

LOWER BACK AND CORE STABILITY WORKOUT

Main Goal: Develop Core Strength

Training Level: Beginner

Equipment: Band or Cable Machine

Training Block: 8 Weeks

Frequency: 2 Days/Week

Duration: 20 - 30 Minutes

A strong core improves posture and makes everyday movements easier and more efficient. In terms of weightlifting, a strong core will also help you generate more power and help reduce the risk for injuries. And contrary to popular belief, the core consists of more than just your abs and the front side of your body. The lumbo-pelvic-hip-complex, also known as your “core”, consists of the lower back, pelvis, hip and abdominal muscles.

This workout is specifically designed to activate your core muscles across every region and is versatile enough to be performed as its own workout, as a warm-up prior to a heavy lifting session, or as an active form of recovery.

	Abdominals			Glutes and Hips		Lower Back		
	Rectus Abdominis	Transverse Abdominis	Obliques	Glutes	Pirformis	Multifidus	Erector Spinae	Quadratus Lumborum
Dead Bug	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
Bird Dog				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Glute Bridge		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Plank	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓
Side Plank	✓		✓	✓				
Palloff Press	✓	✓	✓					

As with any exercise, maintaining good form and consciously contracting your muscles throughout the exercise is crucial for maximizing results. In addition to this, the transverse abdominis, which is the deepest abdominal muscle in the body, requires additional drawing-in maneuvers to adequately engage it.

To activate the transverse abdominis: lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat, then inhale and let your belly expand. As you exhale, draw your belly button down toward the floor as tense up your abdominals muscles. Hold the contraction for 5 - 10 seconds as you continue to breathe normally, then slowly release. Repeat as desired.

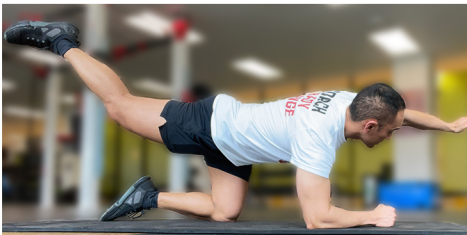
Core Stability Workout

Perform each exercise in order for 30 seconds, focusing on a “mind-body connection” by actively engaging and consciously contracting the muscles in your abdominals, glutes, and low back. Each exercise can be performed individually for 1 - 3 sets each with up to a minute rest in-between sets, or performed as a circuit and repeated 2 - 3 times with a shorter 15 - 30 second rest between circuits.



Dead Bug

Lie on your back with your arms extended toward the ceiling and your knees bent 90 degrees, feet lifted off the floor. Reach one arm straight up as you extend the opposite leg towards the floor. Focus on keeping your back flat and your core muscles tight as you hold this position for 1 - 2 breaths. Slowly return your arm and leg to the starting position and repeat with the opposite arm and leg.



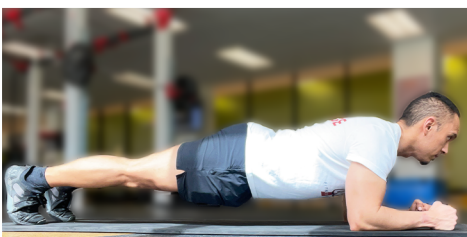
Bird Dog

Get into quadrupedal position (on all fours) on your knees with your hands positioned under your shoulders and knees under your hips. With your abs drawn in and spine neutral, slowly reach one arm and the opposite leg away from the body to form a straight line. Maintain your posture as you hold for 1 - 2 breaths. Slowly return to starting position and repeat with the opposite arm and leg.



Glute Bridge

Lie on your back with knees bent, feet hip-width apart, and heels just below your knees. Your spine should be neutral and your arms out to your sides with palms facing up. Squeeze your glutes and abs as you lift your hips as high as you can go, forming a straight line, and without arching your back. Squeeze your glutes at the top position as you hold for 2 seconds and then slowly return to starting position.



Plank

Get into quadrupedal position with either your arms extended and your hands on the floor directly under your shoulders or with your weight supported by your forearms. Draw in your navel, brace, and squeeze your glute muscles, lifting your body to form a straight line from head to heel. Hold your form for 10 - 30 seconds and up to a 1-minute maximum.



Side Plank

Lie on your side with your feet and legs stacked, your forearm on the ground, and elbow under your shoulder. Draw in your navel, brace, and squeeze your glute muscles, and lift your hips to form a straight line from your ankles to shoulders. Hold your form for 10 - 30 seconds and up to a 1-minute maximum, then return to starting position and repeat with your opposite side.



Palloff Press

Fasten an exercise band to a sturdy object at chest height. Interlace your fingers around the free end of the band and step back to create some tension in the band. Your starting position is perpendicular to the anchor point with your hands near the center of your chest. Without moving your torso, slowly reach your arms in front of your chest until they are straight. Hold for a 5-count and slowly return your hands to the starting position. Repeat for 8 - 12 reps before repeating on your other side.