

## 5 Hot Fitness Tips To Improve Your Cricket Performance

Amateur cricketers (and even some pros) are notoriously lazy. Because you can still score runs and take wickets without doing any fitness work, we tend to avoid strenuous activity unless it's absolutely necessary. But there is no doubt, the fitter you are, the more likely you are to score more runs or take more wickets.

If you've not scored a fifty or taken five wickets since W.G. Grace was captain of England, add these quick and easy fitness tips to your daily routine and clean up at awards night next season.

1. Improve your core strength with planking. Start off gently with a straightforward plank for around 30 seconds a day, then gradually build up and aim to beat your personal best each day. As you get stronger, you can add side planks to work your obliques. Very quickly, your balance will improve, giving you a better platform to hit the ball harder, bowl the ball with more control and, for keepers, to take that breathtaking leg-side stumping.
2. Batters, take your bat and swing it as if playing a drive but with the top hand only. Start off with 10-20 swings and aim to slowly build up to 50 or more. Once you have mastered this, try playing 10-20 shadow pull shots (with two hand on the bat this time) as well. This will add to your shoulder strength and power up your batting. You'll end up hitting the ball to the rope more often and you'll score more runs, more quickly.
3. Bowlers, boost your shoulder flexibility with this very simple routine. Lie face down on the floor or training mat. Hold your arms out on each side and slowly raise them up above your head, whilst keeping the rest of your body as still as possible. To add difficulty, get a bat or stump and lie face up on a bench or gym ball, with your hands outstretched from your sides, lift it behind your back and as close to the ground as you can. Doing this simple exercise every day will reduce the amount of discomfort you feel after a hard day in the field.
4. Short 20m sprints will help bowlers bowl their ten overs and allow batters to steal more quick singles. A simple exercise is to place two stumps in the ground 20-25m apart. Start by jogging from one stump the other, then turn quickly and sprint back as fast as you can. Again, start off gently with 3-5 repetitions, and slowly build up to 10 or even 20 rounds. Even if you are not the fastest sprinter in the game, the aim is to increase your 'sprint stamina' so you can sprint for longer without getting tired.
5. And finally, probably the easiest thing you can do before a match is to get a good night's sleep. We all hear stories of how batsmen have scored hundreds after partying the night before, and bowlers have bowled demon spells on 2 to 3 hours' sleep - and they may well be true. But, the best way to give yourself the greatest chance of winning that MoM award and being a hero to your teammates is by being sharp, focussed and hungry for success on game day.

If you found these fitness tips useful, don't forget to subscribe below and get regular updates.

And don't forget to **HAVE A GREAT SEASON!**