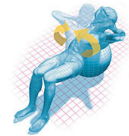


Quick & Easy Core

8 Quick Exercises to Build Core Strength Bicycling Magazine

1. Boxer Ball Crunch



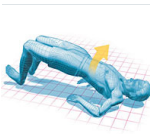
What It Works: Transverse abdominus, obliques, lower back

Exercise: A. Lie with the middle of your back on a stability ball, your knees bent 90 degrees and your feet flat on the floor. Place your hands behind your head, but don't pull on your neck.

B. Squeezing your belly button toward your spine, lift your upper back off the ball. Keeping your shoulders off the ball, trace a clockwise oval with your torso. Apply pressure with your lower back to keep the ball still through the entire motion. After 15 clockwise ovals, trace 15 counterclockwise.

Why It Works: This fluid, circular exercise builds control and that helps you minimize lateral torsion and wasted motion.

2. Power Bridge



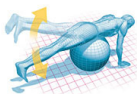
What It Works: Hip flexors, glutes, lower back

Exercise: A. Lying on your back, bend your knees and place your heels near your glutes. Arms are at your sides, palms down.

B. In one smooth motion, squeeze your glutes, raise your hips off the floor and push up from your heels to form a straight line from shoulders to knees; toes come off the floor slightly. Hold for two seconds. Keeping your toes raised, lower yourself three-quarters of the way to complete one rep. Do 20 repetitions.

Why It Works: In addition to stretching the hip flexors the bridge strengthens the link between your lower back and glutes.

3. Hip Extension



What It Works: Lower back, hamstrings, glutes

Exercise: A. Lying with your hips and stomach on the stability ball, put your hands on the floor directly under your shoulders, and extend your legs with toes resting on the floor.

B. With a straight spine and shoulder blades back, as if you're trying to make them touch, lift both legs off the floor, keeping them straight. If possible, raise them slightly higher than parallel to the floor. Hold for two seconds and lower. Do 20 reps.

Why It Works: This movement builds backside strength

4. Plank



What It Works: Transverse abdominus, upper and lower back

Exercise: A. Lying on your stomach, place your elbows under your shoulders with forearms and hands on the floor.

B. Lift your hips off the floor, keeping your back straight and abs tight, and rest on your toes. Aim for 60 seconds.

Why It Works: The plank builds strength and muscular endurance.

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5. Transverse Plank



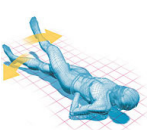
What It Works: Transverse abdominus and obliques

Exercise: A. Lie on your right side, with your right elbow under your shoulder, forearm in front for stability, and stack your left foot on your right. Raise your left arm over your head.

B. In one motion, lift your hips to create a straight line down your left side. Lower your hips a few inches off the floor; do 10 to 15 reps, then switch sides.

Why It Works: Strong obliques improve stability

6. Scissors Kick



What It Works: Transverse abdominus, hip flexors, inner and outer thighs

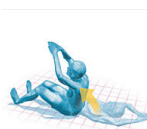
Exercise: A. Lying on your back with legs straight, place both hands palms down under your lower back.

B. Pushing your elbows down into the floor and pulling your belly button toward your spine, raise your shoulders off the floor and look toward the ceiling. Raise your legs 4 inches off the ground and scissor them: left leg over right, then right over left.

That's one rep. Work up to 100.

Why It Works: A comprehensive movement that connects key muscles, the kick also builds inner-thigh muscles

7. Catapult



What It Works: Entire core

Exercise: A. Sitting with a slight bend in your knees, press your heels against the floor. Extend arms to the front at shoulder height, palms facing each other.

B. With a straight spine and upward gaze, inhale deeply, then exhale and slowly lower your torso to the floor over five counts as you inhale. Arms are overhead.

C. In one smooth movement, leading with the arms, exhale and explode back to the starting position. Do 20 reps.

Why It Works: Contrary to its name, the catapult encourages supreme body control.

8. Boat Pose



What It Works: Transverse abdominus, lower back

Exercise: A. Sit, resting both hands lightly behind you, and lean back until your torso is at a 45-degree angle.

B. Keeping your legs together, lift them off the floor as you extend arms forward at shoulder height. Abs are tight, as thighs and torso form a 90-degree angle. If your hamstrings are tight, you'll need to bend your knees a little. Work up to holding for 60 seconds.

Why It Works: As with the plank, this pose builds the lower-back stability and core strength