

Core Strength for Runners

COACH O TRAINING SERIES

Coach Oliete · 3 times a week, before or after practice · A mat or towel to lie on helps

Your core is every muscle between your ribs and your hips, front, sides, and back. A strong core keeps your body steady so the power from your legs goes into moving you forward instead of wobbling side to side. Rest 30 to 45 seconds between sets.

Why it matters beyond injury prevention: A strong core helps you hold good running form when you are tired, which saves energy late in a race. It also lowers your chance of low back pain, helps your arm swing stay smooth, and gives you better control on hills, turns, and uneven trails.

NO EQUIPMENT NEEDED

Front Plank 3 sets of 30 to 45 sec	Rest on your forearms and toes with your body in a straight line from head to heels. Squeeze your glutes and stomach. Do not let your hips sag or point up.
Side Plank 3 sets of 20 to 30 sec, each side	Lie on your side and lift your hips so you rest on one forearm and the side of your foot. Keep your body in a straight line. Drop to your bottom knee to make it easier.
Dead Bug 3 sets of 10, each side	Lie on your back with arms pointing up and knees bent over your hips. Slowly lower one arm and the opposite leg toward the floor, keeping your lower back pressed down. Return and switch.
Bird Dog 3 sets of 10, each side	On your hands and knees, reach one arm forward and the opposite leg back until they are level with your body. Hold 3 seconds, then switch. Keep your back flat.
Bridge March 3 sets of 10, each leg	Hold a glute bridge with your hips up. Lift one foot a few inches, put it down, then lift the other. Keep your hips level the whole time.
Hollow Hold 3 sets of 15 to 20 sec	Lie on your back, press your lower back into the floor, and lift your shoulders and legs a few inches. Hold. Bend your knees to make it easier.
Superman 3 sets of 12, hold 2 sec	Lie face down with arms overhead. Lift your arms, chest, and legs a few inches off the floor using your back and glutes, hold, then lower slowly.
Plank Shoulder Taps 3 sets of 10, each hand	Hold a high plank on your hands. Slowly tap one hand to the opposite shoulder, then switch. Keep your hips still and feet wide.

Tip: Breathe the whole time and never hold your breath. Stop a set early if your form breaks down. If your back hurts during these, stop and tell Coach Oliete.

Disclaimer: Coach Oliete is not a doctor, and this sheet is not medical advice. Only you (the runner) or a doctor can judge whether these exercises are safe for you to do. If you are unsure, check with a doctor first.