

Let's Plank – Different ways to plank for a killer core.

By **Manuella Myburgh**

The King of bodyweight movements: They're super tough and great to do anywhere, with little or no equipment. Planks are versatile core strengthening exercises, but they also engage more than 20 muscles including your shoulders, back, arms, legs & glutes, in turn strengthening your whole body. Planks also allow you to work your core without the risks of back injury.

Remember Form is very important, so before progressing to the more advanced plank variations make sure your form is correct. Concentrate on tightening you abdominals and low back muscles to prevent bending at the hips. Keep body straight & neutral as possible, arms directly underneath shoulders, look forward.

Start with the beginner exercises. Practice holding each move for 30 seconds at a time, adding 15 seconds each time you workout. Once you can hold a basic plank for a minute, move on to the intermediate and advanced variations that will transform you into a plank pro. Increase intensity by increasing the time or number or reps. You can also use a yoga ball or weights to maximize the intensity of you planks.

Enjoy!! Be Fit & Stay Strong

Basic High Plank



Straight arms, directly under the shoulders & locked out elbows. Keep your bum / hips down.

Basic Elbow Plank



This is a more advanced version of the basic high plank. Body in a straight line, balancing on toes & your elbows. Always concentrate on keeping your core tight!

Bird-Dog Plank



Begin in full plank position, lifting your opposite arm & leg, alternate. Great for core stability

Plank with Donkey Kick



Basic plank with up & down back kicks, great for working that bum...

Plank with Leg Lift



Straight leg lifts working that core hard as well as your glutes. You can either lift your leg up & down or do pulsing lifts

Side Plank



Nice for working those obliques. Helps improve on your stability. You can either have your hand on your hip or stretched up. Concentrate on lifting your hips. An easier way to execute this exercise would be to plank from the knees, and then advance to your feet

Side plank with Hip Lifts



Side plank with hip lifts up and down. Keep your body in line & contract your abs

Knees to Elbow Plank



Assume the high plank position... moving knee towards your elbow & back, alternate. To make this more challenging move knee towards opposite elbow, criss crossing.

Side Plank with Crunch



Challenging! Great way to make those abs & obliques work extra hard!

Side Plank with Leg Lift



Now that you have mastered most of the plank versions, give this one a try! Ultimate stabilizing exercise!

Plank with Lateral Arm Raise



Shoulder stability intensified.....! Keep that core super tight!

Plank Rows



Here you can work from planking on the knees without weights, then to the toes again without weights. When you are ready, you can advance to rowing with dumbbells. This is great for working your back with your core.

Side Plank Under Pass



Starting with your arm stretch up, move it down, (while twisting your body) through the bottom bridge that your body has created in the side plank. Crank it up by using a weight.

Plank Walks



Advanced & Challenging! Move from your elbows onto your hands, with straight arms, then back onto your elbows and so on... do this walk for a long as you can & feel the burn!