

Core Exercises

Week one – 25 reps

Week two – 35 reps

Week three – 45 reps

Week four - 55 reps

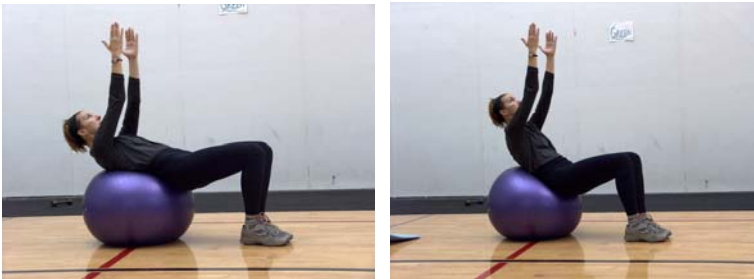
Abdominal Exercises:



Basic Abdominal Crunch

- Lie down on the floor on your back and bend your knees, placing your hands behind your head or across your chest.
- Pull your belly button towards your spine, and flatten your lower back against the floor.
- Slowly contract your abdominals, bringing your shoulder blades about one or two inches off the floor.
- Exhale as you come up and keep your neck straight, chin up.
- Hold at the top of the movement for a few seconds, breathing continuously
- Slowly lower back down, but don't relax all the way.
- Repeat with perfect form for each rep.

Physioball Crunch



To make this exercise more difficult, balance on the physioball

- Arms can be either extended as shown in photo or behind head
- Contract your abs to lift your torso off the ball, pulling the bottom of your ribcage down toward your hips.
- As you curl up, keep the ball stable (i.e., you shouldn't roll).
- Lower back down, getting a stretch in the abs
- Repeat with perfect form for each repetition

Reverse Abdominal Crunch with legs extended



- Realize that reverse crunches work the lower portion of your abdominals, while regular crunches work the upper part.
- Start by lying on your back with your legs perpendicular to the ground, knees very slightly bent and feet in the air
- Keep your arms on the floor next to you or place them comfortably behind your head.
- Rest your head on the floor, relax your shoulders and keep your back straight.
- Slowly lift your hips 1 to 2 inches off the floor, which will raise your legs and feet a few inches higher. Avoid rolling your hips backward and thus bending your back.
- Hold this position for just a moment. Squeeze your abdominal muscles and keep your head and shoulders flat against the floor.
- Slowly lower your hips back to the floor.
- For an easier reverse crunch, lift one leg at a time while the other leg's knee is bent and its foot is flat on the floor. You can also use your hands to help you lift your hips. Just remember that it's an abdominal, not arm, exercise.
- For a harder reverse crunch, add an upper abdominal crunch at the same time
- For an even hard crunch, add a physio ball or light weight medicine ball between the feet while doing this exercise

Warnings:

Avoid arching your back. Relaxing your abdominal muscles during the exercise will result in back extension (arching), putting tremendous strain on your back. If you can't avoid arching, strengthen your abdominals for a few weeks with a regular crunch before performing this exercise

Oblique Abdominal Exercise



- Lie flat on your back on a mat with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor.
- Place hands comfortably behind the head
- Keeping lower back pressed into the floor, lift your shoulder blades off the floor and then curl your upper body diagonally across your body towards your right knee.
- Contract your abs and obliques as hard as you can at the top of the movement.
- Slowly return to the starting position and repeat

- Lower back down and repeat for 20 reps on the same side before switching sides. Do 1 or more sets.

Lower Back Exercises

SuperMan Extention on Mat



Or

Super Man on Physioball



- Lie face down with ball under your hips and lower torso.
- On your toes or knees and with hands behind the head, clasped behind your back, or extended out to the side as shown in the picture. (
- Lift your chest off the ball, bringing your shoulders up until your body is in a straight line.
- Make sure your body is in alignment (i.e., head, neck, shoulders and back are in a straight line), your abs are pulled in and that you are breathing continuously.

Pointing Dog Arm and Leg Extension (choose one)



- Start on mat on hands and knees – be certain that hands are under shoulder and knee is under and in alignment with hip
- With your back flat, lift one opposing arm and leg pair at a time. Extend both limbs fully, palm toward ceiling, toes pointed.
- Concentrate on squeezing muscles throughout.

- Lower your arm and leg pair to the ground.
- Raise other pair and continue to alternate.
- Keep your arms and legs fully extended at top of movement.
- Move them slowly. Pausing for a moment at the top of each extension to squeeze.
- Keeping your abdominals taut should ensure that your back stays flat.

Pointing Dog on Physioball



- Start on physioball on hands and toes – be certain that hands are under shoulder and leg is extended
- With your back flat, abdominals taut lift one opposing arm and leg pair at a time. Extend both limbs fully, palm toward ceiling, toes pointed. Keep back flat
- Concentrate on squeezing muscles throughout.
- Lower your arm and leg pair to the ground.
- Raise other pair and continue to alternate.
- Keep your arms and legs fully extended at top of movement.
- Move them slowly. Pausing for a moment at the top of each extension to squeeze.

Hip Extension on Ball



- Lie supine on the floor with feet propped on the ball.
- Keeping abs tight, slowly lift your hips off the floor (squeezing the buttocks) until body is in a straight line.
- Hold for a few seconds and lower
- Note: to make it easier, place ball under knees rather than under heels.
- To make it more difficult, cross your arms across your chest, which will challenge your balance even more!

