

Core Strengthening Exercises



Don't mount a cannon on a canoe

Having a strong core provides a more stable foundation to preserve the power and precision generated by your arms and legs.



Fortify your ship

Good core strength is essential for peak performance and injury prevention. Here are four potent exercises that can help improve core strength and stability.

Abdominal Brace



The basic goal of "abdominal bracing" is to tighten your abdominal wall in order to protect your spine. This exercise may be performed by imagining that someone is about to punch you in your stomach. Your stomach muscles should contract to brace for the punch. Your abdominal wall should not be "sucked in" nor "pushed out". Do not move your spine or pelvis. This contraction should be performed during all movements throughout the day to assist in spine stability.

Bird Dog



Begin on your hands and knees in a quadrupedal position. Extend your left leg and right arm into a fully straightened "bird dog" position. Hold this contraction for two seconds and return to the quadrupedal position. Do not arch your back or twist your hips at any point. Repeat with your opposite limbs, slowly alternating for three complete sets of 10 repetitions two times per day or as directed.

Dead Bug (Intermediate)



Lie flat on your back with your hips and knees bent to 90 degrees and your straightened arms reaching toward the ceiling, palms facing each other. "Tuck your tail" to flatten your lower back into the floor. Simultaneously slowly lower one arm and the opposite leg back down toward the floor. Return to the start position and repeat with your opposite limbs. Avoid arching your back, and keep your core braced throughout this movement. Repeat this alternating pattern as directed.

Side Bridge



Begin lying on your side. Rest your weight on your forearm and feet. Lift your hips toward the ceiling until your body is in a straight "plank" position. Try to avoid looking down to watch your body as this will interfere with achieving the ideal plank position. You may wish to use a mirror to ensure good form. Slowly lower your hips back to the floor and repeat as directed.

**Do not begin any exercises without consulting your chiropractor or therapist. Exercises should be performed slowly and within a relatively comfortable range. Maintain good posture and breathe naturally. Do not hold your breath. Unless otherwise instructed, stop any exercises that cause pain, or radiating symptoms.*