulder width into Open Position, and knees and feet to touch in Closed Position.
	- Stride again, bringing hands back together with thumbs touching in Closed Position, and knees and feet wider than hip width in Open Position.

Common errors

- × Striding with same arm and same leg
- × Arms and legs striding different distances
- × Fingers and thumbs open
- × Hands and/or feet not touching when in horizontally adducted position
- × Fail to maintain neural spine throughout

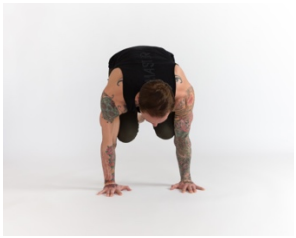
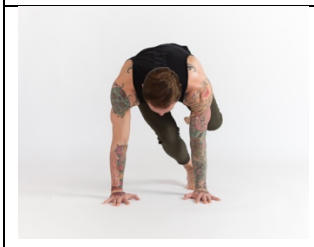
Test Out guidance

Extra notes

TRAVELING FORMS

LATERAL TRAVELING APE - VERSION 1: LOW HIP (LTA1)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Deep Ape.
	- 'Push on the gas' to shift into the balls of the feet - Place hands in Cross Body Contact, trail hand lines up 1 hand length in front of lead foot - Lead hand lands shoulder width in front of the trail hand.
	- Drive down into the ground while simultaneously driving out of the legs to lift the hips - Shoulders shift forward, scapulae protract, elbows stay straight - Eyes look between the hands.
	- Trail foot lands first, in line with lead hand.
	- Lead foot lands and hands push weight of the body back into the heels - Hips transfer laterally to find new Deep Ape - Chest lifts, eyes focus to the horizon in between each repetition.

Common errors

- × Heels lifted in Deep Ape
- × Reaching across the body prior to 'pushing on the gas'
- × Opposite hand and foot do not line up when in Cross Body Contact
- × Fail to keep elbows extended during Cross Body Contact or travel
- × Hips lift high and/or legs kick out behind body
- × Feet land at the same time
- × Fails to lift chest and bring eyes to the horizon, finding new Deep Ape after each repetition

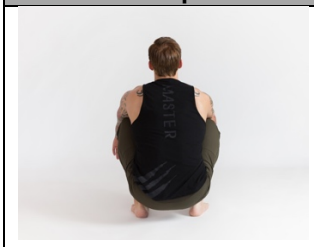
Test Out guidance

Extra notes

TRAVELING FORMS

LATERAL TRAVELING APE - VERSION 2: HIGH HIP (LTA2)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Deep Ape.
	- 'Push on the gas' to shift into the balls of the feet - Place hands in Cross Body Contact, trail hand lines up 1 hand length in front of lead foot - Lead hand lands shoulder width in front of the trail hand.
	- Drive down into the ground while simultaneously driving out of the legs, lifting hips until they stack over shoulders - Shoulders shift forward, scapulae protract, elbows stay straight - Head is neutral between arms, eyes look between the base of the hands.
	- Trail foot lands first, in line with lead hand, finding High Hip Modified Beast - Base knee is extended, heel is high, lead leg is tucked tight to chest, heel to glute, ankle plantarflexed, toes pointed - Shoulder gap is closed, eyes on base foot
	- Hips lower down allowing lead foot to land as hands push weight back into heels - Hips transfer laterally to find new Deep Ape - Chest lifts, eyes focus to the horizon in between each repetition.

Transitional Position: High Hip Modified Beast (HHMB)

- ✓ Hands shoulder width, closing the gap
- ✓ Base knee extended, heel high
- ✓ Opposite knee tucked tight towards chest, heel to glute, toes pointed, ankle dorsiflexed

Common errors

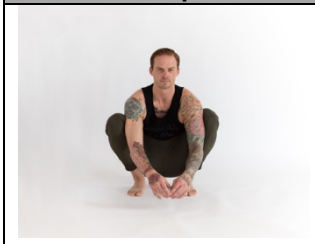
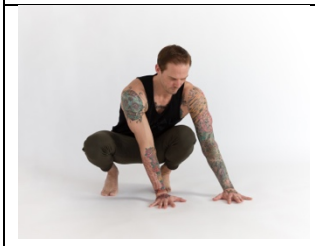
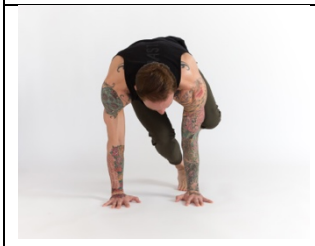
- × Heels lifted in Deep Ape
- × Reaching across the body prior to 'pushing on the gas'
- × Opposite hand and foot do not line up when in Cross Body Contact
- × Fail to keep elbows extended during Cross Body Contact, tuck or travel
- × Fail to stack hips above shoulder or close the shoulder gap
- × Fail to tuck knees to chest, heels to glutes and/or point toes
- × Feet land at the same time, or lead foot lands first
- × Fail to pass through High Hip Modified Beast

Test Out guidance / Notes

TRAVELING FORMS

LATERAL TRAVELING APE - VERSION 3: REACHING (LTA3)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Deep Ape.
	- 'Push on the gas' to shift into the balls of the feet - Place hands in Cross Body Contact.
	- Drive down into the ground while simultaneously lifting the hips - Shoulders shift forward, scapulae protract, elbows stay straight - Eyes look between hands.
	- Trail foot lands first, in line with lead hand - Eyes focus on lead foot as it reaches, knee fully extends, landing with toes and ball of the foot.
	- Drive out of hands, dropping heels - Hips transfer laterally, staying low and transitioning to the next repetition fluidly - Chest lifts, eyes focus to the horizon during transition.
	- Just before the trail knee extends, lift the heels and plant the hands into Cross Body Contact, moving into the next repetition.

Common errors

- × Heels lifted in Deep Ape
- × Reaching across the body prior to 'pushing on the gas'
- × Opposite hand and foot do not line up when in Cross Body Contact
- × Fail to keep elbows extended during Cross Body Contact or travel
- × Hips lift high and/or legs kick out behind body
- × Pauses in Deep Ape rather than transitioning fluidly
- × Slides or steps trail foot in to adjust width of stance
- × Fails to lift chest and bring eyes to the horizon during the transition

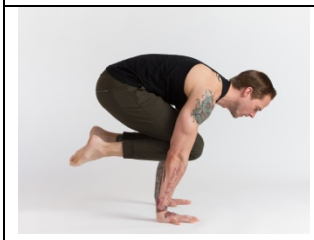
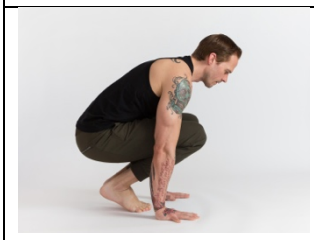
Test Out guidance

Extra notes

TRAVELING FORMS

FORWARD TRAVELING APE (FTA)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Forward Traveling Ape – knee, ankles, feet together, heels off the ground.
	- Spot the ground for where you want the hands to land (approx. 45 degree angle down to ground) - Elbows are flexed, palms forward.
	- Drive out of hips, performing a short dive forward with arms outstretched and eyes forward.
	- Hips stay low throughout the dive, elbows stay straight - As the hands make contact, bring eyes up and forward, enabling the shoulders to translate forward of the wrist line.
	- Balls of the feet land lightly as the forward trajectory is decelerated - Legs stay tucked and spine flexed throughout the movement.

Common errors

- × Beginning with knees or feet apart
- × Heels down at any point of the movement
- × Planting hands and pulling the legs through
- × Shoulders not passing the wrist line
- × Hips lifting high, stacking above shoulders
- × Legs extending from hips, pulling lumbar spine into extension
- × Landing with elbows flexed
- × Landing with fingers rotated outwards

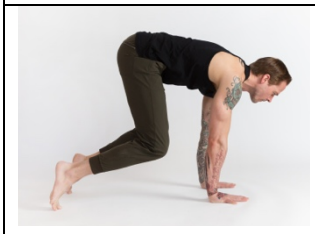
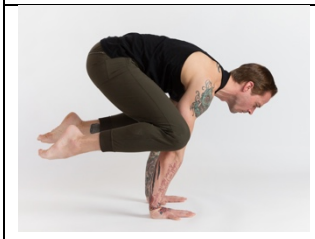
Test Out guidance

Extra notes

TRAVELING FORMS

FORWARD TRAVELING FROG (FTF)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- From Deep Ape, place hands on the ground, inside the knees with elbows straight
	- Flex the elbows to lift the hands, tilting forward as the heels lift, weight shifting in the forefoot - Look where the hands should land (approx. 45 degree angle, forward and down).
	- Dive forward from the legs allowing the shoulders to move in front of the wrists as the hands land - Elbows are straight.
	- Once shoulders are in Forward Shoulder Load, decelerate the forward trajectory - Hips stay low.
	- Lower the feet with control - Forefoot lands outside of the base of the hand.
	- Heels land and hands stay down.

Common errors

- × Fail to commence with hands on ground
- × Fail to shift weight into the forefoot before traveling
- × 'Leap Frog' motion – jumping high off the ground
- × 'Plant and pull'
- × Extending legs out behind body
- × Lifting hands before feet land

Test Out guidance

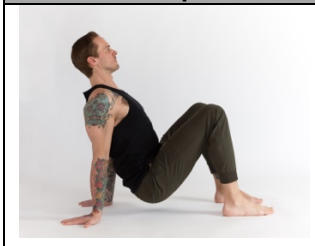
Extra notes

TRAVELING FORMS

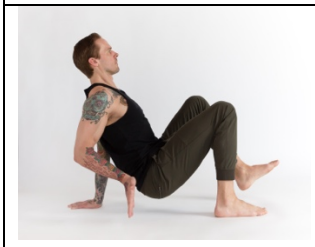
FORWARD and REVERSE TRAVELING CRAB (FTC / RTC)

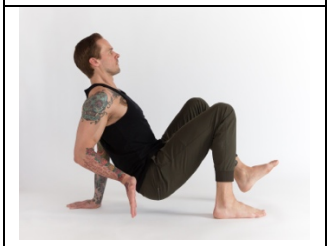
Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence



- Set Crab.





- Bending the elbow to initiate, lift opposite hand and foot simultaneously
- With hips 1 inch/2-3cm above ground, stride equal distance with the hand and foot
- Hand and foot land at the same time
- FWD: land heel to full foot, and fingers to full hand
- REV: land toes to full foot, and base of the palm to full hand
- On "set", corkscrew upper arm generating stability for next stride
- Maintain neutral neck throughout by focusing eyes up to the 'rising sun'.

Common errors

- × Lifts same side limbs during travel
- × Limbs lift and land at different times
- × Limbs stride unequal distances
- × Fail to bend the elbow to begin stride
- × Eyes forward
- × Shoulders protracted and/or elevated, posterior pelvic tilt, spine flexed
- × Hips lift more than 1 inch/2-3 cm above ground
- × Landing with incorrect hand or foot contact pattern

Test Out guidance

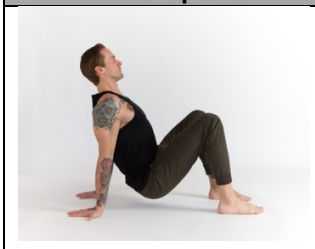
Extra notes

Lift: opposing limbs at the same time
Stride: the same distance, at the same time
Land: limbs contact ground at same time
Set: corkscrew the arm

FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES

CRAB REACH (CR)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Crab, with the feet placed at shoulder width or slightly wider.
	- Lift the hand of the Call Out arm and position it central to, and 6-8 inches/15-20 cm away from, the face.
	- Initiate the movement by lifting the hips and corkscrewing the base arm, finding 3-Point Bridge - Hips are extended, eyes looking directly up and through the hand.
	- Continue, following hand with eyes, until gaze finds base hand - Call Out arm frames head at 90 degrees, bicep towards back of head, fingers reaching for ground - Shoulders stack one above the other, over base wrist
	- Initiate return movement by retracting Call Out arm, following hand with eyes, and lowering hips.
	- Return to Crab. -

Common errors

- × Hand of Call Out arm too close to body
- × Fail to find 3-Point Bridge (or moves past it) before reaching over
- × Heels lift and/or feet rotate out
- × Base hand requires adjustment
- × Base elbow flexes
- × Shoulders are not stacked
- × Call Out arm fails to maintain 90 degree bend at elbow, arm falls forward/covers face
- × Eyes/head do not look at base hand in Reach Position
- × Fails to sequence head properly to initiate Return to Crab

Test Out guidance

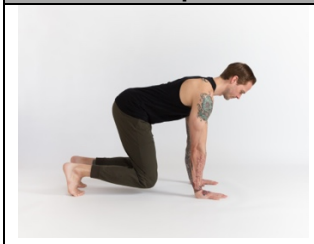
Points of Tension / Notes

1. Glutes engage to create hip extension
2. Drive the ground away through the base hand, creating a bubble of space in the same side shoulder
3. Fingertips of Call Out arm reach towards the ground, closing the shoulder gap.

FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES

LOADED BEAST (LB)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Beast.
	- Push the hips back to meet the heels, knees flare open outside the torso at a natural angle, staying 1 inch/2-3cm from the floor - Walk or slide the hands forward at shoulder width until head is between arms, shoulders making contact with ears.

Common errors

- × Stepping or jumping feet back from Beast
- × Hands wider than shoulder width
- × Knees fail to flare open
- × Knees lift too high
- × Not closing the shoulder gap
- × Allowing the lumbar spine to sink into extension

Test Out guidance

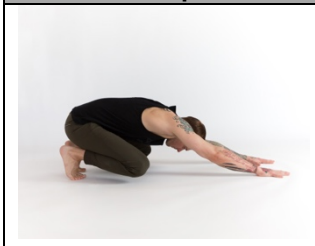
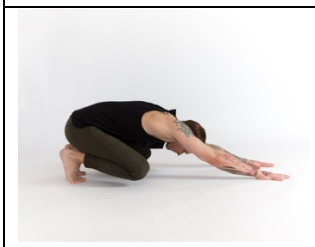
Points of Tension / Notes

1. Close the shoulder gap
2. Brace the abdominals
3. Horizontally abducting the hips.

FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES

WAVE UNLOAD (WU)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Loaded Beast.
	- Initiate the movement by lifting hips, reaching Peak Position – knees extended, heels high, neutral head.
	- Simultaneously tuck chin and posteriorly tilt pelvis, commencing the flexion wave. Wave travels through spine.
	- Once shoulders are in Forward Shoulder Load, hips begin to drop, starting the extension wave. - Keep elbows straight and toes tucked throughout.
	- Corkscrew the arms, open the chest, and drive the pelvis towards the floor. - Set scapulae back and down, lift the chin from the chest and bring eyes to the sky.
	- Initiate the Return to Loaded Beast by tucking the chin to begin the reverse flexion wave. - Hips follow the spine back up to the Peak Position before lowering into Loaded Beast.

Common errors

- ✖ Moving forward like Unload
- ✖ Elbows flexing
- ✖ Heels staying low or on ground
- ✖ Failing to extend knees
- ✖ Failing to tuck chin
- ✖ Failing to tilt pelvis
- ✖ Premature lift of chin
- ✖ Hips drops too early
- ✖ Shoulders not retracted/depressed
- ✖ Eyes/head face forward
- ✖ Not initiating reverse via chin tuck

Test Out guidance

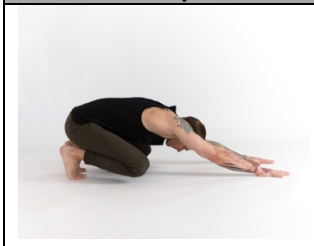
Points of Tension / Notes

1. Extensor chain throughout extension wave
2. Flexor chain throughout flexion wave

FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES

BEAST REACH (BR)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Loaded Beast.
	- Initiate the movement by lifting hips and carrying the Call Out leg up to Peak Position - Call Out leg tucks tight into the body, with knee to chest, heel to glute, ankle plantarflexed - Base knee extended, base heel high, neutral head.
	- Translate forward into flexion wave, continuing to tuck leg tight into body - Base leg remains straight as Call Out knee travels past same side arm, settling at or just below elbow - Head lifts once knee reaches elbow - Eyes focus forwards, shoulders protracted, hip of base leg is open.
	- Initiate the Return to Loaded Beast by tucking the chin - Reverse back through the Flexion Wave, finding Peak Position again.
	- Keeping Call Out leg tucked, bend the base leg to send hips back down to Loaded Beast.

Common errors

- × Moving forward like Unload
- × Not keeping the Call Out leg tucked and flexed
- × Fail to tuck chin and posteriorly tilt pelvis to commence Flexion Wave
- × Failing to extend the base knee
- × Knee fails to reach/pass the same side elbow
- × Knee drops towards wrist
- × Spine drops into extension, hips lower
- × Shoulders sink into retraction
- × Head sinks towards ground
- × Eyes looking down instead of forward
- × Not initiating reverse via chin tuck

Test Out guidance

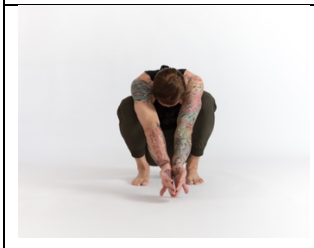
Points of Tension / Notes

1. Engage adductor complex, driving Call Out leg into same side elbow
2. Serratus anterior/latissimus dorsi pulling scapulae into protraction
3. Forearm extensors pulling shoulders further in front of wrists
4. Gluteal contraction of base leg.

FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES

APE REACH (AR)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- From Deep Ape, reach forward and down -arms internally rotated, backs of hands together, thumbs low to ground but not touching - Spine flexed, chin tucked, legs pulling in towards midline.
	- Initiate the Open Phase by shifting weight into the balls of the feet while opening arms simultaneously - Pelvis tips forward, heels lift to support hips - Arms remain straight throughout, externally rotating and horizontally abducting from shoulders - Hands drive out in opposing directions, palms facing directly up - Knees pull open, hips horizontally abducting.
	- Return to Ape Reach by simultaneously shifting weight back into heels and closing arms - Arms remain straight throughout.

Common errors

In Reach Position

- ✖ Heels lifted
- ✖ Palms facing toward each other
- ✖ Hands not close to ground
- ✖ Fingers interlaced
- ✖ Reaching forward from hips

In Open Position

- ✖ Standing up out of squat
- ✖ Arms above or below shoulder level
- ✖ Shoulders shrugged
- ✖ Elbows flexed
- ✖ Palms not facing upwards

Test Out guidance

Points of Tension / Notes

Reach Position

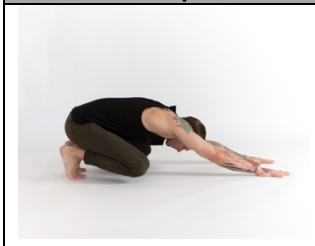
1. Hip abductors
2. Rectus abdominals
3. Internal rotators of shoulder
4. Upper trapezius

Open Position

1. Glute medius
2. Erectors of spine
3. Serratus anterior
4. External rotators of shoulder

FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES
LOADED BEAST UNLOAD (LBU)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Loaded Beast.
	- Initiate the movement by gripping the ground, pushing through the feet and pulling the shoulders forward - Elbows stay extended, knees stay flexed and 1 inch/2-3 cm above the ground.
	- Shoulders travel in front of wrists, staying protracted throughout - Pelvis tilts posteriorly - Neck long, eyes to ground - Knees maintain flexed, low position.
	- Return to Loaded Beast by pressing the ground away and sending hips back to heels.

Common errors

- × Moving forward with a flat/neutral spine/'planking'
- × Fail to keep elbows extended
- × Knees extending and/or lifting too high
- × Pelvis anteriorly tilting, lumbar spine sinking into extension
- × Eyes forward or head sinking towards ground

Test Out guidance

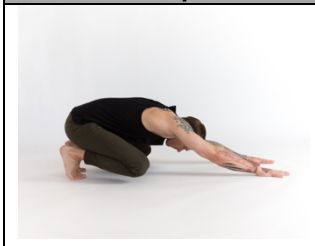
Points of Tension / Notes

1. Forearm extensors pulling shoulders further in front of wrists
2. Serratus anterior/latissimus dorsi pulling scapulae into protraction
3. Lower abdominals and glutes creating posterior pelvic tilt.

FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES

SCORPION REACH (SR)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Loaded Beast.
	- Initiate by pulling the ground underneath the body with straight arms - Press knee of Call Out leg against opposite wrist, staying low to ground - Shoulders protracted, neck long, eyes down, ankle of Call Out leg is plantarflexed, toes pointed.
	- Circle the Call Out leg diagonally out and up - Head drops between straight arms to close the shoulder gap and bring gaze to base foot.
	- Call Out leg maintains 90 degree at the knee, shin pulls upward towards sky - Spine is extended, rotated and laterally flexed - Base heel is high and outwardly rotated, knee remains flexed
	- Initiate the Return to Loaded Beast by circling the knee diagonally until it makes contact again with the opposite wrist.
	- Press hips back to Loaded Beast.

Common errors
× Beginning like Wave Unload or in Static Beast
× Fail to reach opposite wrist
× Fail to take Call Out leg through circular pattern
× Call Out leg extending through sagittal plane
× Head lifts up or tucks down
× Limited rotation of hips/Call Out leg
× Rotation of shoulders/torso
× Base heel remains down or low
× Base knee extends
× Fail to reverse the sequence on Return to Loaded Beast

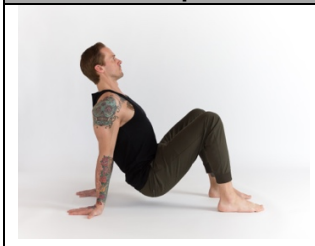
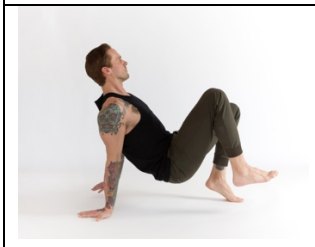
Test Out guidance

Points of Tension / Notes
1. Close the shoulder gap
2. Closing the space between ribs and hip on the same side as the base leg
3. Glutes engage to pull shin of Call Out leg towards sky

SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS

UNDERSWITCH (US) – Crab to Beast

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence – from Crab to Beast	
	- Set Crab* *US from Crab first, progress to US from Beast.
	- Lift the Call Out leg and opposite hand, as if performing a contralateral limb lift.
	- Drive the base foot into the ground to 'push on the gas' and lift the heel.
	- Bring limbs towards the midline, streamlining the rotation - Turn towards the Call Out leg as it travels UNDER the body - Knee travels close the ground throughout.
	- Once the base arm comes into view, drop the Call Out leg and traveling arm at the same time - Hands are shoulder width and perfect Beast alignment is achieved.

Common errors

- × Opposing limbs lifting or landing at different times
- × Fail to 'push on the gas' before rotating
- × Call Out leg and opposite hand incorrectly positioned, fail to streamline rotation
- × Hips/knees too high during rotation
- × Loss of form in Crab or Beast
- × 'Overswitching'

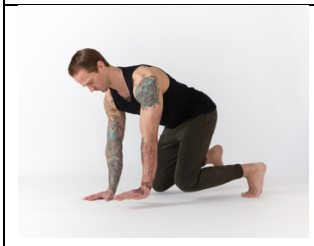
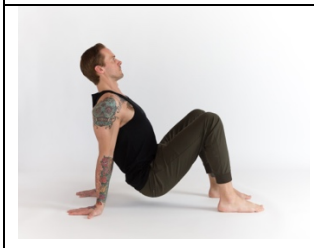
Test Out guidance

Notes

SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS

UNDERSWITCH (US) – Beast to Crab

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence – from Beast to Crab	
	- Set Beast* *US from Crab first, progress to US from Beast.
	- Lift the Call Out leg and opposite hand, as if performing a contralateral limb lift.
	- Bring limbs towards the midline, streamlining the rotation - Follow the Call Out leg as it travels UNDER the body, ankle plantarflexed - Knee travels close the ground throughout.
	- Once the rotation has been completed, drop the base heel to stop rotating.
	- Call Out leg and opposite arm land, finding perfect Crab position.

Common errors

- × Opposing limbs lifting or landing at different times
- × Fail to drop the heel to stop rotating
- × Call Out leg and opposite hand incorrectly positioned, fail to streamline rotation
- × Hips/knees too high during rotation
- × Loss of form in Crab or Beast
- × 'Overswitching'

Test Out guidance

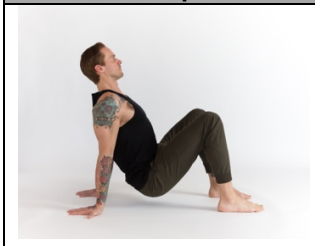
Notes

SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS

UNDERSWITCH TAP (USTap)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence – from Crab to Beast

	- Set Crab* *USTap from Crab first, progress to USTap from Beast.
	- Perform regular Underswitch but initiate movement with speed - Control speed of rotation throughout.
	- Shoulders, hips and knees square up with ground - Traveling limbs 'tap' the ground, the hand and foot make contact simultaneously with approximately 10% of body load.
	- Redirect energy, accelerating in the opposite direction.
	- Decelerate just in time to gently transition back to base position.

Common errors

- × Opposing limbs lifting or landing at different times
- × Fail to utilize correct Underswitch technique
- × No discernable acceleration/deceleration
- × Re-distributing weight through all limbs/tapping with too much weight
- × Fail to tap the ground with both limbs

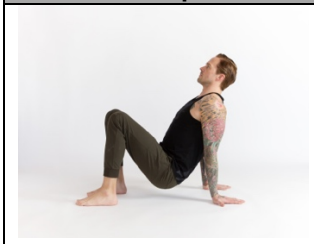
Test Out guidance

Notes

SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS

JUMPING UNDERSWITCH (JUS)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Crab
	- Lift the Call Out leg and opposite hand - Drive off the base leg, jumping into the rotation
	- Rotate towards the Call Out leg, switching feet in the air.
	- Land in Modified Beast with a neutral foot position – toes pointing towards the same side wrist - Ankle that floats above the ground is in plantarflexion, toes pointed.
	- Transition through the Movement Window fluidly, completing the rotation.
	- Finish in perfect Crab position.

Common errors

- × Performing a regular Underswitch and then switching feet
- × 'Push on the gas' before jumping
- × Landing on the wrong foot after "pop over"
- × Fail to land in neutral foot and/or moving past Modified Beast
- × Jumping out of Crab with too much height
- × Pausing in Modified Beast too long before transferring through the Movement Window
- × Losing control/moving too fast

Test Out guidance

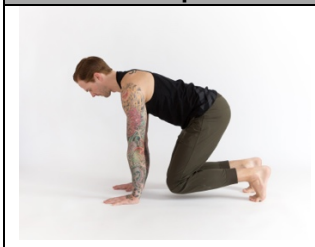
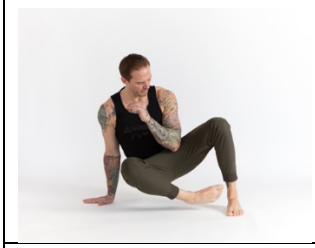
- Be sure to submit the full Jumping Underswitch in your Test Out, NOT the regression.

Notes

- To regress this movement, perform a regular Underswitch, switching feet as both hands land in Modified Beast. Complete the movement according to the rest of the sequence at left.

SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS
SIDE KICKTHROUGH (SKT)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Beast.
	- Lift the Call Out leg and opposite hand - Begin to rotate as if performing an Underswitch - Bring eyes down to base foot.
	- Watch the base heel drop once toes have lined up perpendicular (90 degrees relative) to base hand - Hips are positioned halfway between base hand and base foot.
	- Kick the Call Out leg, extending the knee, externally rotating from the hip, ankle plantarflexed and toes pointed - Base arm is straight, shoulder protracted - Peel opposite elbow away from Call Out leg, 'opening the sling' - Elbow is at, or just above, the same side shoulder, back of hand facing same side cheek.

Common errors

- × Fail to watch heel drop once toes line up perpendicular to base hand
- × Fail to extend knee, externally rotate Call Out leg
- × Fail to plantarflex ankle, point toes of Call Out leg
- × Hips not centered between base foot and base hand
- × Fail to 'open the sling'/palm of hand faces down or towards face
- × Does not lift the base heel when moving back to Beast via Underswitch

Test Out guidance

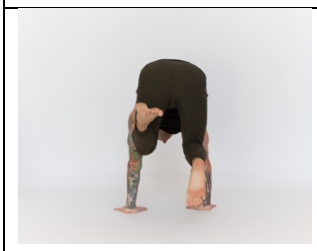
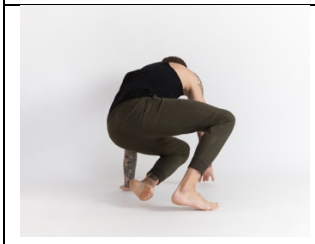
Notes

- Perform an Underswitch to get back to Beast

SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS

JUMPING SIDE KICKTHROUGH (J-SKT)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- From Beast, perform a Side Kickthrough.
	- 'Push on the gas', driving the ball of the foot and lifting the heel - Retract the kicking leg powerfully, bringing the Open Sling arm down to meet the ground simultaneously.
	- Glance under body as feet switch, landing in Modified Beast with neutral foot alignment.
	- Continue to transition through the Movement Window fluidly, watching the heel drop.
	- Finish in perfect Side Kickthrough.

Common errors

- × Beginning in Beast and jumping into a regular Side Kickthrough
- × Initiating the movement with a partial Underswitch before proceeding to the jump
- × Jumping too high; hips rising above shoulders
- × Fail to land in neutral foot / landing on an already rotated foot
- × Technically incorrect Side Kickthrough

Test Out guidance

Notes

SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS

LEVITATING SIDE KICKTHROUGH (L-SKT)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- From Beast, perform a Side Kickthrough.
	- 'Push on the gas', driving the ball of the foot and lifting the heel - Retract the kicking leg powerfully, bringing the Open Sling arm down to meet the ground simultaneously.
	- Lift the hips and attempt to stack above shoulders as heels and knees are pulled tight into the body in Tuck Balance position.
	- Bring the original kicking leg down to meet the ground in High Hip Modified Beast (HHMB) - Hips high, knee tucked towards chest, heel to glute - Base leg fully extended, heel high off the ground - Head between arms, eyes looking at base of hands.
	
	- Bend the base knee, lowering into the rotation and finishing in perfect Side Kickthrough.

Common errors

- × Begins in Beast and jumps into a regular Side Kickthrough
- × Initiating the movement with an Underswitch before levitating
- × Hips fail to reach stack position above the shoulders
- × Legs 'donkey kick', tuck position is 'loose'
- × Elbows fail to stay extended
- × Lands with base leg flexed, hips are already dropping towards the ground
- × Lands on an already rotated base foot

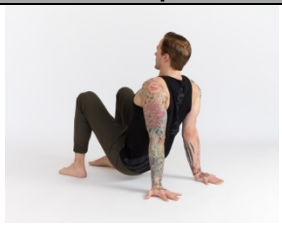
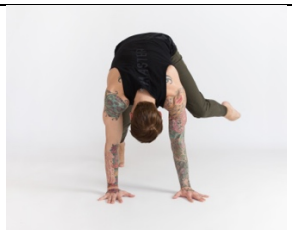
Test Out guidance

Notes

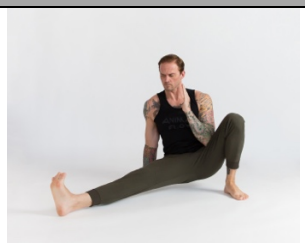
SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS

FULL SCORPION (FS)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Crab
	- Initiate movement as if performing a regular Underswitch – lift Call Out leg and opposite hand, and 'push on the gas' to begin the rotation - Call Out ankle plantarflexes.
	- Hand lands and Call Out leg slightly internally rotates from hip - Foot of Call Out leg travels diagonally out and up, tracking a circular path.
	- Call Out leg finds Peak Position of Reach – hips high, head between arms - Eyes check that base heel is high and knee is soft - Elbows straight, closed shoulder gap position.
	- To begin the Switch, base knee extends, ankle finds 90 degrees, weight transfers to outer ridge of base foot - Call Out leg maintains 90 degrees at knee - Opposite arm counter-balances the Call Out leg until it is gradually peeled from the floor as the foot descends.
	- Land lightly in Modified Crab (see box at right).

End Position: Modified Crab



- ✓ Hips halfway between base hand and base foot
- ✓ Extended leg is straight at knee, ankle dorsiflexed, toes extended
- ✓ Arm in Guarded Position

Common errors

- × Fail to begin in Crab
- × Technically incorrect Underswitch component
- × Technically incorrect Reach component
- × Fail to extend base knee or find 90 degrees at base ankle prior to commencing Switch
- × Bends base knee during Switch or landing
- × Releases hand from ground too early / fails to align by ear throughout Switch
- × Incorrect Modified Crab position (see box above)

Test Out guidance / Notes

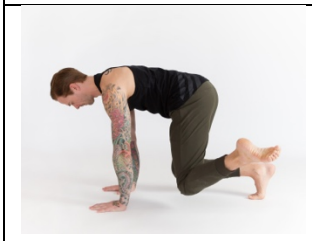
SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS

SCORPION SWITCH (SS)

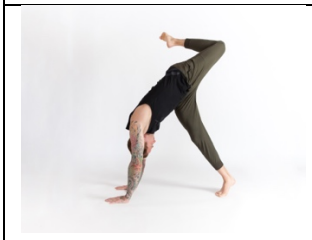
Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence

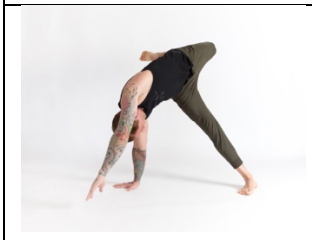
- Set Beast.



- Initiate movement by lifting Call Out foot, ankle plantarflexes, toes point, slight internal rotation from hip.



- Foot of Call Out leg travels diagonally out and up, tracking a circular path
- Call Out leg finds Peak Position of Reach as per Full Scorpion.



- Call Out leg completes the Switch as per Full Scorpion.

- Land lightly in Modified Crab as per Full Scorpion (see box at right).

End Position: Modified Crab

- ✓ Hips halfway between base hand and base foot
- ✓ Extended leg is straight at knee, ankle dorsiflexed, toes extended
- ✓ Arm in Guarded Position

Common errors

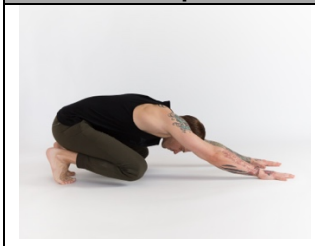
- × Loading knee to opposite wrist
- × Technically incorrect Reach position (see Full Scorpion)
- × Technically incorrect Switch (see Full Scorpion)
- × Technically incorrect landing (see Full Scorpion)

Test Out guidance / Notes

SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS

FRONT STEP (FStep)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Loaded Beast.
	- Drive forward out of Loaded Beast, lifting the Call Out leg and same side hand simultaneously - Foot lands outside of, and slightly in front of , where hand was originally positioned
	- Head lifts to bring eyes to the horizon - Chest high, base knee flexed - Base arm is straight, opposite arm is in Attack Hand position – palm forward, elbow pulling directly back .
	- Initiate the Return to Loaded Beast by simultaneously driving the Attack Hand down to the floor as the Call Out leg lifts.
	- Send hips back to find perfect Loaded Beast.

Common errors

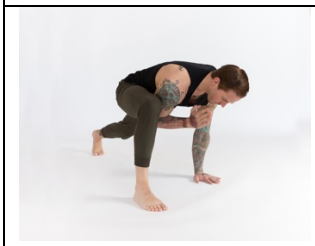
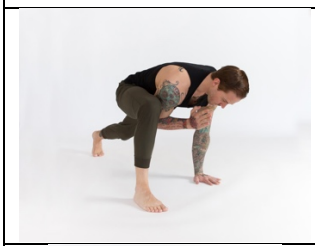
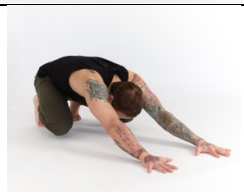
- × Call Out leg steps into position before lifting same side hand
- × Call Out leg steps too narrow, foot rotates outwards or otherwise deviates from neutral
- × Arm is in Open Sling position or otherwise deviates from Attack Hand position
- × Base leg extended

Test Out guidance

Notes

SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS
FRONT STEP THROUGH (FST)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Loaded Beast.
	- Perform a Front Step.
	- Base hand and Call Out leg drive into the ground, opening the Movement Window for the rear leg to transition to kicking leg - Attack Hand transitions to Guarded Position.
	- Rear leg kicks forward, knee extends, externally rotated from hip, ankle plantarflexed, toes pointed - Toes of both feet point forward in same direction as base fingers - Arm in Guarded Position.
	- Initiate the Return to Loaded Beast by simultaneously driving the Guarded Position arm down to the floor as the Call Out leg lifts.
	- Send hips back to find perfect Loaded Beast.

Common errors

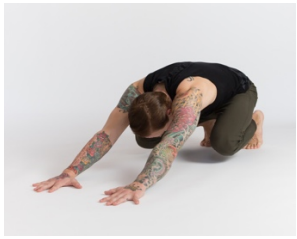
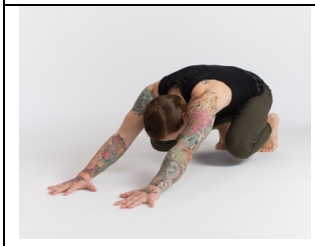
- × Any errors from Front Step
- × Base foot rotates outwardly or heel lifts as rear leg transitions through
- × Arm does not transition from Attack Hand to Guarded Position
- × Leg not kicking directly forward
- × Arm does not transition directly to ground from Guarded Position on Return to Loaded Beast

Test Out guidance

Notes

SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS
FRONT KICKTHROUGH (FKT)

Call Out	
Intent	

Movement Sequence	
	- Set Loaded Beast.
	- Jump out of Loaded Beast, lifting the hand so the same side foot (base foot) can land - Foot lands wider than, and in front of, where the hand was originally positioned.
	- Call Out leg follows, transitioning powerfully through Movement Window into full extension - Leg kicks directly forward to 12 o'clock direction - Ankle plantarflexed, toes pointed, externally rotated from hip - Base foot stays anchored to ground, toes facing directly forward - Lifted arm finds Guarded Position, torso slightly flexed, base arm straight.
	- Pop it back to Loaded Beast by retracting the Call Out leg while simultaneously driving the Guarded Position hand back to the ground - Push entire body back to perfect Loaded Beast.

Common errors

- × Stepping forward from Loaded Beast
- × Movement Window too narrow: base foot rotates outwardly or heel lifts
- × Call Out leg kicks off-center
- × Call Out leg not extended at knee, ankle not plantarflexed, toes not pointed
- × Call Out leg rests on the ground
- × Arm in Open Sling
- × Spine in extension in final kickthrough position

Test Out guidance

Notes

CHAPTER 4

LANGUAGE & FLOWS

ANIMAL FLOW LANGUAGE

One of the most important parts of teaching Animal Flow is how well you communicate it to your clients and/or others you are practicing with. The "Animal Flow Language" uses specific terms and syntax that are the same throughout the world. Understanding this language helps ensure that your Call Outs are consistent and can be followed by any Flowist.

When Calling Out a Flow, you'll select the movements and direct your students through the Flow using our specific Animal Flow language. Think of the Animal Flow language like a road map that clearly identifies the series of directions someone should follow to reach a destination. With Animal Flow now being offered in well over 35 countries, this language is used by Flowists across the globe to clearly and consistently communicate with our clients, our students, and each other.

Following are some important rules regarding the terms and syntax for Call Outs.

SET BASE POSITION

The first part of any Flow is to establish the start position of the Flowist. This base position will always be one of the following four animal forms: Crab, Beast, Ape, Loaded Beast. The cue to get into the position is "Set."

Base Position Options	**Call Out**
Deep Ape	"Set Ape" or "Set Deep Ape"
Static Beast	"Set Beast" or "Set Static Beast"
Static Crab	"Set Crab" or "Set Static Crab"
Loaded Beast	"Set Loaded Beast"

CALL OUT FORMULA (GENERAL): DIRECTION > LIMB > COMMAND

One of the most important parts of the Animal Flow language is our Call Out formula. This formula informs the way we verbally instruct the movement that is to be performed.

1. DIRECTION: Left or right
2. LIMB: Arm or leg (never 'hand' or 'foot'!)
3. COMMAND: The name of the actual movement.

For example, when performing a Side Kickthrough with our left leg, the call out would be: "Left" (direction) "leg" (limb) "Side Kickthrough" (command).

No matter where you go in the world, the Call Out formula is communicated the same way.

DIRECTION > LIMB > COMMAND

DIRECTION and LIMB instructions are communicated in the chosen language of the speaker but the COMMAND is always spoken in English.

CALLING OUT THE ACTION IN SIDE KICKTHROUGH

In Level 1, there are TWO exceptions to the DIRECTION > LIMB > COMMAND order: Jumping Side Kickthrough and Levitating Side Kickthrough.

In these variations, you need to first call out the ACTION they are about to perform, followed by the rest of the Call Out so that our new formula becomes:

ACTION > DIRECTION > LIMB > COMMAND

For example:

"JUMP to Left Leg Side Kickthrough" or "LEVITATE to Right Leg Side Kickthrough"

Why is this the case? In both instances, the actual Side Kickthrough itself doesn't change; the only thing that changes is how we *transition* into the movement.

*Remember: We never Jump or Levitate to a Side Kickthrough from a Static Beast, Loaded Beast or Static Crab. In order to call out a Jump or Levitation, we have to first be in one of our acceptable straight leg positions like Side Kickthrough, Front Kickthrough or Modified Crab.

CHANGING ANIMAL FORMS: SET

When changing from one animal base to another, we would use the word SET, just as when we establish the starting or base position for a flow.

There are, however, some caveats to using the SET command:

1. We would never use the word SET when changing from a Crab to Beast or Crab to Loaded Beast. Instead we'd use an Underswitch since it's a far more fluid option.
2. We would never SET a Modified Crab since a Full Scorpion or Scorpion Switch is, again, a more fluid option for getting into a Modified Crab.

What can we SET?

If this is your Base Position...	And want to change to...	You'd do it this way...	And you'd say...
Deep Ape	Static Beast	SET	"Set Beast" or "Set Static Beast"
	Loaded Beast	SET	"Set Loaded Beast"
	Static Crab	SET	"Set Crab" or "Set Static Crab"
Static Beast	Loaded Beast	SET	"Set Loaded Beast"
	Deep Ape	SET	"Set Ape" or "Set Deep Ape"
	Static Crab	Underswitch	"Right/Left leg Underswitch"
Loaded Beast	Static Beast	SET	"Set Beast" or "Set Static Beast"
	Deep Ape	SET	"Set Ape" or "Set Deep Ape"
	Static Crab	Underswitch	"Right/Left leg Underswitch"
Static Crab	Deep Ape	SET	"Set Ape" or "Set Deep Ape"
	Static Beast	Underswitch	"Right/Left leg Underswitch"
	Loaded Beast	Underswitch	"Right/Left leg Underswitch TO Loaded Beast"

RETURNING TO ORIGINAL POSITION: RETURN TO

The call out "Return to" instructs Flowists to do exactly that: return to a position that they were just in. Here are the ways we use it.

Using "Return To" with Form Specific Stretches

The "Return To" command is used primarily with FSS. Any time we have someone in the Reach Position of a FSS, they must stay there until we tell them to "Return to" the place they started.

For example:

"Right Arm Crab Reach - Return to Crab"

"Wave Unload - Return to Loaded Beast"

This gets slightly more confusing when performing an Ape Reach since there is seemingly an extra step. Here is the correct way you would call out an Ape Reach:

"Set Deep Ape" - first we have to instruct the Flowist to find Deep Ape

"Ape Reach" – this is the actual reach, thumbs down towards the ground

"Open" – shift into the balls of the feet, open the arms, palms towards the sky

"Return to Ape Reach"* – return to the reaching position

*Once in Open position, it would also be acceptable for us to call out "Set Deep Ape," which would mean that it's unnecessary to return to the Reach Position, but instead, simply drop the heels, finishing in Deep Ape.

Using "Return To" or "Pop Back" in the Front Kickthrough category

In addition to using the Return To command with FSSs, you would also use this command during a Front Step or Front Step Through.

For example:

"Left Leg Front Step - .Return to Loaded Beast"

"Right Leg Front Step Through - Return to Loaded Beast"

To match the explosive nature of the Front Kickthrough move, we typically use the phrase "Pop back to Loaded Beast". The "pop" in this scenario, means that you want them to jump back into the Loaded Beast position, versus just stepping back.

"Pop back to Loaded Beast"

However, in order to further expand the possible ways that we can combine these actions, we *can* also mix and match the pairings of Front Step Through and Front Kickthrough with either "Return to", or "Pop back to", Loaded Beast.

COMBINING AND MODIFYING MOVEMENTS: TO or INTO

The correct use of "to" and/or "into" can be one of the more confusing components to master from the entire Call Out language. In Animal Flow, we use the terms "to" and "into" interchangeably - there is no difference to the meaning for which one you choose to use.

The TWO scenarios where TO or INTO should be used

1. **When we are ending somewhere other than where we would normally end a movement**. For example, we know that a regular Underswitch would always transition us from Static Beast to Static Crab or vice versa. If we want to get from Crab to loaded beast, we can use INTO or TO to let the flowist know there is a change to specify ending an Underswitch in Loaded Beast rather than Beast.

   For example:

   "Set Crab, Right leg Underswitch to Loaded Beast"

   "Left leg Jumping Underswitch INTO right leg Side Kickthrough"

2. **When we are eliminating something to create a more fluid transfer between two movements**. In the examples below, we are eliminating the hand drop going from a Crab Reach to an Underswitch and from a Modified Crab to a Crab Reach.

For Example:

"Right arm Crab Reach, Return to Crab INTO left leg Underswitch

"Right leg Full Scorpion, Set Crab INTO Right Arm Crab Reach"

When NOT to use TO or INTO

You should never call out TO or INTO after a regular movement. It's common for new Animal Flow instructors to use these words when they're not necessary.

The following example is INCORRECT:

> *"Left Leg Underswitch TO Right Leg Underswitch INTO Right Leg Underswitch Tap, TO Right Leg Full Scorpion" (incorrect)*

None of these movements need a TO or INTO between them, as they are all stand-alone movements. The correct way to call this out would be simply:

> *"Left leg Underswitch, right leg Underswitch, right leg Underswitch Tap, right leg Full Scorpion" (correct)*

POP BACK TO & SLIDE TO

The Call Out "Pop Back to Loaded Beast" is one used from a Front Kickthrough or Front Step Through position to indicate an explosive jump backwards to land in Loaded Beast. There are a couple of other instances in which we can use Pop Back to.

Slide to is used from a Loaded Beast position and is an option to transition fluidly forward in space on one leg to facilitate creating a movement window. Both Pop Back To and Slide To can serve as transitions to pass through Modified Beast transfer as outlined below.

When you can use Pop Back To:

1. From a Front Kickthrough, Front Step Through, Side Kickthrough or Modified Crab position to get to Loaded Beast.
2. From a Front Kickthrough, Front Step Through, or Modified Crab position to pass through Modified Beast then either transition:
    a. Under the movement window as in a Side Kickthrough or Underswitch
    b. Over the movement window as in a Scorpion Switch

When you can use Slide To:

1. From a Loaded Beast position to indicate sliding on one foot forward to a Modified Beast then either transition:
    a. Under the movement window as in a Side Kickthrough or Underswitch
    b. Over the movement window as in a Scorpion Switch

FLOWS

In Animal Flow, the Flow component is where the magic happens. It's the ultimate integration of the benefits and objectives of the S&T and FSS components,

Over the following pages, we've shared some sample flows as well as a go-to resource that you can use to map and explore the endless movement combinations that are possible in Animal Flow.

For the first two Flows – the Beast Flow and the Form Specific Stretch Flow, we've included the full Call Out in the column on the left and the abbreviated written Flow in the column on the right. For the remaining sample Flows, we've left the written Flow column blank so that you can practice the skill of writing out Flows according to the abbreviation key covered at the end of this chapter.

THE BEAST FLOW	
Call Out	**Written Flow**
Set Crab Right leg Underswitch Tap Left leg Jumping Underswitch TO Right leg Side Kickthrough Levitate to left leg Side Kickthrough Left leg Full Scorpion Right leg Jumping Underswitch TO Right arm Crab Reach Return to Crab INTO Left leg Underswitch to Loaded Beast Unload Return to Loaded Beast Right leg Front Step Through Return to Loaded Beast Right leg Front Kickthrough Pop it back to Loaded Beast Right leg Underswitch Repeat, starting with a left leg Underswitch Tap from the base position of Crab.	Crab, R L USTap, L L J-US – R L SKT, L L L-SKT, L L FS, R L J-US – R A CR – Crab – L L US – LB, LBU – LB, R L FST – LB, R L FKT – LB, R L US

THE FORM SPECIFIC STRETCH FLOW	
Call Out	**Written Flow**
Set Loaded Beast Loaded Beast – Unload (x2) - *Call Out: Unload, return to Loaded Beast (x2)* Wave Unload (x2) - *Call Out: Wave Unload, return to Loaded Beast (x2)* Set Deep Ape Ape Reach (x2) - *Call Out: Reach, Open, return to Ape Reach (x2)* Set Static Crab Crab Reach (x2) - *Call Out: Right arm Crab Reach, return to Crab, left arm Crab Reach, return to Crab* Underswitch to Loaded Beast - *Call Out: Right (or Left) leg Underswitch to Loaded Beast* Beast Reach (x2) - *Call Out: Left leg Beast Reach, return to Loaded Beast, right leg Beast Reach, return to Loaded Beast* Scorpion Reach (x2) - *Call Out: Left leg Scorpion Reach, return to Loaded Beast, right leg Scorpion Reach, return to Loaded Beast*	LB, LBU – LB, LBU – LB, WU – LB, WU – LB, Ape, AR, Open – AR, Open – AR, Crab, R A CR – Crab, L A CR – Crab, R (or L) L US – LB, L L BR – LB, R L BR – LB, L L SR – LB, R L SR - LB

ANIMAL FLOW BASE MOVEMENTS

Over the following charts, we've mapped out where you can move to from any of your Base Positions.

BASE POSITION: DEEP APE		
	SET	Ape Reach Beast Crab Loaded Beast
	S&T	-
	FSS	Ape Reach
	TO/INTO	-
	SLIDE TO	-

BASE POSITION: BEAST		
	SET	Loaded Beast Deep Ape
	S&T	Underswitch Underswitch Tap Side Kickthrough Scorpion Switch
	FSS	Scorpion Reach* - Continue the switch - Return to Beast - Underswitch - Underswitch to Side Kickthrough
	TO/INTO	Underswitch Tap to Full Scorpion Underswitch Tap to Scorpion Reach
	SLIDE TO	-

**When performing a Scorpion Reach from a Base Position of Beast, remember that we don't load the Call Out leg/press the knee of the Call Out leg to the opposite wrist!*

BASE POSITION: CRAB		
	SET	Deep Ape
	S&T	Underswitch Underswitch Tap Jumping Underswitch Full Scorpion Levitating Underswitch
	FSS	Crab Reach
	TO/INTO	Underswitch to Loaded Beast Underswitch to Scorpion Reach Underswitch Tap to Side Kickthrough Jumping Underswitch to Side Kickthrough Jumping Underswitch into Crab Reach Levitating Underswitch to Side Kickthrough Levitating Underswitch to Crab Reach
	SLIDE TO	-

BASE POSITION: **LOADED BEAST**	**SET**	Beast Deep Ape Leap to Deep Ape
	S&T	Front Step Front Step Through Front Kickthrough Underswitch
	FSS	Loaded Beast – Unload Wave Unload Scorpion Reach Beast Reach
	TO/INTO	-
	SLIDE TO	Side Kickthrough Underswitch Scorpion Switch Underswitch into Crab Reach

WRITING FLOWS

Over the previous pages, we've begun to share the concept of the specific verbal and written language that we use to communicate Animal Flow. In addition to the full names, there's a simple but effective set of abbreviations that you'll want to learn in order to further enhance the way you use this language.

Components	FSS	Form Specific Stretch/es
	S&T	Switches and Transitions
	TF	Traveling Forms
Traveling Forms (TF)	FTB	Forward Traveling Beast
	RTB	Reverse Traveling Beast
	LTB	Lateral Traveling Beast
	FTC	Forward Traveling Crab
	RTC	Reverse Traveling Crab
	FTF	Forward Traveling Frog
	FTA	Forward Traveling Ape
	LTA1	Lateral Traveling Ape 1: Low Hip
	LTA2	Lateral Traveling Ape 2: High Hip
	LTA3	Lateral Traveling Ape 3: Reaching
Form Specific Stretches (FSS)	LBU	Loaded Beast Unload
	WU	Wave Unload
	BR	Beast Reach
	AR	Ape Reach
	CR	Crab Reach
	SR	Scorpion Reach
	LB	Loaded Beast*
Switches and Transitions (S&T)	US	Underswitch
	USTap	Underswitch Tap
	JUS	Jumping Underswitch
	SKT	Side Kickthrough
	J-SKT	Jumping Side Kickthrough**
	L-SKT	Levitating Side Kickthrough**
	FS	Full Scorpion
	SS	Scorpion Switch
	FStep	Front Step
	FST	Front Step Through
	FKT	Front Kickthrough

*Remember that Loaded Beast is a Base Position! We've grouped it with FSS here for ease of reference.

**When writing a Jumping or Levitating Side Kickthrough, you'll see a L - or J - which would mean levitate or jump to.

HOW TO WRITE OUT A FLOW

Do you remember the Call Out formula? We use this same format in our written Flows, too, so all you need to remember is: DIRECTION > LIMB > COMMAND, or, in the case of Jumping or Levitating Side Kickthroughs, ACTION > DIRECTION > LIMB > COMMAND.

For example:

L L SKT = Left Leg Side Kickthrough

Here are a few guidelines to follow when writing out your Flows.

- Always start with the base position, writing the name in full. For instance, if you'd say "Set Crab", then you'd write "Crab"
- Use commas between each call out, unless it's a combination
- For combinations, use a dash in place of the words TO or INTO, for example: "Left leg Underswitch TO Loaded Beast" would be written as "*L L US – LB*"
- You would also use a dash to represent the command "Return To" after a FSS
- When returning to a position after a FSS, write out the full name of the position you are returning to, for example: "Right arm Crab Reach, return to Crab" would be written as "*R A CR – Crab*"

Example 1:

Crab, L L US, R L US, L L JUS - R L SKT

Translates to:

Set Crab
Left leg Underswitch
Right leg Underswitch
Left leg Jumping Underswitch TO right leg Side Kickthrough

Example 2:

R A CR - Crab, L L FS, Crab

Translates to:

Right Arm Crab Reach
Return to Crab
Left Leg Full Scorpion
Set Crab

Example 3:

R A CR – Crab – L L JUS

Translates to:

Right Arm Crab Reach
Return to crab INTO
Left leg Jumping Underswitch

Note: In this example, the first dash indicates "return to" because we are returning to the base Crab position, which is written out. The second dash indicates the command "INTO", signifying that we don't want the reaching hand to make contact with the ground before going into the Jumping Underswitch.

Command/Movement	**Symbol**
"Set"	"Ape", "Beast", Crab" or "Loaded Beast"
Regular transition to next move	, (comma)
TO/INTO	- (dash)
Return to	- (dash)

SAMPLE FLOWS

Below you'll find 5 sample flows to help in your own progress. Like the Beast Flow, these flows are excellent examples of how the pieces can fit together - just keep in mind that the combinations are endless! Practice each Flow, either repeating the Flow as it's written or by leading with the opposite leg.

Referring to the abbreviations on page 73, translate the full Call Out versions into the correct written format. Check the box at the bottom of the next page to find the correct answers for each Flow!

FLOW 1	Call Out	Written Flow
	Set Crab Right leg Underswitch Left leg Underswitch Right arm Crab Reach, return to Crab Left arm Crab Reach, return to Crab	

FLOW 2	Call Out	Written Flow
	Set Crab Right leg Full Scorpion Left leg Underswitch Right leg Side Kickthrough Jump to left leg Side Kickthrough Set Crab	

FLOW 3	Call Out	Written Flow
	Set Loaded Beast Wave Unload, return to Loaded Beast Right leg Beast Reach TO Front Step, return to Loaded Beast Right leg Front Kickthrough, pop it back to Loaded Beast Left leg Underswitch TO right arm Crab Reach, return to Crab	

FLOW 4	Call Out	Written Flow
	Set Beast Right leg Side Kickthrough Levitate to left leg Side Kickthrough Left leg Jumping Underswitch INTO left arm Crab Reach, return to Crab INTO Right leg Underswitch	

FLOW	Call Out	Written Flow
5	Set Crab Right leg Jumping Underswitch Right Leg Full Scorpion Left leg Jumping Underswitch Left leg Full Scorpion Jump to left leg Side Kickthrough Levitate to right leg Side Kickthrough Right leg Underswitch INTO Loaded Beast Right leg Front Step Through, return to Loaded Beast Left leg Front Kickthrough, pop it back to Loaded Beast Set Beast	

Answers:

Flow 1: Crab, R L US, L L US, R A CR – Crab, L A CR – Crab
Flow 2: Crab, R L FS, L L US, R L SKT, L L J-SKT, Crab
Flow 3: Loaded Beast, WU – LB, R L BR – FStep – LB, R L FKT – LB, L L US – R A CR – Crab
Flow 4: Beast, R L SKT, L L L-SKT, L L JUS – L A CR – Crab – R L US
Flow 5: Crab, R L JUS, R L FS, L L JUS, L L FS, L L J-SKT, R L L-SKT, R L US – LB, R L FST – LB, L L FKT – LB, Beast

CHAPTER 5

PRACTICE

BEGINNING YOUR ANIMAL FLOW PRACTICE

Now that you've completed the workshop, you've got a ton of information - but where do you begin your practice?

DRILL THE BASICS

The best way to start practicing AF right away is to drill the basics. It's common for new students who've just completed the course to want to focus only on the Flows, or other parts they particularly like. While there's nothing wrong with focusing on the movements that make us feel good, it's still important to always be drilling ALL of the movements.

Even if it's only for a rep or two, by practicing all of the movements you'll be keeping the patterns fresh in your system.

SAMPLE WARM UP

Here's an example of the warm-up Mike performs every single time he practices AF:

1. **Wrist Mobs:** Go through each Wrist Mob and any additional wrist and hand preparation activities that you have in your tool box.
2. **Activations:** Perform both Beast and Crab Activations at your current threshold. Perform at least two sets each for max. time (with perfect technique).
3. **Form Specific Stretches:** Perform the Form Specific Stretch Flow from Chapter 4. Perform at least two reps of each stretch or go through the entire flow twice.
4. **Traveling Forms:** Do your ABC's, making sure you hit each variation of each animal.

    Ape – Lateral Ape versions 1,2,3, and Forward Traveling Ape/Frog

    Beast – Forward, Reverse, Lateral

    Crab – Forward, Reverse

5. **Switches & Transitions:** Go through each S&T from each category, even if it's for just a couple of reps. Call out to yourself either out loud or in your head.

Underswitch	Scorpion Switch
Underswitch Tap	Full Scorpion
Jumping Underswitch	Front Step
Side Kickthrough	Front Step Through
Jumping Side Kickthrough	Front Kickthrough
Levitating Side Kickthrough	

6. **Flow:** Perform the Beast Flow to both sides. Begin with the right leg as you did in the workshop, and then repeat the entire thing, starting with the left leg. Be sure to call out for yourself, performing as many sets as you'd like.
7. **Practice:** Here you can decide how you want to spend the rest of your flow session. You could focus on free flow, design a flow, practice something that you're not strong at, or practice the things you really like. You'll likely want to spend time on the things you love most, but remember that to become a well-rounded Flowist, you'll need to invest time in the areas that feel most challenging at the start of your journey.

PRACTICING YOUR CALL OUTS

The Animal Flow language is just as important as the moves, and just like learning any new language, it's going to take practice and consistency!

You'll have the opportunity to use the Call Out language as you're teaching the Animal Flow moves to your clients and classes, but don't be afraid to use it in your personal practice. We highly recommend calling out your own moves either out loud or to yourself while practicing. This is an easy way to get in a little extra practice, and really lock in the language.

Here are some great ways to practice your Call Outs.

1. **Voice recording**. Most smart phones have a Voice Note or Voice Memo app that allows you to record your voice. Design a Flow of 8-10 movements then record it (slowly!) on your device. Play it back while practicing the Flow. You can also do this with the Beast Flow, any of the sample Flows included in this manual, and any of the Homework Flows that are posted in the Animal Flow Certified Instructors group on Facebook.
2. **Vocal solo practice**. While it feels a little strange at first, one of the best ways to master the Call Out language is to vocalize the language in your own practice.
    - You could Call Out all your drills in full, in the same way as we do during the workshop – for instance, if performing alternating Front Steps, you would Call Out the movement ('Left leg Front Step') before initiating the move.
    - Try combining your Call Out practice with your Free Flow exploration. Set a timer for 1-2 minutes and vocalize each movement as you perform it. This adds an additional layer of complexity as you need to bring awareness to the skill of developing Flows spontaneously.
3. **Engage other instructors**. Get together (online or in person) and practice your Call Outs either by building a Flow together in real time or playing a game of 'pass along', where you take turns to contribute 2-3 moves to a Flow. Practice your Call Out language as you go.

STAYING CURRENT WITH YOUR PRACTICE

You'll find lots of ways to stay fresh and up-to-date with your Animal Flow practice. These include:

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook

We have such an incredible global community of Animal Flow instructors, and it's easy to interact with them on our Closed Facebook page. Request to join the group for Animal Flow Certified Instructors, at:

www.facebook.com/groups/AnimalFlowCoaches/

You will be prompted to answer two questions when you request to join, so please be sure to answer those. If your Facebook name is different from the name we have you registered under, please shoot us an email to let us know.

Once on the page, you'll see that other instructors are constantly posting their practice videos and questions. You'll also find what we call the "Weekly Homework Assignment," from one of our Master Instructors. At the end of the week, the Master Instructor will provide a follow up video with feedback based on the homework submitted.

Note that some regions, including Australia/New Zealand, Spain, UK, and others also have smaller groups for Instructors from that area. Your Master Instructor can advise you on any additional groups that exist in your region.

Instagram

If you're on Instagram, check out and follow the **@AnimalFlowOfficial** account. Every single day we repost an Animal Flow-related post from one of our instructors. Once you become a Certified Instructor, be sure to tag us in any of your posts so that you can be featured. We also regularly share shout outs for classes that are happening all around the world – tag us in your IG Stories so that we can share what you're up to. Remember to geo-tag your location so it's easy for people to find you!

ANIMAL FLOW ON DEMAND

Animal Flow's On Demand channel is a subscription service that gives you unlimited access to tutorials, classes, and Flows with Mike and the Master Instructor team.

https://ondemand.animalflow.com/

As an important part of our Animal Flow community, you get access to special rates and discounts for On Demand so if you're looking for inspiration for your Flow practice, or reminders on those small but critical details in your technical execution, be sure to take advantage of it!

JAMS

One of the things that we're most proud of with Animal Flow is our community. It's very common for Animal Flow Instructors to meet up with each other all around the world. This could be with other instructors from your area whom you practice with on a regular basis, or it could be a one-time meet-up when you're visiting a new place. Feel free to post on the Instructors FB page that you'll be traveling and would like to meet up, or that you'll be hosting a jam and see whose available in your area.

What do I do at a jam?

A "jam" is exactly what it sounds like: you're just meeting up with other Instructors to play and practice. There's no strict format, but an easy template is to follow the suggestions for general practice in the previous section. We also like to put a strong emphasis on the Call Outs during the jams, so be sure to make that a priority. You may also want to work together to create a Flow and post a video of it on the Instructors page!

INSTRUCTOR RESOURCE AREA

We provide additional resources on the Animal Flow website. The level of access you have depends on whether you have completed the certification process or not.

1. **All Workshop Students:** Everyone who completes the workshop has access to our tutorial series on Call Outs. In these videos, Mike provides a detailed overview of the Call Out language and flow combination possibilities: You will need to be logged in to have access to that section.

2. **Certified Instructors:** Once you've passed your Test Out and are officially a Certified Animal Flow Instructor, you will have access to the rest of the Instructor Resource Area. This includes: Additional Tips Videos; archives of all the previous Homework assignments; sample group class formats and a video of Mike teaching a sample class; the Instructor Agreement, FAQ, Trademark Guidelines, and Code of Conduct; and other helpful information.

   This is also where you find access to purchase your Certified Animal Flow Instructor tank tops and shirts.

ADVANCED WORKSHOPS

We offer numerous opportunities for you to further your Animal Flow practice

LEVEL 2

Level 2 workshops are open to anyone who has completed Level 1. You'll learn how to successfully perform the Level 2 movements, as well as how to integrate them with Level 1 to create extended Flows with an increased degree of complexity and intensity. The two-day agenda includes:

- ✓ Review of key Level 1 moves
- ✓ Intro to Hand Balancing: Tuck Balances
- ✓ New Transitions: Reaching Underswitch, Scorpion Sweeps, Crocodile Rolls, Pop Outs, Roll Through, and Underswitch to Ape
- ✓ New traveling forms: Bear, Leopard, Crocodile
- ✓ Further understanding of Energy Rolls, Redirects and Brakes
- ✓ How to strategically use tempo changes
- ✓ Properly integrating Animal Travels
- ✓ Combining L1 & L2 movements
- ✓ Intermediate flow design

MENTORSHIP WEEKS AND RETREATS

We offer one Mentorship and several retreats per year, in locations around the world.

At a Mentorship, you'll join Mike Fitch and select Master Instructors for a full week (7 days/6 nights) of immersive learning. We'll cover a wide range of sessions that are all about enhancing, implementing, and promoting your Animal Flow skills. The weeklong curriculum varies in each location but typically includes science, group class formats, applications for special populations, advanced flow design, and more. Plus, you'll enjoy awesome social activities with other Animal Flow Instructors and go on amazing adventures in the surrounding areas.

Animal Flow Retreats are small, informal events offering Flowists the chance to get together for a memorable long weekend (4 days/4 nights) of fun and practice with Mike and fellow Flowists from around the world. We'll work on techniques, create individual and group flows, and share our practice with each other. In between the flow time, we'll take advantage of a range of great activities in the local region.

RE-SIT A WORKSHOP

No matter how long you've been practicing Animal Flow, there's always benefit to taking your Level 1 workshop again to brush up on the specifics and refine your practice. Once you've taken Level 1, you'll be eligible to re-sit the workshop for just 50% of the advertised rate. Send an email to admin@animalflow.com with the workshop you want to attend and we'll let you know how to lock it in!

The 50% discount is also available when you re-sit Level 2.

APPENDICES

CERTIFICATION TEST OUT INSTRUCTIONS

In order to become an Official / Certified Animal Flow Instructor, you'll need to demonstrate that you've mastered what you've learned and are able to coach your clients or students. This is done through the "Test Out."

You might be able to complete a Test Out in person, if a live test session is offered in your area. If there is no live test in your area, you must submit a Test Out video within 30-90 days after completing your workshop. The requirements for what you need to demonstrate are exactly the same if you attend a live test or submit on video.

There will be two sections of the Test Out. Each should be submitted in its own video.

- **Video 1:** Performing the moves yourself
- **Video 2:** Create your own Flow and show that you can teach it to another person.

VIDEO 1: PERFORM THE MOVES YOURSELF

Demonstrate that you can perform each of the Animal Flow moves listed below.

1. Perform a few reps of each of these moves. For Beast and Crab Traveling Forms, you should perform 5-6 steps each direction (forward and reverse), and for Lateral Traveling Forms (Apes), you should perform 5-6 reps to each side. For the Switches and Transitions, make sure to show at least 3 reps on each side.
2. Do them in the EXACT ORDER LISTED BELOW.
3. DO NOT PUT THEM INTO A FLOW. We need to see each move clearly by itself. We want to see them one at a time, in the order presented below.
4. You can do the moves one after the other, or you can take a break to rest in between if you need to.
5. Doing the moves out of order, or in a flow, or with too many reps, can double or triple the amount of time it takes your Master Instructor to grade your video. The Master Instructor will be filling out an Assessment Form while they watch your video. If the moves are out of order, they have to stop your video and start looking for components.

In this section, we want to see that you understand the differences between the moves, and that you can perform each one correctly. Pay attention to your form and the details!

Here is the list of moves to demonstrate:

Form Specific Stretches – 2 Repetitions per side

1. Loaded Beast - Unload
2. Wave Unload
3. Beast Reach
4. Ape Reach
5. Crab Reach
6. Scorpion Reach

Traveling Forms – 5-6 Repetitions per direction

1. Lateral Traveling Ape Version 1 – Low Hip
2. Lateral Traveling Ape Version 2- High Hip
    a. High Hip Modified Beast Pause
    b. Integrated as one movement
3. Lateral Traveling Ape Version 3 – Reaching
4. Forward Traveling Ape
5. Traveling Beast – Forward and Reverse
6. Traveling Crab – Forward and Reverse

Switches and Transitions – 3-4 Repetitions per side

1. Underswitch
2. Underswitch Tap
3. Jumping Underswitch
    a. Modified Beast Pause
    b. Integreated as one movement
4. Scorpion Switch
5. Full Scorpion
6. Side Kickthrough
7. Jumping Side Kickthrough
8. Levitating Side Kickthrough
    a. High Hip Modified Beast Pause
    b. Integrated as one movement
9. Front Step Through
10. Front Kickthrough

VIDEO 2: DESIGN AND CALL OUT A FLOW

In this section, we want to see your ability to design a quality flow, and to properly Call Out the moves to your participant. You should design a 90-second flow and teach it to a client, friend or someone who has taken the workshop. Then video tape yourself "calling out" the Flow while they perform it.

Here are some rules and hints:

1. The Flow should be 90 seconds long (give or take a few seconds).
2. You will NOT be performing the Flow yourself. Instead, you will teach it to someone else. Teach it to them first, and then video tape yourself calling out the Flow while they perform it. By the time you video tape it, they should already have learned the moves. So in the video, you will Call Out the Flow while the student performs it.
3. If the participant makes a mistake, you should correct them and move on. Do NOT stop and spend a lot of time teaching the move again. We want to see that you recognize the error and give instructions to correct it, but the video is not the time for extensive teaching. If the student makes a major mistake that requires extra coaching, simply stop and reshoot the video.
4. You may NOT use notes when Calling Out the Flow! We want to see that you know how to "Call Out" the Flow without needing assistance.
5. You must also appear on camera while directing the Flow. We want to see you interact with your participant.
6. Make sure to give the participant cues or form corrections when needed.
7. Remember to always call out the direction just before the command. (For example, say "LEFT leg Underswitch; don't just say "Underswitch").
8. The Flow should be a mix of Form-Specific Stretches, and Switches and Transitions. There is no set minimum number of moves, but use a variety of moves. We want to see that you have a good knowledge of the different moves. **DO NOT JUST REPEAT EACH MOVEMENT TO BOTH SIDES**, as we want to see the versatility of your flow design.
9. **DO NOT INCLUDE ACTIVATIONS OR TRAVELING FORMS** in the flow.
10. Use only LEVEL 1 moves.
11. The goal is to demonstrate your understanding of how the moves fit together, so aim for fluidity and making sure that the switches and

transitions flow together easily.

12. You will be graded on whether you used a variety of Level 1 moves, and how well you Call Out to your participant.
13. If English is not your primary language, you can Call Out to the participant in your own language. Remember, the names of the Animal Flow moves must always be in English. However, your cueing, and calling of the directions and limbs can be in your own language.

SUBMITTING YOUR VIDEOS

1. **DUE DATES**

   You should submit your videos between 30 – 90 days after the workshop.

   - Do NOT submit it earlier than 30 days. We believe you need at least that much time to practice the moves.
   - Don't wait longer than 90 days. We encourage you to start practicing shortly after the workshop as we see a high degree of readiness within 90 days.
   - If you have an injury or some reason you can't complete your videos within 90 days, you can request an extension by emailing us at Certifications@AnimalFlow.com. Please don't abuse the extension process or make up reasons. You may be granted one 90-day extension maximum.
   - If your video is submitted 180 days or more after that workshop, we'll need to assess a late fee of $50. We charge this fee because our MIs will have moved on to the next batch of workshops to grade by then, and your late submission creates extra unplanned work. We usually have to pay someone else to take on grading your exam by then, so we need to pass on this cost.
   - If you have not submitted your video within one year of the workshop, you will need to either retake the workshop (at a 50% discount) or hire one of the MIs to provide one-on-one coaching to get you ready for submission.

2. **Video Formats:** You should submit TWO videos. One for Section 1 (Performing the Forms) and one for Section 2 (Coaching the Flow). DO NOT send us 20 separate videos with each separate move.
3. **Video Quality:** The videos do not need to be very high quality. We just want to see that you can perform the moves and Call Out.

1. Shooting on a cell phone is fine.
2. You DO NOT have to include labels, or graphics, or anything fancy.
3. Please make sure we can HEAR you in the coaching section. Avoid shooting in loud gyms, places with a lot of background noise, or with loud music.
4. Shoot HORIZONTAL. If you shoot vertical, you are sure to go out of frame.

4. **Music:** DO NOT use music in your video.
   - We want to hear you coaching, and music makes that hard.
   - If you upload a video that includes copyrighted music to YouTube, YouTube may block it or mute the sound. If you upload copyrighted music to our YouTube channel, we get in trouble. Don't get us in trouble.
5. **Uploading:** Upload your videos to YouTube or another streaming service (Vimeo, etc.). Do NOT send us videos as email attachments that have to be downloaded, including via WeTransfer or Google Drive. We will not accept videos that we have to download to watch. If you don't have a YouTube or other type of video channel, you can upload to our channel (instructions below).
   - When you upload to YouTube, make sure the video is set to UNLISTED. Do NOT set it to "private" or to "public." If it is private, we cannot see it and your video grading will be delayed. If it is public, anyone can see the moves and we will ask you to take the video down.
   - If you don't have your own video streaming account, email us and we will send you a dropbox link to upload.

SUBMISSION FORM

The following information must be included in your test submission. Please COPY this form and submit it to Certifications@AnimalFlow.com

a) Your full name used for registration

b) Your full name as you'd like it listed on your Certificate

c) Your email address

d) Date, location and Master Instructor for the workshop you took

e) Your current location (we list this on your social media announcement)

e) Links to your TWO uploaded test videos

f) If applying to be an AF Instructor, please tell us your applicable fitness credentials:

g) Please attach photo of yourself performing favorite AF move (we use this for your social media announcement)

h) Please attach proof you completed the online exam (PDF certificate or email confirmation). (Download the PDF from www.animalflow.com/my-courses; or send screen shot of the confirmation email after you completed the online course)

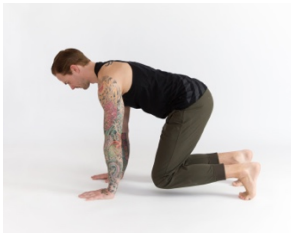
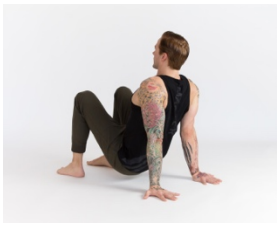
GRADING

1. Your video submission will be graded by the Master Instructor who taught your workshop.
2. The Master Instructor uses the attached Assessment Form to grade your video. He/she will assign points for each section. You will receive the Assessment Form back with notes on the areas that need practice or improvement.
3. You need to score at least 80% to pass. If you don't pass, you will be able to resubmit your video again.
4. It may take up to 3 weeks for you to receive your results.

RESUBMISSIONS

1. If you don't pass your video test on the first submission, you'll receive detailed feedback from your MI with notes on what you need to correct. You are allowed to resubmit. Usually the MI will ask you to resubmit just the specific moves or areas that need work. There is no fee for this resubmission.

2. If you still don't pass after resubmitting, you'll need to pay a $50 fee for a third submission. Again, this is to cover the costs we incur for paying the MI to spend additional hours reviewing the same student. If you don't pass the 3rd time, you'll need to retake the workshop (at 50% discount) or hire an MI to provide one-on-one coaching as needed.
3. We ask you to take the submission process seriously – please follow the instructions and really pay attention to the feedback. Don't submit a poor quality test just to see what the feedback will be.

CHEAT SHEET: LEVEL 1 SCORPION VARIATIONS			
	Starts in	**Ends in**	**Notes**
Scorpion Reach	Loaded Beast 	Loaded Beast 	
Scorpion Switch	Static Beast 	Modified Crab 	
Full Scorpion	Static Crab 	Modified Crab 	

ANIMAL FLOW TERMS

Base Limb

The arm or leg that stays connected to the ground throughout either the initiation of, or entirety of, a movement. For instance, in a Left leg Front Step, the right hand/arm stays in position throughout the movement, making it the 'base' arm.

Base Position

Ape, Beast, Crab, or Loaded Beast are all known as Base Positions.

Call Out

The verbal delivery of Animal Flow instructions according to the rules of the program. Any use of the Animal Flow language is considered a Call Out, whether you're drilling movements or combining them into a full sequence.

A 'Freestyle Call Out' refers to the style of Flow that requires Flowists to respond to movements that are spontaneously instructed. If you were to 'write out the Call Out' as in a Choreographed Flow, you would itemize the names of the movements in the order in which they are to be performed, either in full or according to the approved abbreviations. See more on 'Calling Out' in the language section of Chapter 4.

End Position

The final position of all Switches & Transitions, and the second position of all Form Specific Stretches are all known as 'End Positions'.

Flowist

Someone who practices Animal Flow.

Flow Jam

A Flow Jam (or 'Jam' for short) is a gathering of Flowists and is intended for the purpose of practicing Animal Flow in an informal setting.

Forward Shoulder Load

When shoulders are aligned in front of the wrists in a weight bearing position such as in Forward Traveling Ape or Loaded Beast – Unload.

Movement Window

Any space that is created through which a limb can pass. When we 'open a movement window', we are effectively creating a suitably-sized space for a following movement to occur, such as stepping wide and forward in a Front Step, or bringing a leg underneath the body in an Underswitch.

Peak Position

The term Peak Position refers to the highest point that can be reached with our hips during positions that require inversion. In Level 1 we see this in Wave Unload, Beast Reach, Full Scorpion, Scorpion Switch, Scorpion Reach, Levitating Side Kickthrough, and Lateral Traveling Ape – version 2.

Press On The Gas

This is a colloquial way to reference pressing on the accelerator of a car. To do so in Animal Flow references driving down through our forefoot, taking our ankle into plantarflexion and lifting the heel/s from the ground. By contrast, when the heels are flat, we would consider the brakes to be on.

Transitional Position (Modified Beast, HHMB)

This refers to a variation of a Base Position that is primarily used to transitional point.

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