

Resistance Exercises for Health and Function

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Tips to follow for your strength training program:

- **Warm up for 5-10 minutes.** This will reduce your chance of getting hurt and increase your range of motion. **Use your walk as a warm-up or walk in place for a few minutes. Do a few stretches** for the muscles you will be working on that day.
- **Follow the instructions for the exercises carefully.** We have learned a lot about how to best train your muscles in a safe way. Some of the old ways you may have learned to train your muscles may not be as safe or effective. (For example: You may have been taught to do sit-ups with your legs straight out. Now we know it's important to bend your knees to prevent back problems.)
- **After you exercise muscles on one side of a joint, exercise those on the other side.** This helps to maintain balance and prevent injury. (For example: If you first exercise the muscles that bend the elbow (biceps) then exercise the muscles that straighten the elbow (triceps).
- **Move slowly & smoothly. Never hold your breath.** This will prevent a dangerous rise in blood pressure.
 - When you lift: Breathe out, and count 1-2.
 - Hold the position for 1 count.
 - When you release: Breathe in and count 1-2-3-4. Be careful to control the speed with which you release the movement. This will avoid stressing the joints.
- **Do each exercise through the full range of motion.** If you can't do this, decrease the amount of resistance.
- **Keep it slow and steady.**
 - Add more resistance gradually to develop muscle strength. But also be careful not to do too much.
 - You may want to slowly repeat each exercise 10-20 times (this is called a "set"). Then work up to doing 2-3 sets of each exercise each time.
- When using the exercise bands, it's okay to do the exercises every day unless you use too much resistance and your muscles are very sore. If you are very sore it is best to take a day off to allow your muscles to rest and recover.
- **Always cool down after the exercises by stretching the muscle groups used.** Do each stretch three times and hold 30-60 seconds.

Let's get started...

First & Foremost.... "Tie-it-up"!

This stabilizes your core and provides a solid foundation for resistance exercises.

This is a two step process:

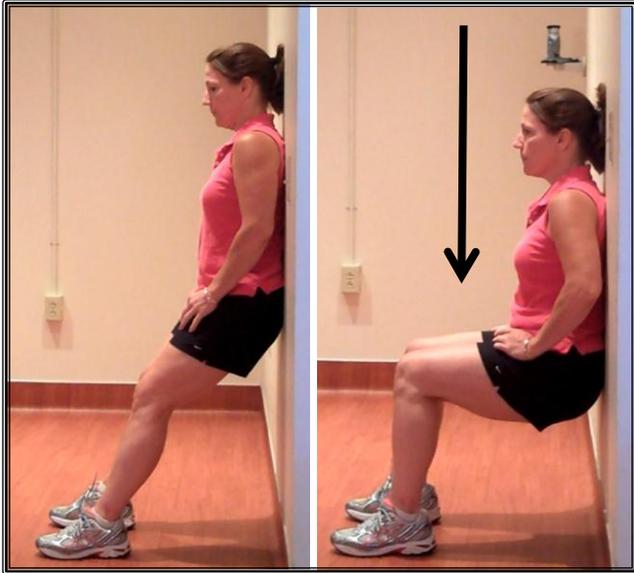
1st – close the pelvic floor. For men... as though you are stopping the flow of urine, it is the same for ladies but more commonly referred to as Kegel exercises.

2nd – While doing the above, **tighten the lower abs** (like you are preparing to be punched in the stomach). Be sure to "Tie-it-up" before doing all exercises.

Lower Body

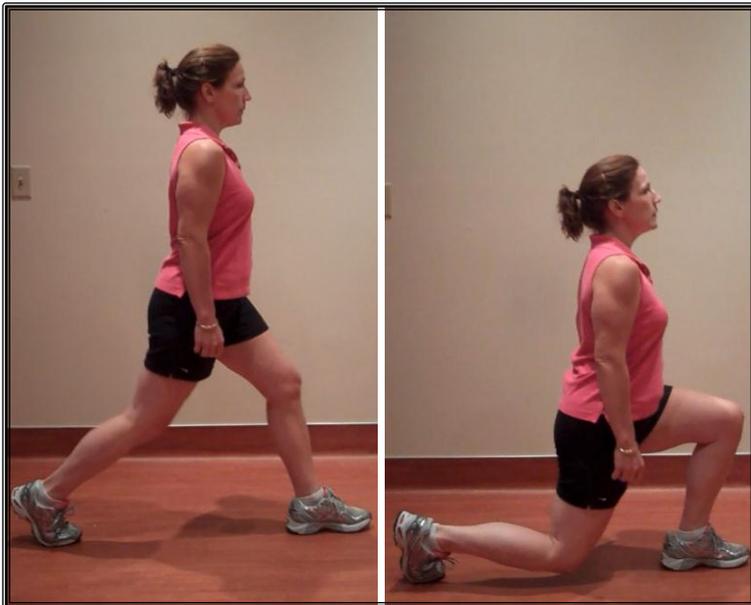
Pick any two exercises from this page and the next page on any given day. You can change up your choices each time you work out to better train your muscles.

Wall Sits



Start with your back up against a smooth wall. Place your feet hip width apart about 1 –1 ½ feet away from the wall. Slide your back down the wall until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Be sure your knees do not extend past your toes. If they do, move your feet further from the wall. Hold the sit for as long as you are able then push up through your heels to slide your back up the wall. Rest and repeat. Do 3 – 5 times.

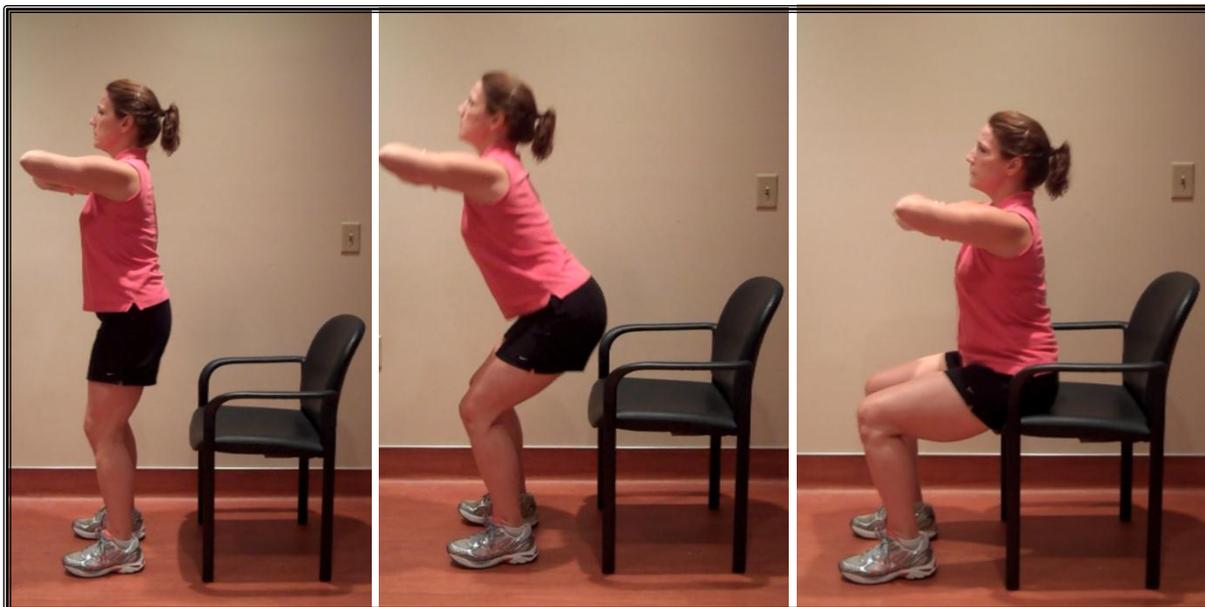
Standing Lunges



Start with your feet together then take a large step forward with one foot. Your rear foot should be on its toes. Stand with nice upright posture and place your hands on your hip. Now, slowly lower your rear knee straight down to the floor until your front knee is at 90 degrees (Your knee should not pass your toes). Press up to return to the starting position being sure to maintain your upright posture. Do 10 – 20 repetitions. Repeat with the opposite foot in front.

To add resistance you can hold dumbbells at your sides.

Chair Squat

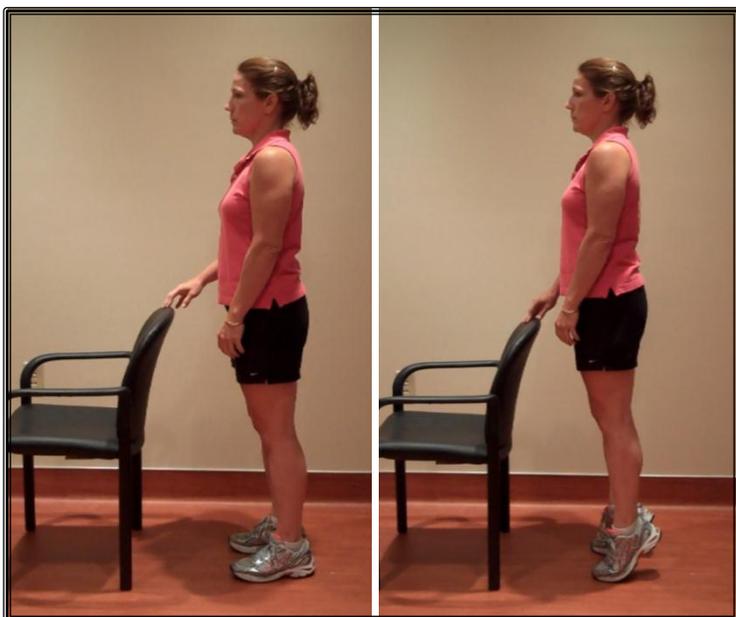


Start sitting at the very edge of a hard chair or bench with your feet hip width apart and your toes just in front of your knees. Cross your arms in front of your chest then raise your elbows to point forward so that your upper arms are parallel to the floor. Make sure you are “tied-up” then press through your heels to stand up. **DO NOT lock your knees** out when you reach the top.

Leading with your tailbone, sit back down just until your bottom touches the chair and stand right back up. Repeat 10 – 20 times.

To add resistance place the resistance band under your feet and, while seated as described above, wrap the extra length around your hand to take up the slack. The band will stretch as you stand. Since your hands will be down to hold the band, be sure to keep your shoulders back and chest out throughout the motion.

Calf Raises



Start with your feet flat on the floor.

Raise yourself up onto your toes, pause, and slowly lower yourself back to the starting position.

Repeat. Do 10- 20 repetitions.

Hint, if you are having trouble balancing, hold on to something sturdy like a counter top or the back of a sturdy chair. Make sure you are “tied-up”... it helps with balance!

Upper Body

Shoulder Press



Stand with your feet hip width apart and place the band under the arch of your feet. Wrap the excess length comfortably around your hands until there is no slack when your hands are at shoulder level.

With your palms facing forward, raise your hands straight up being sure to keep your elbows slightly bent when you reach the top. Slowly return to the starting position.

Repeat. Do 10 – 20 repetitions.

NOTE: This exercise can also be done sitting in a firm chair by placing the band under your bottom instead of your feet.

Seated Row



Sitting with your feet straight out in front of you place the band around the bottom of your feet. While sitting up nice and straight extend your arms in front of you and wrap the extra band comfortably around your hand until there is a slight stretch. Be sure your elbows are NOT LOCKED.

Keeping your arms close to your body, draw your elbows back while squeezing your shoulder blades together. Pause for a second and slowly return to the starting position.

Repeat. Make sure your upper body stays straight up throughout the motion. Do 10 – 20 repetitions.

Chest Press



Stand with your feet hip width apart and place the band across your back at shoulder blade level. Wrap the excess length comfortably around your hands until your thumbs are even with your chest.

Extend your arms to stretch the band. **DO NOT LOCK YOUR ELBOWS!** Be sure to keep your elbows just slightly bent when the band is fully stretched.

Slowly return to the starting position.

Repeat. Do 10 – 20 repetitions.

Core

Alternating Superman (Back)

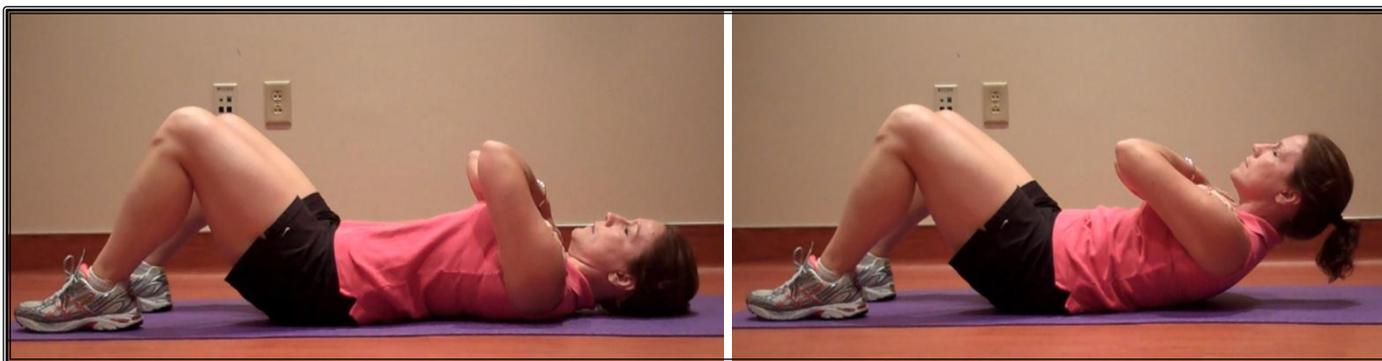


Keeping your hips and chest in contact with the floor at all times, raise your left arm and right leg, squeeze for a second, lower and repeat up to 20 times.

Repeat exercise lifting your right arm and left leg.

NOTE: This is a small movement and beginners often can lift their limbs only an inch or two until they develop more strength.

Curl-ups



Start by lying on your back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Place your hands either by your ears or across your chest. Make sure you are “tied-up” and slowly curl up until your shoulder blades are just off the floor.

This is NOT a full sit-up! Picture a string attached to your chest pulling through your belly button. You should feel it in your abs NOT your neck!

Do 10 – 20 repetitions.

Front Planks



Start by lying face down. Place your elbows and forearms under your chest.

Using your toes and forearms, prop yourself up to form a bridge. Maintain a flat back and do not allow your bottom to stick up into the air or your back to sag.

Hold this position for 10 seconds to start and gradually increase the length of the hold. Keep your abs tight (“tie it up”).

Rest and repeat. Do 3 – 5 times.

Upper Body

Bicep Curls



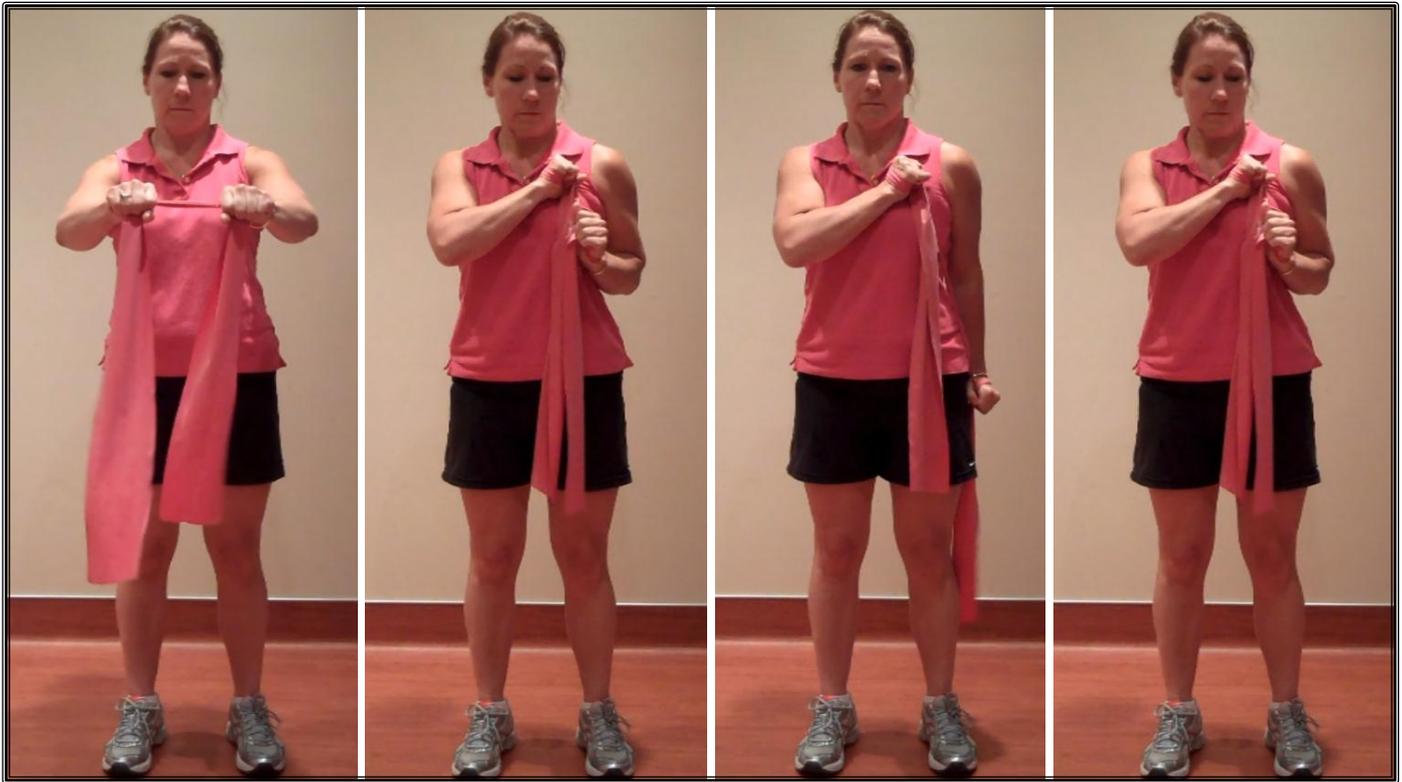
Start by standing with one foot slightly in front of you. Place the band under your foot. With your arms extended downward, wrap the excess comfortably around your hands until there is no slack.

Keeping your elbows touching your side and your palms facing away from you, bend your elbows drawing your hand up to your shoulder. (Do not bend your wrist when you reach the top).

Slowly return to the starting position.

Repeat. Do 10 – 20 repetitions with each arm.

Triceps Extensions



Grip the band in front of you with about 1 foot of band between your hands. Wrap the band around each hand 1 time so that your hands are touching (or nearly touching).

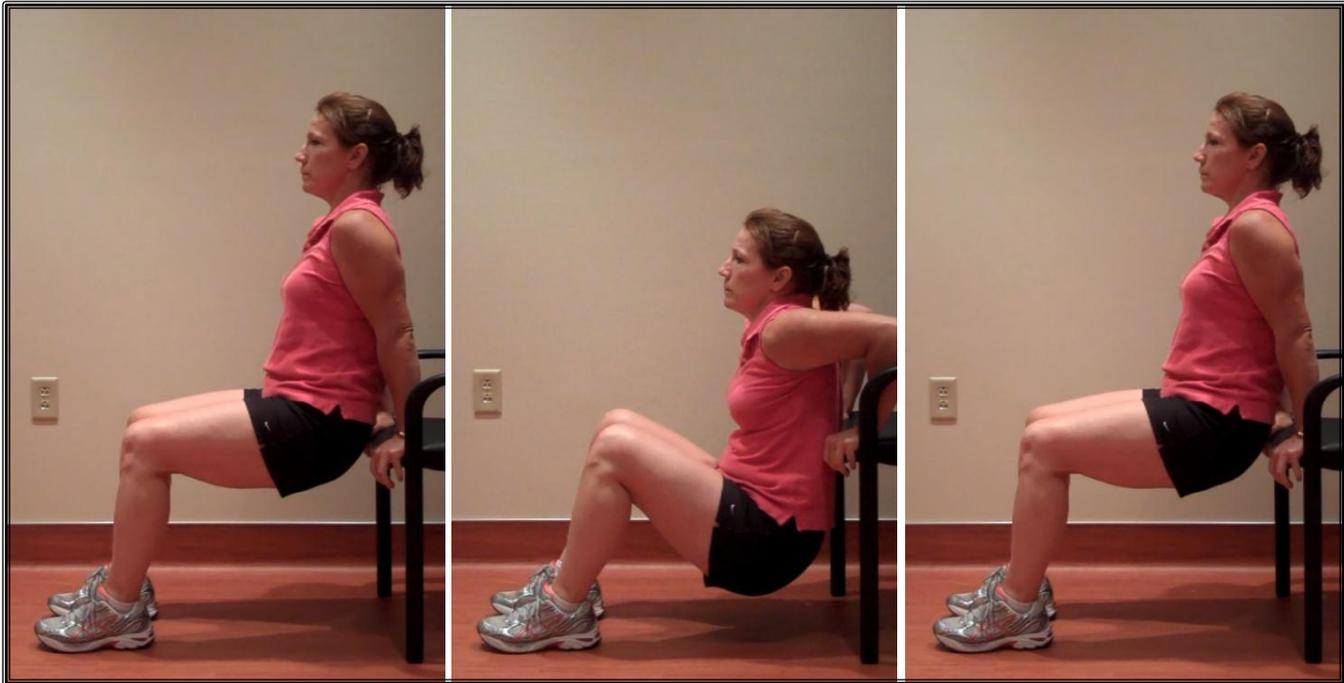
Place your right fist on your left chest close to your left shoulder.

Keeping your left elbow tight against your side, extend your elbow all the way (this time you want to lock your elbow briefly). Slowly return to the starting position.

Do 10 – 20 repetitions. Then repeat this exercise on the opposite side.

If you want to mix things up, use this exercise instead of the Biceps and Triceps exercises above:

Triceps Dips



Use any firm **STURDY** edge approximately 2 feet above the floor. (e.g. chair, park bench, picnic table bench, etc). Start by sitting the chair. Place your hands under your thighs with your hands pointing forward and your fingers curled over the edge. With your feet, take a step forward while supporting your body with your arms and legs. Your knees should be bent at 90 degrees and your feet flat on the floor. Your bottom should be in front of the chair and just off it and your upper body should be perpendicular to the floor. This is the starting position.

Lower your bottom by bending your elbows while keeping your upper body vertical and not arching or bending. Relax your legs so that they are not doing the work but are there to help if you need them. Continue to lower yourself until your elbows are bent 90 degrees.

Now, use your **ARMS** to push up to the starting position. Be sure that you do **NOT** lock your elbows at the top of the movement.

Repeat. Do as many as you can up to 20 repetitions.

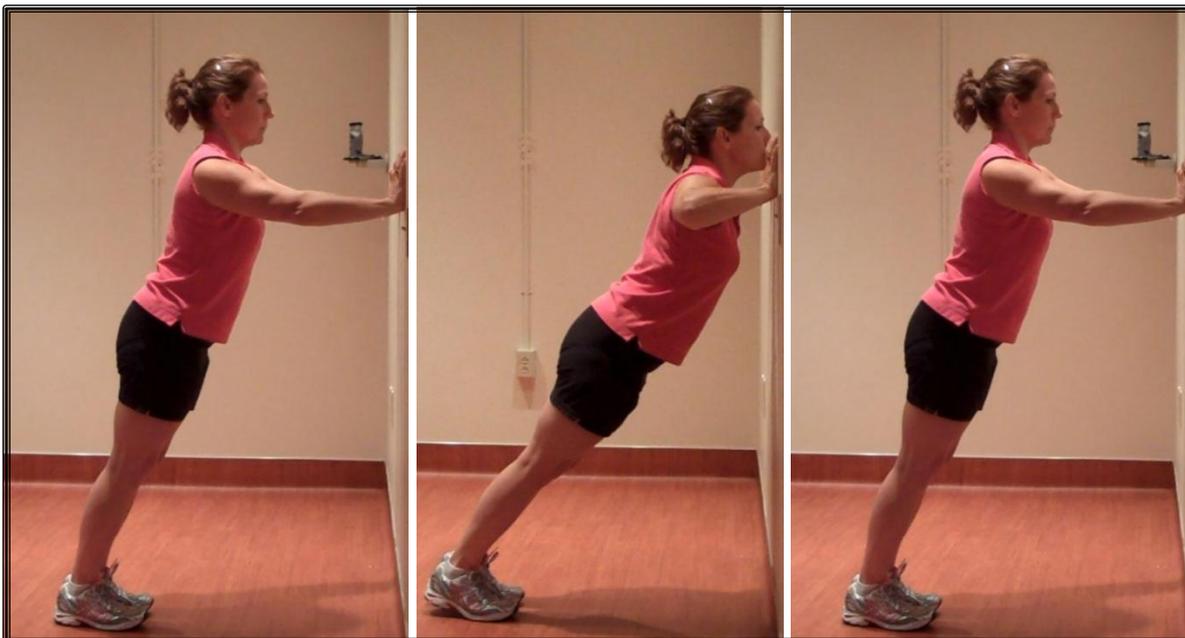
Push-ups (Progression)

There are 4 different ways to do a push-up. The goal is to eventually be able to perform a Full Push-up! The SAFEST, and least frustrating, way to work your way up to doing a full push-up is to follow the progression illustrated below.

1. Wall Push-up

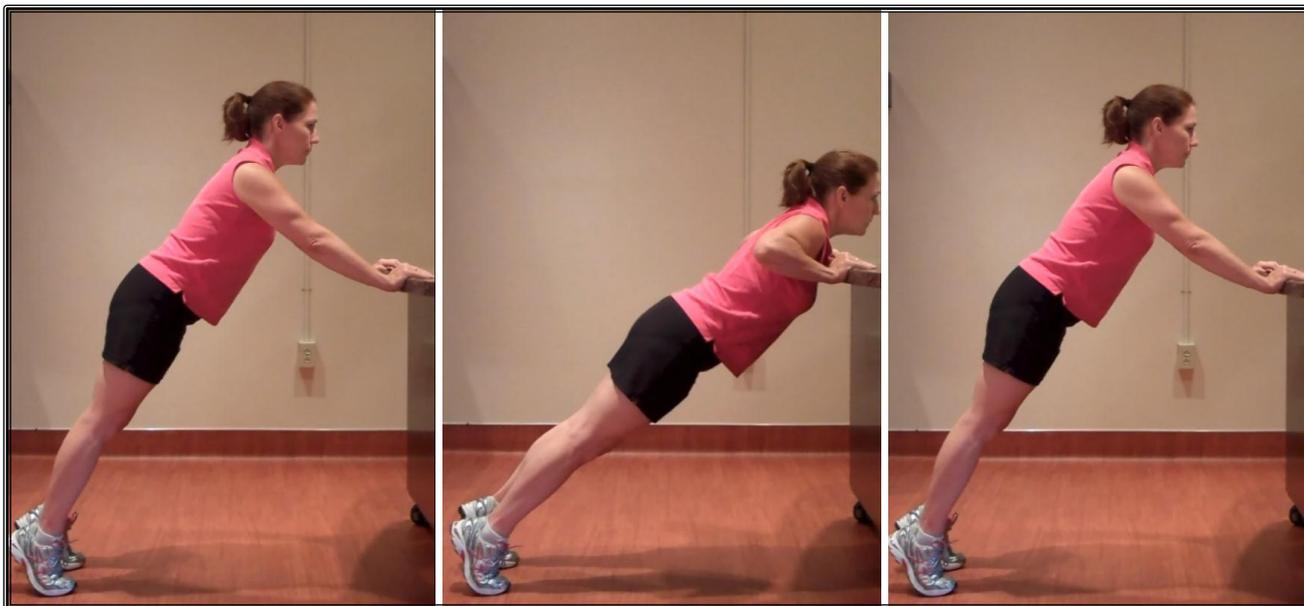


Face a wall and raise your arms in front of you up to shoulder level. Place your hands against the wall so they are slightly wider than your shoulders and your fingers are pointing up. Move your feet about 2 feet away from the wall so that your arms are bent as you lean into the wall on an angle. Be sure you are “tied-up” so that your back stays flat like in the plank exercise. Now, push your upper body away from the wall until your arms are extended (DO NOT LOCK elbows). Repeat. Do as many as you can up to 20.



NOTE: The closer your feet are to the wall, the easier the push-up, the further away from the wall the harder. If you can do 20 easily, then move your feet further from the wall.

2. Incline Push-up

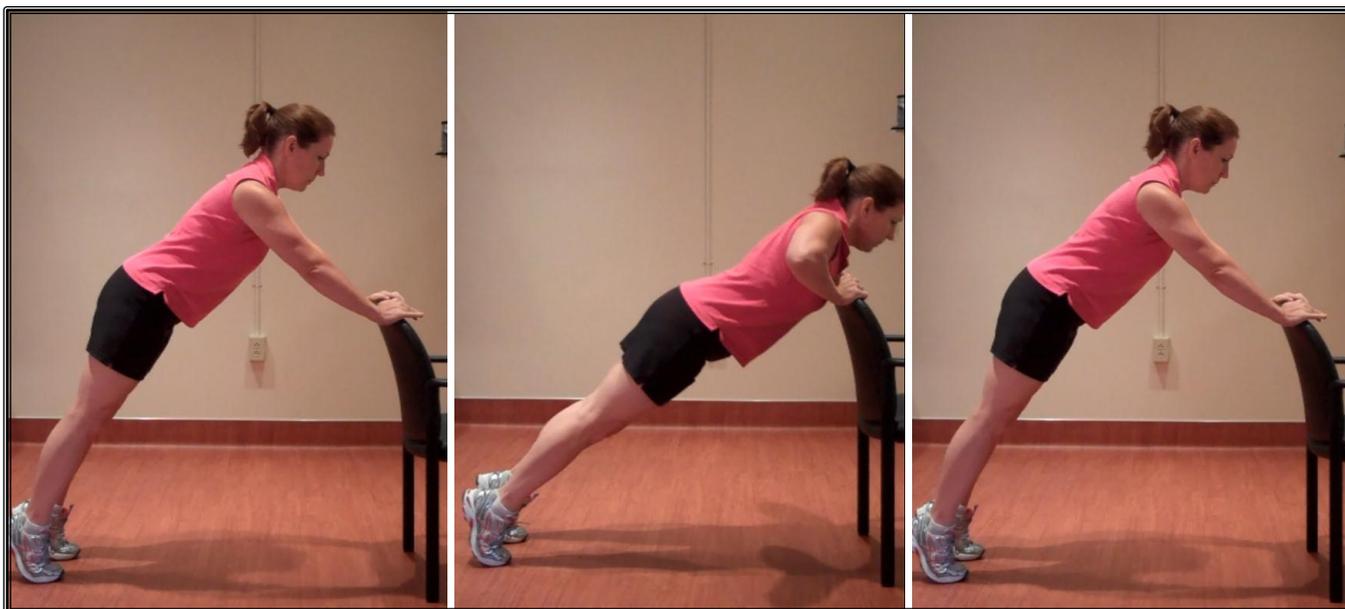


Stand facing a bench or sturdy elevated platform. Place hands on the edge, slightly wider than your shoulders. Move your feet back far enough to ensure that your arms are at 90° to your body and your back is straight (like the plank). You will be on the balls of your feet.

Now, lower your chest to the edge of the platform by bending your elbows.

Push your body back into the starting position until arms are extended (Do NOT LOCK elbows).

Repeat. Do as many as you can up to 20.



NOTE: The higher the platform the easier the push-up, the lower the platform, the more challenging. Lowering the platform is a good way to progress toward steps 3 & 4 below!

3. Modified Push-up



The best way to get into the modified position is to start in the full position. This is basically the plank on your hands instead of your forearms.

Now, from this position simply drop your knees to the floor and lift and cross your feet. Your body should still be stretched out and your back should be flat. (No sagging backs or bottoms up in the air!)

Lower your chest to the floor by bending your elbows to about 90 degrees (This is when your bottom wants to stay in the air!) Be sure to keep your back flat. Now, push yourself back to the starting position. (This is when a sagging back is likely to happen!) Be sure to keep your back flat like the plank.

Repeat. Do as many as you can up to 20.

4. Full Push-up



The final destination... the Full Push-up!

The starting position for this push-up is basically the plank on your hands instead of your forearms and up on your toes.

Lower your chest to the floor by bending your elbows to about 90 degrees (This is when your bottom wants to stay in the air!) Be sure to keep your back flat.

Now, push yourself back to the starting position. (This is when a sagging back is likely to happen!) Be sure to keep your back flat like the plank.

Repeat. Do as many as you can up to 20.

You did it! 😊