

BODYWEIGHT EXERCISES



Thinking about your own activity, what is important to you? How does your current exercise routine improve your health and well-being?

Utilizing bodyweight exercises — strength-training activities that require only the weight of your body — is a great introductory routine. And it's perfect for on-the-go people, because it's easy to integrate into even the busiest lifestyles! Strength training improves body movement, increases overall quality of life, strengthens bones, improves strength and body balance and can help manage chronic conditions.

Key bodyweight exercise terms

- **Bodyweight exercise:** Any movement in which resistance is created by the weight of your own body.
- **Repetitions (reps):** The number of times you will complete the exercise; one repetition is down and up (or vice versa).
- **Rest:** Taking a break — you've earned it!

The most common focus areas for bodyweight exercises are legs, upper body and core (see our bodyweight exercise chart for a detailed breakdown of movements for each focus area):

- **Lower body:** Some of the biggest muscle groups in your body are located from your waist down.
 - » Example exercises: body squats, hip complex, calf raises, bridges
- **Upper body:** This muscle group includes your chest, upper back and arms.
 - » Example exercises: push-ups, triceps dips, I,Y,Ts, and "Superman"
- **Core:** The mid-section (front and back!) is the foundation or center of your body — most movements stem from here.
 - » Example exercises: crunches, dead bug, lower abdominal hold, bird dog

Create your own opportunity for workouts on the go by following these steps and using the chart on the next page as a guide:

- a. Choose an exercise for each category (lower body, upper body and core)
- b. What is your goal? Examples include:
 - » Circuit of all movements: 12 minutes total = 1 minute for each movement including rest. Perform as many repetitions you can during that time frame. You can alter time to meet your needs.
 - » Eight repetitions of three movements. Remember that one repetition is the completion of the movement. You can alter as needed. See chart for detailed descriptions.
- c. Do the workout!

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Location	Type	Exercise	Reps/Time
Ex.: Home/Work/Park	Lower Body		8 reps/1 min.
	Upper Body		8 reps/1 min.
	Core		8 reps/1 min.
	Rest	Rest	1 min.

Use this bodyweight exercise chart to help you select exercises for each category (lower body, upper body, and core). In addition, whether you are looking to integrate bodyweight exercises and strength training as means of toning up, weight loss or increasing muscle mass, always remember to "P.R.E.P."

Who	What	Where	When	How
Anyone!	Pick your movement(s): Lower Body/ Upper Body/ Core/Rest	Ex.: home, work, park	Ex.: during commercials, at the office, reheating dinner	Circuit/Time or Repetitions

P.R.E.P.

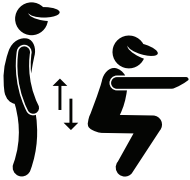
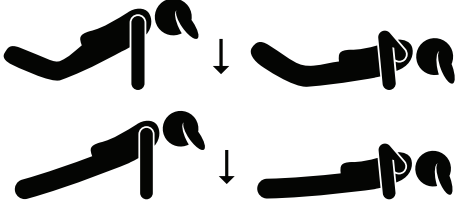

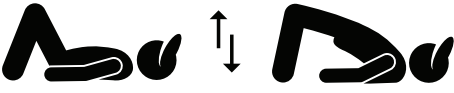
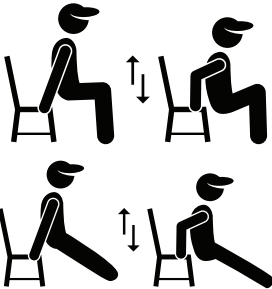

- **Proper form** – Are you using it?
- **Repetitions/Rounds** – Are you doing what's right for you according to the goal you are wanting to achieve?
- **Exercises** – Are you choosing the ones that will get you closer to your goal?
- **Pay Attention** – Are you listening to your body? Resting when needed and staying hydrated will help decrease the risk of injury.

Important tips:

1. Always perform activity at your comfort level.
2. Perform the complete motion.
3. When using a chair or step, make sure it is secure and can support you.
4. Discomfort is normal when doing a new physical activity, but pain isn't. If you are experiencing pain, please consult your physician.

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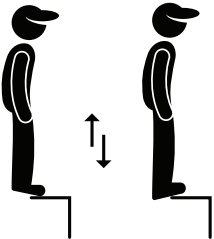
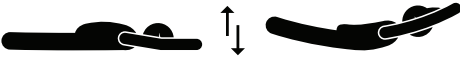

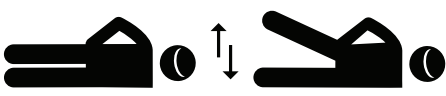
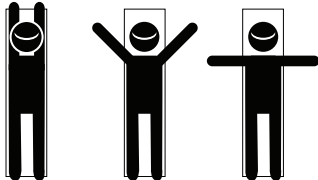

Examples of Bodyweight Exercises

Lower Body	Upper Body	Core
 <p>Body Squats: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and slowly lower yourself as if you are going to sit in a chair. Be sure to bend at the hips and maintain a straight spine. Be mindful to avoid arching or rounding of your back, and make sure your knees do not go over your toes. Go only as far as it is comfortable for you. One rep = down and up.</p>	 <p>Push-Up: With your palms placed approximately shoulder-width apart and your feet or knees on the ground, lower yourself to where your arms reach 90 degrees, then raise yourself back up. Your body should remain in one straight line throughout the entire motion. This can be achieved by maintaining a tight core.</p> <p><i>* If both of those are difficult, you can perform the same motion standing against the wall and progress from there. One rep = down and up.</i></p>	 <p>Dead Bug: Lie with your back flat on the floor and your legs in a table-top position. Slowly lower one leg at a time without arching your back. If you feel your back starting to rise, only lower as far as you are comfortable.</p> <p><i>* If this is too easy, you can add arms. Lower opposite arm with opposite leg. One rep = down and up.</i></p>
 <p>Bridge: Lie on the floor with a flat back, feet touching the floor and arms palm down beside you. (To achieve a flat back, tilt your hips as if someone is pulling your stomach toward the floor from underneath you). Contract your glutes and press your heels into the floor as your lower body rises into the air. One rep = up and down.</p>	 <p>Dips: With your back to a chair or bench, place your hands on the edge of the seat with your legs straight out in front of you. Lower yourself to approximately 90 degrees and then return to your starting position. If this is too difficult, you may place your feet flat on the ground. Be sure to use only your arms to perform the motion. One rep = down and up.</p>	 <p>Crunches: Lie with your back and feet flat on the floor. Cross your hands over your chest or place them in front of you. Raise and lower yourself using only your core while reaching toward the ceiling. Avoid putting your hands behind your head and pulling on your neck. One rep = up and down.</p>

You are the only one standing in the way of igniting your next workout, so make use of your body — your “free” equipment — and see where it takes you!

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Examples of Bodyweight Exercises (cont.)

Lower Body	Upper Body	Core
 <p>Calf Raises: Stand with only your toes on a raised edge/ ledge, box, step, etc. Raise and lower your body weight to strengthen your calves. You can work different parts of your calves by doing this exercise with your toes facing inward/outward, or you can do it with bent knees. One rep = down and up.</p>	 <p>Superman: Lie with your chest and forehead on the floor. Place your arms above your head with palms facing the floor. With your shoulders down and back (imagine putting your shoulder blades in your back pocket), engage your back and glute muscles to lift your body into an arched position. Keep your head/ neck parallel with the ground. One rep = up and down.</p>	 <p>Lower Abdominal Hold: Lie face-up on the floor with your hands underneath your glutes or by your side and both legs straight out. Raise both legs simultaneously 6 inches and hold for 30 seconds. Adjust height and time as needed for your comfort level. If you want to perform reps you can do holds for 3-5 seconds and increase as you get stronger.</p>
 <p>Side-lying Leg Raise: Lie on your left side with your left arm supporting your head, your legs stacked on one another and your right hand on the floor assisting in balance (if needed). Contract your quads, or thighs, and raise your leg up, keeping your toes facing forward. If you need to turn your toes toward the sky, you are going too far. One rep = up and down.</p>	 <p>I's, Y's, T's: Lie face down on a flat surface, such as a bench. If you don't have access to a bench, you can do one arm at a time on your bed or sofa. Using the images below as a guide, you will make an "I," a "T" and a "Y" with your arms through a slow, controlled motion. (A) Thumb facing upward and arm parallel to head. (B) Thumbs facing upward and arm out at approximately 45 degrees. (C) Palms facing downward, arms extended at 90 degrees. One rep = up and down.</p>	 <p>Bird Dog: Prepare by getting in a quadrupedal position (hands and knees) on the floor. Hands should be beneath you, shoulder-width apart and knees should be hip-width apart. Engage your core and contract your glutes while extending your right leg, keeping it parallel with the ground. Repeat on left leg. If that is too easy or you would like to progress, you may add in left arm with right leg and vice versa. One rep = up and down.</p>

IGNITING ACTION

After reading this information, what is standing out to you as an opportunity to incorporate bodyweight exercises into your workout routine?

What does P.R.E.P. look like for your workouts?

What action can you take that will help you be successful in the coming week?