

# RUG WORK – More on Improvisation

*By Charles Peebles*

They're plastic disks with rubber on the convex side, and they're for sliding furniture across carpet. You can pick up a four-pack of them for under ten dollars at one of the Marts. Or you can pay several times that amount for a pair of them from one of the fitness-gear purveyors who've sprung up in recent years like so many mushrooms after this past June's wetness. But give some credit to Valerie, a woman who stamped "Valslide" on this simple hardware-store item and threw in a video to make her big mark-up fortune (a la TRX). Admit it, you probably wish you'd thought of stuff like this. But you could probably use plastic saucers almost as easily. My point here is that if you understand the kinesiology of an exercise movement, what you use to achieve that movement is limited only to your ability to improvise. These can substitute handily for many of the machines in your health club, and you can do them in the living room with no clutter at all.

But in the manner of many bodyweight exercises like pushups, pull-ups, squat variations, ab-wheel rolls, etc., they're not easy. And you can make them ever harder by adding weight or easier by shifting your center of gravity. You can even experiment with the friction-coefficients of different carpets. Be thankful shag went out with the seventies!

We've all seen the adductor/abductor machines where so many women spend time fluttering out high reps with low weights, mistakenly believing they're somehow "toning" the inner thigh. Years ago the Thigh-Master pretended to emulate that as an at-home solution. It brought wealth to Suzanne Somers and a few others, but didn't do much for anyone's thighs. Those adductors and abductors lie so deep you won't see them, and they require far more intensity than most people are using. It's been proven best to focus on developing lean muscle- everything else you want will follow.



Abductor/adductor

Adding resistance



Hamstring curl



Hip flexion/extension



Chest Fly



Shift bodyweight to make harder or easier



Easier than the ab-wheel... not!

*Photos courtesy of*

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