



# Fitness Friday

03/29/2019



On Monday, April 1, 2019, we begin our 30-Day Core Challenge. We hope you will join us. The most important aspect of this challenge is your personal safety with any and all of the exercises. We recognize that we are speaking to all age groups with varying levels of cardiovascular fitness as well as strength.



The template for the core challenge is a suggested list of exercises. You may increase or decrease the repetitions and/or duration according to your ability.

Nearly all of the exercises can be modified. For example, in the top picture, Jaclynn is performing a side plank from her knees versus from her feet. This is an excellent way to modify a side plank until you've developed the strength to hold proper form from either stacked or staggered feet.

It is equally important to conduct the exercises utilizing proper technique to minimize risk of injury. In the middle picture, Jaclynn's hips are too high in this plank. If you do not have the core strength to begin a plank from the feet, start with a plank on both knees. Prone planks can be done with straight arms (elbows should always be aligned under the shoulders, hands only slightly wider than your shoulders). Utilize a forearm plank if your wrists cannot support your weight. Clasp the hands together if your hands are not comfortable laying flat on the ground. These are a few modifications for a plank exercise.

Another common technique flaw is when we don't have enough core strength to press / hold our lumbar spine to the floor during the exercise. In the bottom picture, Jaclynn is attempting to lower her legs slowly to the floor. I am able to put my hand under her lumbar spine which means she needs to modify the exercise to ensure her lower back stays pressed to the floor. Once the core is strong enough to maintain proper technique, progress to the more advanced exercise.

With the stability ball exercises, proceed cautiously and ensure you aren't near furniture when conducting the exercises. Again, modify as needed, and be patient with yourself. The core strength will come with commitment and practice.

And have some fun!



<p><b>Day 1</b>                  20 sec Static Plank  <i>(high or low/ forearm plank)</i>                  2x10 sec Side Planks                  10 reps <i>Superman</i>                  (upper body only)</p> <p><b>Exhale on exertion.</b></p>	<p><b>Day 2</b>                  30 sec Static Plank                  2x20 sec Side Planks                  15 reps <i>Superman</i>                  (upper body only)</p> <p><b>Good technique over task completion.</b></p>	<p><b>Day 3</b>                  30 sec <i>Concentric</i> crunches (↑3/↓1)                  30 sec <i>Eccentric</i> crunches (↑1/↓3)                  30 sec <i>Penguin Reach</i>                  16 reps Back Extension (opposite arm/leg lift)</p>	<p><b>Day 4</b>                  45 sec conc.crunches                  45 sec ecc. crunches                  30 sec Legs Extended Crunch (reach for opp. outer ankle)                  20 reps Back Extension (opposite arm/leg lift)</p>	<p><b>Day 5</b>                  60 sec Full Crunch                  45 sec Static Plank                  2 x 30 sec Side Planks                  20 reps <i>Superman</i>                  (arms &amp; legs)</p> <p><b>Way to go on Day 5!</b></p>
<p><b>Day 6</b>                  45 sec Ball Crunch                  45 sec Cross Crunch on ball                  30 sec seated Stability Ball Knee Raise with Twist                  10 Back Extensions on ball</p> <p><b>Bonus: Balance Sit</b></p>	<p><b>Day 7</b>                  60 sec Ball Crunch                  60 sec Cross Crunch on ball                  45 sec Seated Stability Ball Knee Raise with Twist                  12 Back Extensions on ball</p>	<p><b>Day 8</b>                  60 sec Ball Crunch                  2 x 30 <i>Side Crunches</i> on ball                  15 Back Extensions on ball                  30 sec <i>Glute Bridge Hold</i> (heels on ball)</p>	<p><b>Day 9</b>                  10 <i>V-Ups</i>, feet on ball                  10 <i>Hand Offs</i>                  16 <i>V-Sits with ball tap</i>                  30 sec prone on ball  <i>Single Leg Lift</i></p> <p><b>Your core is stronger.</b></p>	<p><b>Day 10</b>                  60 sec Cross Crunch on ball                  10 <i>V-Ups</i>, feet on ball                  12 <i>Hand Offs</i>                  12 <i>V-Sits with ball tap</i></p> <p><b>Slow, controlled.</b></p>
<p><b>Day 11</b>                  45 sec Bicycle Crunch                  30 sec Reverse Curl  <i>Hip Pops</i>                  45 sec Full Crunch (knees to shoulder)                  10 <i>Bird Dogs</i></p> <p><b>Stay with it.</b></p>	<p><b>Day 12</b>                  5 sec Elbow to Knee hold/45 sec Bicycle Crunch (repeat for both side holds)                  45 sec <i>Hip Pops</i>                  60 sec Full Crunch                  12 <i>Bird Dogs</i></p> <p><b>Breathe. Focus.</b></p>	<p><b>Day 13</b>                  60 sec Static Plank                  30 sec Side Planks (add extended arm)                  15 reps <i>Bird Dog with elbow to opp knee</i>                  20 sec Static Plank with <i>Single Leg Lift</i></p>	<p><b>Day 14</b>                  60 sec <i>Same Knee to Elbow High Plank</i>                  30 sec <i>Roll Outs</i> on ball                  40 sec ball Double Leg Lift                  30 sec Static Plank with <i>Single Leg Lift</i></p> <p><b>Day 14-er. Core is leaner.</b></p>	<p><b>Day 15</b>                  60 sec <i>Same Knee to Elbow High Plank</i>                  30 sec <i>Knee to Opposite Elbow High Plank</i>                  60 sec <i>Pass-the-Ball</i>                  45 sec <i>Dead Bug</i>                  45 sec ball <i>Double Leg Lift</i></p>
<p><b>Day 16</b>                  40 sec Side Plank (with extended arm)                  30 sec <i>Double Leg Lift</i>                  45 sec <i>Clam Shell Crunch</i>                  12 reps <i>Snow Angels</i></p> <p><b>Exhale on effort.</b></p>	<p><b>Day 17</b>                  40 sec Double Leg Lift                  2 x 20 sec <i>Leg Circles</i> (reverse direction)                  60 sec <i>Clam Shell Crunch</i>                  15 reps <i>Snow Angels</i></p> <p><b>Over half way there!</b></p>	<p><b>Day 18</b>                  75 sec Ball Crunch with Hand Weights                  45 sec <i>Roll Outs</i>                  2 x 30 sec <i>Stir-the-Pot</i>                  40 sec <i>V-sits ball tap</i>                  30 sec ball <i>Single Leg Lift</i></p>	<p><b>Day 19</b>                  75 sec Cross Crunch on ball, with weight                  45 sec <i>Single Leg Lift to Dumbbell</i>                  30 sec <i>Scissor kick</i>                  15 sec <i>Flutter kick</i></p> <p><b>Bonus: Balance Sit</b></p>	<p><b>Day 20</b>                  60 sec <i>Roll Outs</i>                  2 x 30 sec Side Plank with <i>Hip Dip</i>                  40 sec <i>Scissor kick</i>                  30 sec <i>Flutter kick</i>                  15 reps <i>Superman</i></p>
<p><b>Day 21</b>                  60 sec Static Plank                  45 sec Plank with feet on Ball                  45 sec <i>Ball Tuck</i>                  2 x 60 sec Side Crunch on ball                  40 sec prone on ball  <i>Single Leg Lift</i></p> <p><b>Have fun on Day 21!</b></p>	<p><b>Day 22</b>                  2 x 30 sec <i>Stir-the-Pot</i>                  60 sec <i>Ball Tuck</i>                  60 sec <i>Dead Bug</i>                  60 sec <i>Roll Outs</i>                  40 sec <i>Penguin Reach</i></p> <p><b>Slow, smooth. Focus.</b></p>	<p><b>Day 23</b>                  60 sec <i>Around-the-Clock Plank</i>                  10 sec Elbow to Knee Hold/60 sec <i>Bicycle Crunch</i>                  45 sec <i>Suitcase Crunch</i>                  60 sec prone on ball  <i>Single Leg Lift</i></p>	<p><b>Day 24</b>                  90 sec <i>Around-the-Clock Plank</i>                  2 x 30 sec Side Plank with <i>Hip Dip</i>                  60 sec <i>Suitcase Crunch</i>                  45 sec prone on ball  <i>Double Leg Lift</i></p>	<p><b>Day 25</b>                  90 sec <i>Roll Outs</i>                  90 sec <i>Pass-the-Ball</i>                  60 sec <i>Dead Bug</i>                  45 sec <i>V-sit ball taps</i>                  30 sec <i>Ball Pike</i>                  60 sec prone on ball  <i>Double Leg Lift</i></p> <p><b>Almost done....</b></p>
<p><b>Day 26</b>                  45 sec <i>Shoulder Tap Plank</i>                  2 x 30 sec <i>Stir-the-Pot</i>                  2 x 60 sec Crunch w Legs Extended &amp; Reach for Ankle                  30 sec <i>Penguin Reach</i>                  16 reps <i>Superman</i></p>	<p><b>Day 27</b>                  60 sec <i>Shoulder Tap Plank</i>                  60 sec <i>Roll Outs</i>                  30 sec <i>Glute/Heel Press</i> (on ball)                  60 sec <i>Dead Bug</i>                  60 sec Back Extension with Slow Twist (at top)</p> <p><b>You Got This!</b></p>	<p><b>Day 28</b>                  60 sec <i>Sit Ups</i> (hold weight above head/arms by ears)                  60 sec <i>Suitcase Crunch</i>                  60 sec <i>V-sit ball taps</i>                  2 x 30 <i>Side Plank w Hip Dip</i>                  15 reps <i>Superman</i></p> <p><b>Super great, Day 28!</b></p>	<p><b>Day 29</b>                  10 sec Elbow to Knee Hold/60 sec <i>Bicycle Crunch</i>                  90 sec <i>High Plank w Jumping Jack Feet</i>                  60 sec Plank with Forearms on ball                  2 x 30 sec Side Planks with <i>Hip Dip</i></p> <p><b>Finish strong!</b></p>	<p><b>Day 30</b>                  2 min <i>Around-the-Clock Plank</i> (shift every 10 sec)                  90 sec <i>Bicycle Crunch</i>                  60 sec <i>Penguin Reach</i>                  60 sec <i>Clam Shell Crunch</i>                  60 sec Back Extension on ball</p> <p><b>Congratulations!</b>  <b>You did it!</b></p>



## 30-Day Core Challenge: Modifications & Tips (Days 1 – 7)

**High Plank – Knee Modification**



**High Plank – from Feet**



**Low (Forearm) Plank – Hands Clasped**



Static pose. Squeeze your glutes. Engage the core. Keep head/neck neutral by focusing on a spot on the floor ~12 inches in front of the face.

**Side Plank – Knee Modification, from Elbow**



**Side Plank – from Stacked Feet**



**Side Plank – Stacked Feet, Arm Extended**



Static pose. Squeeze your glutes. Engage the core. Feet can be staggered one foot in front of the other. Be sure shoulder, hips, and feet are aligned, hips up.

### Superman – Upper Body Only



### Superman – Lower Body Only

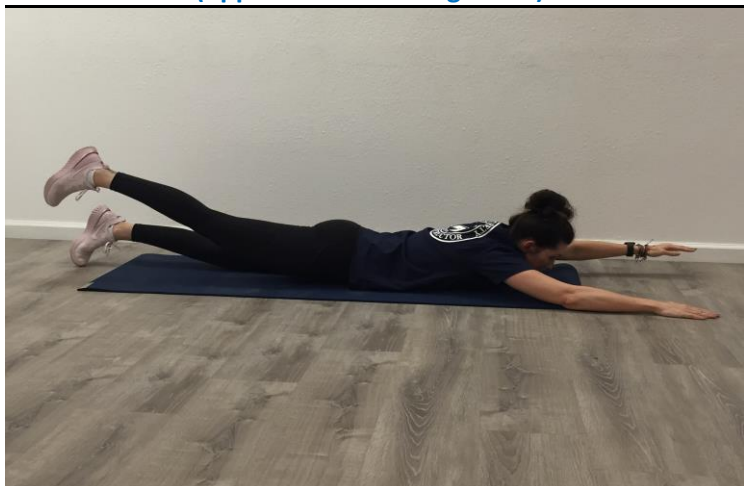


### Superman – Upper & Lower (Arms and Legs)



Lie face down on the floor. Simultaneously lift both legs off the floor (exhale), hold the contraction for ~2-3 seconds and slowly lower to the floor (inhale). If the exercise is too easy, simultaneously lift both arms and legs together with the core tight and engaged.

### Back Extension (opposite arm and leg reach)



Lie face down on the floor with arms and legs extended outward so the body forms an “X” shape. Engage the spine and glute muscles by lifting the right arm/left leg toward the ceiling, just off the floor. Hold for 1-2 seconds and lower slowly. Repeat with the opposite arm and leg. If this is easy, you can lift both arms and legs simultaneously (i.e. Superman).



### Concentric Crunch



Lie on back, knees bent. Hands can be across the chest or cupping the ears. Pull navel toward the spine while engaging the core. Lift head and shoulder blades up ~1", then ~2" and finally ~3+" off the ground (count and lift 1, 2, 3) and lower on 4th count but don't relax all the way. Exhale on exertion as you come up, and keep chin up and neck straight.

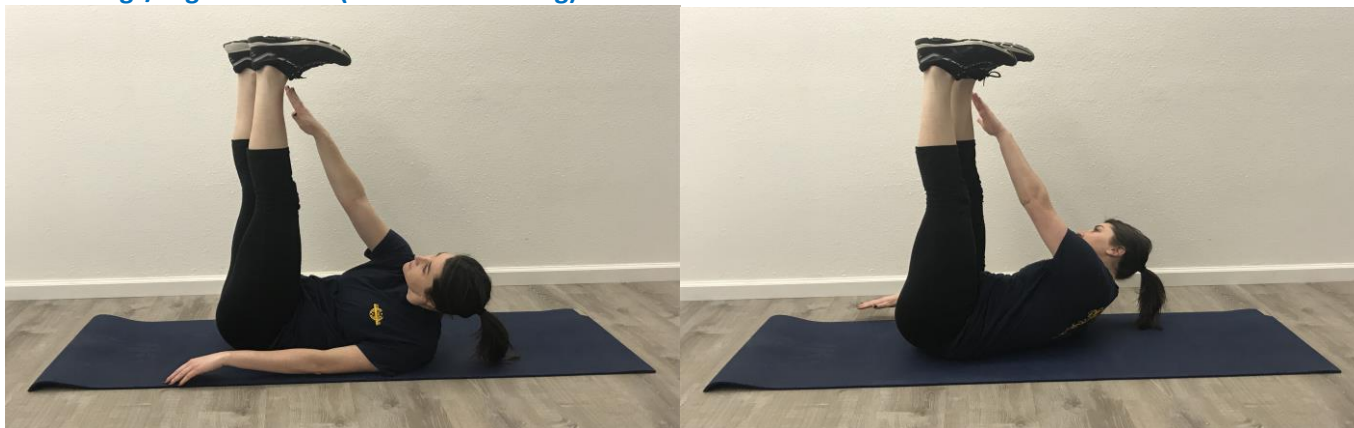
For **Eccentric Crunch**, lift all the way up (3+ inches) in 1 count (exhale), and lower eccentrically for a count of 2, 3, 4. Do not relax all the way to the ground.

### Penguin Reach



Lie on back, knees bent and heels close to your bum. Lift shoulders and head partially off the mat and reach your fingers toward your outer ankle/toes by bending side to side. Try not to rest the head/shoulders down until finished.

### Raised Legs/Legs Extended (toward the ceiling) Crunch



Lie on your back and prop your legs straight above your hips, hands placed behind the head/cupping the ears. Exhale and lift your head and shoulder blades off the floor, pause at the top, and slowly lower while inhaling. If the raised leg position is too difficult, bend the legs at the knees or across a bench/chair to begin with.

### Ball Crunch (seated slightly down from the top of the ball)



### Cross Crunch



Lie on ball with lower back pressed against the surface of the ball. Knees bent and feet pressed firmly on non-skid surface. The upper torso will hang off the top of the ball. Exhale and lift/crunch the core on the ball, and slowly lower, inhaling and return to the starting position. Your back should not hyper extend over the ball. When core is strong enough and balance is good, add small weights with crunches as shown.



### Stability Ball Knee Raise & Twist (seated on top)



Sit on top of the exercise ball with legs in front of you and feet on a non-skid surface. If you feel unstable, hold the arms out in front of you (with aligned wrists, elbows and shoulders). As you exhale, engage the core and bring your right knee up as close to your chest as possible. Inhale and lower the right leg. Repeat with the left leg. As your core strength improves, with raised arms as shown, add a slight twist and pause with the knee toward the chest. If easy, an advanced position would be with a straighter leg position.

### Back Extensions on Ball (with wall/object assist)



Lie face down, “cactus arms” or arms behind the head. Feet can be anchored against a wall or other very sturdy object. Squeeze your glutes and lift your torso up until your body forms a straight line. Do not hyperextend. Hold for 2 seconds. Lower slowly.

### Back Extensions on Ball (no assist)



Once posterior core muscles are strong enough, perform exercises without the wall.