

No time to waist!

A 10 minute workout to a great waistline

Do you find it hard to make the time to maintain good health and feel good about yourself? Do you feel like the routine you currently have just doesn't quite cut it? This 10 minute workout is designed to challenge your core and abdominal strength, leaving you feeling like you've really 'hit the spot'.

It takes no more than a bit of floor space, some hand weights and a towel, because you'll sweat from this one. A Swiss Ball would be helpful too. (You should pay between \$50-80 for a good quality one that won't disappear from underneath you!) Check out www.aokhealth.com if you want to buy one online.

Before we start, here are some great useful facts about working your core.

Fact 1: These muscles are small, thin sheets and work in relatively short ranges of motion. They require oxygen for an effective workout. This means that your 'core work' should be done with continuous breathing. Do not hold your breath or take extended breaks.

Fact 2: Your duration per exercise should be maintained for no less than 45 seconds.

Fact 3: You should always alter your exercise to suit your current strength. Continuing an exercise without maintaining a true technique will only hinder your results. So don't feel like you need to show that you can do the harder version based on ego or the 'trying to impress' factor. You won't get the results you want.

Fact 4: Keep your focus on the muscle group you are trying to work in association with your breath. DO NOT do whatever it takes to maintain that position – if you are no longer able to effectively hold that position then change the level and continue.

If you can keep these four points in mind you will absolutely create a stronger, flatter waistline! However, you must combine this with some cardiovascular training and most importantly a well-balanced diet.

Let's get started!

Exercise 1 – The McKenzie push up

Starting from the floor, roll the shoulders back towards the spine away from the neck and gently push up, keeping the pelvis on the floor. Use the gluteal group to hold the pelvis down. Repeat 10-15 times. If you have lower back problems only go to what feels comfortable – never hyperextend.



Exercise 2 – The Prone Cobra

Typically done with the palms face down, the main concept is to retract the shoulders with core control. Imagine each vertebra ever so slightly separating or lengthening from the tailbone to the base of the skull. Engage your glutes in conjunction with the lower abdomen. Take shorter, shallower breaths than usual and hold for 45 seconds as a minimum. Again, if you have a lower back problem use a range of motion that is pain-free.



Exercise 3 – The Hover

The aim here is to draw the abdomen into the body, effectively narrowing the waistline and supporting the spine with your core strength. If the lower back feels discomfort then either change to an easier level or adjust your position to take the strain from the lower back. Take deeper, longer breaths, holding for 45 seconds as your minimum target.



Exercise 4 – The Side hover

Keeping a straight line from heels to the base of your head, draw the lower abs with the side (oblique) abs and again breathe, to add a little extra pulse up from this position. Keep the pelvis slightly rotated forward to avoid lower back problems. Remember to work both sides of your body.



Exercise 5 – The SB Jack knife

Roll over the ball and walk forward on the hands until the knees are just off the ball. Draw in your lower abdomen and pull the knees into the chest with a controlled and continual lift of the pelvis. Try to exhale in this phase and inhale as you return to a stationary position.



Exercise 6 – Push-ups with rotation

With or without hand weights, pull an arm in by the side of the body and rotate through the torso to extent the arm upwards. Draw the core in and try to avoid any swaying in the hips. Add a push-up in between each side to intensify the work out. Try a set of 10 on both sides.



So there you have it. Try for one full series daily of each exercise. When you feel confident enough, go through the series twice each day.

Brad Spark
 Director, Active Lifestyles Personal Training
 For more information or to contact email brad@fitforlifeonline.com.au