

CORE STRENGTH

Build a strong, steady center with a simple four-week plan.

HOME OR GYM | BODYWEIGHT + OPTIONAL BAND / DUMBBELL

START WITH THE BASICS

Your core includes muscles that help you brace, breathe, balance and transfer force. Train control first; make a movement harder only when you can keep steady form and breathe comfortably.

Frequency

2 sessions each week, with a rest day between them. Alternate A and B.

Effort

Finish with about 2 clean reps left. Rest 45-75 seconds as needed.

Warm-up

3-5 minutes easy walking or marching, shoulder rolls and gentle hip hinges.

Equipment

Stable chair or counter; optional light band or dumbbell.

YOUR FOUR-WEEK BUILD

Week 1

Learn the moves. Do 2 sets per exercise.

Week 2

Add 1-2 reps per set if comfortable.

Week 3

Add a third set to 1-2 moves, or hold 5 seconds longer.

Week 4

Repeat with control. Progress one variable only if form stays steady.

A good rep feels controlled. Exhale through effort and do not hold your breath. Stop for sharp pain, dizziness, or pressure/heaviness. General education only, not individualized medical care.

YOUR TWO CORE SESSIONS

Choose a variation that lets you keep ribs stacked over hips and breathe without strain. Complete A and B on separate days.

MOVEMENT	SETS x REPS	FORM CUE / OPTION
A Dead bug	2-3 x 6-10 / side	Keep back steady; shorten reach if it arches.
A Bird dog	2-3 x 6-10 / side	Reach long; pause without twisting hips.
A Incline plank	2-3 x 15-30 sec	Hands on wall/counter; long line head to hips.
A Suitcase carry	2-3 x 20-40 sec / side	Hold a light bag; walk tall without leaning.
B Heel tap	2-3 x 8-12 / side	Move slowly; keep breathing.
B Side plank, knees bent	2-3 x 10-25 sec / side	Press floor away; keep shoulder comfortable.
B Pallof press, band	2-3 x 8-12 / side	Press forward without rotating.
B Glute bridge	2-3 x 8-12	Exhale; lift hips only as high as comfortable.

TRACK YOUR SESSIONS

WEEK	SESSION A DATE / NOTES	SESSION B DATE / NOTES
1	_____	_____
2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____
4	_____	_____

PREGNANCY / POSTPARTUM NOTE

If pregnant, recently gave birth, have pelvic-floor symptoms, abdominal doming, pain, or a condition affecting exercise, ask your clinician or pelvic-health physical therapist how to adapt these moves. Return gradually with guidance specific to your recovery.

Guidance: CDC Adult Activity Overview (cdc.gov/physical-activity-basics/guidelines/adults.html); ACOG Exercise After Pregnancy (acog.org/womens-health/faqs/exercise-after-pregnancy).