

## Planking Basics and Extras

### To Start

- Get into the normal “pushup position” on the floor.
- Instead of being on your hands, rest your weight on your forearms, which should be placed immediately beneath your shoulders.
- Make sure your body forms a straight line from your head to your feet. Don’t arch your butt up or let it sag downward. Think plank!
- Hold the position for as long as you can. Take a break for one minute, then rinse and repeat.

### The basic plank progression

- Start on your knees and elbows. If this gets too easy ...
- Then move to your toes and elbows. If this gets too easy ...
- Finally graduate to your toes and hands, a la the standard push-up position.

### Ways to improve your plank time

- Just do this several times per day. Seriously, that’s it.
- What you are measuring is the time it takes you to fatigue.
- Expect that “time to fatigue” to increase over time.

### Week 2: Lift one leg up

- Instead of being on two toes (or two knees), raise one leg by just a few inches and you hugely increase the demand on your core to fight your body’s natural urge to rotate.

### Week 3: Lift one ARM up

- Instead of being on two hands (or two elbows), this time raise one arm off the floor and your body will tend to want to fall to that side. Stabilize your core against this tendency and you will have an excellent workout!

### Week 4: Are you ready for this?

- **Start in your standard front plank** on elbows and toes. Lift one arm and, at the same time, the opposite leg. Focus on keeping your back flat. Hold this position for a count of 5 seconds, return to the all-fours plank position for 5 seconds, then alternate sides. Do this until you fatigue, and then complete this routine 3-5 times.

