

TOWEL PULL-APART

FOUNDATIONAL MOVEMENT: Upper-back activation and posture control (helps strengthen the muscles that open the chest and support the shoulders)

- **WHAT SHOULD BE STABLE?** Core, ribs, and hips stay steady.
- **WHAT SHOULD BE MOBILE?** Shoulders and upper back.

EQUIPMENT: Rolled up towel or light resistance band

POSITION: Stand tall with your feet hip-width apart, knees softly bent. Hold a rolled-up towel or light resistance band in front of you at chest height. Keep your hands slightly wider than your shoulders, palms facing the floor.

START:

1. Imagine a string gently pulling you up from the top of your head.
2. Take a deep breath in and gently lift your chest without arching your lower back.

MOVEMENT:

3. As you exhale, pull the towel apart by drawing your shoulder blades together (imagine holding a pencil between them).
4. Keep your shoulders relaxed and away from your ears, and remember, try not to arch your lower back.
5. Hold for two seconds, focusing on the muscles between your shoulder blades turning on.

RETURN:

6. Inhale as you slowly return to the starting position with control. That is one rep.
7. Repeat 5-8 times.

TRAINER TIPS/CUES:

- Move slowly and focus on feeling your upper-back muscles, not your arms.
- Keep your ribs down and your neck long.
- Think about standing tall and keeping your chest open without arching your lower back.

REGRESSIONS: Do this seated or hold the towel lightly without pulling apart, focusing only on posture and breathing. **PROGRESSIONS:** Use a light resistance band instead of a towel or add a small pause at the end of each pull for 3–5 seconds.