

Strength



Strength exercises improve muscular strength and help your body become stronger.

With your partner, pick one muscle group for your daily workout focus (3-5 exercises). Change up the muscle groups on different workout days. You can use machines, free weights, or body weight to complete your strength training.

Progressions

Sets & Reps: In strength training, you will complete sets and repetitions of each exercise. Repetitions are the number of times you complete the exercise, and sets are the number of cycles of repetitions you complete. For example, if you are doing bicep curls at 3 x 10 (3 sets of 10 repetitions), you would do 10 curls in a row, rest while your partner does their set, then repeat the cycle two more times.

Rest time is important for your muscles when doing strength training. A good way to ensure proper rest between sets is to rest while your partner is completing their set and take turns. We recommend around 60 seconds of rest between sets.

Proper form is KEY to strength training. Always start your exercise by demonstrating one repetition without weights to make sure you are properly performing the exercise. To ensure proper form, complete your exercises slowly and with control. Check each exercise page for examples. Not using proper form may result in injury.

Start with lower weights and adjust as needed. If the weights are too heavy, pick a lighter weight (or try the exercise without weights). If the weights are too light, pick a heavier weight. You may need to continue adjusting the weights as you progress through the program.

Find descriptions and examples of strength exercise options in this section (pages 33-56).

Strength



Free weight equipment examples and descriptions.

Dumbbells

Dumbbells are an option for free weight exercises, we recommend using 1lb to 30lb dumbbells for most athletes and partners. Most gyms have dumbbells in 5lb increments (5lbs, 10lbs, 15lbs, 20lbs, 25lbs, 30lbs). Dumbbells can be used one at a time or two at a time.

Kettlebells

Kettlebells are another option for free weight exercises, we recommend using 5lb to 30lb kettlebells for most athletes and partners. Kettlebells are mostly used one at a time.

Barbells

Barbells are another option for free weight exercises. Barbells are weighted bars, and weight plates can be added to make them heavier. Be very careful when adding plates to the bar, and make sure to use the safety clip to keep the plates in place. For safety purposes, a spotter (coach, partner, etc.) should always be present when lifting with barbells.

Bicep Curls



Muscle Group: Arms (biceps) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 | **Equipment:** Dumbbell or barbell

Instructions

1. Choose a set of weights that you feel comfortable using.
2. Start with your arms resting by your side, one weight in each hand, grip facing out.
3. Flex your arms by pulling the weights up towards your shoulders.
4. Then slowly lower your arms and weights back down to your side.
5. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Practice proper form without weights one time before starting your sets with weights.
- Instead of doing both arms at the same time, consider doing one arm at a time, then switch.
- Beginner Tip: Start with 3-5lbs weight and adjust as needed.



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Triceps Kickbacks



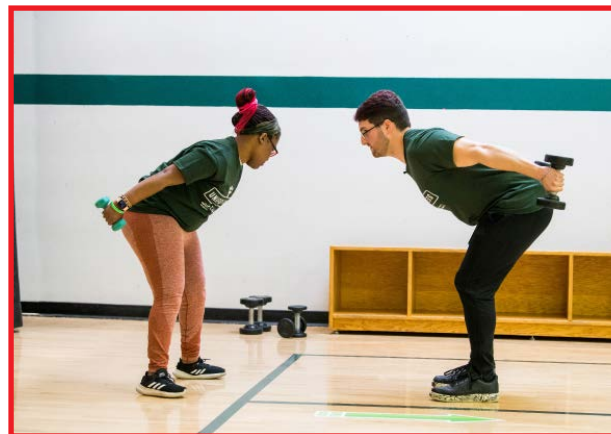
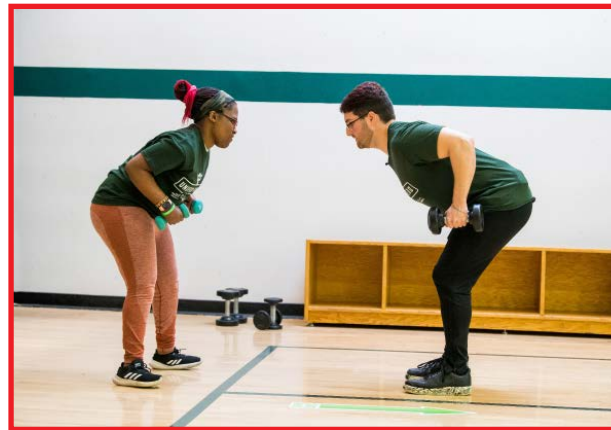
Muscle Group: Arms (triceps) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 | **Equipment:** Dumbbell or barbell

Instructions

1. Choose a set of weights that you feel comfortable using.
2. Start with your arms resting by your sides with weights in your hands (grip facing in towards your body).
3. Bend your knees, lean forward, and keep your back flat.
4. Flex arms to 90 degrees and pull your elbows back
5. Then slowly extend your arms and weights back behind your body then return your arms to the 90 degree angle.
6. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Try single arm triceps kickback (one arm at a time) if needed.
- Keep elbows close to your body and your head straight.
- Make sure movements are slow and controlled.
- Beginner Tip: Start with 3-5lbs weight and adjust as needed.



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Bench Press



Muscle Group: Shoulders (pectorals, deltoids) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 | **Equipment:** Dumbbell or barbell

Instructions

1. Choose a set of weights that you feel comfortable using and sit on a weight bench or on the ground.
2. Slowly lay back and bring the weights down towards your chest with your elbows bent.
3. Push the weights up towards the ceiling until your arms are fully extended and pause at the top.
4. Slowly bring the weights back down towards your chest, then push back up.
5. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Make sure movements are slow and controlled.
- More experienced or advanced lifters may consider using a bench with a barbell rack.
- Keep elbows extended without locking them out.
- For more arm control, lay on the ground instead of a weight bench.
- Beginner Tip: Start with 3-5lbs weight and adjust as needed.



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Overhead Press



Muscle Group: Shoulders (pectorals, deltoids) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 | **Equipment:** Dumbbell or barbell

Instructions

1. Choose a set of weights that you feel comfortable using.
2. Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and a straight back.
3. Stand with your arms up by your shoulders, with the weights in your hands and grip facing out.
4. Push the weights up over your head until your arms are fully extended, pause at the top, then bring them back down to your shoulders.
5. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Make sure movements are slow and controlled
- If you are using a barbell, keep the bar in front of your body in line with your chest.
- If needed, try a single arm press with sets and reps on each side.
- Instead of standing, you can also do this exercise seated.
- If you need help keeping your back straight, try to do this exercise with your back against a wall.
- Beginner Tip: Start with 3-5lbs weight and adjust as needed.



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Pushups



Muscle Group: Arms (pectorals, biceps, triceps) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 | **Equipment:** Body weight

Instructions

1. Start with your knees on the ground and walk your hands out until your back and legs form a straight line (hips down).
2. Position your hands directly under your shoulders with your fingers pointing out.
3. Slowly lower your body towards the ground, pause and push back up.
4. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Make sure movements are slow and controlled.
- Try pushups against a wall if needed.
- Use a mat or towel under your knees for cushion.
- More experienced or advanced participants, try a fully extended push up with knees off the ground.
- Beginner Tip: Start by using the wall and perfecting your form before moving to the ground.



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Triceps Dips



Muscle Group: Arms (triceps) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 | **Equipment:** Body weight

Instructions

1. Sit on a bench, curb, or on the ground with your hands next to your hips and knees bent.
2. Lift your body up and move it forward in front of the bench or ground so that your arms and elbows remain behind you.
3. Bend your elbows and lower your body towards the ground then push back up. Keep your back straight during this exercise.
4. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Make sure movements are slow and controlled.
- For more of a challenge, move your feet further away from your body.
- You should feel this exercise in the back of your arms (triceps).
- Move your feet closer to your body.



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Lat Pulldowns



Muscle Group: Back (latissimus dorsi, trapezius) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 |
Equipment: Weight machine

Instructions

1. Make adjustments to the machine so that your feet are flat on the ground, and you can reach the bar above.
2. Sit on the bench facing the machine and adjust the weight using the pin.
3. Reach up to grab hold of the bar with your hands facing away from you.
4. Slowly sit and pull the bar down with your arms extended above your head.
5. With control, pull the bar down in front of your chest, remain seated and fully extend your arms over head.
6. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Avoid leaning back when you pull the bar down, sit up tall.
- Keep some bend in your elbows, try not to lock them out.
- Beginner Tip: Practice the movement without weight first.
- Start with the lowest weight on the machine.



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ROWS



Muscle Group: Back (latissimus dorsi, trapezius) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 | **Equipment:** Weight machine, dumbbell, barbell

Instructions

1. Make adjustments to the machine so that you can reach the handles.
2. Sit on the bench facing the machine and adjust the weight using the pin.
3. Plant your feet firmly on the ground, or foot rests and reach forward to grab hold of the handles.
4. Slowly pull the handles towards your body. Stop when your hands are close to your ribs.
5. With control, reach back out until your arms are straight, then continue the exercise.
6. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Keep your elbows close to your body when pulling the handles in.
- Keep your chest forward with your back straight and keep your knees slightly bent.
- Beginner Tip: Practice the movement without weight first.
- Start with the lowest weight on the machine.



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Chest Fly



Muscle Group: Chest (pectorals, deltoids, biceps) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 |
Equipment: Weight machine, dumbbell, barbell

Instructions

1. Make adjustments to the machine so that your feet are flat on the ground, and the handles are inline with the side of your body.
2. Adjust the weight using the pin, and sit on the bench with your back against the backrest, and feet planted on the ground.
3. Reach out and grab hold of the handles keeping your elbows slightly bent.
4. Slowly pull the handles in towards each other to meet in front of you.
5. With control, open your arms back up to the starting position then continue the exercise.
6. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- If flexibility is an issue, adjust the handles so your arms start closer together.
- If you need to, do 1 arm at a time.
- Be sure to keep your back against the backrest the entire time.
- Beginner Tip: Practice the movement without weight first.
- Start with the lowest weight on the machine.



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Reverse Fly



Muscle Group: Back (latissimus dorsi, deltoids) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 |
Equipment: Weight machine or dumbbell

Instructions

1. Make adjustments to the machine so that your feet are flat on the ground, and the handles are in front of your body.
2. Adjust the weight using the pin.
3. Sit on the bench with your chest against the backrest facing the machine and your feet planted on the ground.
4. Reach out and grab hold of the handles in front of you keeping your elbows slightly bent.
5. Slowly pull the handles out and back until your arms are out to your side.
6. With control, bring the handles back to the starting position then continue the exercise.
7. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Be sure to keep your chest against the backrest and keep your back straight.
- Make sure you are using your back muscles to complete this exercise.
- Beginner Tip: Practice the movement without weight first.
- Start with the lowest weight on the machine.



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Superman



Muscle Group: Back & Legs (latissimus dorsi, glutes, hamstrings) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x10 seconds
Equipment: Body weight

Instructions

1. Lay on your stomach with arms and legs extended.
2. Using your core and back muscles, lift your arms and legs off the ground and hold it for 10 seconds.
3. While holding, keep your head inline with your back by looking down towards the floor.
4. Repeat this 3 times (3 x 10 seconds).

Tips & Modifications

- Hold the superman for up to 10 seconds, lower the time if you need to.
- For more of a challenge, hold the superman for more than 10 seconds, or pulse 10 times during each set.
- Beginner Tip: Try to lift your hands first, then add your feet.



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Leg Press



Muscle Group: Legs (quadriceps) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 | **Equipment:** Weight machine

Instructions

1. Make adjustments to the machine so that your feet are flat on the platform, and your knees are bent.
2. Adjust the weight using the pin.
3. Sit on the bench and hold the handles.
4. Slowly push your feet against the platform and extend your legs.
5. With control, return to the starting position with your knees bent.
6. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Keep a slight bend in your knees without locking them out while extending your legs.
- Make sure your knees are in a comfortable starting position (not too close or too far away).
- Beginner Tip: Start with the lowest weight on the machine to practice the correct motion, then increase weights.



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Leg Extension



Muscle Group: Legs (quadriceps) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 | **Equipment:** Weight machine

Instructions

1. Make adjustments to the machine so that the foot bar is aligned with your ankles.
2. Adjust the weight using the pin.
3. Sit on the seat, hold the handles, and tuck your feet behind the foot bar.
4. Slowly push the leg bar up and extend your legs.
5. With control, return to the starting position with your knees bent.
6. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Keep a slight bend in your knees without locking them out while extending your legs.
- Beginner Tip: Start with the lowest weight on the machine to practice the correct motion, then increase weights.



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Leg Curls



Muscle Group: Legs (hamstrings) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 | **Equipment:** Weight machine

Instructions

1. Make adjustments to the machine so that the foot bar is aligned with your ankles.
2. Adjust the weight using the pin.
3. Sit on the seat, hold the handles, and place your feet on top of the foot bar.
4. Slowly pull the foot bar down and bend your legs.
5. With control, return to the starting position with your legs extended.
6. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Start with the lowest weight on the machine to practice the correct motion, then increase weights.



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Calf Raises



Muscle Group: Legs (calf) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 |

Equipment: Weight machine or dumbbells

Instructions

1. Make adjustments to the machine so that the height of the shoulder pads are inline with your shoulders.
2. Adjust the weight using the pin.
3. Step on to the machine platform with the balls of your foot on the bar and your heels slightly off the back.
4. Bend your knees and place your shoulders underneath the shoulder pads and grip the handles with your hands.
5. Slowly, raise up on the balls of your feet, pause, then return back down.
6. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Start with no weights and practice proper form with hands on your hips.



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Squats



Muscle Group: Legs (quadriceps) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 |
Equipment: Weight machine, barbells or dumbbell

Instructions

1. Choose your plates and weights based on comfort level.
2. Adjust the rack height to be level with your shoulders.
3. Load your weight if needed and secure using bar clips.
4. Step under the bar, place your hands shoulder width apart and grip the bar, and rest the bar between the top of your shoulder blades.
5. Lift up to bring the bar off the rack and step back.
6. With feet shoulder width apart, slowly bend your knees and sit back like you are sitting in a chair until your quadriceps are parallel to the ground.
7. Pause, then slowly stand back up.
8. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Progress from body weight to dumbbells to using a squat rack/barbell.
 - Turn your toes slightly outward when getting into position.
- Make sure your knees do not go past your feet, and stay facing forward.
- Beginner Tip: Start with no weights and practice proper form with hands clasped in front.
 - Most barbells are 45lbs with no plates.



Strength

Lunges



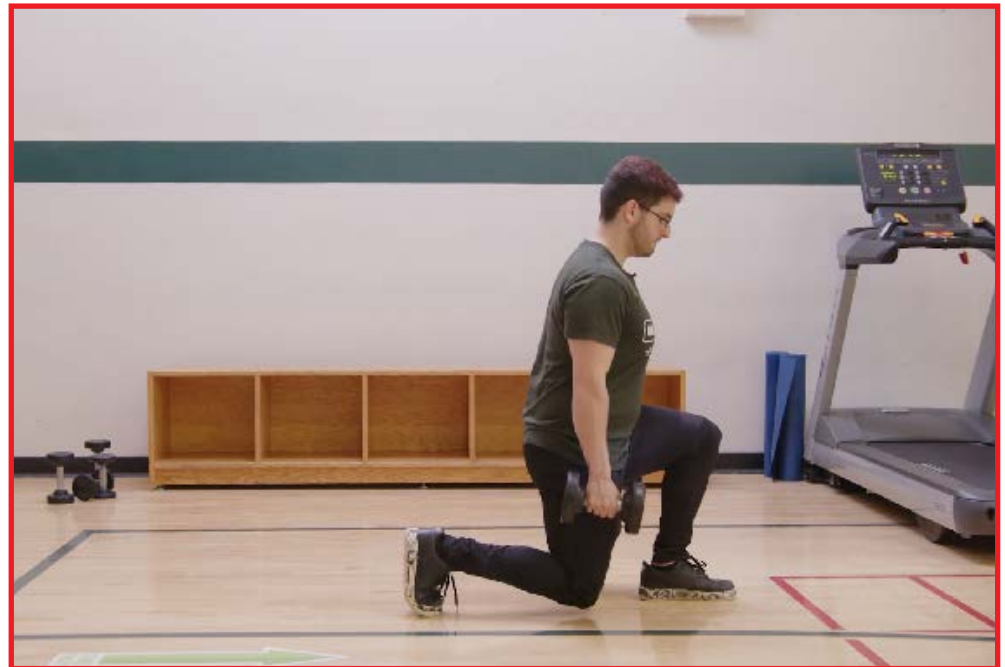
Muscle Group: Legs (quadriceps) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x8 or 3x10 | **Equipment:** Dumbbells

Instructions

1. Choose your weights based on your comfort level.
2. Start with your feet planted firmly on the ground with arms by your side.
3. Take a large step forward with one foot and keep both feet facing forward.
4. Slowly bend both knees until your back knee is close to the ground.
5. Pause, and push back up to return to standing with your feet together.
6. Repeat on the opposite side.
7. Continue this 10 times on each side.

Tips & Modifications

- Start with no weights and practice proper form with hands on hips.
- If you need help with balance, use a wall or chair for stability.



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Plank



Muscle Group: Core (abdominals) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x15 seconds | **Equipment:** Body weight

Instructions

1. Start laying on the ground with hands directly under your shoulders with your fingers pointing out.
2. Push up and extend your arms with your back and legs forming a straight line.
3. Hold this position for 15 seconds.
4. Repeat this 3 times (3 x 15).

Tips & Modifications

- Drop down to your knees, making sure your back and legs are still straight.
- More experienced or advanced participants, try to hold the plank for 30 seconds or do a low forearm plank instead.
- Beginner Tip: Spread your feet further apart for more stability.



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Russian Twists



Muscle Group: Core (abdominals) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x10 | **Equipment:** Body weight

Instructions

1. Sit on a mat with your knees bent and feet on the ground.
2. Lean back while engaging your core muscles and clasp your hands together in front of your body.
3. Keep your back straight.
4. Twist your body slowly to the right side and then the left side.
5. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Have your partner hold your feet if needed.
- For more of a challenge, try holding a weight while performing the exercise or lift your feet off the ground and twist.
- Beginner Tip: Start sitting up straight and practice the twist before leaning back further.



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Leg Raises



Muscle Group: Core (abdominals) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x10 | **Equipment:** Body Weight

Instructions

1. Lay on your back with legs extended and arms by your side.
2. Using your core muscles, slowly lift your legs up off the ground reaching towards the ceiling.
3. Keep your legs straight and feet together with your lower back touching the ground.
4. Slowly bring your legs back down to the ground.
5. Repeat this 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- For more of a challenge, keep your feet off the ground between reps.
- If needed, do 1 leg at a time.
- Beginner Tip: Start with a slight bend in your knees.



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Sit Ups



Muscle Group: Core (abdominals) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x10 | **Equipment:** Body Weight

Instructions

1. Sit on a mat with your knees bent and feet on the ground. Keep your knees and feet together.
2. Lay back with your arms across your chest.
3. Using your core muscles, pull your body up to a seated position and pause at the top.
4. Slowly return to the ground.
5. Repeat 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Keep your back straight while sitting up and back down.
- Keep your feet on the ground.
- If needed, have your partner hold your feet.
- Beginner Tip: Try curl ups first, with arms by your side and curl up towards your feet.



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Standing Obliques



Muscle Group: Core (obliques) | **Sets & Reps:** 3x10 | **Equipment:** Body weight

Instructions

1. Stand with your feet hip width apart and arms by your side.
2. Reach down to the right side toward your knee, lift back up, and do the same on the left side.
3. Repeat 10 times (3 x 10).

Tips & Modifications

- Keep your back straight and bend at your side.
- Beginner Tip: To practice correct alignment, hold your hands on your hips and lean side and to side.



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