**Strong Core**

By Mike Boyle

A [strong core](http://stat.dealtime.com/DealFrame/DealFrame.cmp?bm=519&BEFID=96467&acode=529&code=529&aon=&crawler_id=1932212&dealId=qqDYnDHlkpF4PMtIz8Qvjg%3D%3D&searchID=&url=http%3A%2F%2Frover.ebay.com%2Frover%2F1%2F711-57618-1854-0%2F2%3Fkwid%3D1%26mtid%3D570%26crlp%3D1_240251%26linkin_id%3D%7Blinkin_id%7D%26sortbid%3D%7Bbidamount%7D%26fitem%3D310967105560%26mt_id%3D570%26mpre%3Dhttp%253A%252F%252Fwww.ebay.com%252Fitm%252Flike%252F310967105560%26sdc_id%3D%7Bsdc_id%7D%26mid%3D446528&DealName=90%27%20X%201%2F4%22%20Premium%20Double%20Braid%20White%20Nylon%20Flag%20Pole%20Rope%20With%20Strong%20Core&MerchantID=446528&HasLink=yes&category=0&AR=-1&NG=1&GR=1&ND=1&PN=1&RR=-1&ST=&MN=msnFeed&FPT=SDCF&NDS=1&NMS=1&NDP=1&MRS=&PD=0&brnId=2455&lnkId=8070676&Issdt=150205050325&IsFtr=0&IsSmart=0&dlprc=22.5&SKU=310967105560) allows you to be stronger, faster more powerful in everything you do on the field. It also helps prevent injury by keeping you balanced and stable.

**Preventing Extension**

People are programmed to think that they need to flex their abs in a crunching fashion to work their core. That’s why Crunches and Sit-Ups have been go-to exercises for years. Unfortunately, they train the core incorrectly.

“[Your abs] don’t bring your shoulders closer to your hips. They don't bring your hips closer to your shoulders. They don’t crunch,” says Boyle. Instead, they prevent the spine from going into extension or arching. The idea is that these muscles prevent movement, not create it.

The basic anti-extension exercise is the Plank, because the core muscles work to prevent the back from sagging, or moving into extension. Boyle recommends adding several variations of the Plank to your workouts.

## ****Preventing Rotation****

In line with the theme of anti-extension, the core is also tasked with preventing rotation. “We want people to understand that the core muscles are more anti-rotators than rotators,” says Boyle. “Rotation comes from the hips.”

The lumbar spine, or lower back, is designed for stability, not a twisting motion. Preventing rotation in your trunk and allowing your hips and shoulders to do the work, are keys for maximizing power and health.

## ****Producing Rotation (Properly)****

Throwing a ball, swinging a bat and shooting a puck involve rotation. You drive through your legs and hips, rotate your trunk and finish with an upper-body movement specific to your skill.

You may think that your core is producing the rotation, but this is a common misconception. “The powerful rotation is being done by the hip rotators. It’s being done from the ground by the push,” Boyle explains. Again, your core is trying to prevent rotation and extension, and the only rotation comes from your upper back—even if it's just a slight rotation.