

Health, fitness, lifestyle

TAYLAKFITNESS CORE EXERCISE GUIDE

Workout because you love your body, not
because you hate it.

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STRETCHING AND WARMUPS



Don't forget to warm up and cool down!

Dynamic stretching and static stretching are two different types of stretching techniques.

Dynamic Stretching:

Dynamic stretching involves active movements, typically incorporated into warm-up routines before engaging in more intense physical activity. It helps joint range of motion, blood flow and reduced risk of injury.

Here are examples of dynamic stretches:

- Leg Swings: Swing one leg forward and backward in a controlled manner.
- Arm Circles: Rotate your arms in circular motions to warm up the shoulder joints.
- High Knees: March in place, lifting your knees towards your chest.
- Hip Circles: Rotate your hips in circular motions to improve hip flexibility.
- Jumping Jacks: Perform jumping jacks to engage multiple muscle groups and elevate your heart rate.

Static Stretching:

Static stretching involves holding a stretch for an extended period, typically 15-60 seconds. It aims to improve overall flexibility, relaxes the muscle and elongate muscles. Static stretches are often performed after a workout during the cooldown phase.

Here are examples of static stretches:

- Hamstring Stretch: Sitting or standing, reach toward your toes, holding the stretch.
- Chest Opener: Clasp your hands behind your back and straighten your arms to open up your chest.
- Quad Stretch: Stand on one leg, bringing your heel towards your glutes, and hold the stretch.
- Calf Stretch: Place one foot behind you, keeping the heel on the ground, and lean forward to stretch the calf.
- Triceps Stretch: Bring one arm overhead and reach down your back, gently pulling on your elbow with the opposite hand.

Static stretching helps relax muscles, improve flexibility, and enhance overall range of motion. It's beneficial for

CRUNCHES

Crunches

Setup

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor
- Place your hands lightly behind your head or crossed over your chest
- Keep your elbows wide and your chin slightly tucked, like you're holding an apple under your chin
- Engage your core before you begin

Form

- Lift your head, neck, and shoulders off the floor by contracting your abs
- Focus on curling your ribs toward your hips — not pulling your head forward
- Pause at the top and squeeze your abs, then slowly lower back down with control
- Keep your lower back in contact with the floor the whole time

Tips

- Don't use your hands to yank your head — let your abs do the work
- Exhale as you lift, inhale as you lower
- Keep the movement small and focused — crunches don't need to be big to be effective
- Move slowly to maximize tension on the core



WEIGHTED SITUPS

Weighted Sit-Ups

Setup

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor (or anchored if needed)
- Hold a weight plate, dumbbell, or medicine ball close to your chest or straight above your chest with both hands
- Engage your core and keep your lower back neutral

Form

- Sit up by curling your spine and lifting your upper body toward your knees
- Keep the weight stable (pressed to your chest or overhead if more advanced)
- At the top, sit up tall without slouching
- Lower down slowly with control until your back touches the floor again

Tips

- Exhale on the way up, inhale as you lower
- Avoid using momentum — keep the movement core-driven
- Keep your feet flat and avoid lifting your heels
- Use a lighter weight to start and increase as you build strength



BICYCLE CRUNCHES

Bicycle Crunches

Setup

- Lie flat on your back with your hands behind your head (fingertips lightly touching, no pulling)
- Bring your knees up so they form a 90° angle, with feet off the ground
- Engage your core and lift your shoulder blades slightly off the floor

Form

- Twist your torso to bring your right elbow toward your left knee, while extending your right leg straight
- Switch sides: bring your left elbow to your right knee, extending your left leg
- Continue alternating sides in a smooth, controlled, pedaling motion

Tips

- Exhale as you twist, inhale as you switch sides
- Keep your core tight and avoid pulling on your neck
- The movement should come from your abs and obliques, not just your elbows
- Move slowly and intentionally to maximize the burn 🔥



PLANK

Plank

Setup

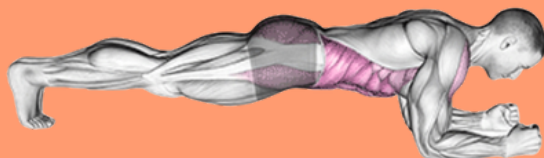
- Start in a forearm plank position, with your elbows directly under your shoulders
- Keep your forearms parallel to each other or slightly wider if needed
- Engage your core, squeeze your glutes, and make sure your body forms a straight line from your head to your heels
- Keep your neck neutral, with your gaze looking slightly ahead of you (don't look straight down)

Form

- Hold your body in a straight line, avoiding sagging hips or raised buttocks
- Keep your shoulders engaged and elbows directly under your body
- Keep your hips aligned with your spine — think of pulling your navel towards your spine to tighten your core
- Breathe steadily, don't hold your breath

Tips

- Engage your glutes and quads to help keep your body in a strong, straight position
- Don't let your lower back sag — this could lead to strain
- Start with short intervals and gradually increase your hold time as your core strength improves
- For more difficulty, you can elevate your feet on a bench or add leg lifts



RUSSIAN TWIST

Russian Twists

Setup

- Sit on the floor with your knees bent and your feet flat on the ground
- Lean back slightly, keeping your back straight (not rounded), and lift your feet off the floor if you're able to (for added challenge)
- Hold a dumbbell, medicine ball, or simply clasp your hands together in front of you
- Keep your core engaged and your chest lifted

Form

- Twist your torso to the right, bringing the weight or your hands to the side of your hip
- Return to the center and twist to the left side, bringing the weight or hands to the opposite hip
- Continue alternating sides in a controlled, twisting motion, focusing on moving from your core rather than your arms

Tips

- Exhale as you twist to each side, and inhale as you return to center
- Keep your feet off the ground for more challenge, but feel free to keep them down for stability if needed
- Don't let your back round — keep your chest open and shoulders back throughout
- Twist slowly and with control to maximize the engagement of your obliques
- For added intensity, use a heavier weight or slow down your reps



SEATED FLUTTER KICKS

Seated Flutter Kicks

Setup

- Sit on the floor with your legs extended straight out in front of you
- Place your hands behind you (fingers facing forward or palms flat on the ground) for support
- Engage your core and keep your back straight to avoid slouching
- Lift your legs slightly off the floor, keeping them straight, with your feet about 6–12 inches above the ground

Form

- Begin by alternating kicks, bringing one leg up while the other leg is down, then switch legs quickly in a fluttering motion
- Keep your legs straight and controlled, and avoid letting them drop too low or too high
- Keep your core tight and focus on moving from your lower abs rather than using momentum
- Continue fluttering, making sure to breathe steadily throughout

Tips

- Engage your core to protect your lower back and keep your movements smooth
- Keep your legs low but don't let them touch the floor to maintain tension on your abs
- Avoid leaning back — your torso should stay upright and straight to really target the core
- Go for slow and controlled movements rather than rushing to ensure maximum ab activation



HANGING KNEE TUCKS

Hanging Knee Tucks

Setup

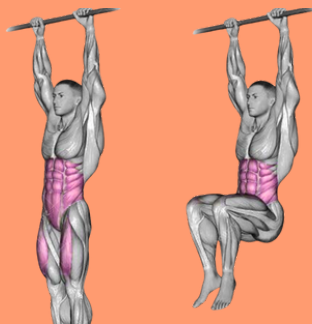
- Hang from a pull-up bar using an overhand grip, hands shoulder-width apart
- Let your body hang freely with engaged shoulders (don't let them sag)
- Keep your legs straight and feet together, core braced

Form

- Pull your knees up toward your chest in a smooth, controlled motion
- Focus on curling your pelvis slightly as you lift your knees (not just lifting your legs)
- Pause briefly at the top to contract your lower abs
- Slowly lower your legs back down to the starting position — don't swing or use momentum

Tips

- Keep the movement slow and controlled for maximum core activation
- Avoid swinging — if needed, lightly bend your knees and work on strict form first
- Focus on your abs doing the work, not your hip flexors
- Great for improving core strength, stability, and even grip endurance
- Progress to straight-leg raises or toes-to-bar as you get stronger



DECLINE SITUP

Decline Sit-Up

Setup

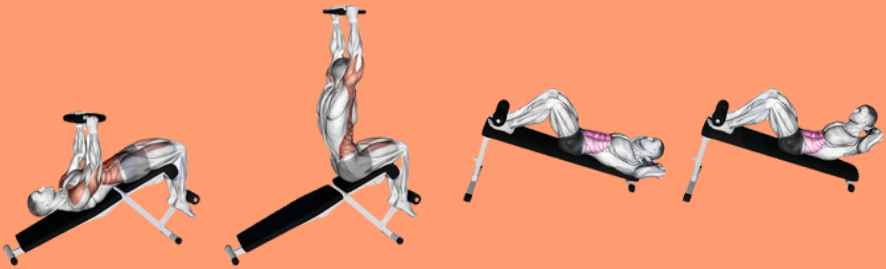
- Sit on a decline bench, hook your feet securely under the foot pads
- Lie back so your torso is aligned with the bench, hands crossed over your chest or behind your head (without pulling your neck)
- Keep your core engaged and feet firmly in place

Form

- Exhale as you contract your abs and sit up toward your knees
- Keep your spine neutral, avoiding jerking or pulling with your arms
- Pause at the top for a brief squeeze
- Inhale as you lower yourself slowly back down with control, resisting gravity

Tips

- Avoid using momentum — focus on slow, controlled movement
- Keep your lower back slightly off the bench at the bottom to maintain core tension
- Want to make it harder? Add a weight plate or medicine ball to your chest
- Great for adding intensity to your ab training and building core strength



CAPTAINS CHAIR TUCKS

Knee Tucks (Captain's Chair / Vertical Knee Raise)

Setup

- Stand on the foot pegs and place your forearms on the arm pads
- Grip the handles lightly and press your back firmly against the pad
- Let your legs hang straight down, core engaged, and shoulders relaxed

Form

- Lift your knees up toward your chest by contracting your abs
- Focus on curling your hips slightly at the top — not just lifting your legs
- Pause briefly at the top for a strong squeeze
- Slowly lower your legs back down to the starting position without swinging

Tips

- Avoid leaning forward or pressing off the arm pads for momentum
- Keep the movement controlled — no swinging or jerking
- Exhale on the way up, inhale as you lower
- To make it harder, extend your legs into a straight-leg raise or hold a medicine ball/dumbbell between your ankles
- Excellent for targeting lower abs, hip flexors, and core control

