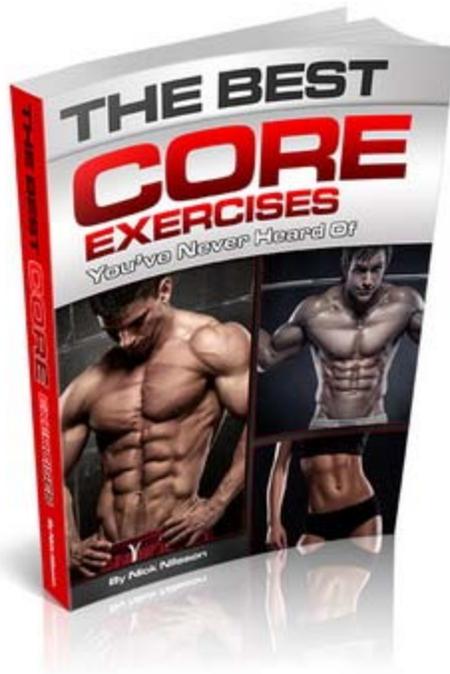


Six Insane New Core Exercises

By Nick Nilsson, The Mad Scientist of Muscle

If you want a strong body, you NEED a strong core...and these six unique, new exercises will get the job done. These are taken directly from my book "[The Best Core Exercises You've Never Heard Of](#)."

Take them to the gym and try them out...and try not to die!



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Please Note: Any exercise program contains an element of risk. Be aware that the exercises in the book may not be familiar to you and, even though every attempt has been made to ensure safe instruction, how and if you decide to execute the exercises is ultimately your responsibility. Consult your physician before taking part in any exercise program. By reading the information in this book you hereby agree to the Terms and Conditions of use, found in this book.

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Dumbbell Crawling



SERIOUS core training is not about getting "six-pack abs" or a "toned tummy" (I can't believe I just wrote the words "toned tummy").

If you want to develop incredible core strength that boosts your athletic and strength performance, you need core training that is functional, movement-based and utilizes significant resistance.

You need an exercise that is going to challenge your core in ways it has NEVER experienced before.

And that exercise is the Dumbbell Crawl...

I'll be honest...this is one of THE weirdest abdominal exercises you'll ever see. It's also one of the most effective and one of my absolute favorites for developing ridiculous core strength.

You're not going to be doing any crunching or twisting or squeezing. There are no machines involved...heck, there's no need to really even focus on contracting the core muscles.

Because once you start doing this exercise, your body will have NO CHOICE but to fire the abs HARD in order to do it.

For this exercise, all you need is a pair of dumbbells and a floor. That's it!

The first time you do this one, start at a moderate weight - something you'd use for sets of 5 reps on dumbbell curls, perhaps. In the demo, I'm using 65 lb dumbbells and those were a good weight for me. I would recommend starting even lighter, unless you're used to doing cross-tension core training already.

This exercise is going to teach you what core strength and stability are REALLY all about...

How To Do Dumbbell Crawling:

You'll need some open floor space for this exercise - preferably where you have about 10 to 15 feet of unobstructed space to move.

Set the dumbbells on the floor then get down in what looks like the top of a close-grip push-up position. Your hands will be on the handles of the dumbbells and you'll be up on your toes (not kneeling).



Now you're going to CRAWL forward in that position. Move the RIGHT dumbbell forward a few inches and step your LEFT foot forward a few inches. When doing these, I like to set the dumbbells at an angle on the floor. This keeps them from rolling to the sides while you're moving, giving you a bit more stability.



It's definitely easier to "get" this one when you see it done on video (posted above).

Basically, you're going to be crawling on the floor with your hands weighted by the dumbbells. Crawl forward about 10 feet like this then stop.







When you've gone as far as you can, crawl **BACKWARDS**, returning to the start location. This backwards crawling is actually even harder than forwards because you don't have the strong muscles of the lower body pushing you forward.



If you're advanced, you can also add in a pair of ankle weights to **REALLY** kick things up a notch. I've got a pair of 20 lb ankle weights on in this next set of pictures.





Looks easy, right? Just crawling around on the floor...

Oh yes, it's VERY easy...[insert evil laughter here]...

Why Dumbbell Crawling Is So Effective:

Dumbbell crawling is a VERY effective core exercise because of the cross-tension you get through your core with every step forward you take.

Think of it this way...when you're lifting up your left hand (with the dumbbell) and the right foot, what is supporting your body?

The support is coming from your OTHER hand and foot. Your core is, in an instant, going from 4-point support to 2-point support and all the tension is going diagonally through your core. This fires the internal and external obliques STRONGLY. And if you're below 10% bodyweight, you'll also involve the transverse abdominis muscles (studies have shown it's not active at higher bodyfat levels).

In addition, while crawling, you're also supporting your bodyweight in a pike position, working the entire abdominal area isometrically (which means without movement - just acting to stabilize and brace your body position). It's a two-pronged attack on your core that will pay off BIG.

One of the great things about this exercise is that the strength you develop is EXTREMELY functional. Forget standing on a BOSU ball on one leg and catching a beanbag. THIS exercise will build serious functional power through the core.

The diagonal tension of crawling exactly mimics the natural diagonal tension that goes through the core when walking, running and jumping. Think of it as "force transfer" strength, meaning you'll be better able to transfer force through your core when moving (i.e. running, jumping, etc.).

Increasing strength in this very targeted way will have an IMMEDIATE and powerful carryover to sports performance.

And when you start moving BACKWARDS, you'll be in for a treat.

When you're doing this exercise, start with a light to moderate weight but don't be afraid to increase the weight here. You may not feel it so much in the abs until you move up in weight. THAT is where the real benefits of the exercise will be felt.

Conclusion:

If core strength and performance are important goals in your training, DEFINITELY give this exercise a try. As strange as it may look, it's actually extremely effective for working the core. It's going to TRASH your abs!

Barbell Pullover Dragon Flag Leg Raises



You will hate me for this ab exercise.

I hate me for this ab exercise.

Seriously.

It's brutal.

It's for advanced trainers only.

Advanced trainers who are also gluttons for punishment.

And if I haven't completely sent you running for the hills by now, it just might be right up your alley...

This exercise is basically a combination of three exercises...all of which are very effective at torching your abs individually. When put together, the abdominal tension you can achieve is downright incredible.

To perform this one, all you need is a patch of floor-space and an empty barbell.

Lay down on the floor with the bar just behind your head. Reach back and grasp the bar with an overhand grip, about shoulder-width apart.

Now raise your legs up until just your upper back is in contact with the floor. You should have some bend in the waist here and your elbows should be bent about 90 degrees. There is very little abdominal tension at this point in the exercise.



Next, under COMPLETE CONTROL, begin to lower your body, from the shoulders down, towards the floor.

This part is similar to the Dragon Flag...it's obviously not a true Dragon Flag because the body isn't straight and there's movement.

However, if you have VERY strong abs, and you can actually maintain a straight body position on the way down, go for it. Personally, I've got some work to do in that department before I can achieve that.

I also want you to look at the barbell...it's now coming up off the ground. The weight of the empty bar is not enough to fully counterbalance the weight of your lower body coming down, and it'll start coming up. THIS is the pullover and it's going to add even MORE tension to the rectus abdominis (six pack abs) as you bring your legs down.



Continue lowering your legs until your lower back is flat on the floor. At this point, the bar should be a few inches off the ground.



Continue lowering your legs until your feet are just a few inches off the ground. HOLD this position for a few seconds.



One of the major benefits of holding the bar off the ground behind you is that it does have enough weight to counterbalance your legs at this point and take stress off the lower back in the bottom of the leg raise position.

Now for the hard part...(yeah, as if the other stuff wasn't hard enough). Bring your legs back up until your lower back is flat on the floor. The barbell should still be held off the ground.

DO NOT ALLOW ANY MOMENTUM during this entire raising phase. None. Zero. Zilch.



Here's the important part...

Instead of focusing on raising the legs at the hip (as in a normal leg raise), I want you to focus on raising the legs pivoting from the **BOTTOM OF THE RIB CAGE**.

Imagine as though your hips are locked into position and can't bend...and the only place your body CAN bend is in the upper ab area. From here, the shoulders/upper back will be the only part of you touching the ground again.



And yes, THIS is the most brutal part of the entire exercise.



Come all the way back up to the start position, with the legs pointed up to the ceiling and the bar resting on the ground. Take a short breather...it's the only break you're going to get.

Then go again.

When you watch the video, you'll notice that I'm making noise like Arnold did in Total Recall when he pulled the tracker out of his nose. When you try this exercise, I think you will, too.

Just remember these key points...

1. ZERO momentum
2. The barbell comes up off the ground and is held isometrically during the leg raise portion of the movement.
3. On the way back up, keep the hips locked and pivot from the upper abs, with just the upper back on the ground.

That's it!

Give this exercise a try next time you hit your abs. The tension you can develop is absolutely incredible...it'll TORCH your six-pack abs AND your lower abs at the same time.

And don't say I didn't warn you...

One Dumbbell Curl Squat



Strong supporting core strength is CRITICAL if you want to lift a lot of weight in your big exercises like squats and deadlifts. And in my opinion, there is NO better "core support" exercise than the Curl Squat.

This exercise is exactly what the name implies...holding a weight in the top of a curl position and squatting with it.

Holding the weight in the "curl" position takes all skeletal support away from the weight, forcing your core to brace strongly to support it. In this way, it's similar to a Front Squat, only done without the weight resting on your shoulders.

This version of the exercise, done with just one dumbbell held in one hand so the load is off center on your body, is going to also strongly involve the DEEP muscles of the core...the obliques and transverse abdominis.

You'll need just one dumbbell for this exercise...I'm using a 95 lb dumbbell. You'll want to definitely start lighter than this the first time you try it. I've been doing Curls Squats of various forms for a long time and you'll need to build some specific strength before you go heavy.

Swing the dumbbell up to the top of the curl position. Don't curl it...swing it and use your other hand to help get it to that top position. This is a core exercise, not a bicep exercise.

Set your feet a little wider than shoulder width, in your normal squat stance.



Hold the dumbbell a little AWAY from your shoulder. It should NOT be resting on your body at all. That defeats the purpose of the exercise, which is massive unsupported loading on the core muscles.



Now squat down.



Hold your breath all the way down and until you're about halfway up again. You need to do so in order to maintain a solid "brick" of a midsection for maximum support. If you breathe, it will break the exercise and you'll likely have to set the weight down.

For this reason, it's a GREAT exercise for teaching you how to maintain "solidity" in your core as you're squatting.

If you have blood pressure issues, this is not an exercise I would recommend for you as holding the breath IS a critical part of it.

Perform 3-5 reps on one arm, then set the dumbbell down, grip it with the hand, swing it back and do 3-5 reps with the other arm. Perform 2-3 total sets with 1 minute rest in between.

I would suggest doing this exercise at the end of a workout, after you've done everything else that might need strong core strength. This exercise will absolutely fatigue the core and compromise strength if you try and do it first (unless you go light, of course).

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Ab Rippers



You're going to hate me for this one...this is one of my very favorite "secret weapon" core training exercises. And when you're done, you're going to feel like you can punch through a brick wall.

It's a relatively simple-looking concept on the surface...you'll be doing a single-arm dumbbell bench press while at the same time doing a single arm cable pulldown/row.

As you're pushing the dumbbell UP, you're pulling the cable DOWN.

However, even though you're doing a back and chest exercise, as I mentioned, that's NOT the focus of the exercise.

What you might not see at first glance is the INCREDIBLE core cross-tension you'll get when you execute a push and a pull at the same time. In order to stabilize the core while doing two opposing movements, your deep core muscles (obliques and transverse abdominis) will be pushed to the limit.

This is honestly one of THE best core exercises I've ever found. And it's going to develop incredible core strength in you.

I can promise you, if you've never done heavy cross-core tension training before, your deep abdominal muscles will be feeling it for DAYS. That means start with more moderate weights than I'm using in the demo here and work up to it.

Here's how to do it...

First, you'll need a flat bench, a high pulley with a single handle and a dumbbell. Set the bench perpendicular to how you'd "normally" set it for a press, beside or under the high pulley. You're going to be lying with just your upper back on the bench.

I'm using a 105 lb dumbbell and about 110 lbs on the pulldown part. You'll need to do a little practice to get the weight balance right for yourself. The dumbbell should be something you can press for at least 8-10 reps, then balance the pulldown load according to the dumbbell you're pressing (about even or a little bit more than the press is good).

Pick up the dumbbell in your right hand, sit on the end of the bench and rest the dumbbell on your right thigh.



There are two ways to get into position for the exercise, depending on your setup.

If you are able to lower the handle down (either using an adjustable-height pulley or a length of chain), set it at a point where you can lie on the bench and reach up and grab it.

If you can't adjust the height, you'll need to reach up and grab the handle **FIRST**, before you lie back on the bench (it's a bit trickier, so practice it with lighter weight first).

Lie back on the bench with your upper arm resting on the bench.

This turns the press into almost a "floor" press done on the bench. This is much easier for getting the dumbbell into position and performing the exercise. It's also going to allow you to use heavier weight, which allows you to put more cross-loading on the core.

This exercise is not about working the chest or the back...it's about **MAXIMUM** torque on the core.



Now reach up and grab the single cable handle and set your feet out wide (important especially with heavier weights).



Now PUSH and PULL.

This should be simultaneous. And this is where you'll start to feel the incredible cross-tension on the core!



At this point, you will feel like a giant is clawing at your entire midsection and/or wringing you out like a big, wet towel. The cross-tension is ridiculous.

As you press/row, try and keep your feet on the floor, however, there will likely be some movement in the lower body as you try to prevent being twisted in half.

With the pulldown/row part, you'll want to keep your elbow coming down in beside your body...not a wide-grip row position, more like a close-grip row. This is important for balance.

Press all the way up and pull all the way down as far as you can. We're not necessarily looking for full range of motion on the pull...just enough to get that massive cross-tension.



Now just lower the dumbbell and let the cable come up and repeat.

I like to keep to lower reps on this one...(4-6 reps). The core responds better to lower reps and resistance, especially if you want to build power and explosiveness, so start with moderate resistance but definitely work your way up.

On each rep, rest your upper arm on the bench, similar to a floor dumbbell bench press.

To finish the exercise, let your upper arm rest on the bench and release the cable handle.

Reach over and stabilize the dumbbell with the left hand, too. Then just shift your legs around to a kneeling position, then move the dumbbell to the floor (easier to see in the video).

That's one side!

I recommend taking a rest period in between that and switching up to work the other side. Your core especially will need it. You'll get more out of the other side by waiting for some recovery (at least a minute to 90 seconds) before hitting the opposing movements.

It's going to look exactly the same only with sides reversed.





Repeat for 4 to 6 reps.

I would suggest performing two sets on each side.

If you've never really felt your deep abdominal muscles after training THIS exercise is going to change that!

(Side note: do your best not to sneeze for the next few days...trust me on this...the deep core soreness you're going to get from this one will be intense.)

One-Arm Hammer Planks



The plank is a simple exercise and a very effective one for developing core strength and stability. In fact, the regular plank is an exercise I start even complete beginners off with because of the tremendous core-focused benefits you can get from it.

This version of the plank cranks the difficulty up a LOT...it's definitely not a beginner version. You should be able to do at least 2 to 3 minutes of a normal plank before attempting this one.

You're going to be doing the plank with one arm instead of two. The arm you're bracing on will be set perpendicular to your body, which is the reason I call this one a "hammer" plank (it mimics the hammer curl and you'll be exerting force against the ground with your fist, like a hammer).

And instead of setting the forearm in line with body and tilting so you're doing a side plank, you will instead be keeping your shoulders parallel with the ground, using your arm position to brace the core.

It's a VERY tough position and targets the obliques and deep muscles of the core strongly (the transverse abdominis, for example) by focusing on anti-rotation tension. What that means is that you'll be exerting force to PREVENT rotation of the spine. This is a much safer way to target "rotational" muscles without actually rotating the spine.

When doing this one, you have two options...legs together or separated (I just did the legs-together version in the demo). Keeping your legs together will increase that torsion through the core. Setting the feet wide will make the exercise easier as part of the work that the abs should be doing will be done with leg stabilization.

Here's the position you will be in for the One-Arm Hammer Plank. Notice how the arm is set and how my shoulders are kept square to the ground. This is the MOST important thing to note for the exercise, because if your body tilts up on it's side, it turns it into a Side Plank, which is a whole different exercise. Don't make it easy on yourself :).



In order to maintain that shoulders-square position, you must exert force with your fist against the ground, which carries through the arm and into the core.

Hold until your position starts to break then set your other forearm down and switch arms.





Keep repeating this side-to-side sequence until you're unable to hold yourself up (with shoulders square to the ground) on either side.

This is a VERY challenging plank movement. To give you an idea of how hard it is, I can do a normal plank for about 4 minutes...I was less than a minute on this, even switching between arms.

You will feel this one from the moment you start it and it will develop tremendous anti-rotational core strength and stability.

Pallof Press Abdominal Sit-Ups



This combination exercise is literally one of THE best waist-tightening exercises I've EVER found.

After completing your first set, you will actually FEEL the muscles in your waist pulling inwards and tightening like shrink wrap. It's a very weird and very awesome feeling.

You're going to be combining an excellent anti-rotation exercise, called the Pallof Press, with a "six-pack" exercise called the Abdominal Sit-Up.

Each of these exercises on their own are very effective...put them together and it's like magic...and it will tighten your waist like crazy.

How to Do It

First, you'll need a little bit of equipment...a rolled-up gym towel and either a low-pulley cable machine or a training band. Either one will work just fine...I'll use the pulley for the demo.

Set the rolled up towel beside the pulley (about a foot away). Set a LIGHT weight on the pulley. You don't want heavy resistance for this one. I've set the stack to just 2 notches down. Going too heavy will actually wreck the exercise and the training effect we're going for.

Lie down with the towel in the small of your back, pretty much right on the waistband of your shorts or pants. Hold the cable handle in both hands, at your chest. The weight stack should be up and already providing resistance.

Your feet should be together, with your knees apart (like a frog stance). This takes the hip flexors out of a direct line of pull, minimizing their contribution to the exercise.



Now the fun part...

Come up into a sit-up...and at the SAME time, move the handle away from your body (this is the Pallof Press).



The towel in your lower back changes the sit up from a hip flexion exercise to more of a spinal flexion exercise (which is what the rectus abdominis, aka. the six-pack abs, do). This exercise puts massive load on the core on it's own but doesn't work the anti-rotational function of the deep muscles (the obliques and transversus).

THAT is where the Pallof Press comes in.

Normally, the Pallof Press is done standing or kneeling...you just move the cable handle from

your chest and straighten your arms. The lateral pull of the cable engages those deep core muscles.

It's an excellent exercise...

...and now we've added it to a KILLER exercise that is ALREADY engaging those same muscles as trunk stabilizers.

Come all the way up to the top of the sit-up, keeping your lower back in contact with the towel. At the top, your arms should be fully extended for maximum anti-rotational torque on those deep muscles.



THIS is the "money" part of the exercise.

And I don't care how strong your core is...this combination will CHALLENGE you.

Lie back down under control, bringing the handle back into your chest as you do, then repeat. Do as many reps as you can while keeping good form (likely between 4-8 reps).

Then switch around and work the other side.





I would recommend doing at least 2 sets of this exercise (or 4). On the second set, start with the side you finished with on the previous one in order to keep the workload even (you'll likely get fewer reps on the second side you work in the set).

When you're done, you will feel those deep muscles of your core "shrink wrapping" inside of you.

It's a very weird feeling but you'll truly know this exercise is working!

Give this one a shot in your next workout...this is a waist-tightening, "total" core exercise that will feel like it's turning you inside out...in a good way...

Get Your Copy of "[The Best Core Exercises You've Never Heard Of](#)" Now!

