

# STRENGTH EXERCISES

SWIM22

**How can we train if we have no pool to use? This is a hot topic that everyone has been seeking the answers for over the lockdown periods.**

The best solution we have found is to incorporate aerobic training such as running and rowing with strength training to create a fun land training programme until we are back in the pool!

Strength training is great for swimmers as it can be used as an aerobic builder as well as to improve your power and muscular endurance. The exercises listed opposite will enable you to enhance your training whether you have access to a pool or not, making sure you are Swim22 ready.

Don't worry if you cannot do all of the exercises, there are many variations to suit varying abilities. In other words, there is something for everyone!

The opposite strength exercises will ensure the relevant swimming muscles are targeted. If you struggle with the whole movement, go through the steps on the next page and try the variations.

## 1. Plank

This helps to improve your overall core and trunk strength which is vital for water buoyancy, rotational movement from the centreline and being able to hold a tight streamline position in the water. In other words, planks are great for creating a stable swimming position baseline!

## 2. Superman and dead bugs

These help with arm and leg coordination and stability, which assist you in controlling swimming movements in the water better.

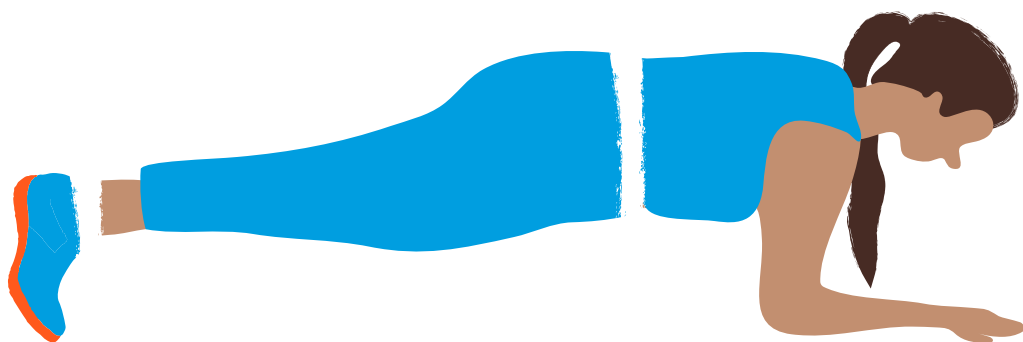
## 3. Burpees

This is a plyometric exercise which targets strength in the shoulders and legs. Doing this exercise will help improve your strength and movement of your arms and legs. This increases your potential to kick and pull with more strength and power. These are great cardio and aerobic exercises to add into your routine, a perfect all rounder!

## 4. Raised legs walk out

These are great at targeting core stability and shoulder strength. This helps you to easily hold and maintain a streamline posture in the water, which is vital in reducing drag and holding momentum. The shoulders will also be strengthened in this exercise which will mean that you can generate more power and force per stroke and pull, helping you travel further and therefore faster.

# HOW TO COMPLETE A PLANK



- 1 Begin by lying on your stomach face down.
- 2 Position your hands or elbows underneath your shoulders.
- 3 Push up to extend your arms until straight or resting on elbows.
- 4 Make sure your head, shoulders, hips, knees and feet are all in a straight line.
- 5 Ensure the top end of your feet are pushing against the ground.
- 6 Tense abdominal and glute muscles to control and maintain position.

## Beginner




To make this exercise easier, place your knees down on the ground, and hold the same position as a normal plank. This will reduce the weight you are holding up making it easier to maintain your plank position.

## Advanced



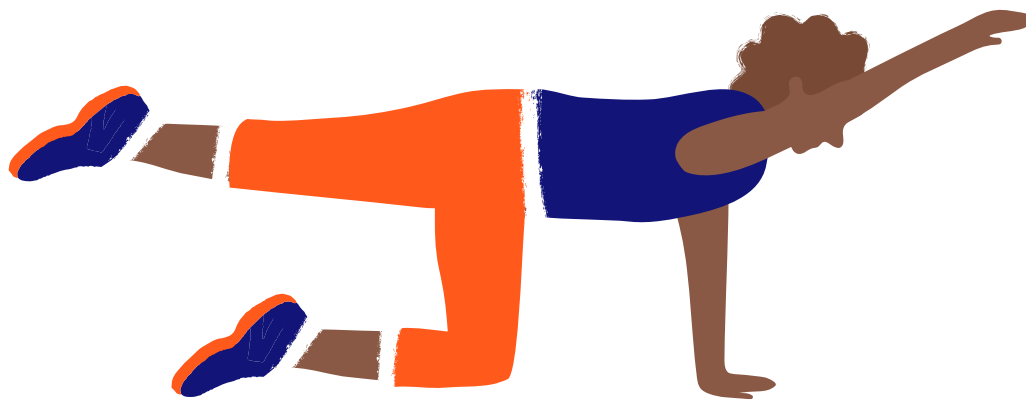
To advance the plank, we follow the same steps to get into the same plank position. If you'd like to advance from this, hold the plank position while having your feet on a ball or your sofa, maintain your focus and position by holding still.

## TOP TIP



Use proper form and learn to do each exercise correctly. This means moving through the full range of motion in your joints. The better your form, the less likely you are to hurt yourself. If you're unable to maintain good form, look for the easier alternatives to replace the exercise.

# HOW TO COMPLETE A SUPERMAN



- 1** Start in a baby crawl position with knees under hips and hands under shoulders, knees hip width apart and hands shoulder width apart.
- 2** Lift and extend alternate arm and leg simultaneously into a superman position. Ensure that you maintain a straight line from fingertip to toes. Your raised hand and foot should not lift above your body line or hip.

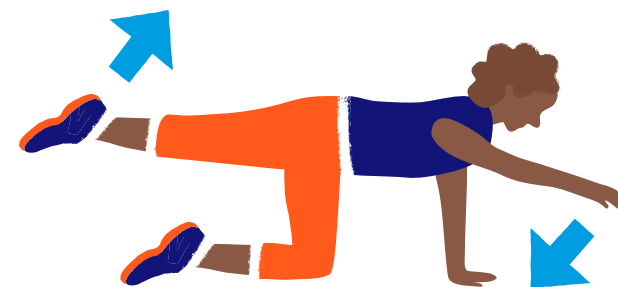
- 3** Squeeze your abdominal muscles and make sure that the movement is stable and controlled. Hold this position for three to five seconds.
- 4** Lower both your arm and leg back down slowly into your starting position.
- 5** Repeat movement with opposite arm and leg.

## Beginner



To make a superman exercise easier, we reduce the amount of moving parts. So rather than lifting both the arm and leg at the same time, just place either your arm or your leg out and swap to the other after one repetition has been done.

## Advanced

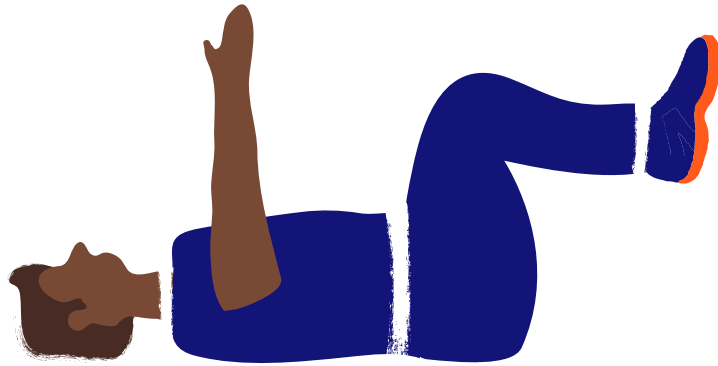


To advance the superman exercise, you have to release your inner superman!

We do this by following the normal steps of a superman but once our arm and leg are raised at the top, hold it in the position and slowly take your arm and leg away from the centre line away from your body, then return your arm and leg back to centre line and repeat.

This means you are advancing by maintaining a raised position for longer and through different movements away from your body.

# HOW TO PERFORM A DEAD BUG

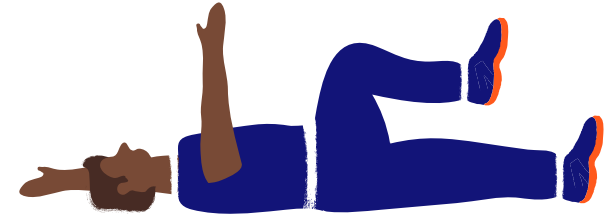


- 1 Lay on your back, extend your arms to the sky directly above your shoulders and lift your legs into a 90 degree position.
- 2 Squeeze your abdominal muscles, push your lower back into the floor and slowly lower both arms and legs down at the same time.

- 3 Lower your arms and legs down as far as you can while keeping your lower back on the floor, without touching your feet or arms on the floor. You may not be able to lower right down to the ground, that is completely normal!
- 4 Hold this position for three to five seconds before returning to the starting position.

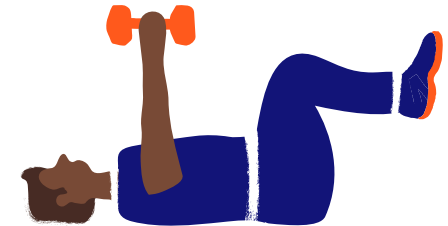
**To prevent injury and maximise the benefits, this should be done slowly and always with your back on the floor.**

## Beginner



To make the dead bug easier all we need to do is follow the normal steps, but rather than doing both arms and legs at the same time we only do alternate arm and leg at the same time.

## Advanced



To advance a dead bug, we can take two light weights or alternatively two drinks bottles filled with water. Hold these in your hands and follow the steps opposite in a slow controlled manner. You will feel the added tension!

## TOP TIP

Finding and maintaining your balance while undergoing powerful and fast movements will decrease chances of injury as well as increase the effectiveness of exercises. Keeping balanced during your exercises means you get the maximum benefits from them.

# HOW TO PERFORM BURPEES



**1** Start in a press-up plank position with hands underneath your shoulders and feet hip distance apart.

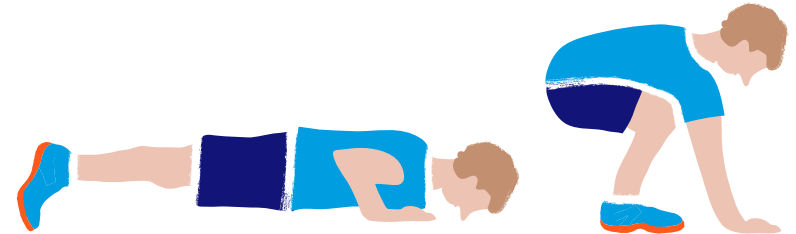
**4** Land the jump and place your hands on either side of your feet on the ground.

**2** Jump both legs simultaneously into your chest and plant your feet between your hands.

**5** Jump your feet back into a press-up plank position to repeat the movement.

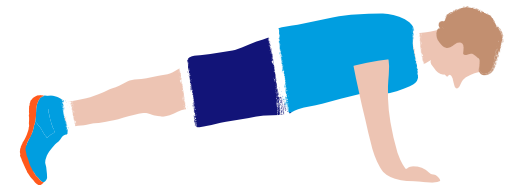
**3** Jump directly upward with both feet. Arms can be brought into a streamline position during the jump.

## Beginner



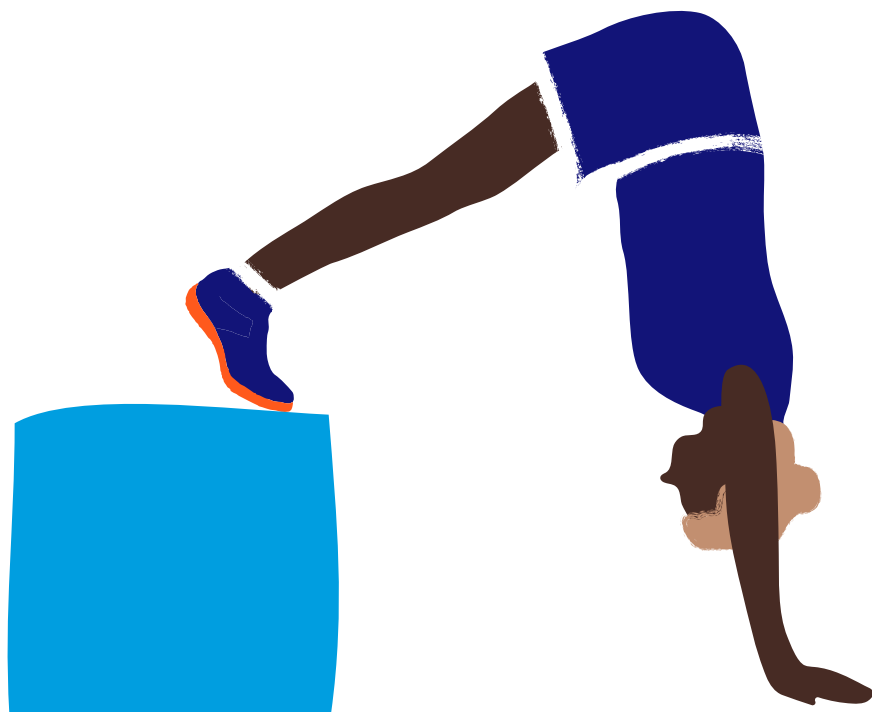
To make the burpee easier we remove steps three to five, so rather than jumping in the air we just bring the feet in and out as per step one to step two.

## Advanced



If you want to advance the burpee, we add another step into the process. After step one, rather than jumping into step two straight away, complete a press up before bringing your legs into your chest and then move onto step two.

# HOW TO COMPLETE A RAISED LEGS WALKOUT



- 1 Place feet on a couch or a slightly raised object that won't move.
- 2 Place hands on floor shoulder width apart.

- 3 Walk hands towards your feet or couch until your body is in an inverted upside down v-shape.
- 4 Walk hands back out.

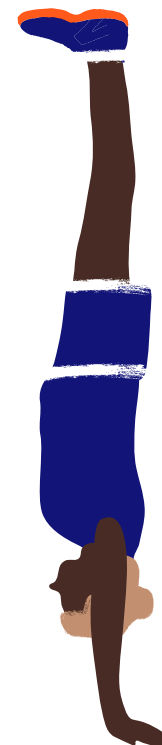
## Beginner



To simplify the raised leg walkouts, we take the raised element out of it. To do this, follow the steps opposite but instead of placing your legs on a raised surface, keep your legs on the floor.

## Advanced

- 1 Stand up and raise your arms directly over your shoulders.
- 2 Place your hands on the floor and swing your legs up to the sky by using the momentum of your arms and body.
- 3 Make sure that your hands are directly above your shoulders and your body is in one straight line.
- 4 Hold this position for as long as possible before slowly lowering back into the starting position. If you are not confident with handstands, a wall can be used to hold you upright.



# GET IN TOUCH

**We're here to help with any questions or concerns you have.**

You can visit our website at [www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

You can email [swim22@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:swim22@diabetes.org.uk)

Or call our helpline on **0345 123 2399, Monday to Friday, between 9am to 6pm.**

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I understand that when participating in any exercise or exercise program, there is the possibility of physical injury. I agree that if I engage in this exercise I do so at my own risk. I am voluntarily participating in these activities and assume all risk of injury to myself.

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Always consult your physician before beginning any exercise program. This general information is not intended to diagnose any medical condition or to replace your healthcare professional. Consult with your healthcare professional to design an appropriate exercise prescription. If you experience any pain or difficulty with these exercises, stop and consult your healthcare provider.

We welcome your feedback. If any information in this guide has been particularly helpful or if you would like to suggest any improvements, please send your comments to: [helpline@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:helpline@diabetes.org.uk) or write to us at: Diabetes UK Helpline, Wells Lawrence House, 126 Back Church Lane, London E1 1FH