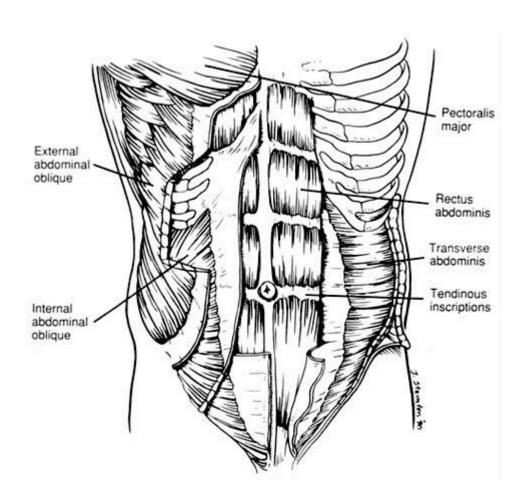
Ultimate Personal Training's Abdominal Exercise Guide



Major Muscles That Act On The Trunk

MUSCLE	ORIGIN	INSERTION	PRIMARY FUNCTIONS
Rectus abdominis	Pubic crest	Cartilage of fifth through seventh ribs and xiphoid process	Flexion and lateral flexion of trunk
External oblique	Anteriolateral borders of lower eight ribs	Anterior half of ilium, pubic crest, and anterior fascia	Lateral flexion of the trunk
Internal oblique	Iliac crest	Cartilage of last three to four ribs	Lateral flexion of the trunk
Transverse abdominis	lliac crest, lumbar fascia, and cartilages of last six ribs	Xiphoid process of sternum, anterior fascia, and pubis	Compresses abdomen
Erector spinae	Posterior iliac crest and sacrum	Angles of ribs, transverse processes of all ribs	Extension of trunk

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Machine ab crunch

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: Machine Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: This is like a situp or crunch, but the machine helps you to add resistance for greater strength increases. Follow the directions on the particular machine that you choose. Be sure to go slow and concentrate on using your abs to push the weight while relaxing your legs and feet.

Ab Roller

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: Other

Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: Using the ab roller, start on the floor on all your hands and knees. Hold the ab roller in your hands while in this position. Slowly roll the ab roller foreward, stretching your body into a straight position. Go down as far as you can without touching the floor with your body. Pause and pull yourself back to the starting position. Repeat for the desired number of reps. Go slow and do not touch the ground!

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Air Bike

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Compound





Tips: Lie on your back and put your hands behind your head. Raise your legs so your thighs are perpendicular and your lower legs are just above parallel to the floor. Curl up and bring your left elbow toward your right side while drawing your right knee in to meet it. It is like you are riding a bike. Alternate sides, continuing the motion back and forth. Remember, don't just flap your elbow across your body, actually rotate your shoulder across and squeeze your abs.

Alternate Heel Touchers

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Works your obliques. In order to complete 1 repetition, each heel must be touched once. So, get into position, crunch over and touch your right heel once, then crunch over and touch your left heel once, and now you've completed 1 repetition. Lie down on the floor. Bend your knees and keep your feet 18-24 inches apart. Keep your arms straight down at your sides. Crunch forward and up about 3-4 inches. Remember to keep your lower back pressed flat against the ground. Keep your head in a neutral position. Alternate touching your right heel and then your left heel. Remember, touching each heel once is one rep!

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Barbell Ab Rollout

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals

Other Muscles Worked: Lower Back, Shoulders

Equipment: Barbell

Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: The elbows are to be locked and kept in a vertical line with the shoulders. Many ab wheel commercials show the user with their arms extended out but it is felt by some that this puts unnecessary stress on the shoulders and lower back. Keep the body locked in a straight position with no back "sag" when in the bottom position. All movement in this exercise is initiated by the hips, not the arms/lats. The emphasis should be on raising the butt as high as possible in a "piking" motion when in the upright part of the movement.

Barbell Ab Rollout - On Knees

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals

Other Muscles Worked: Lower Back, Shoulders

Equipment: Barbell

Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: Start on your knees with your hands about shoulder width apart on a barbell that is positioned in front of you. Slowly roll the barbell forward as far as you can comfortably go. Keep the body locked in a straight position with no back "sag" when in the bottom position. Do not touch your chest or any part of your upper body to the ground. Slowly pull yourself back up using the same motion but in reverse. Repeat. Can also be done with an ab wheel or on your toes.

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Barbell torso twist

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: Barbell
Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Works your obliques. Stand straight up with your feet shoulder width apart. Place a light barbell on your shoulders. Keep your back straight and your head up. Bend to the right as far as possible then bend to the left as far as possible. Bend at your waist only, not at your hips or knees. You can also do this seated, or with dumbbells in your hands.

Lying leg raise

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Compound





Tips: This is like the Reverse Crunch but with a longer range of motion. Outstretch your hands to your sides with your knees bent at a 60 degree angle and your feet just off the floor. Using your lower abs, roll your pelvis backward to raise your hips off of the floor. Your knees will be over your chest. Squeeze your abs and then return to the starting position slowly. You can straighten your legs to make it harder or wear ankle weights.

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Butt-Ups

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Compound





Tips: Begin a pushup position but with your elbows on the ground and resting on your forearms. Your elbows should be bent at a 90 degree angle. Arch your back slightly out rather than keeping your back completely straight. Raise your glutes toward the ceiling, squeezing your abs tightly to close the distance between your ribcage and hips so you end up in a high bridge position. Lower back down slowly to your starting position. Repeat. Don't let your back sag downwards.

Cable Crunch

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: Cable

Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Kneel below a high pulley. Grasp cable rope attachment and place wrists against the head. Flex hips slightly and allow the weight to hyperextend the lower back. With the hips stationary, flex the waist so the elbows travel toward the middle of the thighs. Return and repeat.

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Cross-Body Crunch

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: Lie on your back and bend your knees about 60 degrees and keep your feet flat on the floor. Place your hands loosely behind your head. Curl up and bring your right elbow and shoulder across your body while bring your left knee in toward your left shoulder at the same time. Reach with your elbow and try to touch your knee. Do one side for all your reps, then switch to the other side. Try to bring your shoulder up towards your knee rather than just your elbow.

Crunch - Hands Overhead

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None Equipment: BodyOnly

Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: This variation makes it tougher than regular crunches. Lie on the floor with your knees bent. Keep your feet flat on the floor. Stretch your arms overhead and cross your palms. Curl your upper body forward and bring your shoulder blades just off the floor. Keep your arms aligned with your head, neck and shoulder. Don't move them forward from that position! Slowly lower down after squeezing your abs tight!

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Crunch - Legs On Exercise Ball

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None Equipment: Exercise Ball Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Lie flat on your back with your feet resting on an exercise ball with your knees bent at a 90 degree angle. Place your feet three to four inches apart and point your toes inward so they touch. Place your hands lightly on either side of your head keeping your elbows in. Don't lock your fingers behind your head! Push the small of your back down in the floor to isolate your ab muscles. Begin to roll your shoulders off the floor. Continue to push down as hard as you can with your lower back. Your shoulders should come up off the floor only about four inches, and your lower back should remain on the floor. Focus on slow, controlled movement - don't cheat yourself by using momentum!

Floor ab crunches

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly
Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Lie flat on your back with your feet flat on the ground, or resting on a bench with your knees bent at a 90 degree angle. If you are resting your feet on a bench, place them three to four inches apart and point your toes inward so they touch. Place your hands lightly on either side of your head keeping your elbows in. Don't lock your fingers behind your head! Push the small of your back down in the floor to isolate your ab muscles. Begin to roll your shoulders off the floor. Continue to push down as hard as you can with your lower back. Your shoulders should come up off the floor only about four inches, and your lower back should remain on the floor. Focus on slow, controlled movement - don't cheat yourself by using momentum!

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Decline ab crunch

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None Equipment: BodyOnly Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Using a decline bench, position yourself with your feet locked in at the top. Your upper body should be raised off the bench so that you have to contract your abs just to stay in place. Place your hands on each side of your head, over your heads. Don't lock your fingers! Raise your body slowly while you contract your abs. Crunch up until your elbows are on either side of your thighs. Hold and flex your abs, then slowly lower your body back to the starting position. Don't lower your body all the way down the to bench! If you can, hold a weight plate across your chest for added resistance.

Decline Oblique Crunch

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None Equipment: BodyOnly Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: Position yourself on a decline bench with your feet locked in. Your upper body should be raised off the bench. Cup your right hand over your right ear, and place your left hand on your thigh. Raise your upper body slowly while turning your torso to the left. Focus on keeping your abs tight and keeping the movement slow and controlled. Continue crunching up until your right elbow touches your left knee. Lower your body slowly back down to the starting position. After completing one set on the right, switch to your left side. TIP: Focus on really twisting your torso and feeling the contraction when you are in the UP position.

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Decline Reverse Crunch

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Compound





Tips: Lie on your back on a decline bench and hold on to the top of the bench with both hands. Don't let your body slip down from this position. Hold your legs parallel to the floor using your abs to hold them there. Keep your knees and feet together. Slowly contract your abs, focusing on bring your pelvis up and in towards your chest Let your abs do the work! Slowly lower your pelvis to the starting position, keeping constant tension on the abs. Don't arch your back inwards while you are at the down position!

Dumbbell torso twist

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: Dumbbell **M**echanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Works the obliques. Stand straight up with your feet at shoulder width. Hold a dumbbell in your right hand with your palms in. Place your left hand on your waist. Keep your back straight. Bend to the right as far as you can, then bend to the left as far as possible. After finishing your desired reps, change the weight to your other hand and repeat. Bend at your waist only, not at your hips or knees! Can also be done with a barbell on your shoulders.

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Exercise Ball Crunch

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None Equipment: Exercise Ball Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Sit on top of an exercise ball with your feet placed firmly on the floor. Roll the bottom half of your glutes off the ball by sliding forward. Your lower back should be centered on top of the ball. Place your hands on the sides of your head, but don't use your hands to pull. Crunch your upper body forward and roll your shoulders towards your hips. Squeeze at the top! Then lower back to the starting position and repeat. You can hold a weight to increase the difficulty.

Exercise Ball Pull-In

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None Equipment: Exercise Ball Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: Works more of the lower abs. Start in a push-up position and place your lower shins on top of the exercise ball. While keeping your back completely straight, pull your knees in towards your chest, allowing the ball to roll forward under your ankles. Squeeze your abs and then straighten your legs, rolling the ball back to the starting position.

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Flat Bench Leg Pull-In

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Compound





Tips: Works your lower abs. Lie on a flat bench with your legs off the end. Place your hands under your butt with your palms down. Put your legs straight out. Bend your knees, pulling your upper thighs into your midsection. Return to the starting position. You can hold a dumbbell between your legs to make it harder.

Flat Bench Lying Leg Raise

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Works your lower abs. Place a light weight between your feet if you can. Lie flat on a bench with your legs off the end. Place your hands under your butt with your palms down. Keep your legs as straight as possible and your knees locked. Raise your legs as high as possible. Lower legs back down as far as they can go.

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Gorilla Chin/Crunch

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: Biceps,Lats

Equipment: BodyOnly
Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: Hang from a chinning bar with your knees bent at a 90 degree angle and your hands about 12 inches apart with an underhand grip. Pull yourself up with your arms and crunch your knees up at the same time. You should finish the chin and crunch at the same time. When fully contracted, your note will be at the bar and your knees will be pulled up to your chest. Slowly reverse the movement and return to the starting position. You can also do this with a dumbbell or medicine ball between your feet or with a weight attached to a dip belt around your waist. When you have mastered this, try hanging from only one arm and grasp your wrist with your free hand. This works more of your obliques.

Hanging Knee Raise To The Side

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Compound





Tips: Works the obliques and lower abs. Hang from a pull-up bar with your legs and feet together. Slowly lift your knees to one side as high as you can. Do this by curling your spine from the bottom up, not simply lifting your knees. Squeeze your lower abs and obliques at the to of the movement, then slowly lower. Repeat and alternate sides. Do not SWING your legs up.

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Hanging Leg Raise

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Hang from a bar with your legs straight down. Raise your legs by flexing your hips while flexing your knees until your hips are fully flexed. Continue to raise knees toward shoulders by flexing your waist. Do NOT swing and use momentum. Go slow and concentrate on using your abs to pull your legs up. Return to the starting position. Repeat. You can place weight between your ankles for added resistance. You can also raise your knees to one side of your body to work the obliques.

Hanging Pike

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly

Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: Hang from a bar with your palms facing forward. You can use <u>straps</u> if needed to help with your grip. Start with your knees bent at a 90 degree angle and your upper legs parallel to the floor. Pull your legs up and try to touch your shins to the bar above you. Try to straighten your legs as much as possible while at the top. Lower your legs as SLOWLY as possible until you reach the starting position. Repeat. Don't swing and use momentum!

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Jackknife Sit-Up

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Compound





Tips: Lie on the floor on your back. Place your arms straight back behind your head. Bend at the waist while raising your legs and arms to meet in a jackknife position. Lower arms and legs back to the starting position. Keep your elbows and knees locked!

Janda Sit-Up

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly
Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: While there's some controversy to this exercise, I've found it to be a fun addition to training. Named after Czech exercise physiologist, Dr. Vladimir Janda, this is one of the most challenging sit-up variations as it completely isolates the rectus abdominals by eliminating the hip flexors. The performance of this exercise is done by sitting in a normal sit-up position, feet flat on ground but vigorously tightening hamstrings and glutes. This will cause the hip flexors to be inactivated in a process called reciprocal inhibition, which basically means that opposite muscles to the contracted ones will relax. The exercise can be done using a dedicated apparatus, having a workout partner exert pulling pressure on your calves (while you maintain your feet on the ground) or wrapping your legs over barbell and pulling back. As you begin the exercise, fill your lungs with air and in a slow (three to five second count) ascent, slowly exhale. Seems simple, but go ahead try it!

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Roman chair leg raise

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: Other

Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: 1. This exercise is great because unlike crunches, this works mostly the lower abs. 2. Use your abs to pull your legs up. Rotate your pelvis foreward to really "crunch" your abs. 3. Try not to swing. Using momentum in any exercise is cheating! 4. Squeeze your abs at the top! Keep your legs together.

Leg Pull-In

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly

Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: Work the lower abs. Lie on the floor with your hands under your butt, your palms down, and your legs extended. Bend your knees and pull your upper thighs into your midsection. Return to the starting position. Concentrate on your lower abs. You can hold a dumbbell between your feet to make it harder.

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Oblique Crunches

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Works your side obliques. Lie flat on your back with your knees bent (placing your knees on the floor or resting on a bench). Place your left hand over your left ear. Roll your upper body up to the right until your left elbow touches your right knee. Concentrate on tensing the sides of your waist and holding contraction throughout the movement. Slowly lower to the starting position. After completing a full set of reps on the left side, switch to your right side and do the same thing.

Oblique Crunches - On The Floor

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None Equipment: BodyOnly Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Lie on your left side with your legs on top of each other with your knees bent a little. Loosely cup your head with your right hand. Crunch up as high as you can go, keeping the movement in the lateral plane as much as possible to work the obliques. Do both sides.

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Plate Twist

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: Other

Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: Works more of your obliques. Sit on the floor and hold a plate out in front of your abdominals with your arms slightly bent. Lean back slightly with your upper body and elevate your legs off the floor. Rotate from side to side and touch the plate on the floor. Twisting to the left and touching the plate to the floor and then twisting to the right and touching the plate is 1 rep! Remember to breath throughout the exercise!

Press Sit-Up

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals

Other Muscles Worked: Triceps, Shoulders

Equipment: Barbell

Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: Always start light on this exercise to understand the movement and increase the weight accordingly. Tips: Lie on either a flat or decline bench. For those that are stronger, use the decline. Start with the bar on the chest as though you were preparing to perform a bench press. Take a nice deep breathe, tighten the abdominals and glutes. Begin by simultaneously curling your torso and pressing the bar to an overhead position. Exhale only through pierced lips not to lose intra-abdominal pressure. Reverse the process by unrolling your body, but do not exhale all your air. Note: Even though your feet are anchored try to minimize the pull of the hips.

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Reverse Crunch

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Like on the floor on your back. Put your hands by your sides with your feet up and your thighs perpendicular to the floor. They should not go down lower than this during the movement. Using your lower abs, roll your pelvis backward to raise your hips off the floor. Your knees will now be over your chest. Return slowly to the starting position. You can use ankle weights to make it more difficult.

Russian Twist

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: Lower Back

Equipment: BodyOnly
Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: Secure your feet either by placing them under something that won't move or by having a partner hold them. Start in the position shown above, leaning slightly back and clasping your hands in front of you. Moving only at the trunk, rotate to one side. At the end of your range of motion, quickly reverse the movement and rotate to the opposite side. Repeat in a rapid fashion for the full number of reps. You can also hold a weight or medicine ball to increase the difficulty.

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Lying Scissor Kicks

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Start by lying on your back with your arms by your sides and your palms facing down. Extend your legs fully with a slight bend in your knees. Lift your heels about 6 inches off the floor. Make small, rapid up and down scissor-like motions as you lift each leg to about 45 degrees into the air and lower your heel until it is about 2 - 3 inches off of the floor.

Seated Barbell Twist

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: Barbell

Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Works your obliques. Place a light barbell on your shoulders and sit at the end of a flat bench with your feet firmly on the floor. Twist your torso to the right, then to the left by twisting at your waist only. Do not move your head from side to side. Keep your back straight and your head up. Can also be done standing or by holding a dumbbell close to your chest.

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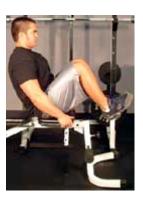
Seated Flat Bench Leg Pull-In

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Compound





Tips: Sit on the end of a flat bench. Place your hands behind your butt and grab the sides of the bench. Extend your legs straight out. Bend your knees and pull your legs into your midsection. Return to the starting position Concentrate on working the abs. You can hold a light dumbbell between your feet for added resistance.

Side Bridge

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly

Mechanics Type: Compound





Tips: Works your obliques and helps stabilize your spine. Lie on your side and support your body between your forearm and knee to your feet. Hold position for two to four seconds. Repeat on the other side. Build up to at least 60 seconds on each side of your body!

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Side Jackknife

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Compound





Tips: Works your obliques. Lying on your right side and keeping your left leg over your right one, place your right hand in a comfortable spot and clasp your left hand behind your head. Bring your torso and left leg toward each other as you pull with your obliques. Squeeze for a moment and return to the starting position. You can use ankle weights to make it tougher!

Floor Sit-Up

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Lie on your back on the floor with your feet about should width apart. You may find it easier to put your feet under something to hold them down. Lift your upper body, bending at the waist, until you're sitting up vertically. Keep your arms at your sides, crossed in front of you, or behind your head, but do NOT attempt use your arms to pull yourself up. Do not raise your feet off of the ground. Smoothly lower your body back to the floor. Repeat.

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Stomach Vacuum

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals **O**ther Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly **M**echanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Works the transversus abdominus and internal obliques. This gives you a flatter profile and a narrower waist!

To execute the Stomach Vacuum, stand upright and place your hands on your hips, and exhale all the air out of your lungs, completely. Expand your chest, and bring your stomach in as much as possible, and hold. Visualize trying to touch your navel to your backbone. One isometric contraction of "20" seconds is one repetition. You can work your way up to 40 or 60 seconds.

Once mastered, the Stomach Vacuum can be performed in a standing, kneeling, seated, and lying position. View pics of those here.

Toe Touchers

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None

Equipment: BodyOnly
Mechanics Type: Isolation





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Tips: Lie back on the floor and elevate your legs up into the air. Make sure you keep your lower back pressed flat into the ground. Exhale and crunch forward to touch your toes. (Touching any part of your foot will work!) Remember, don't pull your chin down towards your chest. Keep your head in a neutral position.

Tuck Crunch

Exercise Data

Main Muscle Worked: Abdominals Other Muscles Worked: None Equipment: BodyOnly Mechanics Type: Isolation





Tips: Like on the floor with your hands either crossed over your chest or behind your head. Bend your knees and hips to form right angles. Keep your lower legs parallel to the floor and your feet crossed. Lift your shoulder blades a few inches off the floor by curling up. Slowly return to the starting position after squeezing your abs.

View and print guides for every exercise! Go to: http://www.bodybuilding.com/fun/exercises.htm

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