

The First Step

Get healthy. So you have been studying for exams, travelling in a 3rd world country, partying your brains out. Now is the time to make sure that you come into planting camp well rested and nutritionally sound. That means 8 hours of sleep nightly and start thinking about power eating. At least eight to ten servings of a wide variety of fruits and vegetables per day. Lots of lean protein like chicken breasts, egg whites, cottage cheese, and ultra lean beef and pork. And don't miss out on those inflammation fighting omega-3 fatty acids with at least two servings of cold water fish per week or fresh ground flax seed sprinkled on everything. Drink plenty of water or herbal teas and cut down on smoking, alcohol and other recreational drug use.

If you are over 40 years of age it wouldn't hurt to check in with your doc either. Planting is hard work and places a very heavy load on your cardiovascular system, liver and pancreas. Get checked out if there is a family history of diabetes; or heart, liver or kidney disease.

You Are An Athlete

Or you need to be one. Start thinking about what you are going to be asking your body to do, and get ready for it.

Planting has three main components.

1. **Endurance.** Keep moving at a fast pace all day long.
2. **Strength.** Carry over 30% your body weight and put that shovel in the ground *how* many times?
3. **Stability.** Support your back, knees, and wrists to remain injury free.

Endurance

Endurance is mostly dependent on your cardiovascular system, but energy supply also plays a big role. You can load both of these systems by using any aerobic activity that recruits a large part of your muscle

like running, swimming, rowing or biking. To build enough capacity to last a full day of planting you'll need to work out at an intensity that is high enough to make you breathe hard and for long enough that you get the energy systems ramped up. The minimum load required to build capacity is 4 of these workouts/week. Here are some examples of workouts to choose from, they can be done with any aerobic type activity:

1. Rollerblade for 30 min at a constant pace where your breathing is deep enough that you cannot easily carry on a conversation but you can still talk in short sentences.
2. Warm up for 5 min. Sprint up a set of stairs for 40 sec and run back down. Shake out your legs and immediately run back up. Every second run up decrease the work interval by 10 sec. When you have done two sprints at 10 sec reverse the process and do 2 runs up at 20 sec, 2 at 30 sec and 2 at 40 sec Finish with a warm down for 5 min. This is a good workout for skate-skiing, hill running or swimming.
3. Warm up for 5 min. Go as hard as you can for 20 sec, then cruise for 20 sec. Repeat this 12 times, then warm down for 5 min. This one is not so great for a road bike due to traffic concerns, but if you have the right terrain mountain bikes work great. Don't worry if the hills work out to a little longer than 20 sec but don't shorten up.
4. Warm up for 5 min. Go as hard as you can for 1 min, then cruise for 2 min. Repeat this 5 times, then warm down for 5 min. Same as previous bullet re-choice of bikes.
5. Run for 60 min at a pace where you are breathing hard but could carry on a conversation. Every 5 min spend 2 min doing some kind of callisthenic exercise such as sit-ups, step-ups, jumps, lunges, push-ups and so on. Finish with 5 min of easy running.

Strength

Wrist. Twist a piece of 1½ inch rubber tubing. Re-



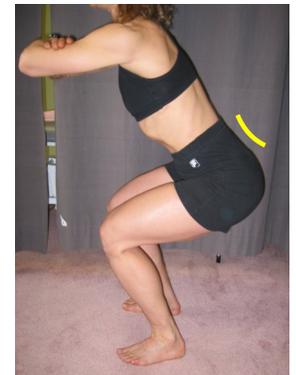
sist the push back keeping your wrist neutral or straight

Hand. Put thick elastics (like the ones from those bundles of fresh broccoli that you are eating) around the thumb and fingertips of each hand. Try to open your hand against the elastic. Work up to 5 sets of 20 reps

Elbow. Explosively toss a medicine ball or heavy bag of rice to a friend and catch the return. Do 3 sets of 20 toss and catch.

Legs. Step ups onto a calf high bench while holding barbells with overhand grip. Extend arms straight out in front and pull back into chest with each step up. Do 3 sets of 30 reps

Back. Squats using elastic banding or weights to increase the load. Technique tips; maintain a slight arch in your lower back. Put a loop of elastic banding around your thighs just above your knees so that you have to press outward to stop it from falling down. This teaches you to use your glutes to keep your knees from rolling in. Do 3 sets of 20 reps



Stability

Back: Keep a slight lumbar arch and make sure you can fully inhale.

Tighten lower abdomen beginning with pelvic floor and drawing your navel up and in. Lift one leg at a time without allowing ANY sideways movement in your hips. When you can do 3 sets of 20 keep the first leg up while lifting the second, so both feet are off the floor. Hold 10 sec and lower without letting lower back lift



Knees: Single leg squats with your back leg on an unstable surface like a ball. Follow the same technique tips as for squats and use your glutes to keep your knee



from falling in and your pelvic floor to stop the wobbles. Do 3 sets of 20 on each leg

Wrist: Cut open a Hacky sac and re-fill it with fishing weights. Working from your elbow bounce the sac off of your hand keeping your wrist flat or neutral. Bounce at least 5 min



Elbow: Place a thick textbook on the backs of your hands and hold it out in front of you with your elbows at 90°. (Same position as shown in the Hacky sac photo). Keeping your wrists close to straight or in neutral, gradually lower the book until it is about to slide off your hands, then slowly raise it until it is about to slide back wards off of your wrists. Do 4 sets of 20, then get a thicker book.

Pelvic floor: Kegle, Kegle and more Kegle exercises

The Desperate Planter's Last Chance

Here is what to do if you've no time:

- Day 1: Endurance workout 3.
- Day 2: Endurance workout 4.
- Day 3: Stability 1 set each exercise
- Day 4: Endurance workout 2 or 5.
- Day 5: Stability 1 set each exercise
- Day 6: Endurance workout 3.
- Day 7: Strength 1 set each exercise
- Day 8: Endurance workout 3.
- Day 9: Endurance workout 4.
- Day 10: Stability 1 set each exercise

And if you've more time:

- Stability work can be done as part of your warm up or down.
- Endurance workout 1 can be used as your recovery day.

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And

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Bring you:

*OMG - Planting starts
in two weeks....*



Is it really too late to get ready?

*Fortunately, sports science can still save your butt. With a bit of effort you **can** kick start your season— here is what to do....*

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