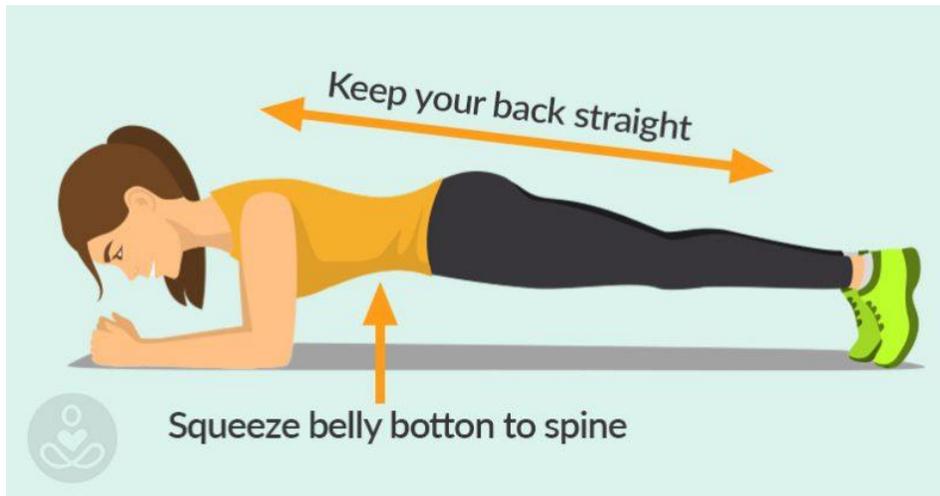


5 Important Strength Exercises for Runners

Make sure to get these in at least once a week and you will have less risk of injury and faster times.

Planks





Prop yourself up on your elbows with your feet slightly apart. Make sure your body is aligned, your abdominal muscles are tight, and shoulders are directly above the elbows and down and back, not hunched up. Hold this position for 45 seconds to one minute. Gradually add time as your core gets stronger.

Modifications: Plank variations include: side planks to target obliques, single leg planks, spider planks, mountain climber planks, and supine planks.

Repetitions: 2 - 4

Muscles worked: core, lower back, shoulders

Frog Pose



Lay on your stomach and grab your feet while lifting your quads and shoulders off the ground. Hold this position for 45 seconds to one minute. Gradually add time as your core gets stronger.

Repetitions: 2 - 4

Benefit: This is a great posture pose and helps you stretch your hip flexors which can become tight from running.

Russian Twist



Lie on your back with your upper legs perpendicular to the floor and your knees bent 90-degrees. Without changing the bend in your hips or knees, lower your legs to the left side of your body while keeping your shoulders in contact with the floor. Lift them back to the starting position, and repeat to the right side of your body. That's one repetition.

Modification: To make it harder, keep your legs straight.

Repetitions: 10 to 12

Muscles worked: core

Scorpion



Lay flat on the ground. Raise your right knee toward your left shoulder as you rotate your hips up and to the left as far as you can. Then reverse directions, rotating your hips up and to the right, and try to touch your right foot to the back of your left shoulder (you won't be able to do it). That's one repetition. Continue for 30 seconds with your right leg, then switch legs.

Repetitions: As many as you can in 30 seconds

Muscles worked: shoulders, core

Squats



Use a bar or dumbbells, keep back straight and eyes forward. Then lower until your knees bend close to 90 degrees. Make sure your knees don't go in front of your feet.

Repetitions: 3 sets

Muscles worked: Whole body!