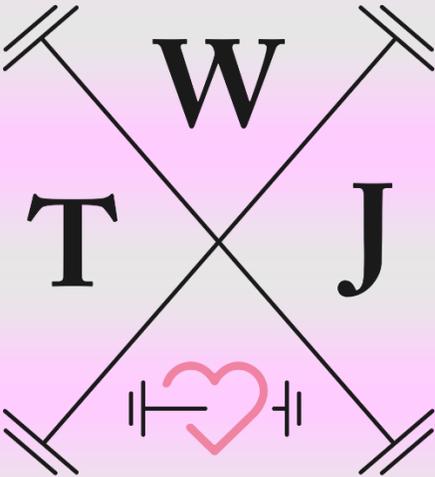




**TRAIN WITH JEN**



**MIND & BODY IN STRENGTH**



# **CORE WORKOUT**

## **LEVEL 1**

### **STEP BY STEP GUIDE**

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Hey there!

I wanted to give you a little taste of what a core workout with Train With Jen © would look like!

Those with chronic lower back pain often need core strengthening. With this, I mean all parts of the core – inner and outer. The inner core, also known as the transverse abdominis (TVA), stabilizes the spine. The TVA will be activated by different exercises, including many different plank variations. The outer core consists of those six pack muscles that are generally worked when training abs, which include the external obliques, rectus abdominis, etc. To get the most out of your core training, you want to include exercises that work the entire abdominal wall, as well as the lower back muscles. This workout is what I consider to be “level 1,” but most exercises will come with a modification. The key is to keep moving the entire time, except for your rest periods. This is a timed workout, so have a timer handy! Each exercise is 30 seconds, with 10 seconds rest in between each exercise (no more than 10 seconds to feel the full intensity!). Complete the workout once through and see how you feel. Most exercises come with a regression (modification) and/or progression (advanced). The workout is explained in detailed after the listing of the workout, which is as follows:

1. BOSU Plank Toe Tap – 30 seconds
2. Double Crunch with Leg Lift – 30 seconds
3. Shoulder Tap – 30 seconds
4. Russian Twist – 30 seconds
5. Bicycle Crunch – 30 seconds
6. Toe Tap Crunch – 30 seconds
7. Mountain Climbers – 30 seconds
8. Power Knee – 30 seconds per side
9. BOSU Dead Bug – 30 seconds
10. Sit-ups – 30 seconds
11. Cable Crunch – 30 seconds
12. Cable Twist – 30 seconds per side

Repeat the interval with 10 seconds between each exercise, and 45-60 seconds between intervals. Do this the first 2 weeks 2 times through, then aim to perform the workout 3 times through with the limited rest mentioned – no more than the allotted time.



## 1. BOSU Plank Toe Tap

Here, you want to use a BOSU ball or a bench – anything where your feet are elevated. Start in a high plank with your feet on the ball/bench, and tap one foot out to the side, back onto the ball/bench, and then tap the other foot out to the side, and then back on to the ball/bench. This is an alternating exercise. The progression for this exercise is to start with both feet on the ball/bench, and jump both feet out, and then back on to the ball/bench and repeat within 30 seconds. You want to try to keep your hips as center as possible, and you want to aim to keep your body in a straight line to activate the inner core.



## 2. Double Crunch with Leg Lift

Here, your starting position will be lying flat on the floor. Holding either a weighted medicine ball or dumbbell up to 10 pounds, lift your arms and legs straight up toward the ceiling. Lower your arms over your head, holding the weight, and lower your feet down to about 6 inches above the ground, then bring your arms and legs back center, up towards the ceiling. Repeat this movement for 30 seconds. The regression (alternative/easier way to do this exercise) would be to start with legs/knees bent 90 degrees, and bring one leg out when your arms go down, then back to center. Repeat and alternate with the opposite leg.



### 3. Shoulder Tap

Starting in a high plank (plank on your hands), separate your feet about 1 ½ feet apart to help stabilize the core and hips during this exercise. Take one hand off the ground and tap the opposite shoulder.

Here, you want your body to be in a straight line, and you want to prevent your body from swaying left and right, while bringing your hand up to the opposite shoulder. Alternate arms within 30 seconds. The progression to this exercise would be a high/low plank. This would involve starting in a low plank (plank on elbows & forearms), and coming up to your hands, one arm at a time. When you get to a high plank, come back down to a low plank, one arm at a time. Repeat this exercise within 30 seconds.



### 4. Russian Twist

This is an exercise to work both the inner and outer core, including the obliques. Start in a seated position with knees & legs bent, and lean back about arm's length away from your knees. Using up to a 10-pound weight or medicine ball, rotate from one side to the other, touching the ground with the weight. The regression to this exercise would be to keep feet on the ground, and the progression would be to lift feet up so that your legs are at a 90-degree angle. However, here, you may not be able to touch the weight down to each side. Alternate sides within 30 seconds.



## 5. Bicycle Crunch

This is another exercise to work both the inner and outer core. To begin this exercise, lay down flat on the floor with knees at a 90-degree angle, and bring the left knee in towards your chest. As this knee comes in, the opposite (right) leg goes straight out, without touching the ground. Here, your hands will be at your temples. The right elbow will cross over the body to the left knee, as you bring your left knee up towards your chest. Therefore, the left elbow will meet the right knee when the right knee is brought in towards the chest. This is meant to work the lower core, upper core, obliques, as well as the inner core. Repeat this alternating movement within 30 seconds. The regression to this exercise would be to start just by peddling the feet, bringing one in to the chest and the other straight out, without touching the ground. Do this without adding the arms, until you become more comfortable with the exercise. The progression to this exercise would be to keep your back off of the ground, and reach your elbow over to the opposite side as far as you can when the opposite knee comes in. This would engage the core even further, by holding your upper body upright.



## 6. Toe Tap Crunch

This exercise is basically what it sounds like. You would begin by lying flat down on the ground. Bring your legs and feet straight up towards the ceiling and reach up towards your opposite toe. Here, as you reach up, that same shoulder blade will come up off of the ground, so that you're crunching up to work mainly the upper core. The progression to this exercise would be to keep both legs and knees bent 90 degrees, and reach up towards your feet with both arms at the same time. Here, your arms will be by your sides – not on top/over your legs. Perform this exercise within 30 seconds.



## 7. Mountain Climbers

Starting in a high plank, bring one knee in towards the same elbow, and alternate. The regression would be to take the hop out of the exercise completely. The progression to this exercise would be to add a hop in between, while switching legs, or do a cross-body mountain climber. Here, you would bring your knee up and across to the opposite elbow to engage more of the core.



## 8. Power Knee

This exercise is performed standing up, and is meant to work the obliques, as well as increase the heart rate. This exercise is easier on the wrists, for those of you who experience frequent wrist pain. Put all of your weight on one leg, and your arms straight up overhead touching each other, but aimed more over to the side with the leg that has all your weight on it. As the opposite knee comes up across your body, your arms would come straight down to meet your knee. Be sure to SQUEEZE the core here to be ensured that it is engaged. You don't want to go through this exercise mindlessly! You also want to go for speed to get as many reps as you can within the 30 seconds per side. Repeat each side without alternating legs for 30 seconds each. When one side had been completed, go right into the other side, without a 10 second rest. The progression to this exercise would be to twist the upper body/elbow across the body just as you would in a Russian Twist, instead of bringing your arms straight down. This would better engage the obliques.



## 9. BOSU Dead Bug

This is a balance exercise, used to engage the stabilization muscles of the core. This exercise was originally and mainly used for people who experience wrist pain, but is a great exercise for anyone to try! Center the arch of your back over the center/curve of the BOSU ball, and bring your legs both up off of the ground, knees bent 90 degrees. After your knees are brought up off of the ground, bring your arms straight up towards the ceiling. Find what I call the “sweet spot,” or your center, and hold this position for 30 seconds. If you experience any neck strain, try tucking your chin into your chest. It is normal that your abdominal muscles may start shaking during the hold, as they’re working to stabilize.



## 10. Sit-Ups

For those of you who don’t know how to do a sit-up, lay down with your legs and knees bent 90 degrees. Sit all the way up off of the floor, with your hands at your temples so you avoid pulling your neck. You will end up with your back completely off the ground and seated upright. If this is too difficult, you may start with your hands above your head as you’re lying down, and swing them up as you sit up, to give yourself momentum and get your body and muscles used to this movement. Every time you perform this workout, try keeping your hands and your temples for at least one sit-up. The regression would be to perform a roll-up. Start with your entire body lying flat down on the ground, and roll your body up, starting with your head, then shoulder blades, and then one vertebrae at a time. The progression to this exercise would be butterfly sit-ups. Here, start with your legs in “Indian style” and keep your hands at your temples as you sit up. This allows more range of motion for this exercise to further engage the core muscles.

## 11. Cable Crunch

This is a weighted exercise using a rope attachment, which is meant to get your entire abdominal wall used to weight. Start with your stomach facing away from the weight stack, and have your bottom rest against the functional trainer. You want to keep your bottom off of your feet, and resting against the functional trainer will help to keep your hips stabilized so it is only your abdominal wall that is working, here. Hold the rope attachment at the ends, and begin with your back arched and your elbows up at your temples. Do your best to keep your arms completely stable, and keep your elbows at your temples the entire time. As you crunch down, think of your elbows as your guide; you want to bring them down towards the ground, rounding your back slightly to imitate a crunch, as you would do on the ground. This will best engage your core and work all the muscles of the abdominal wall. If you don't feel much with this exercise, try increasing the weight and really focus on only the core muscles squeezing to contract to ensure they are engaged. Perform this exercise within 30 seconds.



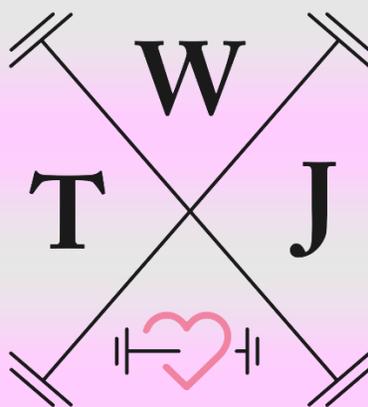
## 12. Cable Twist

This is another weighted exercise, using one handle attachment. This exercise can also be done using a resistance band, tied around a sturdy post. Start standing perpendicular to the post/cable. Hold the handle with both hands, keeping both arms as straight as possible, as they both come all the way across the opposite side of your body (chest height). The key here is to keep your body and hips as center as you can as your arms come across your body and only your upper body/core twist. Squeeze your core, as you bring your arms over to the other side to better activate the entire center, targeting the obliques. This exercise gets your abdominal wall used to weight. The regression and progression would both be to increase or decrease the weight used for this exercise. If using a resistance band, stand further from the post to make the resistance tougher, or stand closer to lessen the resistance used.

Contact me with any questions or rates for in-home or in-studio training in or near Simsbury, CT at [trainingwithjenn@gmail.com](mailto:trainingwithjenn@gmail.com)

Good luck – you got this!

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