

BEGINNERS' STRENGTH TRAINING EXERCISES

FOR CORE (ABDOMINALS AND LOWER BACK)

If you want to start strengthening your core, but need some assistance with the right exercises, then this programme will be a great way for you to tone your body. It's manageable and easy to follow.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS



Don't forget to warm up and cool down before and after every session by doing 5 to 10 minutes of cardio (such as walking or cycling). After cooling down, stretch.



Aim to do resistance training at least twice to three times a week every other day. You could do upper body and core in one session and then lower body in the next or a mix in each session.



Start by doing two sets of the exercises below (1 set is 12 repetitions).



Always follow the exercise instructions, because you can hurt yourself if you do the exercise wrong and it won't work your muscles as well as doing the exercise right.



Always get medical clearance before starting on **any** exercise programme.

CHAT TO HEALTHY COMPANY FOR FREE ADVICE

Healthy Company is here for you. Contact us through the Discovery app, www.discovery.co.za or 0800 320 420

ABDOMINAL CRUNCHES

- 01 | Lie flat on your back, bend your knees at a 90-degree (right) angle, with your hands supporting your head.
- 02 | Keep your neck relaxed and straight and breathe out as you lift your head and shoulders; look towards the ceiling.
- 03 | Hold this position for 3 seconds. Keep your abdominals (stomach muscles) contracted so your back stays straight. Your lower back should remain on the ground at all times.
- 04 | Hold for 3 seconds and then lower to the starting position.

OBLIQUE CRUNCHES

- 01 | Lie flat on your back, bend your knees at a 90-degree (right) angle.
- 02 | Cross your right leg over your left knee and straighten your right arm out sideways to keep you stable. Use your left hand to support your head and keep your neck relaxed.
- 03 | Bring your left shoulder across your body towards your right knee, tightening your abdominal (stomach) muscles on the left side of your stomach.
- 04 | Hold for 3 seconds and then return to the starting position.
- 05 | Once you have done a set of 12 repetitions, do the crunches on the other side.

BRIDGING

- 01 | Lie on your back with knees bent at 90 degrees, feet on the floor, toes pointing forward.
- 02 | Contract your lower abdominals and then lift your bum off the floor, aiming to form a straight line from your knees to your shoulders and keep your arms on the floor to stabilise you.
- 03 | Hold your body in this position for at least 3 seconds, then lower to the floor.
- 04 | For a more advanced exercise, cross your right foot over your left knee and repeat the above exercise by bridging on only one leg. Ensure your hips remain level when lifting your pelvis up to avoid twisting or injuring your lower back.

PRONE BRIDGING (PLANK)

- 01 | Lie on your stomach and then lift yourself on to your toes and forearms, with elbows positioned directly under your shoulders.
- 02 | Make sure your body remains straight and parallel to the floor.
- 03 | Hold this position for 20 seconds and then lower your body.
- 04 | Gradually increase the length of time that you hold the plank position until you are able to hold this for 1 minute. Repeat 3 to 5 times.