

## EXERCISE GUIDE

# STRENGTHEN YOUR CORE

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### BACK EXTENSION WITH BALL



- Rest your belly on the ball, feet planted wide apart on the floor behind you and hands resting on your lower back.
- Peel your chest away from the ball, keeping your gaze on the floor in front of you.
- Pause, squeeze your shoulder blades and lower back, then lower your chest back over the ball.

**Repeat 12 to 20 times, doing more repetitions as you get stronger.**

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### BALANCING FOREARM PLANK



- From all fours, lower yourself to your forearms with your elbows below your shoulders.
- Walk your feet back until your shoulders, hips, knees and heels are in a straight line.
- Tighten your stomach, back and legs.
- Pressing through your heels, lift one leg off the floor and lift the opposite arm.
- Squeeze your shoulder blades together and down toward your hips.
- Keep your neck long by gazing about 6 inches in front of your hands.
- Slowly lower your arm and leg and repeat on the opposite side.

**Hold for 20 to 60 seconds on each side, continuing for longer as you get stronger.**

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### BALANCING PLANK



- From all fours with your wrists directly under your shoulders, walk your feet back until your shoulders, hips, knees and heels are in a straight line.
- Tighten your stomach, back and legs, and squeeze your shoulder blades together and down toward your hips.
- Keep your neck long by gazing about 6 inches in front of your hands.
- Lift one leg and the opposite arm off the ground, then slowly lower and switch sides.

**Hold for 20 to 30 seconds per side, going for longer as you get stronger.**

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## BIRD DOG WITH BALL



- Rest your belly on the ball with hands planted on the floor, wrists directly below your shoulders and legs extended straight behind you, toes touching the floor.
- Keeping your gaze on the floor slightly in front of you, slowly lift one hand and the opposite leg until they form a straight line with your torso.
- Squeeze the muscles along your back to balance.
- Pause, then slowly lower and switch sides.

**Repeat 12 to 20 times, doing more repetitions as you get stronger.**

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## BOAT



- Start in a comfortable seated position with knees bent.
- Place your hands on your thighs just above each knee. Bring your feet together and lift them off the floor.
- If you can, lift them so your legs are mostly straight.
- Relax your shoulders, lift your heart and continue breathing.
- For a more difficult variation, lengthen your arms, spreading your fingers wide.

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## BRIDGE



- Lie on your back, knees bent, feet flat on the floor.
- Squeezing your glutes and driving through your heels, lift your hips.
- Tuck your tailbone toward the backs of your knees and lift your hips even higher.
- Pause, and slowly lower until your glutes almost—but don't quite—touch the ground.

**Repeat 12 to 15 times, doing more repetitions as you get stronger.**

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## BRIDGE WITH BALL



- Lie on your back with your knees bent and heels resting on the ball.
- Tighten your abs and raise your hips and glutes off the floor, pressing into the ball with your feet until you make a straight line from your chest to your knees.
- Hold for one deep breath. Slowly lower.

**Repeat 12 to 20 times, doing more repetitions as you get stronger.**

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## CAT-COW



- Begin in table top, stacking your shoulders over elbows and wrists.
- Place your knees hip distance apart, directly under your hips, your back flat. Keep your neck long and press your shoulders away from your ears.
- As you inhale, drop your belly toward the ground, lift up your heart and gaze.
- As you exhale, pull your tailbone down toward the floor.
- Relax your head, press hands and knees into the mat and round the spine.

**Repeat at your pace with each inhale and exhale.**

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## CHAIR SQUATS



- Stand a few inches away from the chair with your feet shoulder-width apart and toes turned out slightly.
- Keeping your chest lifted, squat from your hips and push your glutes down toward the chair.
- Pause, squeeze your glutes and rise up, driving through your heels. Imagine spreading the floor apart with your feet as you stand.

**Aim for 12 to 20 repetitions, doing more repetitions as you get stronger.**

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## CHAIR KNEE LIFTS



- Sit tall in a chair, holding its arms or seat.
- Pull your belly button in toward your spine.
- Slowly and with control, lift one knee toward your chest, keeping your stomach muscles tight.
- Then slowly lower it and switch legs.

**Repeat 20 to 30 times, doing more repetitions as you get stronger.**

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## KNEE TO CHEST HUG



- Draw your knees into your chest.
- Wrap arms around knees and hug.
- To massage your back, roll from side to side and forward to back.

**Hold the stretch for 20 seconds.**

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## KNEE TO NOSE



- From all fours, walk your feet back until your shoulders, hips, knees and heels are in a straight line.
- Tighten your abs, back and legs.
- Lift one leg and bend your knee as you bring it in to your chest.
- Return to your original position and repeat on the other side.
- Squeeze your shoulder blades together and down toward your hips.
- Keep your neck long by gazing about 6 inches in front of your hands.

**Repeat 8 to 15 times, doing more repetitions as you get stronger.**

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## LEG RAISES WITH BALL



- Lie faceup on a mat with the ball between your feet.
- Place your hands under your glutes, palms down.
- Squeeze the ball between your feet and ankles, tighten your abs, and raise your legs until they're perpendicular to the floor.
- Pause then slowly lower legs.

**Repeat 12 to 15 times, doing more repetitions as you get stronger.**

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## PLANK



- From all fours, walk your feet back until your shoulders, hips, knees and heels are in a straight line, wrists directly below your shoulders.
- Tighten your stomach, back and legs, and squeeze your shoulder blades together and down toward your hips.
- Press your heels down and keep your neck long by gazing about 6 inches in front of your hands.

**Hold for 20 to 60 seconds, maintaining the position for longer as you get stronger.**

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## REVERSE CRUNCH ON BALL



- Sit on the ball, arms crossed over your chest.
- Keeping your back straight, squeeze your abs and lean back until you feel your abs contract more.
- Hold for 3 deep breaths and return slowly to starting position.
- Remember to breathe deeply throughout the exercise.

**Repeat 5 to 10 times, doing more repetitions as you get stronger.**

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## SIDE LUNGE WITH KNEE LIFT



- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.
- Lift one knee to hip level, balancing on your opposite leg, then step widely to the side, cupping your hands at your chest as a counterbalance.
- Plant your foot and shift your weight into your lunging heel, bending that knee without allowing it to shift past your ankle.
- Your lunging thigh should be almost parallel to the floor and opposite leg should be straight.
- Push off and return to a standing position.
- Do all your reps, then switch sides.

**Repeat 12 to 15 times per side, doing more repetitions as you get stronger.**

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## SPINAL TWIST STRETCH



- Lie on your back and draw your right knee to your chest.
- Shifting your hips to the right, cross your right knee to the left, pressing your right hand into the floor.
- Gaze to your left.
- Repeat on the other side.

**Hold for around 20 seconds.**

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## SQUATS



- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and toes turned out slightly.
- Imagine a chair behind you as you bend your knees and press your glutes back and down, keeping your weight on your heels and your chest lifted. Lift your hands to your chest as a counterbalance.
- Don't allow knees to shift forward past your toes.
- Pause, then drive through your heels to press yourself back to standing, imagining that you're spreading the floor apart with your feet.
- Squeeze your glutes as you rise.

**Repeat 12 to 15 times, doing more repetitions as you get stronger.**



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## TOE TOUCHES



- Lie on your back with legs and arms extended straight into the air perpendicular to the floor.
- Keeping your tailbone tucked, squeeze your abs and reach your hands toward your toes.

**Repeat 15 to 20 times, doing more repetitions as you get stronger. You can also work side abdominal muscles in this position, by reaching from side to side toward opposite legs.**

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## TIGHT ROTATION



- Start with your feet more than shoulder-width apart and hands extended in front of you, palms together.
- Squeezing your abs, rotate your torso slightly side to side as your hands quickly shift along a plane from one shoulder to the other and back.

**Continue for 15 to 60 seconds, going longer as you get stronger.**