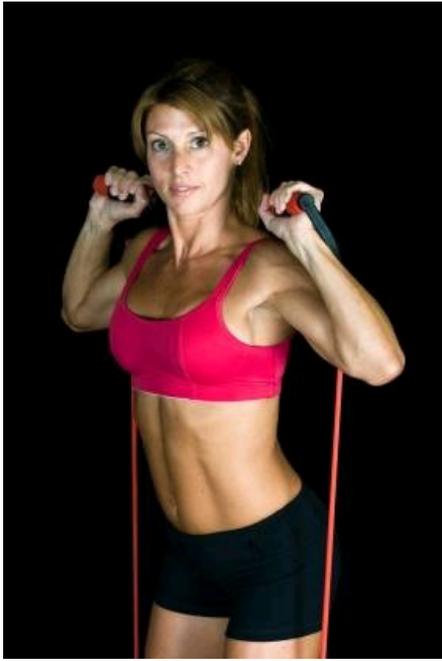


# How to Use Core Exercise Bands

By Allen Smith, eHow User



At the center of most [fitness](#) programs is strengthening the core muscles. The core muscles are made up of the abdominals, lower back, external obliques and dozens of other muscles that help keep the body erect while standing and walking. Strong core muscles aid in good posture and will minimize your chances of getting injured while playing [sports](#).

While you can use expensive gym equipment to [strengthen core muscles](#), there are many ways to get the same results using simple exercise bands.

Difficulty: Moderate

## Instructions

things you'll need:

- Assortment of exercise bands of different lengths
- Solid, firm surface
- Exercise mat (optional)
- Door knob or other fixed object

- 1 Choose an exercise band according to your strength, fitness goals and applications. Some types of exercise bands have handles on each end, while others are meant to be fastened to door knobs or other immovable objects. Bands with handles are very versatile and are perfect for using while traveling because they're lightweight and don't require special attachments. Bands that attach to door knobs offer more resistance and are similar to using light free weights.
- 2 Buy a series of bands that offer different resistances. Begin your exercise program using low-resistance bands and work your way up to more resistance.
- 3 Secure one end of two exercise bands to a door knob according to the manufacturer's directions. Sit on an exercise mat with your legs extended in front of you, with your back facing the door. Grasping the free ends of the bands, pull each band around the outside of your shoulders. Your arms should cross each other while holding onto the ends of the bands. Slowly flex forward at the waist until your upper body forms a 45 degree angle with your legs. Return to the original position. Repeat 10 to 15 times. This is a great exercise for strengthening your abdominal and other "core" muscles.
- 4 Secure the ends of the exercise bands to a door knob while you're sitting, facing the door, with your feet against its surface. Hold the other end of the bands securely across your chest. Slowly lean back at the waist, taking care to keep your back and shoulders straight. Continue extending your back until your waist is at approximately 135 degrees or halfway to the floor. Return to the original position. Repeat 10 to 15 times. This exercise strengthens your lower back.
- 5 Secure one end of the exercise bands to the floor at the base of a heavy weight machine. If you're using a band with a handle, slide your left toe through the handle until it is underneath the arch of your foot and stand on the handle. Hold the other end of the band in your hand firmly against the left side of your

rib cage. Bend your waist to the right side until you form a 45 degree angle. Return to the original position and repeat 10 to 15 times. Move the exercise band to the right side and repeat the exercise 10 to 15 times on each side. This exercise focuses on your obliques (sides).

## Tips & Warnings

- Buy a series of exercise bands of different resistances. Exercise your front, back, right and left sides, equally. Bring your exercise bands with you when you travel. Recruit an exercise partner who can help by holding one end of the band while also checking your posture.
- Avoid starting out with too much resistance. When fixing the band to a door knob, be sure that it won't slip off. If you slide your foot through the handles, make sure that the handle is underneath the arch of your foot.