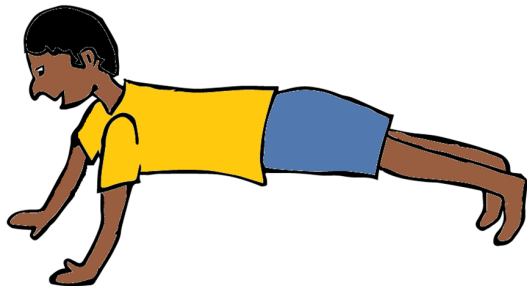


Plank Series

Planks are great for core strength and there are so many ways to modify them beyond just the basic plank.

These cards offer lots of suggestions and can be used as stand alone exercises, in conjunction with other activity cards, and as a circuit.

So get ready to get planking!



Plank Series

Basic Plank

Forearm Plank

Shoulder Taps

Mountain Climbers

Mountain Climber Twists

Plank Walks

Side Planks

Plank Jacks

Up/Downs

Hand to Hand Ball Pass

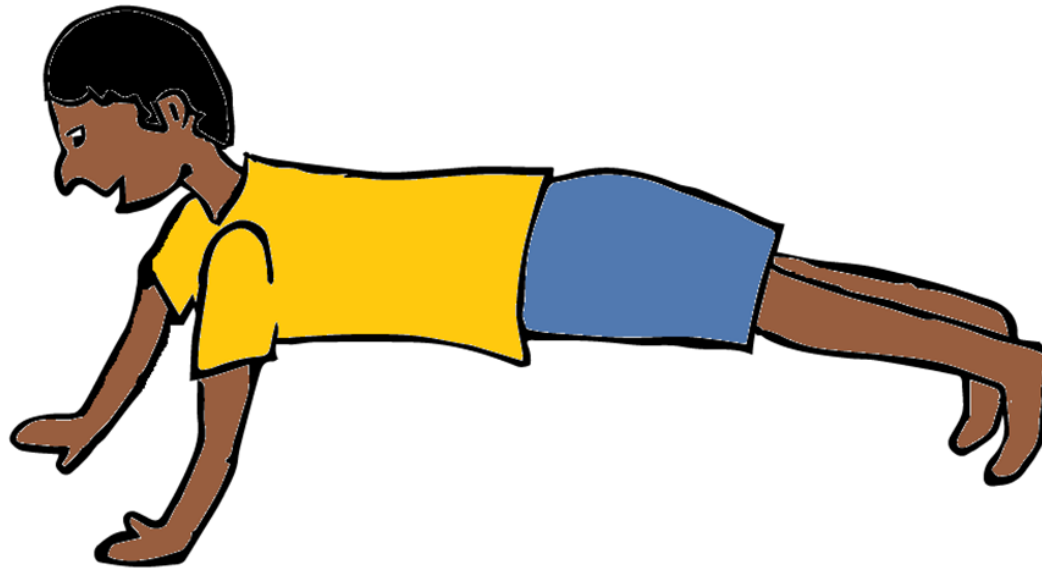
Leg Lifts

Knee Taps

Ball Balance

Elevated Feet

Basic Plank

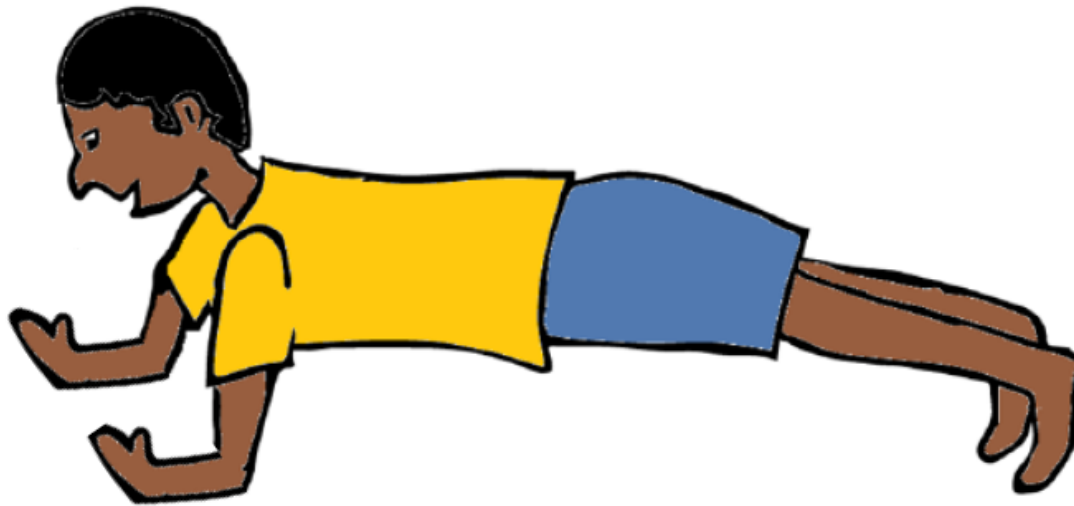


Plank Series

Basic Plank

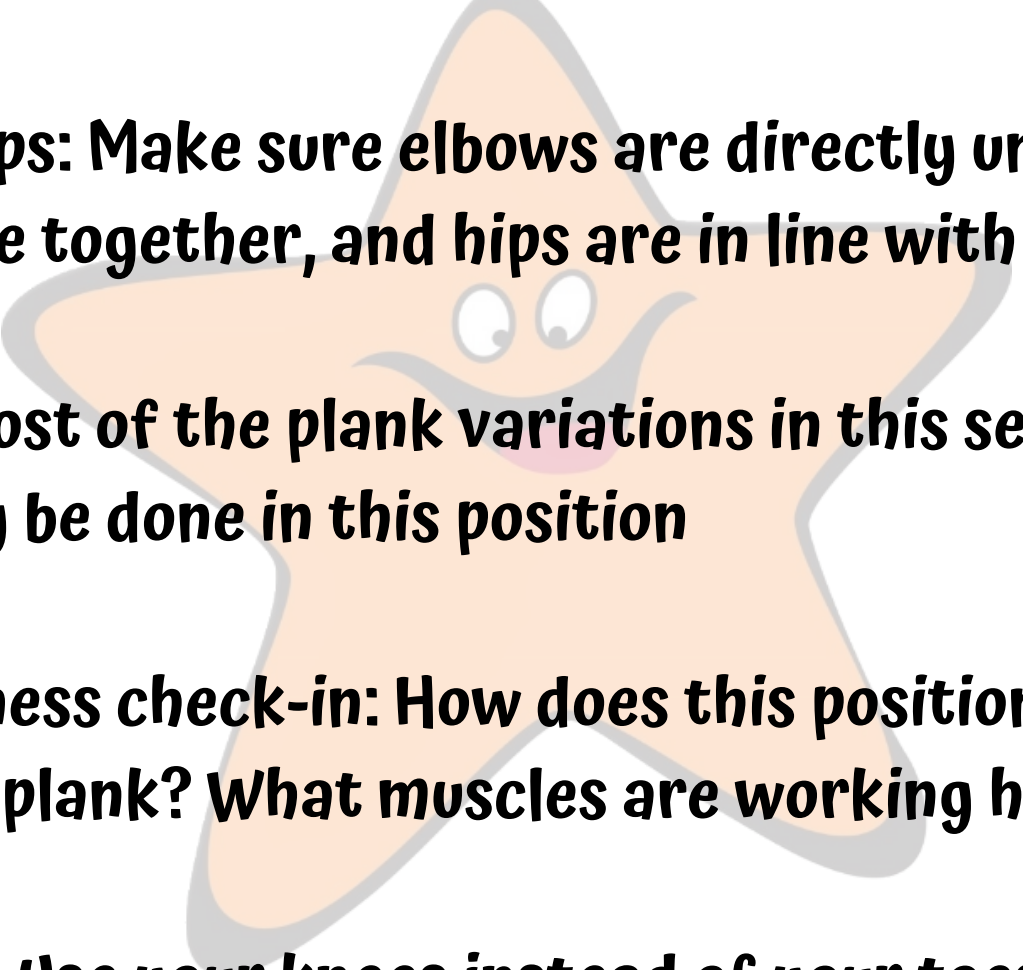
- **Alignment is key!** Make sure that hands are under shoulders, feet are close together, and hips are in line with back (sinking or elevating bottoms are 2 common compensations we try to avoid!)
- **Did you know?** Holding a plank position has been shown to work more muscles more efficiently than doing sit-ups?
- **Try this!** Keep a plank log - try holding just one plank each day, notice how much longer you can hold it at end of the month compared to the beginning!
- **Alternative -** Use your knees instead of your toes as you build up your strength

Forearm Plank

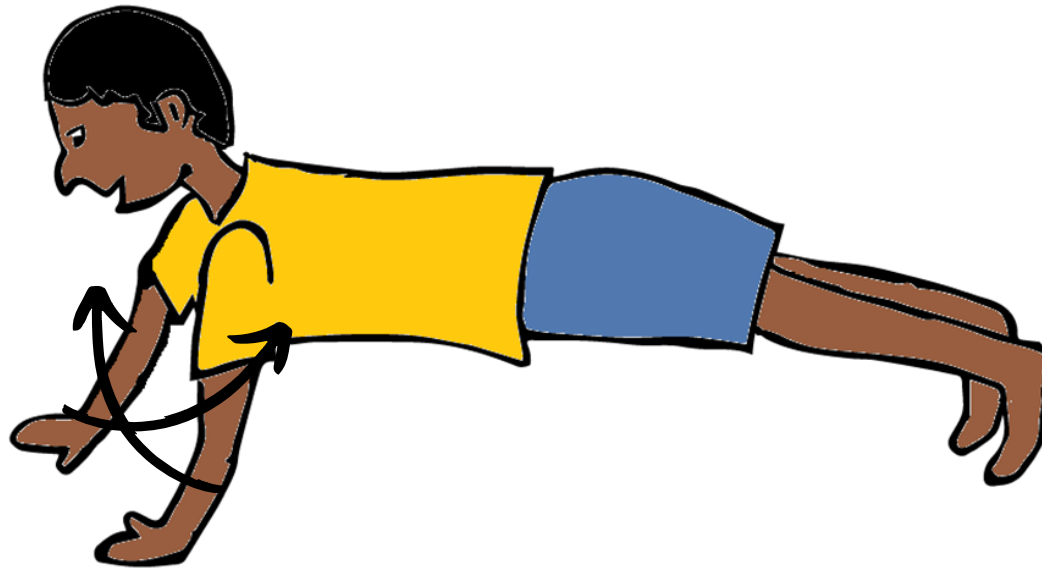


Plank Series

Forearm Plank

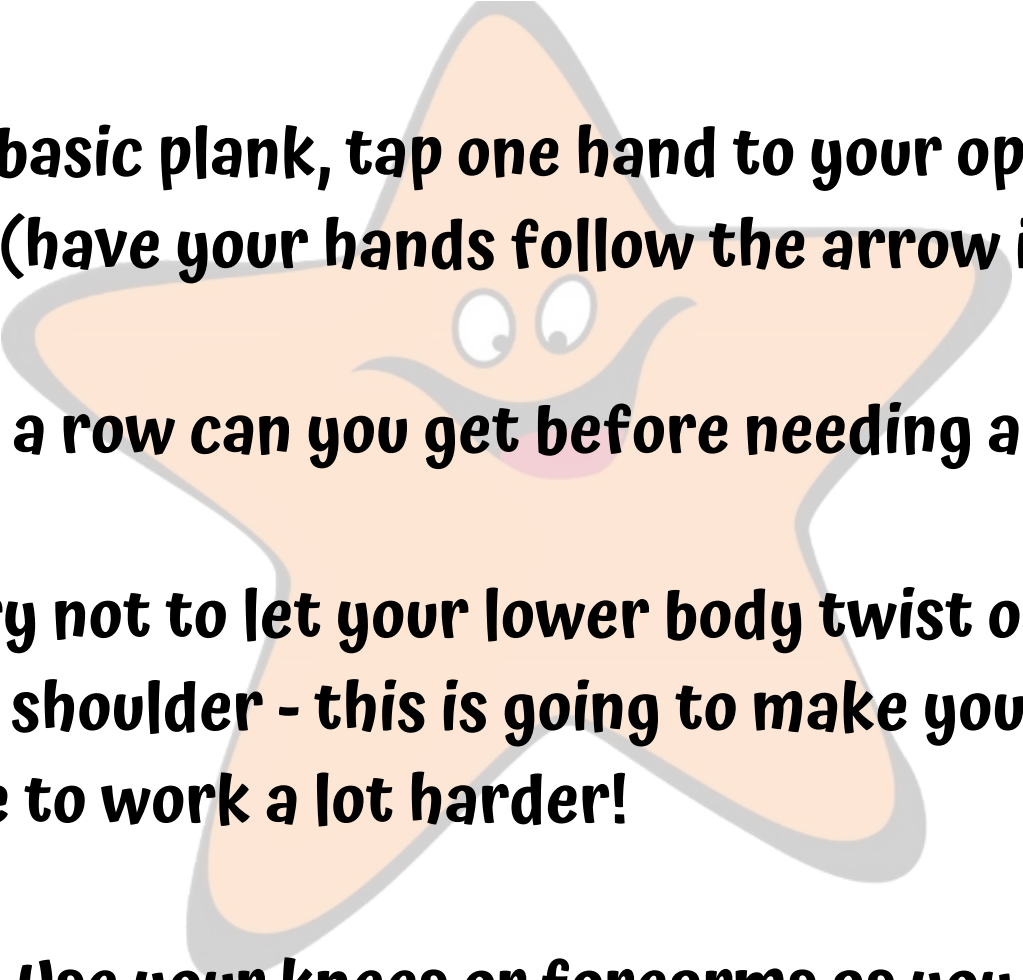
- 
- **Alignment tips:** Make sure elbows are directly under shoulders, feet are close together, and hips are in line with back
 - **Try it out!** Most of the plank variations in this set can alternatively be done in this position
 - **Body awareness check-in:** How does this position feel different from a basic plank? What muscles are working harder?
 - **Alternative -** Use your knees instead of your toes as you build up your strength

Shoulder Taps

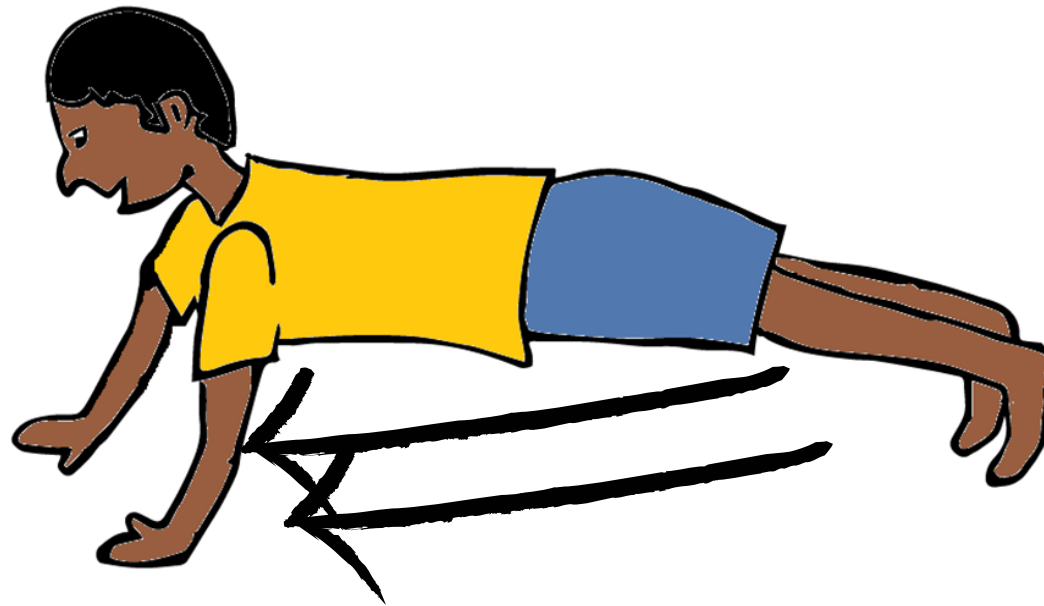


Plank Series

Shoulder Taps

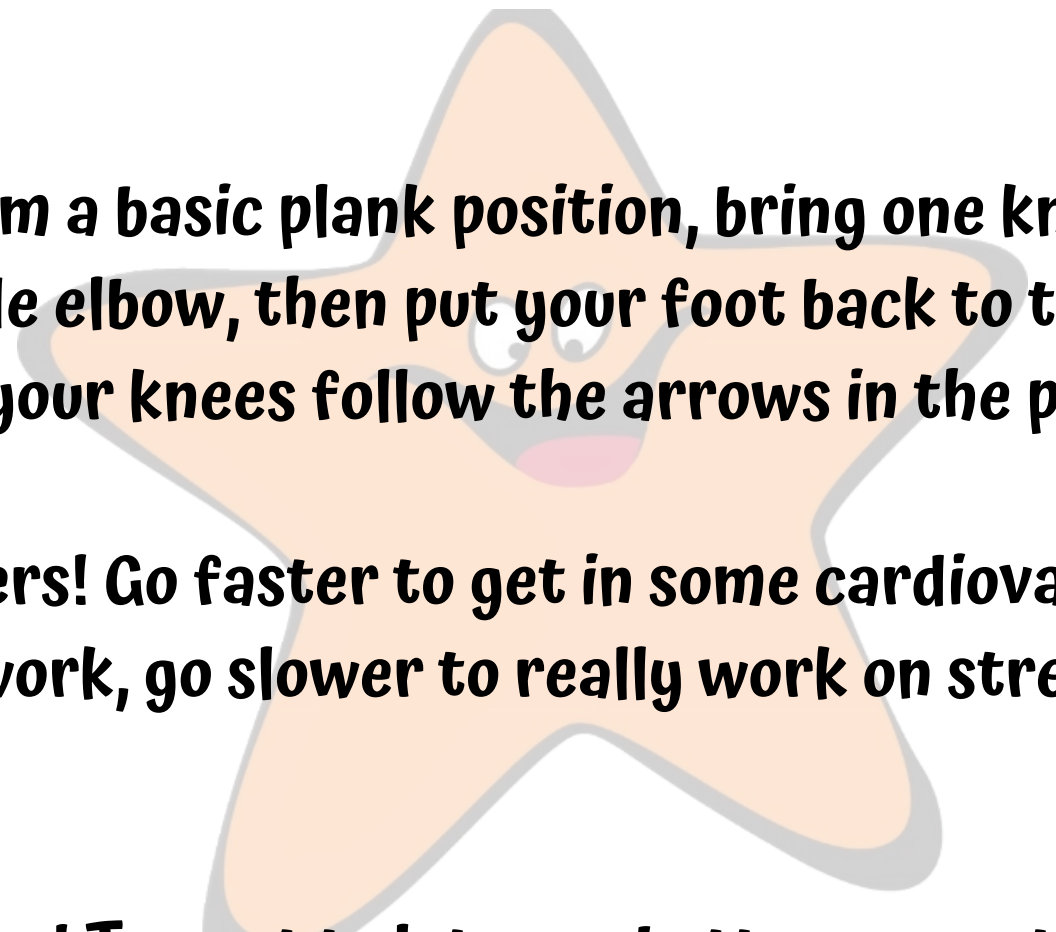
- 
- **Start with a basic plank, tap one hand to your opposite shoulder, then switch (have your hands follow the arrow in the picture)**
 - **How many in a row can you get before needing a break?**
 - **Key point: Try not to let your lower body twist or turn while tapping your shoulder - this is going to make your side tummy muscles have to work a lot harder!**
 - **Alternative - Use your knees or forearms as you build up your strength**

Mountain Climbers

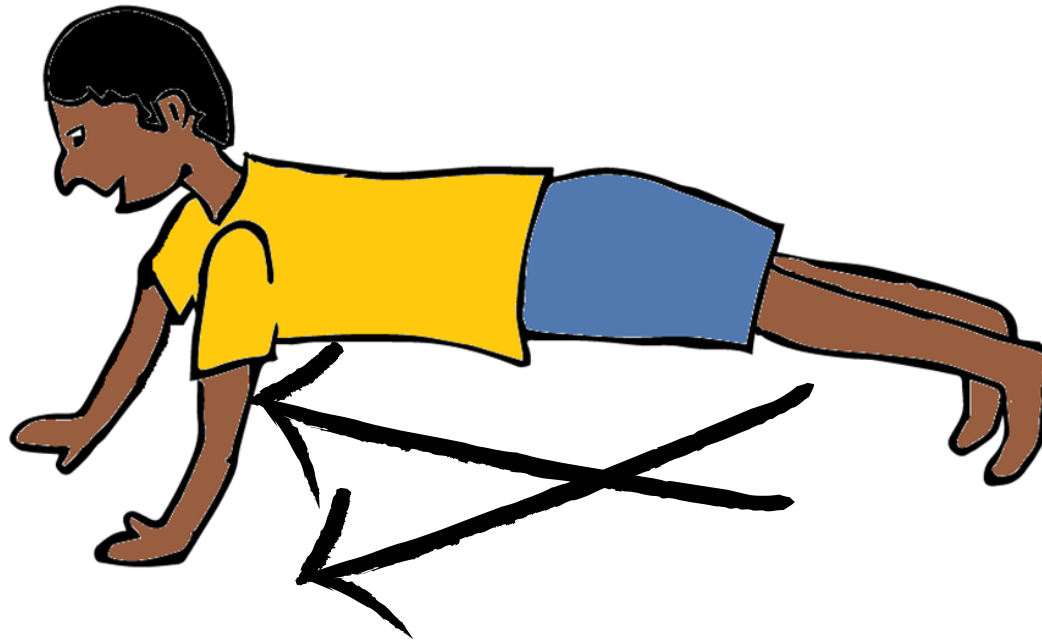


Plank Series

Mountain Climbers

- 
- **Starting from a basic plank position, bring one knee up towards the same side elbow, then put your foot back to the floor, switch sides (have your knees follow the arrows in the picture)**
 - **Speed matters! Go faster to get in some cardiovascular and endurance work, go slower to really work on strength and stability**
 - **Form matters! Try not to let your bottom go up too high or sink down during this exercise**

Mountain Climber Twists

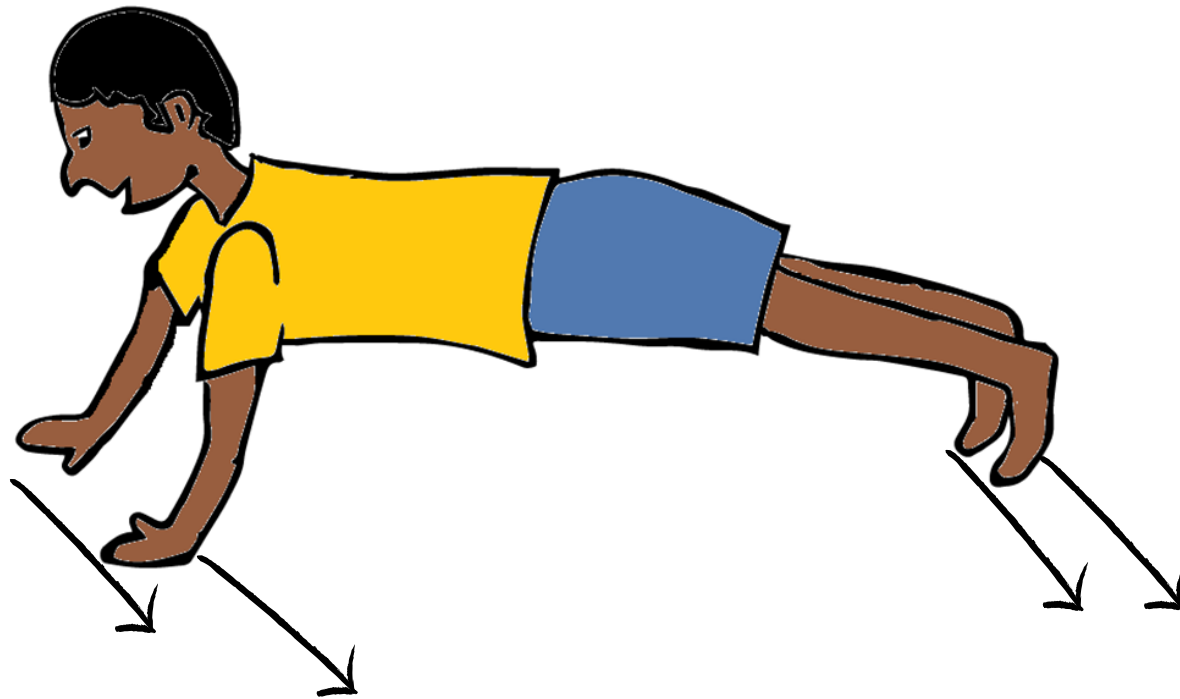


Plank Series

Mountain Climber Twists

- **Starting from a basic plank position, bring one knee up towards the opposite elbow, then bring foot back to floor, switch sides (have your knees follow the arrows in the picture)**
- **This is step up from regular mountain climbers - the cross body knee movement requires increased coordination and oblique strength to complete**
- **Speed matters! Go faster to get in some cardiovascular and endurance work, go slower to really work on strength and stability**

Plank Walks

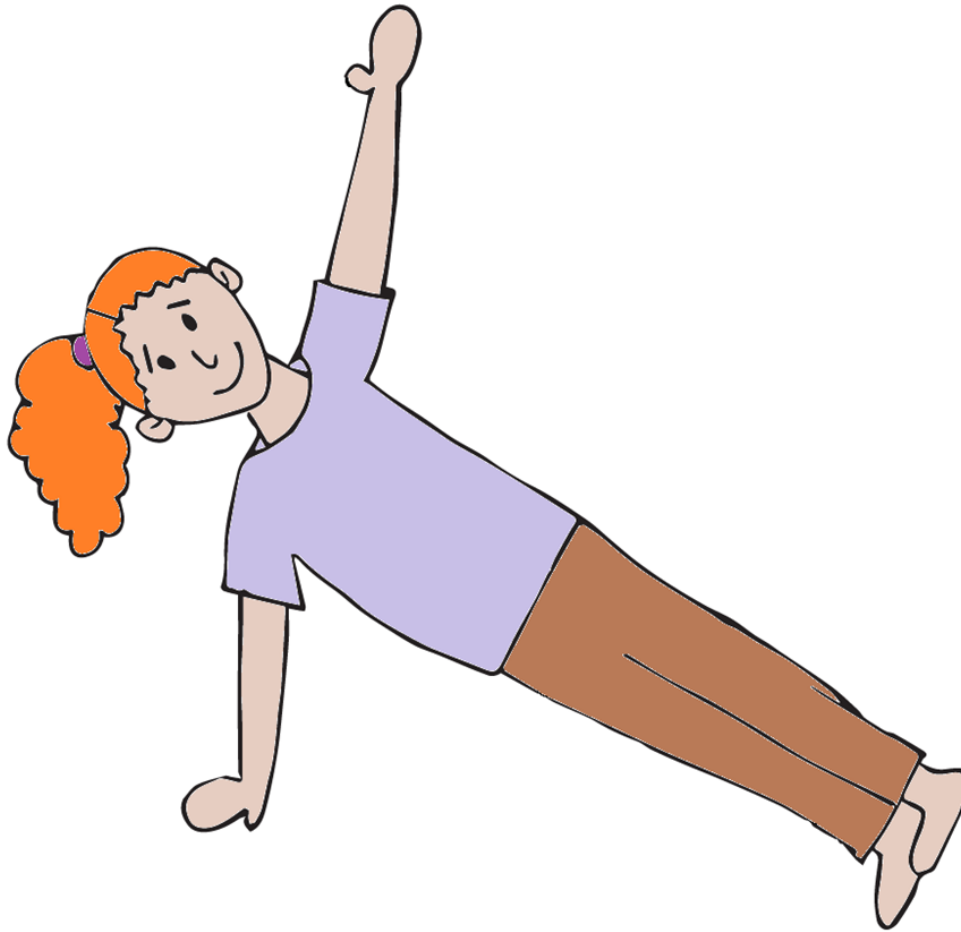


Plank Series

Plank Walks

- **Starting in a basic plank, move one hand and leg out towards the side, then move the opposite hand and leg back to a plank (follow the arrows in the picture)**
- **Keep it equal! However many steps you take towards one side, make sure to take the same amount towards the opposite side**
- **Do you notice that going towards one side is easier than the other?**

Side Plank

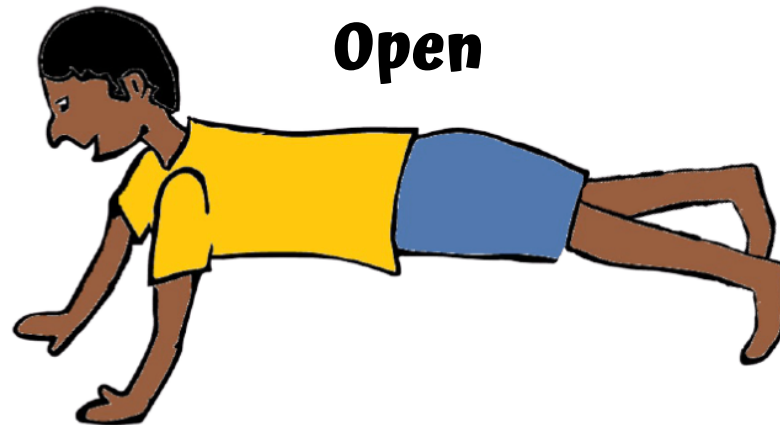
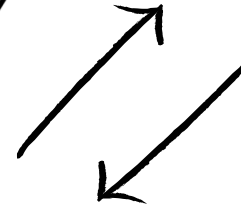
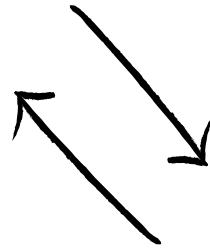
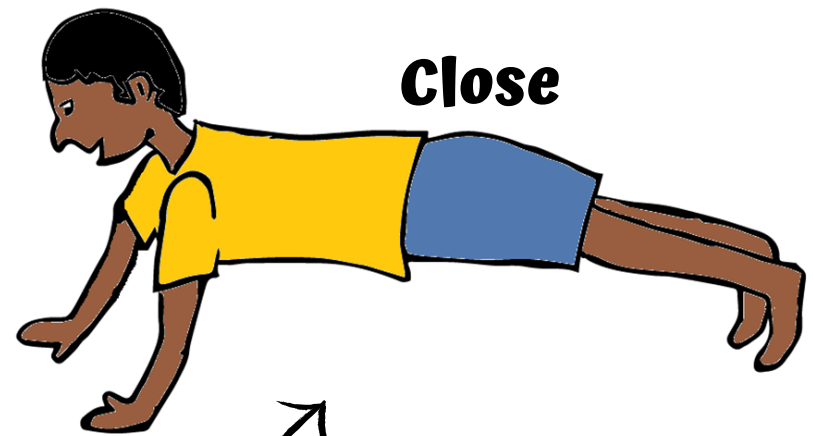
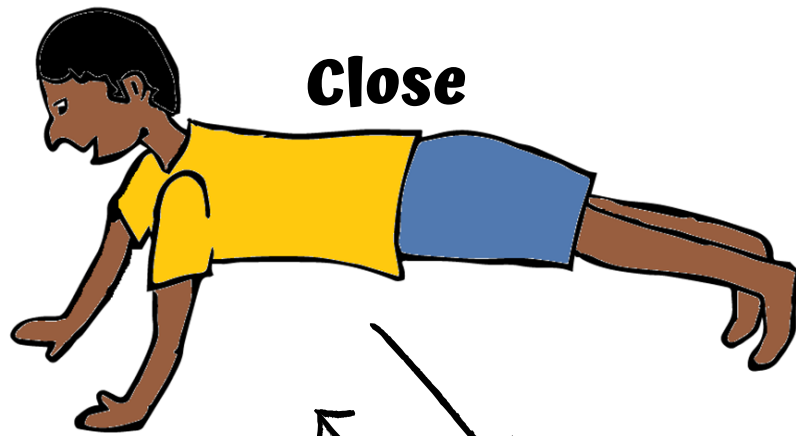


Plank Series

Side Plank

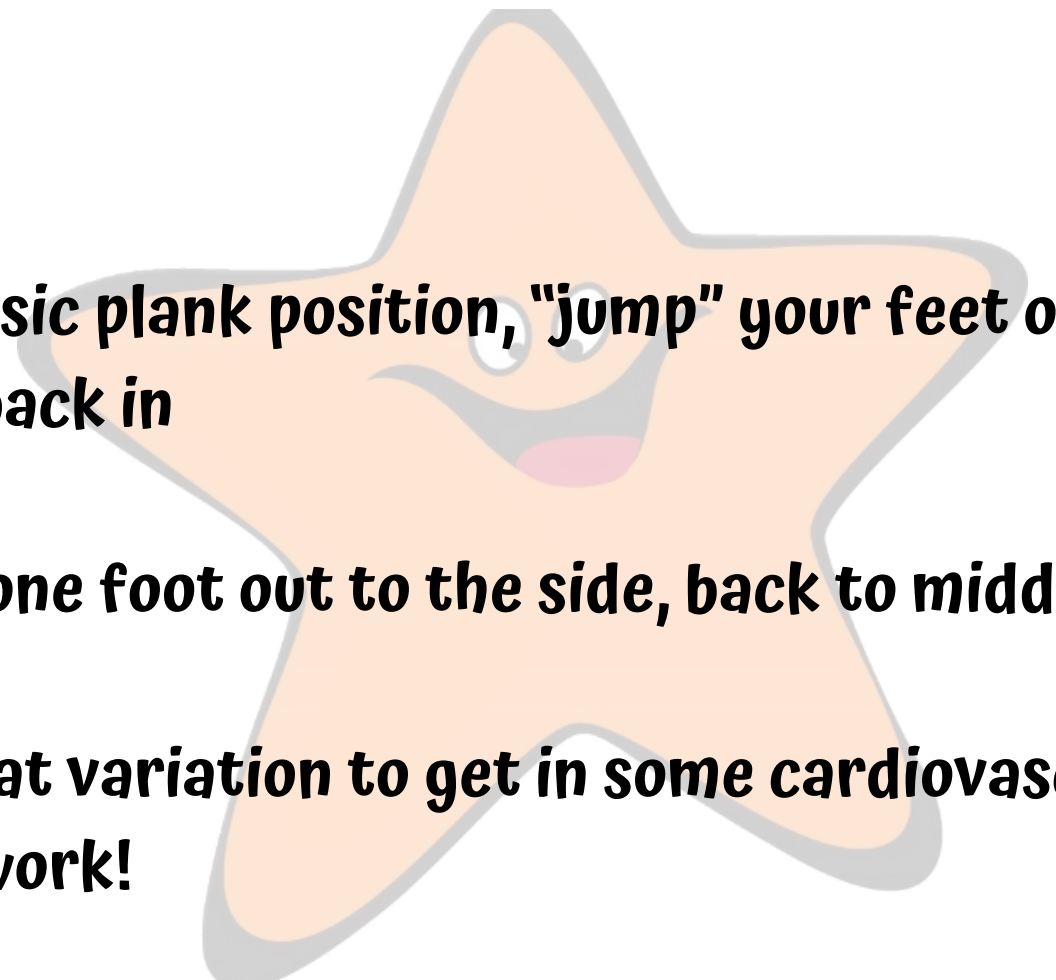
- **Starting from a basic plank position, lift one arm up towards the sky, turn body towards side, stack feet on top of each other. This position can be completed with a straight arm or on your forearm**
- **Easier: Stagger feet so the your top foot rests on the floor in front of your bottom foot**
- **Harder: Lift your top foot up so that only one foot is on the floor**
- **Key tip: Make sure your hips don't sink down towards the floor, the higher up you keep them the more side body work you will get!**

Plank Jacks

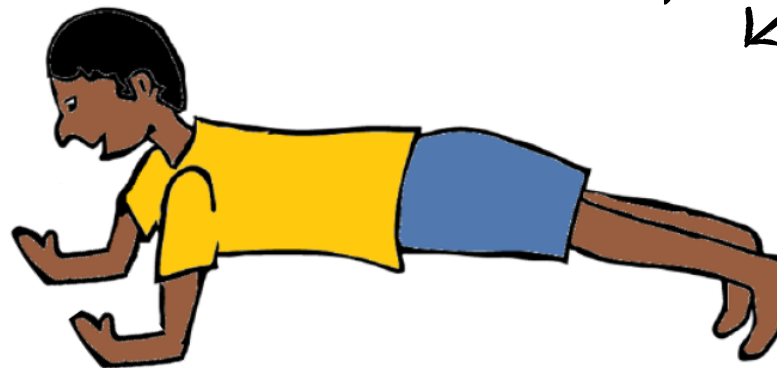
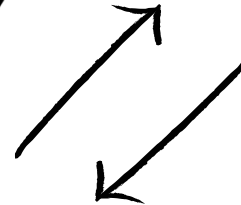
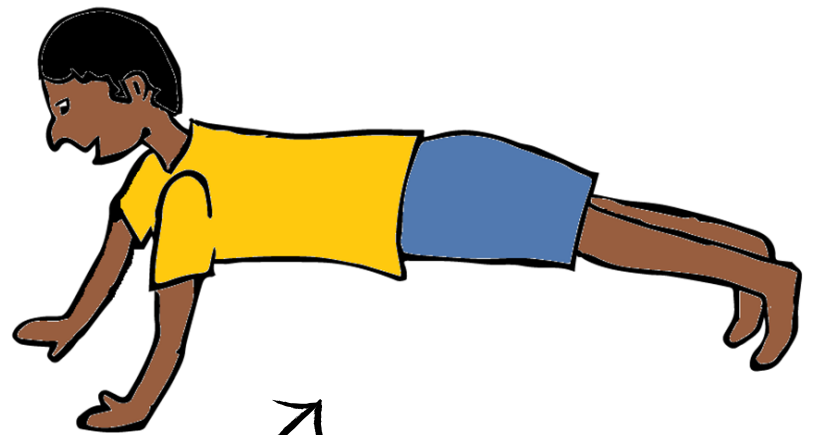
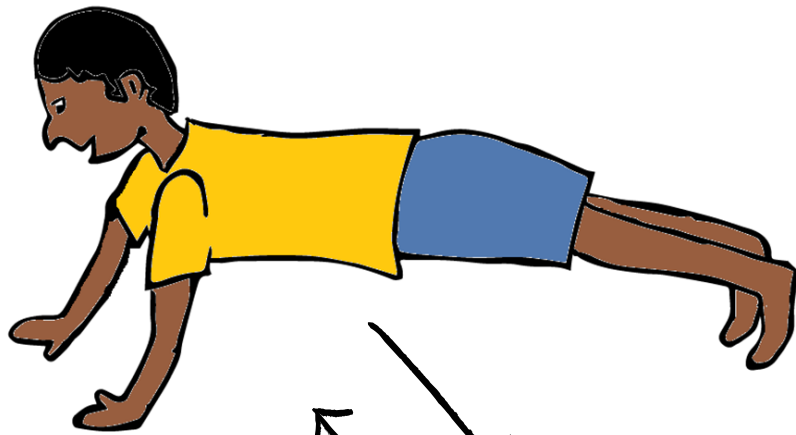


Plank Series

Plank Jacks

- 
- **Start in a basic plank position, "jump" your feet out towards the sides, then back in**
 - **Easier: Tap one foot out to the side, back to middle, then switch**
 - **This is a great variation to get in some cardiovascular and endurance work!**

Up/Downs

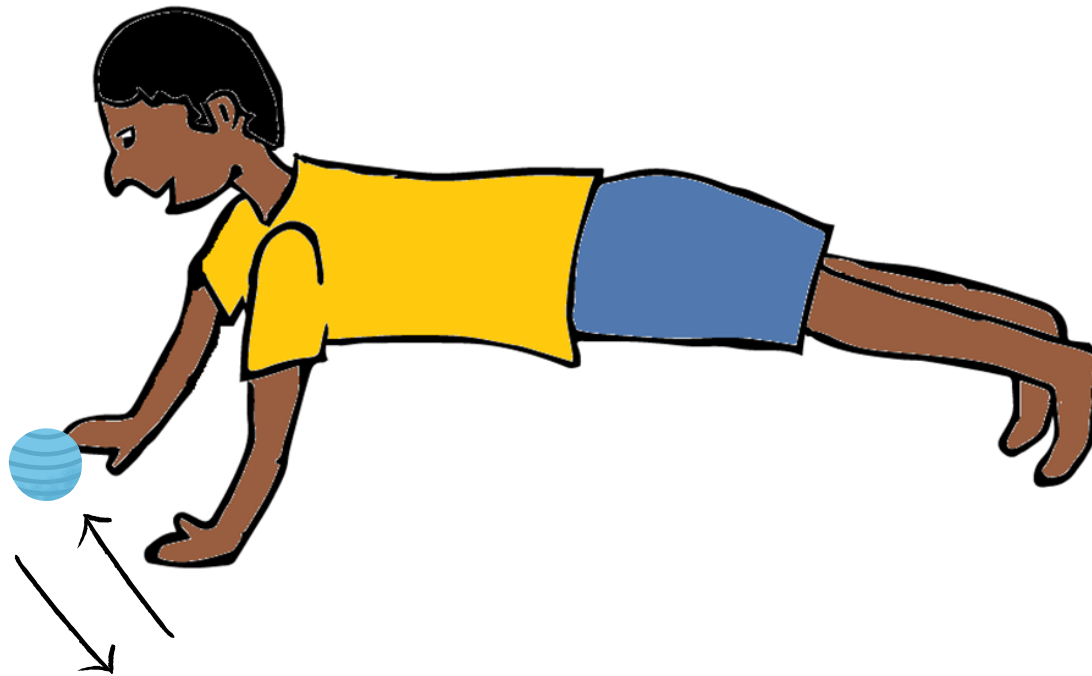


Plank Series

Up/Downs

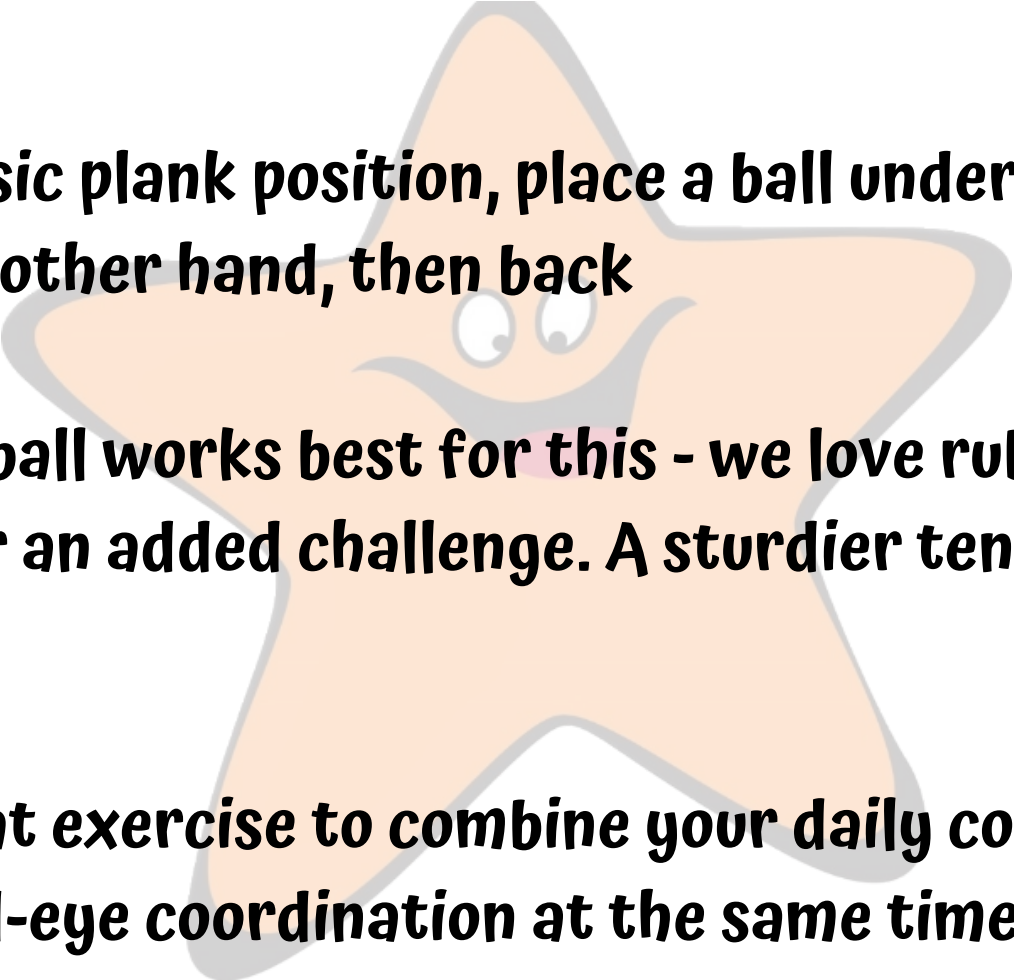
- **Start in basic plank position, lower down onto one forearm, then the other forearm, rise back up onto one hand, then the other hand**
- **Keep it even! Make sure to alternate which forearm lowers down first and which hand pushes back up first**
- **Add to the challenge! Hold the basic plank and the forearm plank for 5-10 seconds before rising or lowering**

Hand to Hand Ball Pass

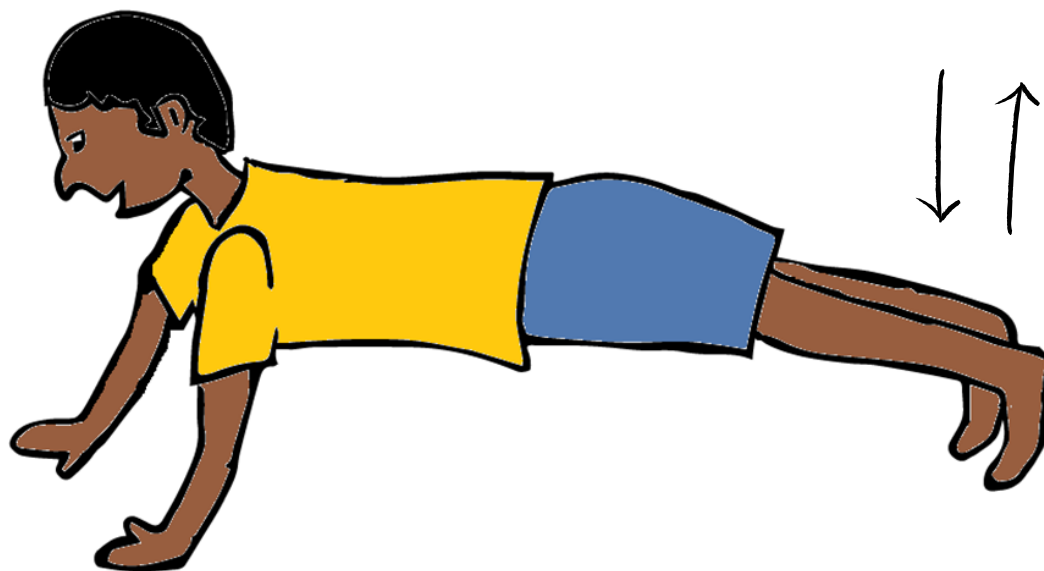


Plank Series

Hand to Hand Ball Pass

- 
- **Start in a basic plank position, place a ball under one hand, roll it towards the other hand, then back**
 - **A small size ball works best for this - we love rubber/squishy play balls for an added challenge. A sturdier tennis ball will also do the trick**
 - **This is a great exercise to combine your daily core work and get in some hand-eye coordination at the same time!**

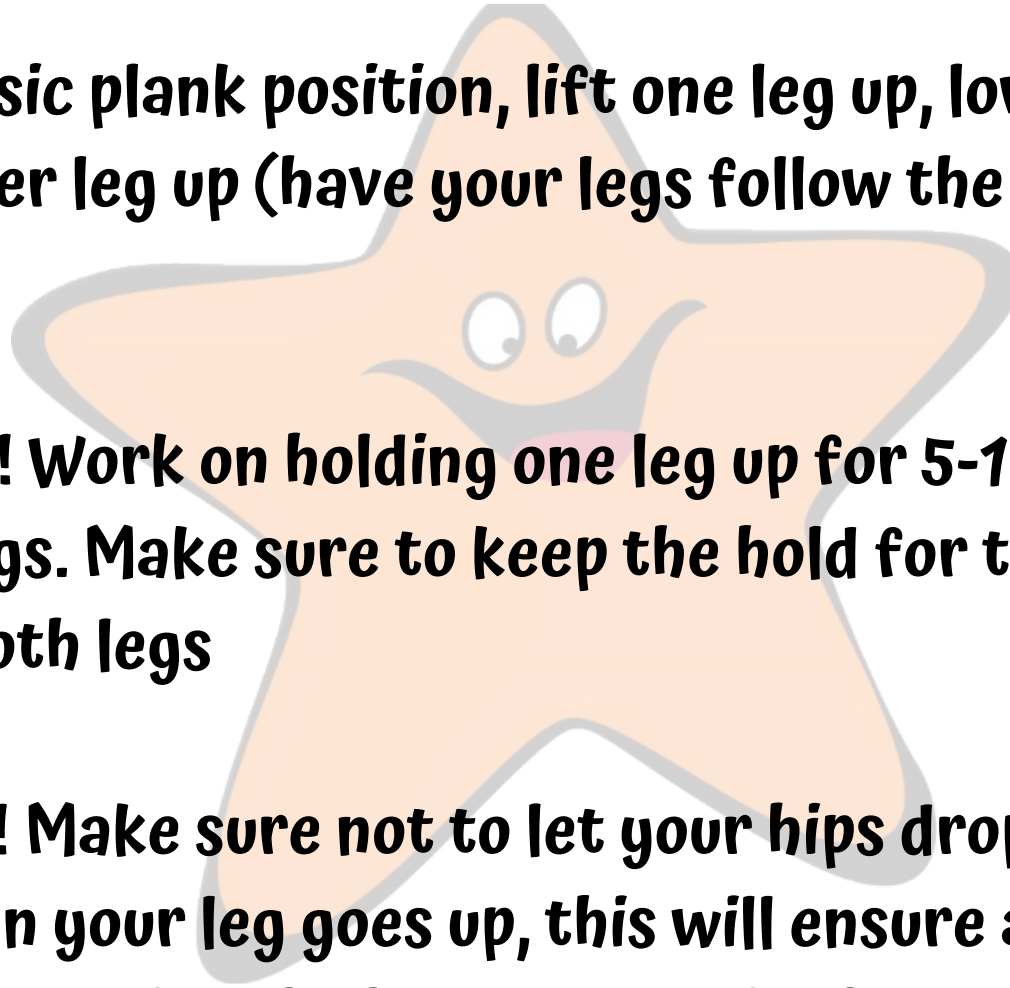
Leg Lifts



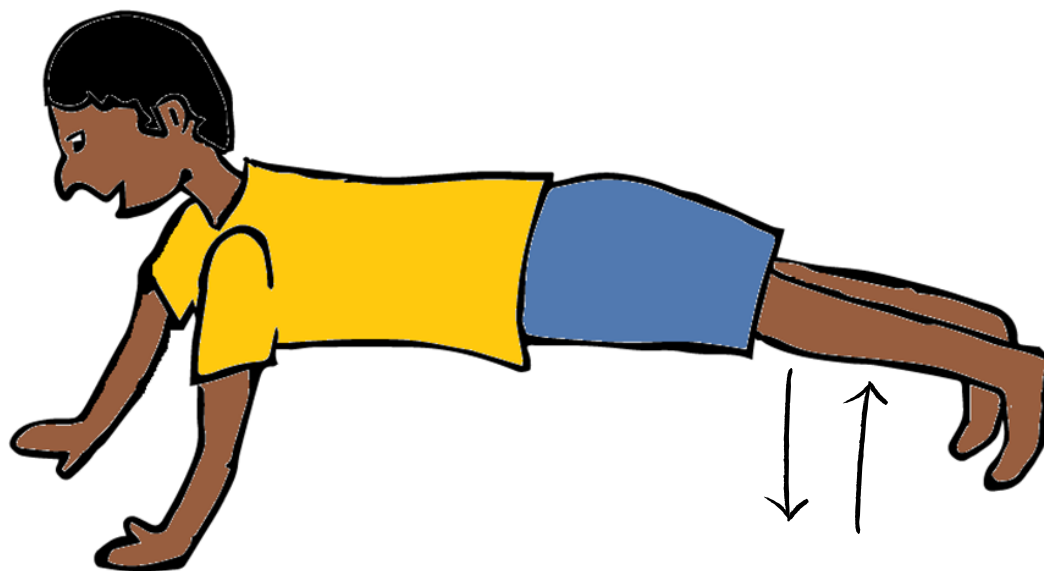
Plank Series

Leg Lifts

- **Start in a basic plank position, lift one leg up, lower back to floor, then lift other leg up (have your legs follow the arrows in the picture)**
- **Change it up! Work on holding one leg up for 5-10 seconds before switching legs. Make sure to keep the hold for the same amount of time on both legs**
- **Keep it even! Make sure not to let your hips drop down towards the side when your leg goes up, this will ensure all of your core muscles are working the hardest - notice how this exercise also works the arms a bit more**

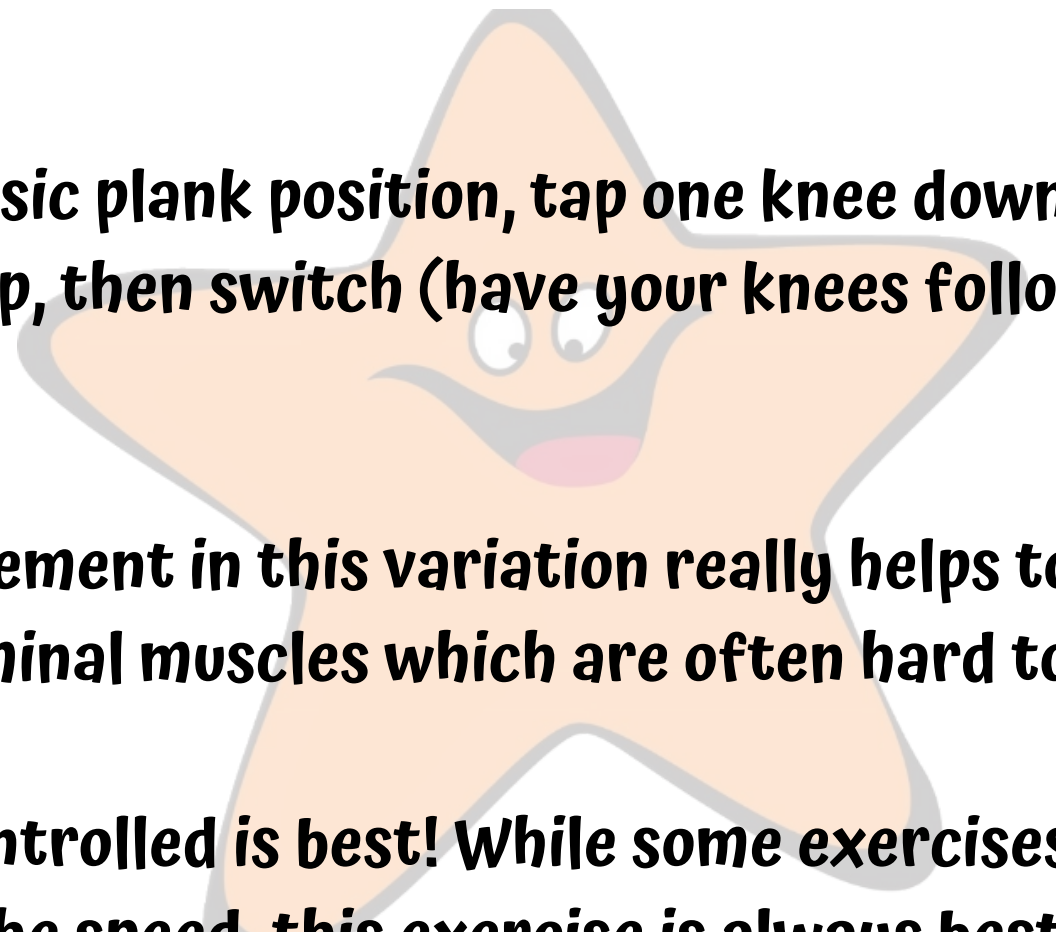


Knee Taps

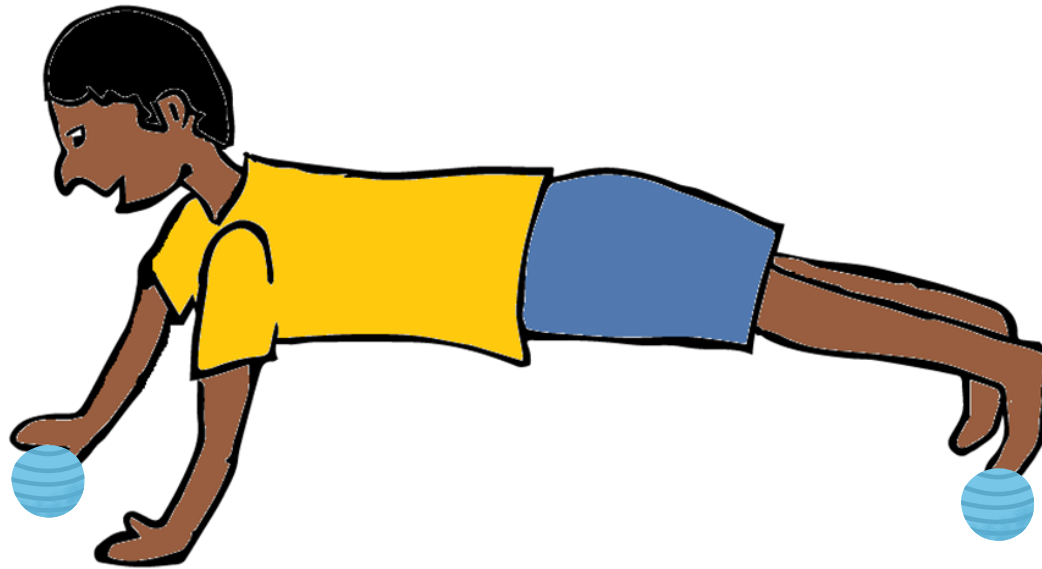


Plank Series

Knee Taps

- 
- **Start in a basic plank position, tap one knee down to the floor, bring back up, then switch (have your knees follow the arrows in the picture)**
 - **The leg movement in this variation really helps to activate the lower abdominal muscles which are often hard to target**
 - **Slow and controlled is best! While some exercises work well with increasing the speed, this exercise is always best to complete in a more controlled manner**

Ball Balance

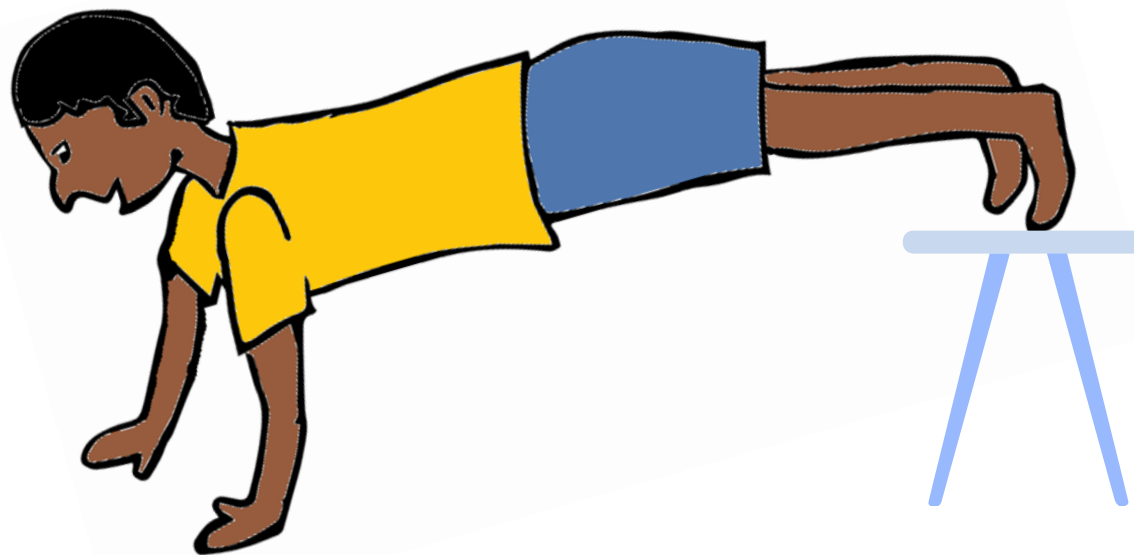


Plank Series

Ball Balance

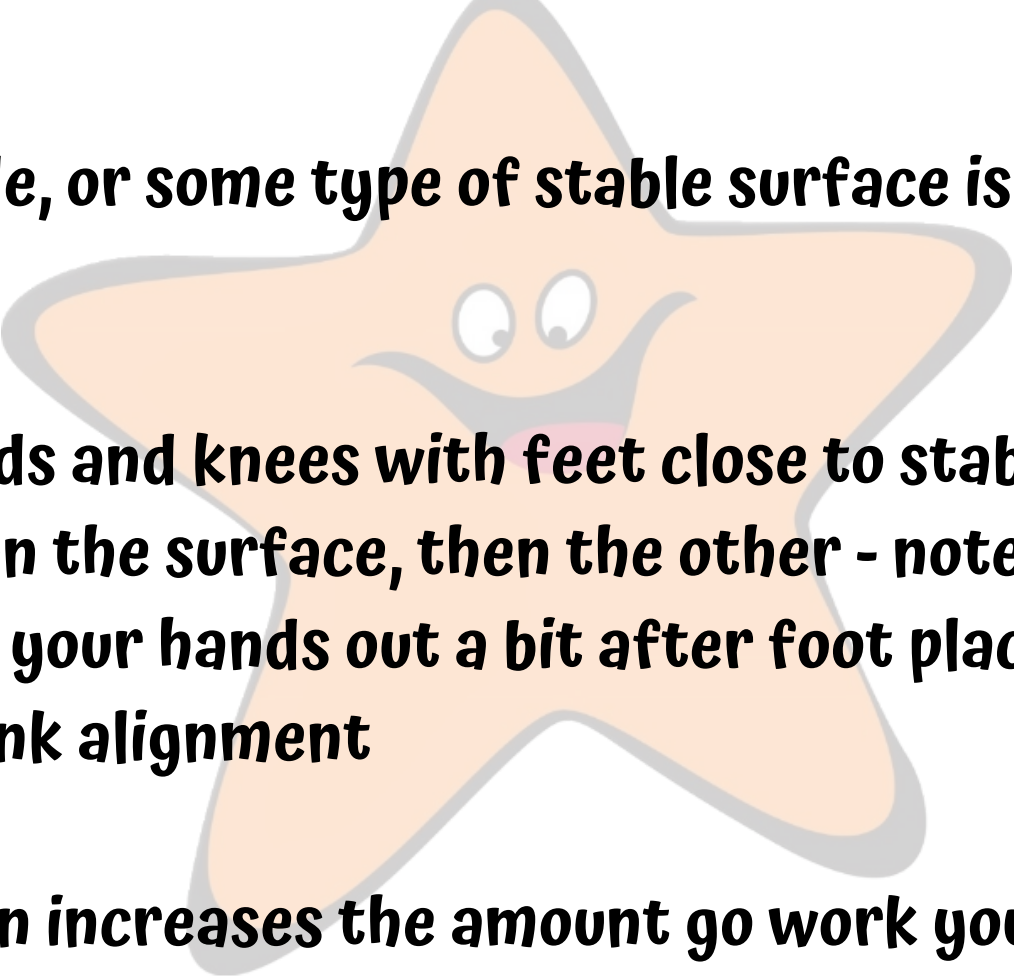
- **A tennis ball or small rubber ball will work best for this. The squishier the ball the more stability work will be required!**
- **Place ball under one hand or one foot (toes), hold for up to 30 seconds, then switch to the other side**
- **Breaks are ok! Taking a break between sides helps to give your body a rest and allows it to build up some more energy to tackle the next side. This is important to keep in mind with all plank exercises!**

Elevated Feet



Plank Series

Elevated Feet

- 
- **A bench, table, or some type of stable surface is needed for this variation**
 - **Start on hands and knees with feet close to stable surface, place one foot up on the surface, then the other - note that you may need to walk your hands out a bit after foot placement in order to obtain plank alignment**
 - **This variation increases the amount of work your arms have to do - try a basic plank after and feel the difference!**