

**CORE STRENGTHENING EXERCISES**

**Plank**



- Lay on your front and place your forearms and palms flat on the floor
- Lift your chest, stomach and legs off the floor and maintain your balance between your forearms and toes
- Keep a straight line from your shoulders, across your back to your feet
- Hold for up to 60 seconds

**Variations & progressions**

- To make the plank easier balance on your forearms and knees (with feet raised)
- Maintain a straight line from shoulders to knees

Muscles worked - Rectus abdominus, Transversus Abdominus, Erector spinae

## **Side Plank**



- Lay on your side with the forearm of the bottom arm on the floor and the elbow bent so the fingers point away from you
- Rest your other arm on your top side
- Keep one foot on top of the other and raise your body up, off the ground
- Maintain a straight line from neck to feet
- Hold for up to 60 seconds

### **Variations & progressions**

- Place one foot just in front of the other to increase the base of support

**Muscles worked** - Rectus abdominus, Transversus abdominus, Internal obliques, External obliques

## **Crunch**



- Lay on your back with the knees bent
- Place your hands on your thighs
- Lift the head, neck and shoulders off the ground and slide your hands up, towards your knees
- Try to keep the same gap between your chin and chest to avoid straining the neck
- Slowly return to the start position

### **Variations & progressions**

- Have your hands behind your head to support your neck - don't pull your neck forwards

**Muscles worked** - Rectus abdominus,  
Transversus abdominus

## **Twisting Crunch**



- Lay on your back with the knees bent
- Place your fingers on your temples
- Lift the head, neck and shoulders off the ground and rotate the trunk so the right elbow meets the left knee
- Try to keep your neck relaxed
- Rotate back to the centre and return the head, neck and shoulders to the floor

### **Variations & progressions**

- Place your hands behind your head to support your neck
- Do not pull your neck forwards using your hands

Muscles worked - Rectus abdominus, Transversus abdominus, Internal obliques, External obliques

## **Reverse Crunch**



- Lay on your back, with the legs crossed in the air, knees slightly bent
- Place your arms on the floor by your sides

- Lift your hips a couple of inches off the floor
- Hold for 2-3 seconds before returning the hips to the floor

### **Variations & progressions**

- Perform on a decline bench to increase the difficulty
- Place your hands over your head and grip the bench

Muscles worked - Lower fibres of Rectus abdominus, Transversus abdominus

**Related injuries** - Abdominal strain, Lower back pain