

Side Plank

For gluteals and abdominals (please start on your knees (bent) and elbow)



Why?

Strengthening your core in this position helps to prevent excessive rotation, lateral shifting and over striding during your run or walk.

How?

- Brace* your core
- Either from the knees or feet, hold a position on your elbows with your shoulders lowered towards your feet
- Keep a straight line between hips, knees/ankles and shoulders

Explanation:

During a foot strike when running or walking, there are large lateral forces through the hip and core. This exercise helps to control these forces. Wasted energy and weakness leads to a loss of spring and bounce in your stride and potential injury (e.g. ITBand).

Sets:	2
Reps:	1
Hold:	15 second – 1 minute
Frequency:	After or between runs

Dynamic Alternatives:**

Trail running, speedwork, strides and bounding.

***Brace (your core muscles):**

Recent research shows that the common advice to pull in your belly button limits the full bracing capacity of your core muscles. Although pulling your belly button in activates a very important core muscle, it does so at the expense of several other key core muscles. This is why power lifters keep their stomachs out so their spines do not buckle during maximum lifts. Preferably, try to “bear down” as if you are going to be punched in the stomach for full core activation. For more research, please see Dr. Stuart McGill’s work at: <http://www.ahs.uwaterloo.ca/kin/people/StuMcGill.html>.

****Dynamic Alternatives:**

- ***Bounding:** Leaping as high and as far forward as possible by driving the knee up and pushing off. It should feel as though you are trying to stay in the air as long as possible. Start with 10 steps, 2-3 sets and progress to 20 steps. An advanced version would be bounding up an incline/hill. For a video demonstration go to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mnhMpLONbtY&feature=related>
- **Strides:** Slightly exaggerated stride length when running fast. Slowly accelerate and decelerate over 60 -100 metres, 4-8 times.
- **Speedwork:** A variety of intervals of faster and slower running. General guidelines are faster intervals of 30 seconds to 5 minutes followed by recovery of half the time of the interval.