

Say No to Sit-Ups

Many people are confused about the best way to train their core.

At the gym, these people can often be seen performing sit-ups or crunches in an effort to get stronger abs. Unfortunately, these exercises do not work all of your core muscles. They are also terrible for your posture and can put a lot of strain on your lower back. While these people may have good intentions for improving their fitness, doing sit-ups is not the most effective way to train the core and can lead to injury.

The core is very important for executing effective and efficient movement. While performing sit-ups may help strengthen the muscles that flex your trunk forward, they will not help develop the other important muscles in the core that provide a stable base for the body to execute more complex athletic movements such as running, jumping, throwing a ball, swinging a golf club, or everyday activities such as getting out of a car or carrying a bag of groceries.

Thankfully, there are a number of exercises you can do to train your core in a more balanced way. These exercises target not only the muscles in the front of the body but also the muscles along the sides, in the lower back, and deep inside the body around the pelvis and spine. Practicing these exercises will help your body to execute all types of movement more safely and effectively. Unlike sit-ups, exercises in a balanced core training routine will also help promote good posture without putting extra strain on your lower back.



If you are interested in having a stronger core, the first thing you should do is build up core stability by doing plank type exercises. These are a great way to work all of the muscles in the core and can also help improve stability in the shoulders.

Once you are strong enough to stabilize the core for an extended period, you should begin adding movement (such as leg lifts or torso twists) to work around that stable base.





Finally, as you get even stronger, overload the core by introducing tools that decrease stability or add resistance such as a TRX, medicine ball, Bosu, tubing, or stability ball. These types of exercises will prepare your body for real-life movements and activities.

The key to safe and effective progression is to execute all exercises with proper form while focusing on breathing and activating the proper muscles to stabilize the core.

Please visit us at [Surefire Fitness](http://www.surefirefitness.ca) for more training ideas or book a [Personal Training](#) session so we can customize a core workout program for you...without sit-ups!

In the meantime, substitute sit-ups with the more effective exercise progressions mentioned above to strengthen the core in a more balanced way.

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