



ELITE

Personal Training and Fitness Solutions

HEALTH TIP OF THE WEEK

12/6- Exercises for the Core

Over the last two weeks we reviewed core anatomy and function. Now let's look at three excellent core-strengthening exercises.

Core Musculature is Incredibly Complex

There are dozens of exercises that target the core. Obviously, some exercises are more difficult than others. Exercise choice should always take into consideration musculoskeletal issues and current levels of strength and flexibility.

The exercises below are suitable for all fitness levels. Each exercise has variations that can be made more challenging. But for now, these basic versions are a great way to begin.

Start slowly with each exercise. Build up gradually. If you experience any pain [beyond typical muscle soreness from a new exercise], stop.

Do each of these exercises three times weekly to start. Pay attention to proper form and execution so that you reap the benefits of each exercise. Click the links at the end of this article for demonstrations and further explanations.



[Low Plank](#)



[Bird Dog](#)



[Dead Bug](#)



Elite Personal Training and Fitness Solutions does not provide medical treatment or intervention. We acknowledge scientific evidence that appropriately intensive exercise and sustainable nutritional intervention can have significant impact on chronic health disorders and obesity, dramatically improving symptoms when recommendations are followed. Please visit us at Eliteptf.com for more information and to schedule your evaluation.

Exercises for the Core

Low Plank

Perform this exercise for a duration that is challenging. Aim for 10-15 seconds to start. Challenging means that it is moderately difficult, but not impossible, to achieve the desired time. You probably could have gone a little bit longer if you had to. Planks target your abs, but they do so much more. Planks are a full-body exercise. They can help make your entire body stronger.

Tips: Don't let your hips, head, or shoulders sag. Improper form could lead to injury in the very muscle groups you want to strengthen. Don't put your hands too close together as this can throw off your balance.

Bird Dog

Perform two sets of 10 repetitions using good form. You can increase over time by adding a third set or by increasing repetitions to 15. Strengthening the core with bird dog exercises can help improve posture and alleviate back pain.

Tips: While on all fours, keep a neutral position. Many people will be in a cat (rounded back) or cow (sinking hips) position. This is NOT the look you want. Be sure your back is flat and your core, especially your pelvic floor muscles, are engaged. Don't raise your arm or leg way too high. They should be in line with each other and your back.

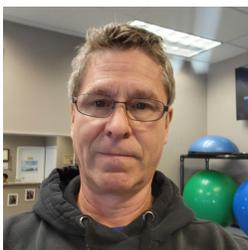
Dead Bug

Weird name, but great exercise! Perform two sets of 10 repetitions in good form. You can increase over time by adding a third set or by increasing repetitions to 15. It may take some coordination at first to get the hang of this exercise, but don't give up. Dead bugs are great core stabilization exercises. They improve posture, balance, and coordination. Dead bugs are also useful exercises for relieving back pain and for preventing it in the first place.

Tips: Keep your back pressed fully to the ground. And keep it slow- really slow. Moving too fast tends to compromise form. It could also mean you're relying on momentum rather than muscle strength to complete the movement. Finally, and this may seem obvious, but don't forget to breathe. Breathe through your diaphragm so that you can brace your core properly. A good rule of thumb is to exhale at the hardest part of your movement, which is typically when you bring your arms and legs back to the center.

Take-Home Message

For perfect form, here is each exercise demonstrated for you on video - click the exercise to see the demonstration.



David Trumbore
PT, DPT, CSCI, CWT, CPI

[Low Plank](#)



[Bird Dog](#)



[Dead Bug:](#)



If you have questions about training time frames or anything else related to exercise nutrition, please reach out to us so we can partner with you and help you improve your health and wellness.

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