

Core Routines 1 and 2- Instructions and Information

Core routines 1 and 2 are two variations of the core routine I use and recommend. Routine 1 is the **standard** routine. It's appropriate for triathletes of all levels. Routine 2 is slightly **more advanced**, but if you have done core training previously, it should be doable.

When you can do all exercises in routine 1 correctly, try to do routine 2, or mix and match between the two. If you're very new to core training, and even routine 1 is too challenging, just **scale down** the duration of the exercises and **take breaks** between them.

Both routines consist of body-weight exercises only, so **you can do them on the go** pretty much anywhere. If you use them consistently you'll build excellent strength and stability in your hips, glutes, abs and lower back.

The benefit of these routines is that they target all groups of core muscles that are essential for triathletes to be able to handle the training done **without getting injured**. In addition, strengthening your core with these exercises will allow you to **swim, bike and run more efficiently** - that is, go faster for the same amount of energy, since you're wasting less energy to compensatory or simply unnecessary motions. Finally, you'll be able to **finish races stronger** with a strong core. Typically, if your core strength or stability is lacking, it shows through towards the end of races when running and even biking form breaks down.

Check out the **instructional video** and additional information about these routines here: <https://www.scientifictriathlon.com/core-training-modules-1-2/>

Also, when you're ready for another challenge and feel like using some equipment (Swiss ball and Therabands), have a look at module 3: <https://www.scientifictriathlon.com/core-training-module-3/>

Routine 1 (standard) - 10 min

1. Front plank - 1 minute
2. Side plank - 45 seconds per side
3. Glute bridge - 1 min
4. Hurdles - 1 min per side
5. Superman back lifts - 1 min
6. Supine plank - 1 min
7. Single-leg deadlifts - 45 s per leg
8. V-sits - 20 s each of running, flutter kick, scissor kick

Routine 2 (advanced) - 15 min

1. Plank circle - 90 seconds
2. Side plank w. hip abduction - 1 minute per side
3. Single-leg glute bridge - 1 min per leg
4. Hurdles - 90 s per side
5. Australian crawl - 1 min
6. Supine plank w. leg raises - 90 s
7. Single-leg deadlifts - 1 min per leg
8. V-sits - 30 s each of running, flutter kick, scissor kick

1.

Front plank / Plank circle

Instructions

Routine 1 - Hold the front plank position (see image to the right) for 60 seconds.

Routine 2 - Plank circle. Lift your right leg and hold for 15 seconds (see image below to the left).



Then do the same with your left leg, right arm (middle image below), left arm, right arm and left leg (right image below) and left arm and right leg. The total time is 90 seconds.



Notes

- Don't let your hips, butt or lower back sag.
- Don't lift your hips and butt too much (see the next bullet point).
- Your glutes, back and neck should form a straight and flat line.
- If it feels too easy, place your elbows further forward in front of you.
- For the plank circle, make sure you engage your obliques (core muscles on the left and right of your abs) to keep yourself stable.

Muscle groups emphasized

Rectus abdominus, transverse abdominals, lower back, obliques and even the upper body.

2.

Side plank / Side plank with hip abduction

Instructions

Routine 1 - Hold the side plank position (see image below) for 45 seconds per side.



Routine 2 - Repeat slowly raising and lowering your top leg (see image to the right) for 1 minute per side, OR raise it and keep it raised for the whole minute.



Notes

- Don't let your hips sag.
- Keep your entire body straightly aligned, from feet to head.
- You should feel your obliques and hips do a large part of the work.
- When raising your upper leg in the advanced variation, raise it to a level at least parallel with the floor.

Muscle groups emphasized

Obliques, rectus abdominus, hips, serratus anterior (ribs to scapula)

3.

Glute bridge / Single-leg glute bridge

Instructions

Routine 1 - Repeat slowly raising and lowering your pelvis (see images below) for 1 minute.



Routine 2 - Do the same using one leg at a time (see image to the right) - 1 minute per leg.



Notes

- Keep a straight line between your knees, hips and shoulders.
- Push your heels firmly into the ground when raising your pelvis.
- In routine 1, fold your arms across your chest to add a stability element to the exercise. In routine 2 you can keep your arms on the floor.
- Make sure you squeeze your glutes and brace your core during this exercise.
- Don't lift with your hamstrings! If you find you do, place your foot closer to your butt.

Muscle groups emphasized

Glute strength, abdominal and lower back stability.

4.

Hurdles

Instructions

Drive your leg backwards and upwards (donkey kick) and keep still for 2 seconds. Then move it forward towards your side, while keeping it raised, as seen in the images below.

Routine 1 - Repeat for 1 minute per side.

Routine 2 - Repeat for 90 seconds per side.



Notes

- Don't swing your leg or use momentum. Use slow and steady movements.
- Keep your lower back straight. Be careful not to arch it.
- Be careful not to shift or rotate your body, especially during the second movement (moving your leg forwards).
- The first movement (the donkey kick) should work primarily your glutes.
- The second movement works your hip abductors.

Muscle groups emphasized

Glutes, lower back, hips, hip abductors

5.

Superman back lifts / Australian crawl

Instructions

Routine 1 - Repeat lifting your opposite arm and leg (see images below) for 1 minute. Use slow movements, and stay at the top for 2 seconds.



Routine 2 - Do constant flutter kicks with your legs raised while driving one arm at a time forward (see images below).



Notes

- In the back lifts, make sure to do slow, steady movements, and not jerky ones.
- The back lifts isolate each glute and each side of the lower back to work on imbalances.
- In the Australian crawl, keep your lower back and core constantly braced.
- Make sure you do keep your movements controlled in the Australian crawl. Don't try to kick too fast or reach out too intensely with your arm.

Muscle groups emphasized

Lower back, glutes, abdominals

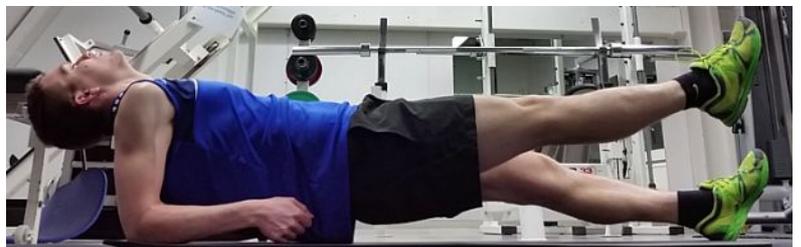
6.

Supine plank / Supine plank with leg raises

Instructions

Routine 1 - Hold the supine plank position (see image to the right) for 1 minute.

Routine 2 - Repeat raising, holding (for 5-6 seconds) and lowering one leg at a time for 90 seconds (see image to the right).



Notes

- Hold your body straight from your feet all the way to your shoulders.
- Don't let your hips sag, but don't elevate them excessively either.
- Brace your core during the entire exercise.
- If you find this exercise too challenging, rest on your hands instead of your forearms. This makes it a lot easier.

Muscle groups emphasized

Hamstrings, glutes, lower back

7.

Single-leg deadlifts

Instructions

From a standing position (near right), hinge forward at the hip with only one foot on the ground until you reach the position in the image to the far right. Slowly revert back to the starting position.



Routine 1 - Repeat for 45 seconds per leg.

Routine 2 - Repeat for 1 minute per leg.

Notes

- Hinge at the hips. Keep the knee-bend at your standing leg minimal, but don't lock the knee.
- Keep your back, lower back and hamstrings straight and aligned.
- Do the movement slowly and with control so you keep your balance.
- Looking forward and not down helps with balance.
- Engaging your core also helps with balance.

Muscle groups emphasized

Entire posterior chain (glutes, hamstrings, upper and lower back, calves), quads

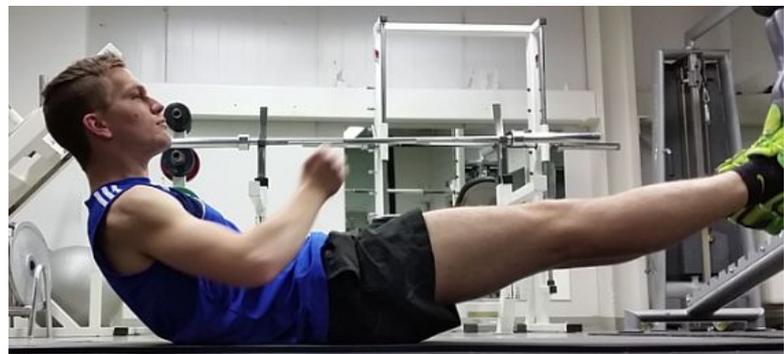
8.

V-sits

Instructions

Keep your butt and lower back on the floor, and raise your legs and upper body to form a V.

1. Drive your arms back and forth as if you were running.
2. Fold your arms and do flutter kicks with your legs.
3. Scissor kicks. Repeat crossing your legs over each other.



Running

Routine 1 - Do 20 seconds each of running, flutter kicks and scissor kicks.

Routine 2 - Do 30 seconds each of running, flutter kicks and scissor kicks.

Notes

- Do the different movements (running with your arms, flutter and scissor kicks) rather forcefully and quickly but with control.
- Don't worry if you can't raise your back and legs a lot from the ground. A flat V is completely fine, and you'll get stronger with time.
- Keep your core engaged during all the exercises.



Flutter kicks. Up and down motion.



Scissor kicks. Sideways motion.

Muscle groups emphasized

Rectus abdominus, transverse abdominals, lower back, obliques, hip abductors and adductors.