



ESSENTIAL HOME WORKOUT PRINCIPLES AND EXERCISES

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Exercise is highly underrated and underappreciated by many. But just thirty minutes of exercise will reap a slew of benefits for you no matter your age.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF EXERCISE

- » Exercise improves your mood. While you are working out your brain will release chemicals such as dopamine and endorphins which will decrease your stress levels and enhance your mood. It also curbs your perception of pain.
- » Exercise will boost your brain power too. As you exercise your brain will begin to repair your neurons and create new neural connections. This means that older individuals can reduce the age of their brain by two years by merely walking for thirty minutes each day.
- » Exercise will stimulate the pituitary gland in your body which releases human growth hormone and helps to regenerate your muscles as well as bones and connective tissue. This is why exercising regularly will reduce your risk of arthritis and osteoporosis.
- » When you exercise and elevate your heart rate it causes your heart to push continued blood through the body which spreads oxygen and nutrients to all of your organs and your skin. This reduces your blood pressure and removes plaque from your arteries.
- » Your body also breaks down toxins and pushes them into the bloodstream where they are excreted from your body through the skin as well as liver and kidneys. But you can also reduce the risk of diabetes by exercising.

With just twenty minutes of exercise your body will start burning fat for fuel which reduces your insulin levels and reduces insulin resistance.

For people suffering from high blood pressure or high cholesterol your cognitive decline is 22.5% faster than healthier individuals. But by exercising you can promote the growth of new brain cells and combat this.

IT DOES NOT TAKE MUCH.

In fact it only takes about seventy five minutes of vigorous high intensity exercise each week or one hundred and fifty minutes of moderate exercise each week. By exercising for just thirty minutes each day your sleep quality will improve by sixty five percent. This means you are sixty five percent less likely to feel tired all day and you will be forty five percent less likely to face difficulty concentrating when you are tired.

Now of course there are many forms of exercise but four are most common:

1. Endurance
2. Flexibility
3. Strength
4. Balance

Each serves a different purpose and can be created to target a core region of your body. You can work out everything regularly or you can rotate with intensive workouts for the arms and shoulders one day per week and then the legs the next day etc... you can do whatever works best for you.

01. ENDURANCE

Endurance refers to aerobic exercises which increase your heart rate and breathing. They keep your heart and your lungs healthy and will work to improve your overall fitness. Endurance exercises can help to prevent diseases such as heart disease or diabetes. By building endurance you can more easily carry out your everyday tasks. Some examples of endurance exercises include:

- » Climbing hills or stairs
- » Swimming
- » Dancing
- » Yard work
- » Biking
- » Jogging
- » Playing basketball
- » Playing tennis



02. FLEXIBILITY

Then there are flexibility exercises. These help to keep your body limber and strengthen your muscles. Being more flexible can give you the freedom of movement for everyday activities. You can do any of the following:

- » Stretching your shoulders and upper arms
- » Calf stretches
- » Yoga
- » Pilates



03. STRENGTH

Strength exercises focus on making your muscles stronger. Even a slight increase in your overall strength can make a large difference in your ability to complete everyday tasks like climbing stairs in your home. These exercises are often referred to as resistance training or strength training. They include:

- » Using resistance bands
- » Lifting weights



04. BALANCE

Balance exercises help you to prevent falling which is a common problem for older adults. There are lower body strength training exercises which will help to improve your balance such as:

- » Tai Chi
- » Yoga
- » Walking heel-to-toe
- » Standing on one foot

When you work out at home chances are you will come by in a lot of these in a single workout.

Many online resources for Yoga and Fitness from home are not just calm exercises in Balance but rather moderately intense exercises and flexibility and strength, some of which use things like yoga blocks, very small weights, or exercise bands to combine many of these exercises into one at home workout.



WARM UP

Endurance training or cardio should be a regular part of your training and for most people who are starting out with at-home workouts it's going to take the form of your warm up. Your muscles need to warm up and cool down before and after any work out. Even if you are just going for a brisk climb up a hill outside you should stretch before and after.

Even if you have exercised regularly and you are just looking to add to your at-home workouts, you still need to warm up before the main portion of your workout. Taking 5 minutes to warm up your muscles will help prevent them from shock or strain.

In fact, for people who take up running as their main source of cardio, some of the biggest injuries sustained are shin splints or knee problems, and they can manifest very quickly. What most people don't realize is these injuries happen because the biggest muscles used, the thighs and hamstrings, are not properly warmed up before running and when the big muscles can't bear the load of your exercise, the smaller muscles and joints tend to bear the brunt of the burden. The smaller muscles and joints are not supposed to do that, the big muscles are, and that's why injuries happen.

So save yourself the strain by taking a brisk walk or some brief cardio like 2 minutes of jump rope before you get started.



COOL DOWN

Another common mistake made by people working out at home or in a gym is trying to stretch immediately. Stretching is not supposed to be your warm up. Your muscles are not warm yet so the blood isn't flowing through and they are more likely to seize when you try to stretch them.

What you can do instead is your quick cardio, just a few minutes to get the blood flowing, and then your stretching, or you can save your stretching for the cool-down phase at the end of your workout.

Just as important as the where while to cramps and stave off soreness and exhaustion. The cooldown doesn't have to be a huge thing, just five minutes is fine. During this time you simply slow down like your muscles return to their regular activity level.

During a workout, your muscles start to shorten and they might feel tight but stretching helps to lengthen them put them back in their regular position which is why stretching during the cool-down can help reduce the amount of aches and pains you have the following day.



HOW TO EXERCISE AT HOME SAFELY

When you exercise at home, you don't have anyone to help you, there are no personal trainers, there is no defibrillator. You are also completely self-reliant in that you might have to figure out how to safely do a pose or stretch a part of your body based on videos or articles online.

When you start exercising at home it's important that you begin slowly. Too often people are very anxious to get started or excited about a new fitness plan so they take on too much, too fast. This more often than not results in injuries.

EXERCISING AT HOME SAFELY REQUIRES:

- The right accessories--Make sure you have proper running shoes or tennis shoes if you are planning to add a lot more cardio.



- Knowing your equipment--If you are purchasing weights or exercise bands or anything to help you work out at home, you need to know how they work and how to safely use them. If you purchase a kettlebell, make sure it is a weight you can handle for whatever exercises you plan to use.

You can, for example, use a kettlebell to do a goblet squat at home, or to do an overhead press, but chances are they won't be the same weight. If something doesn't feel right and you can't keep your form, don't push it.

Work with a smaller weight. If you are doing strength training with any weights, have someone there to spot you, or set up safety measures so that you can always drop the weight in the middle of a set without hurting yourself.

- Changing your eating habits-
-As you prepare to safely exercise at home with the right equipment, and the right instructions, if you start exercising your body is going to burn more and it is going to require additional calories and specifically additional protein.



START SLOWLY

It's been touched upon once already but it bears repeating: start slowly. Working out at home will quickly become second nature and as long as you start slowly and are safe, you will reap many benefits.

Remember, exercising at home is easy if you follow the 4 main types of exercise. Whatever you choose to do during your regular exercise it is important to learn how to safely use all gym equipment and how to properly warm up and cool down before an exercise.



QUICK STRENGTH WORKOUTS TO DO AT HOME

Strength workouts at home are really best done with weights so even a set of dumbbells that are very light or a few kettlebells will give you everything you need to get started with strength training.

CHEST PRESS

Working the chest is a great way to improve your overall strength and if you have weights and bench, the chest press is a great option for you. If you don't have a bench, but you have weights, you can lie flat on the floor with your knees bent and your feet flat on the ground, with a weight in each hand and your elbows wide. Reach both arms upward to the sky until your arms are straight and then lower than back down. Be sure not to hyperextend your arms when you push the weights up and keep your body taut.

If you don't have a bench or weights, you can easily make do with things around your house like yoga blocks, heavy cans, or big books. Whatever you use should be something you can safely hold and should be equal or the same on both sides.



DUMBBELL LUNGES

Dumbbell lunges are a multi muscle leg exercise. It works on all four components. With this exercise, you should hold a dumbbell in each of your hands and keep your shoulders back.

You begin in the stationary position or you can literally walk across a large open area in a straight line. You should keep your chest up and continue to look straight ahead. Put your right leg forward in a wide stride.

The stride should be wide enough that your left leg can bend and form a right angle. Bend until your knee clears the floor then hold it for two seconds, then slowly straight back to the standing position. Repeat this with the other leg as you lung forward.

During this exercise it is important to pay attention to the angle which your legs form. Ensure that your knee stands directly over your ankle and that your knee and toes point in the same direction



QUICK FLEXIBILITY WORKOUTS TO DO AT HOME

Flexibility workouts take many forms and can be as simple as a dedicated stretching routine where you try to stretch muscles necessary for a specific pose. It can also be many popular Pilates and yoga exercises.

PLANK POSE

Plank pose, for example, is something that improves your core muscles and your overall flexibility. It is something that is easy to learn and difficult to master. The more you build with this particular pose, the more overall strength and flexibility you will have.



QUICK ENDURANCE WORKOUTS TO DO AT HOME

When you are working out at home, there are a few simple cardio workouts you can integrate into your routine even if all you have are a few minutes at a time spread across the entire day:

JUMP ROPE

Just like you did in elementary school, jump rope is one of the best cardiovascular exercises you can do. There are so few exercises that involve the entire body, like Jiu-Jitsu, and that makes it difficult to train cardiovascular activity that requires every muscle. But jump rope is one of the closest ways you can do that. You don't have to jump very high, you just need to jump high enough that the rope can go underneath your feet. You can use any type of rope you already have around the house, and if you don't have one, you can just use your imagination.

Jump rope as quickly as you can for 1 minute. Rest. Repeat 5 times.

This will take no more than 10 minutes but will leave you exhausted and feeling great.



JUMPING JACKS

Jumping jacks, as long as you have the space for them, can be done anywhere. Much the same as jumping rope, you can do jumping jacks for one minute at a time, then rest for one minute, and repeat. The goal here is to do as many as you can in one minute.

QUICK BALANCE WORKOUTS TO DO AT HOME

SQUATS

Squats are one of the best exercises for your legs and since your legs comprise some of the largest muscles in your body, exercising your legs at home is the fastest way to burn the highest number of calories and lose fat. Squats are very easy and are something you do everyday when you get in and out of a chair.

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your arms at your side, keep your chest up and your neck in a neutral position looking forward, bend your knees, and push your hips back just the same as if you were going to sit down in a chair. Once your thighs are parallel with the floor as though you were sitting, pause for 1 second before coming back up. If you're unsure how to do this at first, practice with an actual chair; squat down until your thighs brush the chair, hold the position just above that point, and stand back up.

The great thing about squats is that you can use multiple variations to get the most out of a simple exercise. Think back to Jumping Jacks. When you jump up in your jumping jack, instead of coming down to a neutral position, you can jump down into a squat and from the squat jump back up and back down again using the same recipe of: as many times as you can in one minute, one minute rest, and repeat.

You can also do squat jumps where you squat down with your hands by your niece and then jump up raising your hands directly above you as high as you go. Try to land softly and as you land come back immediately into the squat position and repeat.

Try ski squats too. Ski squats can work all aspects of your thighs. To do this, stand with your feet at least a shoulder's width apart. You should have your back leaning against the wall. Bend into a half squat position and remain there for ten seconds. Then move two inches lower and remain for ten seconds. Move an additional two inches lower and hold for ten seconds. Those three motions is the equivalent of one rep. Stand back up and repeat the process.



LUNGES



Lunges are another great exercise to do at home. 4 lunges you want to stand with your feet hip-width apart, and step forward with one foot, and lowering your body as though you were going to drop to your knees. Hold the position with the 90 degree angle for both of your legs and then bring the back foot to the front foot. You can do walking lunges up and down your hallway at home every time you need to get up and get something from another room. It's very easy to make this a regular part of your routine.

ALWAYS BUILD

You might start with regular squats and as you get better at it, hold something heavy in between both hands right at your chest and do a goblet squat. You don't need weights for this. If you have weights, all the better, but if you don't, you can simply hold something like a very heavy book, yoga blocks, or something from the kitchen.

If you are lifting weights, building simply means adding more reps and more weight.

Finally, be sure to give yourself a rest day. You earned it.



THANK YOU!

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