



## Essential Core Strengthening Exercises

These simple, yet effective exercises will strengthen your core muscles. They can be completed in less than 10 minutes, anywhere without any equipment. Do them 4 -5 times a week, preferably changing the order each time. Enjoy!



**Side Plank:** Strengthens lateral muscles of the leg, hip and core, also shoulder muscles of the supporting side.

**Set Up:** Lying down on your side with forearm on the floor directly under the shoulder, align your body straight.

**Execution:** Lift the hip up as high as you can, pushing off the side of the bottom foot and the forearm. Hold for a count of 5 - 10 breaths, 2 sets on each side.

**Progressions:** 1. Increase the time you hold your hip up.  
2. Lift the top leg up without lowering the hip.



**Front Plank:** Strengthens abdominals and low back muscles also shoulders and legs.

**Set Up:** Lie face down on the floor with forearms resting on the floor, eyes focused on your thumbs.

**Execution:** Lift your hips up, pushing off your toes and forearms; keep your eyes focused on your thumbs. Align your hips in a straight line with your shoulders. Don't let your hips go up too high or too low. Hold for a count of 6 - 10 breaths, 2 sets.

**Progressions:** 1. Increase the time you hold your hips up.  
2. Lift one foot up an inch off the floor without moving the hips.



**Supine Bridge:**  
Strengthens low back, gluts and hamstrings.

**Set Up:** Lie down facing up with your knees bent at 90. Keep your chin up, eyes focused on the ceiling. Feet hip width apart, firmly pressed against the floor.

**Execution:** Push off your upper back and your feet; lift your hips as high as you can. Hold and squeeze the gluts together for a count of 2 breaths. Slowly lower the hips down to the floor and repeat 6 - 10 times for 2 sets.

**Progressions:** 1. Perform the move with heels off the floor.  
2. Lift one foot off at the top and hold.



**Low Back Extension:** Strengthens all posterior muscles, primarily low back.

**Set Up:** Lie face down on the floor. Thumbs rotated up, feet hip width apart, eyes focused on the floor.

**Execution:** Lift up both arms and legs at the same time driving up with your thumbs and knees towards the ceiling. Hold for a count of 2 breaths and slowly lower your arms and legs down to the floor. Repeat 6 - 10 times, 2 sets.

**Progression:** 1. Increase the reps and/or the hold.

- Perform exercises slowly and in controlled manner
- Make sure you breath
- Obtain medical clearance if you suffer from pre-existing medical conditions where exercise is contraindicated
- Stop if you feel the exercise is harming you

Contact me for more information,  
additional exercises and routines or to book a personal training session.

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Andrew Kowalczyk is a successful personal trainer based in Mississauga. After graduating from York University Kinesiology program in 2005, he has developed a unique methodology of fitness training which focuses on developing whole-body functional strength. Training focuses on strengthening individual body segments, correcting muscle imbalances and developing core strength; intensity progresses gradually and consistently. By combining the strength gains, increasing flexibility and improving cardiovascular function training adaptations result in easier performance of everyday tasks, recreational activities as well as injury prevention and rehabilitation. Over the years, with a personalized approach to each of his clients' specific needs, Andrew's training practices produced optimal gains in all of their fitness pursuits.