

**Keeper fit**  
How Petr Cech maintains his premier physique

**Villa thriller**  
Ashley Young shows you his top six finish

**Murray not walker**  
Britain's best tennis man's winning moves

# REGIME

SUPERSTARS' TRAINING SECRETS

TRAIN LIKE

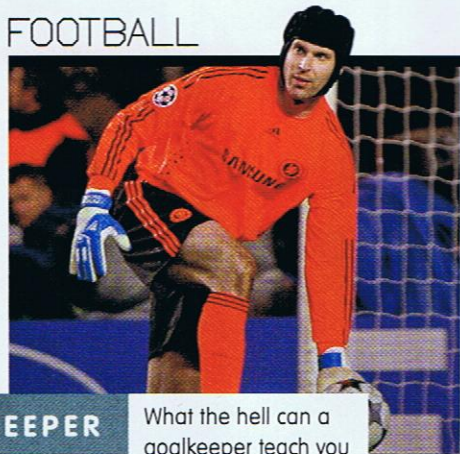
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action 3

[WORDS: STUART HOOD  
PHOTOGRAPHY: ADRIAN MYERS]

# PETR CECH

Chelsea's big man crunches your core



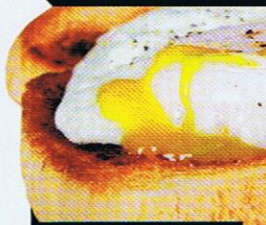
**KEEPER**

What the hell can a goalkeeper teach you

about fitness? He spends most of the time watching the action up the other end, avoiding coins – no? Not true: The Chelsea man needs a strong core, so he can cope with the buffeting he receives in the air and move in either direction quickly. The 27-year-old needs dynamic legs, so he can rise above attackers in the area. And the two-time Premier League champion needs ripped arms so he can punch or block shots that rain in at around 80mph. So strong core, strong legs, and strong arms – in other words, the body you've always dreamed of.

**1/ NUTRITION**

Healthy diet = healthy pay cheque



And I'll have fish, which is a great source of good fats, or chicken, which is full of muscle-building protein."

**SNACK**

"I'll have a banana because of the combination of carbs and vitamin B."

**DINNER**

"My body holds onto carbs for longer than most, so I don't need to take in any more in during the evening. For dinner I'll mix proteins with salad. So something like steak with an avocado salad."

**TREAT**

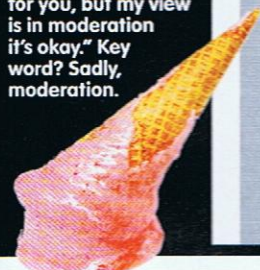
Then, when the final whistle sounds, Petr lets himself go. Sort of. "You can't keep eating like that everyday," smiles the goalie. "Sometimes your body needs pleasure. And when that happens I turn to ice cream. It's bad for you, but my view is in moderation it's okay." Key word? Sadly, moderation.

**BREAKFAST**

"I will have two slices of wholemeal toast topped with two poached eggs. This gives me enough energy and proteins for training. Plus I'll have a bowl of berries to give me a shot of healthy sugars and coffee to give me an energy boost."

**LUNCH**

"For lunch I have carbs to energise me for afternoon training. The options Chelsea puts on are boiled potatoes, brown rice or wholemeal pasta. With this I'll have veg like broccoli and carrots to boost my calcium levels and stock up on nutrients.

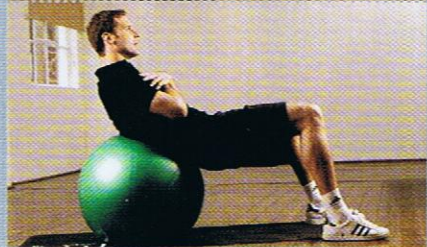
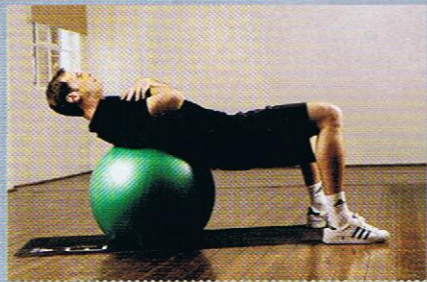


**2/ THE WORKOUT**

A Swiss ball and a Czech keeper in perfect harmony

1

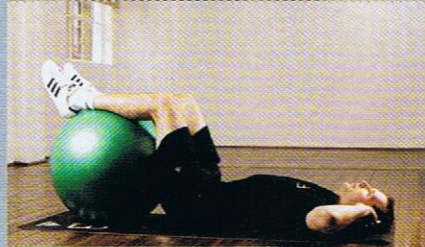
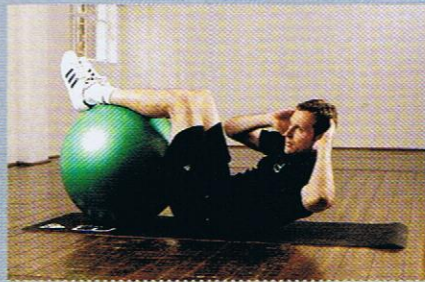
**CORE**



**SWISS BALL BALANCE SIT-UPS**

**Reps: 20**  
"I constantly work on my core stability," says the 6ft 5in stopper. "It's my number one necessity because when I go in the air to catch a cross people bounce off me. If you don't have a Swiss ball, you can just do

normal sit-ups, but if you can, use one. The movement of the ball means you have to control every movement with your muscles, making you much stronger." Complete four sets, then lift your shirt and run to the mirror to see it hasn't worked.



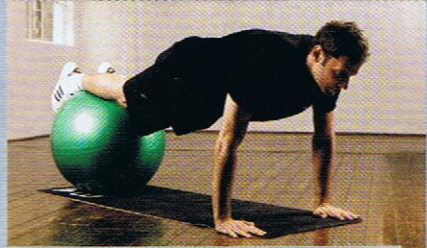
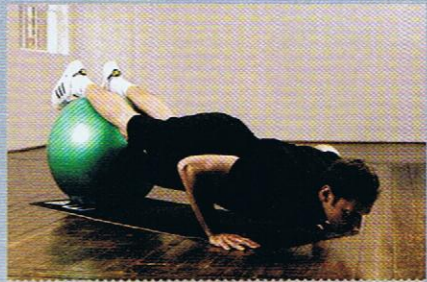
**ABDOMINALS CROSS**

**Reps: 20**  
Abs, abs, abs – it's all anyone ever goes on about, but, as Cech points out: "If you want to have balance and strong core stability you have to train the obliques the same way as you train the abs, because the whole system has to

work together. Also don't think this is just for keepers. Outfield players need good strength in their belly, because strong abs and obliques mean you can run faster, move better and change direction quicker." Do four sets each side.

3

**ARMS**



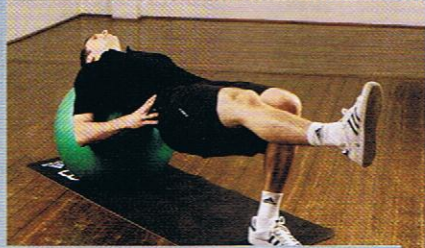
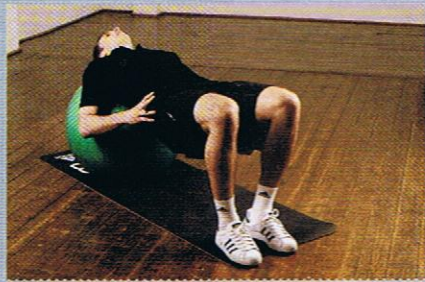
**SWISS BALL PUSH-UPS**

**Reps: 20**  
It's that ball again, but this time, it's to sculpt your arms, not tone your core. "First and foremost, I need strength in my arms to catch the ball or push people," explains the man with more clean sheets than a Chinese laundry.

"But, because I dive up to 600 times every day in training, I also need to build up the shoulder and arm muscles to protect myself from injury. This is a great exercise for this as it works the triceps, pecs and deltoids."

4

**LEGS**



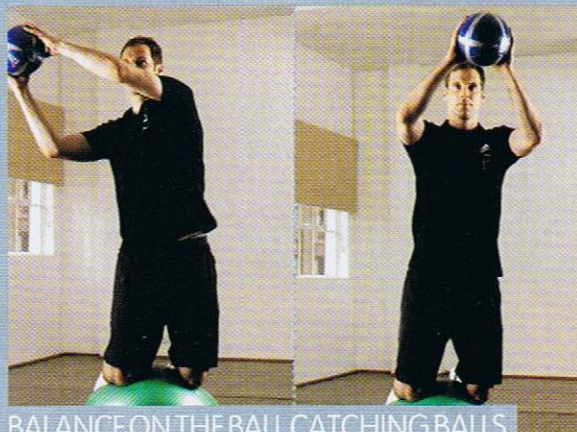
**SWISS BALL LEG RAISES**

**Reps: 20**  
"This one is for the leg muscles," states the big man. "The ball's job here is to offload the strain on the back. Sometimes when people squat with heavy weights, they work the legs, but completely destroy their backs. That won't happen

here, because the pressure of the ball keeps your back in position without you having to place anything on your shoulders. I'd suggest four sets of 20 again. Those who want a bit more of a challenge can do the exercise with dumbbells in your hands." Right...

2

## GROIN AND CORE



BALANCE ON THE BALL CATCHING BALLS

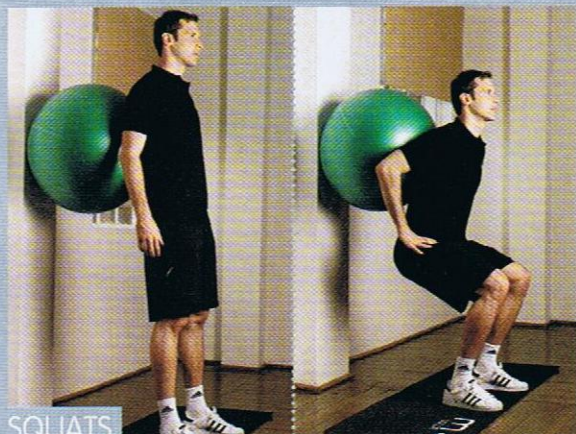
**Reps:** 6x2mins

Hands up, this one is specific to keepers, but it doesn't mean it can't help you.

"The virtue of the Swiss ball here is that it makes the exercise much harder," reveals the Czech Republic's last line of defence. "You need to stay balanced, yet switch direction and cope with the possibility of having to catch a ball anywhere from

low to your left to high to your right from a moving surface. Balance is integral, obviously, and because of this it really works the groin and core." Complete six sets of two minutes, with a minute's rest between each. Or, more realistically, fall flat on the floor and wait for the gym's designated first aider.

## LEGS



SQUATS

**Reps:** 3 per leg

"As a keeper you need to have strong legs so you can spring," states Cech. "But you also need plenty of upper body strength so you can get up quickly when you land. By using the Swiss ball, your upper body has to work hard to stabilise itself. And because you are raising your legs, you need to keep your glutes [aka

arse cheeks] very tight to stay steady. Initially do five sets of three reps per leg, holding each for 30 seconds, then kick on as you get fitter until, eventually, you can hold each rep for a minute." For 'eventually', read 'around 2020'.

*Cech is ambassador for Adidas Action 3 - the new Dry Max deodorant. Visit [adidas.co.uk/action3](http://adidas.co.uk/action3)*

TRAIN LIKE

## ASHLEY YOUNG

Three steps to wing wizardry with the PFA Young Player of the Year...

1

## CROSSING

Young causes havoc not by aiming for specific heads, but because he can either cut in off the left wing to whip crosses into the six yard box, or go to the byline and chip the ball to the back post or penalty spot. In other words, wing-play isn't rocket science, it's about practising exercises until you can hit the spot you want every time. "This drill seems simple, but it's my most important," says the England man. "Start with two people outside the box and a winger out wide. The players exchange a one-two then play the ball out wide. The winger waits for an instruction from the coach - 'front post', 'penalty spot', 'back post' - then concentrates on hitting that area."

2

## DRIBBLING AT PACE

Speed is one of Young's main weapons, but even his pace is not enough to succeed at the top level. "Nowadays, everybody's quick," says Young, "but a winger can stand out by being able to run with the ball at high speed." More Traore than Giggs? Worry not, Ashley's here to help. Get a mate,

two balls and set yourselves up with a cone at your feet and then another cone 15 metres away. Then, as Young advises: "Just race each other to the cones and back with the ball, and go again after 30-seconds recovery." This forces you to be competitive, and gives you a skill that's instantly transferable to a game.

3

## SHIELDING THE BALL

"I've been taught to shield the ball by getting my body into the man who is marking and get side on when receiving the ball," reveals Young. "It's like sitting down. You lean in and arch your back, get down low and then the defender can't get round you." Improve your ball retention by setting up a square area with cones about five metres apart, then completing the following drill. "Get a defender and a receiver in the square, then have the player outside the square play the ball to the receiver and run around it one-and-a-half times, before stopping on the opposite side to where he began," instructs Young. "The idea is that the receiver has to shield the ball for long enough to feed the ball back into the player's new position."

Young in action for Aston Villa

Young wears Adidas F50is. See [bragster.com/F50i](http://bragster.com/F50i) for more info