

# Core strength for Irish dancers - beginner exercises

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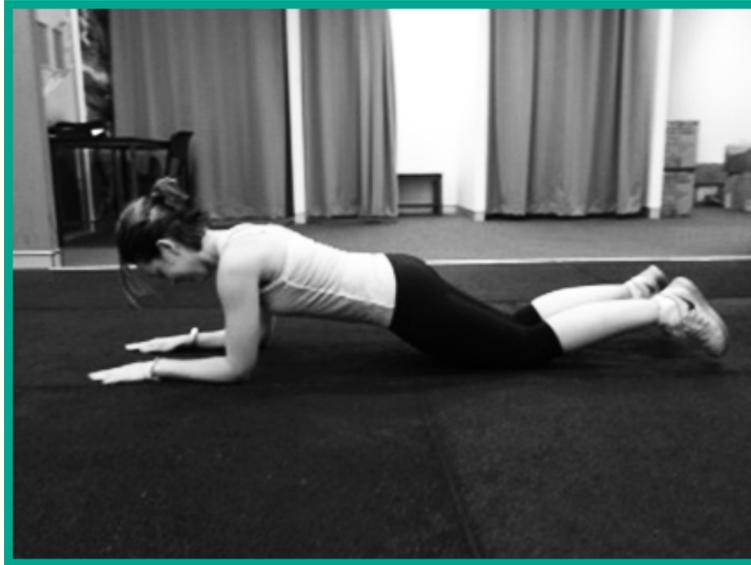
*As with all our advice, please consult a doctor, TCRG, parent, or physiotherapist before starting any new exercises. This is meant as a guide only.*

## Leg Extensions



This exercise focuses on lowering each foot to the floor while maintaining the position of your spine. Lie on your back with hands by your side, keeping legs bent, feet straight and hip width apart. Aim to stop your back from arching as you lower and keep a controlled, slow movement for best results. Raise one foot off the floor as high as can be controlled, hold for 1-2 seconds and bring back to original position now do the same movement with the opposite leg. Perform the extension of each leg 5 times each side to begin with and gradually progress to perform 10-15 on each side.

## Plank or Hover



Lie with your belly on the floor and forearms under your chest while placing your feet together. Start with the hover (on your knees) focusing on maintaining a solid set position. Lift your torso off the ground by pushing up with your arms and abdominals until it forms a straight line from head to knee. Make sure your hips don't drop too low or sit too high and your head doesn't drop. Once you can hold this position for 1-2 minutes you are ready to move to the plank - the same exercise, but on your toes.

## Lateral/Side Hold



Lie on your side with your forearm slightly propping you up, place the other hand on your hip or by your side with feet on top of each other. Tighten your core and use it to lift off the floor, while pushing with your arm. This exercise can also be performed on the knees as a starting option. Begin with 30 seconds and progress to 1-2 minutes. Your aim is to keep your body nice and straight without allowing your hips or head to drop. Repeat on both sides. Challenge yourself by raising your top arm up to the ceiling.



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