

Try Different Plank Variations to Spice Up Your Workout

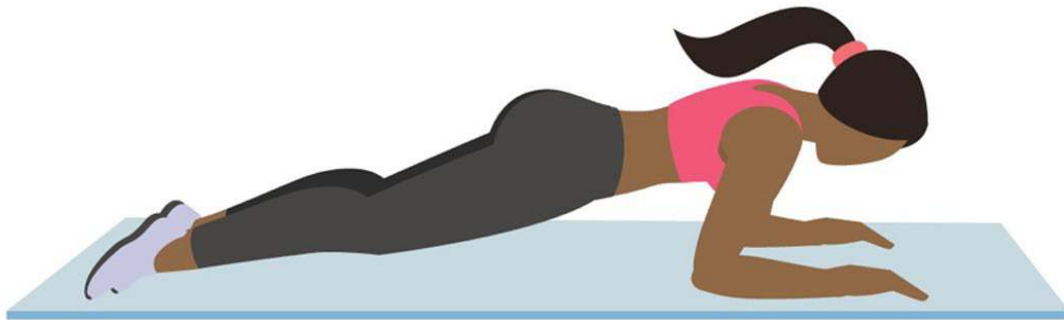
by [Stephanie Vlach, MS](#)

Add some fun challenges to your core workouts with these variations on the basic plank.

Forearm plank, side plank, plank with hip dips—all are group exercise favorites. The plank is one of the most familiar and effective choices for core work, and it's an easy addition. However, how many times can you program that same old plank? Fortunately, with a little creativity, a basic plank can be amazingly versatile. Just add simple movements and a little resistance to make an already challenging move even more interesting and effective.

The following variations are best for participants who can hold a plank with good form for at least a minute.

Rocking Forearm Plank/Plank Pushup



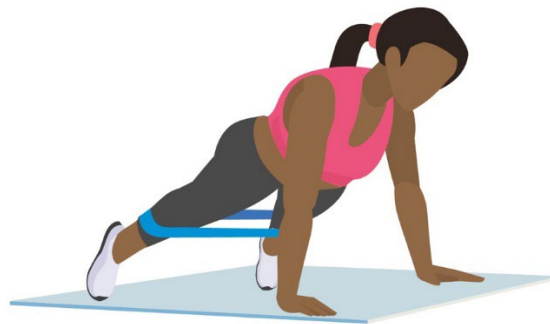
- Start in a forearm plank, elbows and shoulders in line, feet aligned with hips, shoulders locked down and back, spine in line from head to tailbone.
- Push forward off balls of feet and rock shoulders forward.
- At top of the movement, contract the core and rock back to start. Repeat.
- Progression: Continue rocking shoulders forward and bend elbows until chest is close to the floor. Do full plank pushups to further activate the chest and triceps. Do not let your chest “fall through” between shoulders.

Plank Hand Taps



- Start in a traditional plank. Position fingertips near the top of the mat.
- Use the top corners of the mat as a guide and remain in a “straight as a board” position. Contract core and tap right hand near the right-side corner of the mat.
- Bring R hand back to start.
- Repeat movement, left side; alternate.
- Regression: Perform from knees or forearms.
- Progression: Add resistance by placing a looped exercise band above the wrists. Each diagonal or lateral movement works deltoids.

Plank Straddle Walks



- Start in either traditional or forearm plank.
- Maintaining proper form, step R foot to the side, then L foot. Use edge or outside of mat as distance guideline.
- Bring R foot in, followed by L foot. Repeat with the same lead leg or alternate legs.
- Regression: Reduce straddle width.
- Progression: Loop band around ankles to target abductors.

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