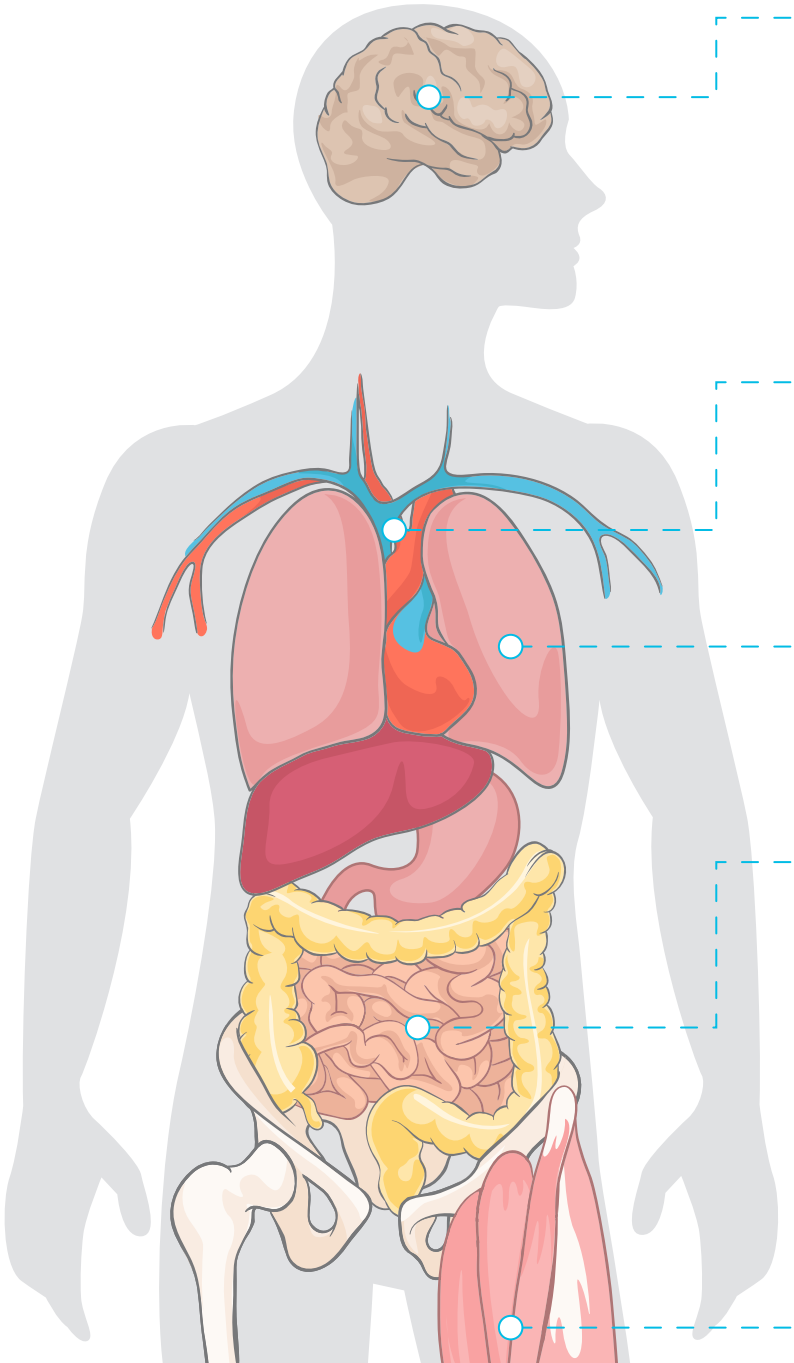
HOW TO STAY IN SHAPE WHEN YOU'RE BUSY

Work trips? Holidays? In hectic times, exercise routines crash. But with 10 minutes a day and virtually no equipment, you can maintain your fitness until you're back in the game.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OFFERS A LONG LIST OF AMAZING BENEFITS



BRAIN

- Less susceptible to stroke
- Increased neural pathway conductivity
- Improved neuroplasticity
- Improved mood and sleep
- Improved executive function

VEINS/ARTERIES

- Increased elasticity
- Improved circulation
- Improved blood pressure

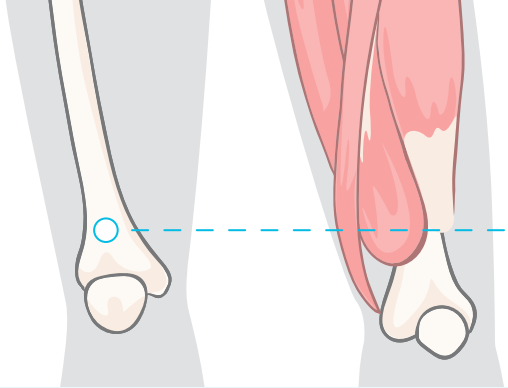
RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

- Increased gas exchange in lungs
- Increased oxygen in the bloodstream

METABOLISM

- Increased mitochondrial density
- Improved enzymatic pathways
- More efficient energy production
- Improved insulin sensitivity
- Improved nutrient uptake
- Decreased fat storage
- Higher resting metabolic rate

MUSCLES



- Improved strength and coordination
- Bigger, more numerous muscle fibers
- Larger, toned muscles

SKELETON

- Increased bone density and strength

The more consistently you work out, the more pronounced and long-lasting the benefits. But if you suddenly become sedentary, the benefits start reversing immediately.

STRESS CAN MAKE YOU LOSE CONDITIONING FASTER.

MENTAL/EMOTIONAL STRESS

INCREASED BREATHING RATE

INCREASED OXYGEN UPTAKE AND CO2 CLEARANCE

DECREASED CO2 IN THE BODY

REDUCED OXYGEN TRANSFER TO MUSCLE CELLS

ALTERED ENERGY PRODUCTION IN MUSCLES

REDUCED ATP (ENERGY) AVAILABILITY IN MUSCLES

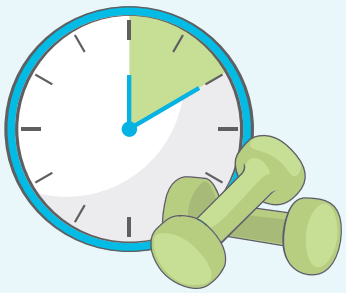
IMPAIRED ABILITY TO RELAX AND LENGTHEN MUSCLES

TIGHTNESS AND STIFFNESS (ESPECIALLY IN THOSE AFFECTED BY STRESS, LIKE THE NECK AND LOWER BACK) AND FATIGUE

SIMPLE, DO-ANYWHERE WORKOUT

For those times when you just can't manage your normal exercise routine, use this minimalist 10-minute workout to stay in shape.

1. **Move through each exercise in sequence.**
2. **Do 5 reps of each exercise.**
3. **Don't rest between exercises.**
4. **Rest 1-2 minutes at the end of the circuit.**
5. **Repeat for a total of 2-4 circuits.**



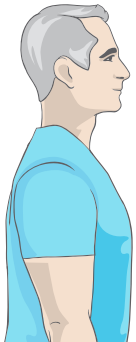
BEAR CRAWL

Starting on all fours, push down with toes to bring knees off floor.

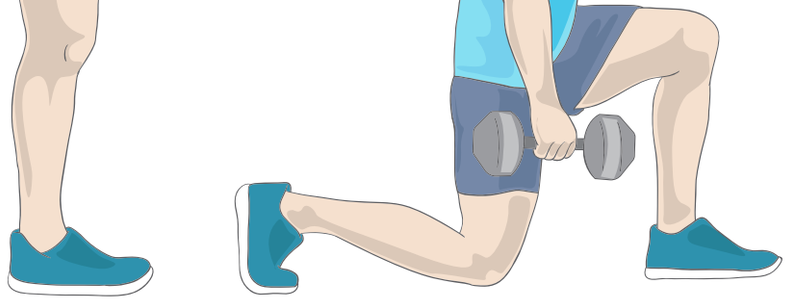
Keeping pelvis centered, "crawl" with right arm and left leg moving forward together, and vice versa. 10 seconds = 1 rep.

REVERSE LUNGE

Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, a dumbbell in each hand.



With chest high, abs engaged, and lower back neutral, step right foot back. Keep weight on forward heel and hips squared as you lower right knee until it's just off the floor and slightly



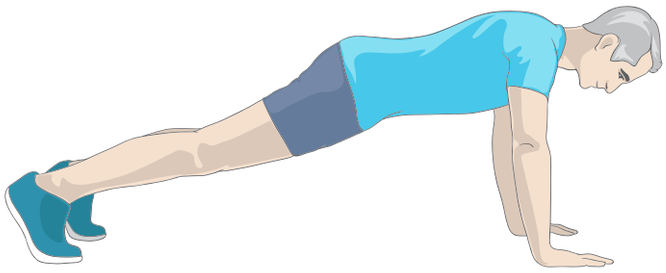
behind your hip.

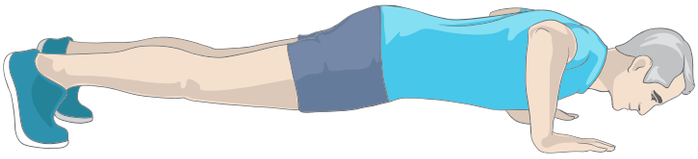
Drive weight into forward heel to return to start. Complete set for right leg, then repeat on the left.

PUSH-UP

Start in “plank” position, hands directly under shoulders and fingers forward.

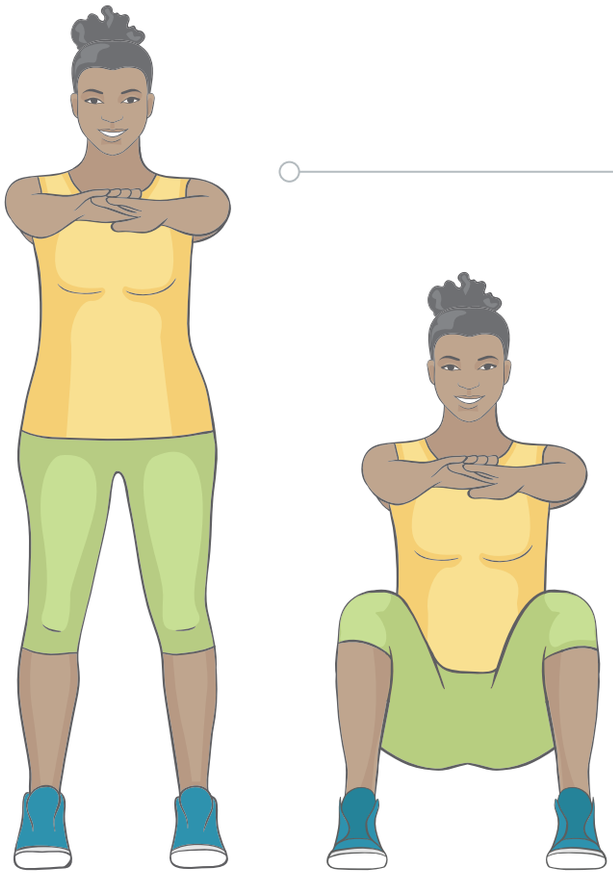
Maintaining a straight line from head to heel, keep elbows in as you bend them to lower your body as far as you can without shoulders popping forward.





Squeeze shoulder blades together and down toward glutes as you lower, then allow them to spread fully apart at the top. Keep abs tight, tailbone tucked under and shoulders down away from ears.

SQUAT



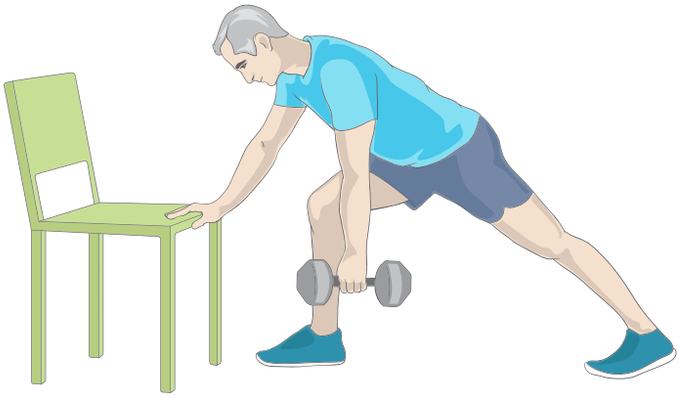
Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, arms extended in front of you.

With abs engaged, ribs pulled down, and tailbone tucked under, push hips back and lower as far as you can, keeping feet straight and knees aligned with little toe.

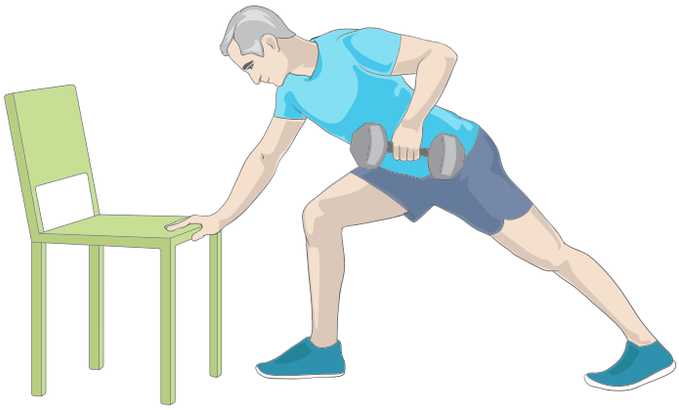
Drive weight into heels and midfoot to return to start.

SINGLE-ARM DUMBBELL ROW

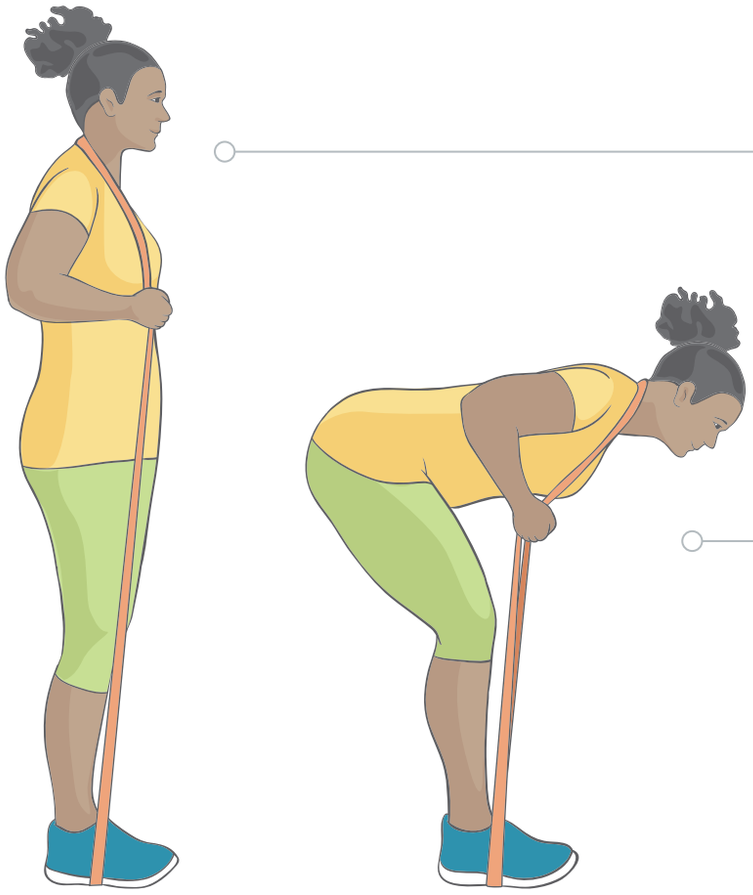
Stand in high lunge, right foot forward and right hand on secure bench or chair supporting you, dumbbell in left hand.



Keeping ribs down, abs tight, tailbone tucked, and weight through forward heel, pull dumbbell toward lower ribs while locking your shoulder blade inward and down.



BANDED HIP EXTENSION

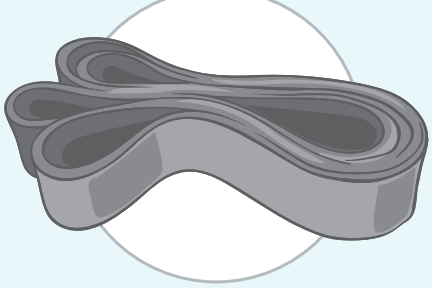


Stand with feet shoulder-width apart with resistance band looped behind neck and ends secured under feet.

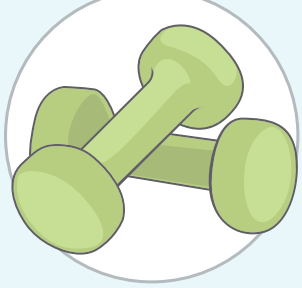
Keeping abs engaged, ribs pulled down, back straight, and weight rooted through heels, push your hips back and bend at waist until you feel a slight stretch in hamstrings.

Return to start, keeping abs tight, ribs down, and tailbone tucked.

YOUR MINIMALIST GYM



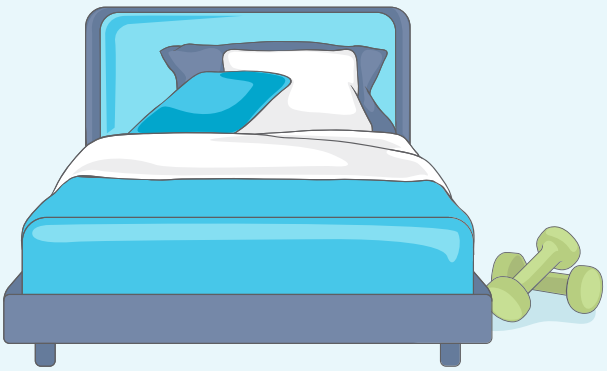
Resistance band
(length: 41”,
width: 0.5-1.5”)



Choose a weight that’s
moderately challenging
(women: 15-30 lb, men 30-50 lb.)

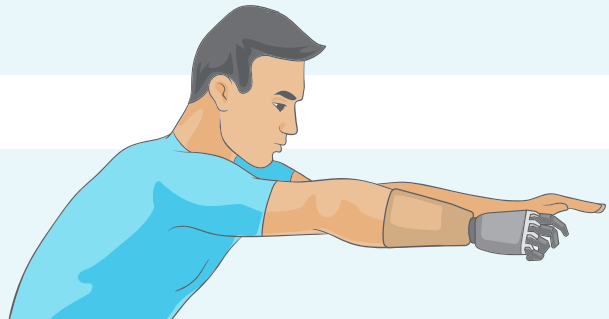
MAKE IT EASY

When you’re busy and stressed, working memory and willpower are low.
Here’s how to make a minimal workout happen.

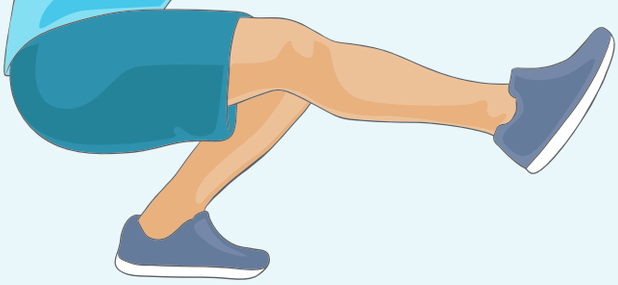


Keep your resistance bands or workout clothes somewhere visible, where you’ll practically trip over them. Behavioral triggers make exercise more automatic, less thought-driven.

Don’t think of the workout as a chore or punishment. Positivity keeps your stress hormone response in check and reduces hedonic compensation (“I did push-ups, so I earned this brownie”).



Can't do one or more of the exercises in the circuit? Skip them. If possible, focus



on the legs, which require greater muscle recruitment and energy burn.

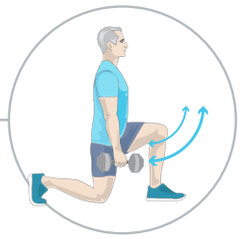
No dumbbell?
Use whatever you can find to add weight to the moves.

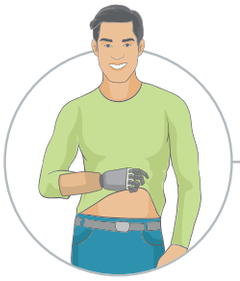
WHY THIS PLAN WORKS

Requires minimal time and equipment, so you can do it anytime, anywhere

Helps you avoid the all-or-nothing downward spiral of feeling "off-track" with exercise

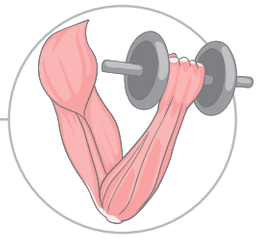
Uses "compound exercise" -- big muscles, big range of motion -- so you get more out of each rep





Gives dietary sugar a purpose, mitigating chances of increased fat storage and weight gain

Maintains joint and tissue health



Keeps stress in check

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