

ACE Fitness: At-Home (No Equipment) Workout

This workout provides a challenging total-body workout that can be done from the comfort of home with no equipment other than bodyweight and space.

Warm-Up

Walk in place while doing some arm circles, shoulder rolls and other arm movements for 5 to 10 minutes. Then:



Cobra

Hold position for 20-30 seconds, return to a comfortable resting position; rest 30 seconds, repeat stretch 1-2 more times.

Step 1: Starting Position: Lie prone (on your stomach) on an exercise mat or floor with your hands by your sides, positioned directly under your shoulders and hands facing forward. Extend your legs and plantar flex your ankles (toes point away from body).

Step 2: Upward Phase: Gently exhale and press your hips into the mat or floor and pull your chest away from the ground while keeping your hips stable. This will arch your low back and stretch the muscles in your chest and abdominal region. Hold this position for 15 - 30 seconds

Step 3: Downward Phase: Gently relax and lower your upper body to rest back upon the mat or floor.



Cat-Camel

Move slowly through the range-of-motion for 6-10 repetitions; rest 30 seconds, repeat stretch 1-2 more times.

Step 1: Starting Position: Kneel on an exercise mat or floor, positioning your knees and feet hip-width apart, with your feet dorsi-flexed (toes pointing towards your body).

Step 2: Slowly lean forward to place your hands on the mat, positioning them directly under your shoulders at shoulder-width with your hands facing forward. Reposition your hands and knees as necessary so that your knees are directly under your hips and hands are directly under your shoulders

Step 3: Gently stiffen your core and abdominal muscles to position your spine in a neutral position, avoiding any sagging or arching.

Step 4: Upward (Cat) Phase: Gently exhale and contract your abdominal muscles, pushing your spine upwards towards the ceiling and hold this position for 10 - 15 seconds. Allow your head to fall towards your chest, maintaining alignment with the spine

Step 5: Downward (Cow) Phase: Slowly relax and yield to the effects of gravity. Let your stomach fall towards the floor (increasing the arch in your low back) and allow your shoulder blades to fall together (move towards the spine). Hold this position for 10 - 15 seconds before returning to your starting position



Supine Pelvic Tilts

Perform 6-12 repetitions, rest for 45-60 seconds; repeat 1-2 more times for a total of 2-3 sets

Step 1: Starting Position: Lie supine (on your back) with your knees bent and both feet flat on the mat/floor and the knees aligned with the second toe of each foot. Abduct your arms (extend to side) with the palms supinated (facing up to the ceiling).

Step 2: Downward Phase: Exhale and gently contract your abdominal muscles to flatten your low back into the mat/floor. Avoid trying to lift your hips (tailbone) off the mat/floor. Hold this position briefly.

Step 3: Upward Phase: Inhale and slowly relax your abdominal muscles while gently contracting your erector spinae (low back muscles) to increase the arch in your low back. Avoid raising your hips off the mat/floor. Hold this position briefly before returning to your starting position.

Workout



Glute Bridge

Perform 12-15 repetitions; push hips up on 2-count/hold at the top for a 2 count/lower on a 4-count, rest for 30-45 seconds; repeat 1-2 more times for a total of 2-3 sets.

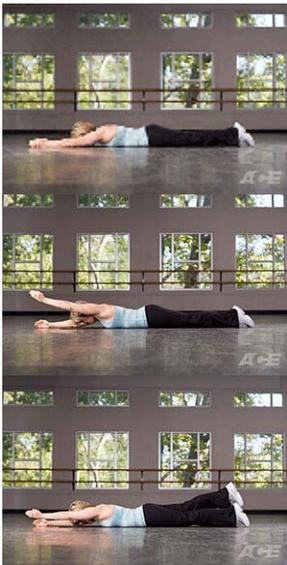
Step 1: Starting Position: Lie supine (on your back) on an exercise mat or the floor in a bent-knee position with your feet flat on the floor. Place your feet hip-width apart with the toes facing away from you. Gently contract your abdominal muscles to flatten your low back into the floor. Attempt to maintain this gentle muscle contraction throughout the exercise

Step 2: Upward Phase: Gently exhale while holding your abdominal contraction and press your hips upwards off the floor into extension by contracting your glutes (butt muscles). At the same time press your heels

into the floor for more stability. Avoid pushing your hips too high as this generally increases the amount of hyperextension (arching) in your low back. Maintaining your abdominal contraction helps avoid excessive arching in your low back.

Step 3: Lowering Phase: Inhale and slowly lower yourself back towards your starting position.

Step 4: Progression: Gradually progress this exercise by starting with both feet together and extending one leg while in the raised position.



Contralateral Limb Raises

Perform 12-20 repetitions, rest for 45-60 seconds; repeat 1-2 more times for a total of 2-3 sets

Step 1: Starting Position: Lie prone (on your stomach) on a mat with your legs extended, ankles slightly plantarflexed (toes pointing away from your shins), arms extended overhead with palms facing each other. Relax your head to align it with your spine.

Step 2: Upward Phase: Exhale, contract your abdominal/core muscles to stabilize your spine and slowly raise one arm a few inches off the floor keeping your arm extended and avoiding any rotation in your arm. Maintain your head and torso position, avoiding any arching in your back or raising of your head. Hold this position briefly.

Step 3: Downward Phase: Gently inhale and lower your arm back towards your starting position without any movement in your low back or hips.

Exercise Variation (1): From your starting position, contract your abdominal and core muscles to stabilize your spine and slowly extend one hip (raise one leg) a few inches off the floor keeping your leg extended, ankle plantarflexed (toes pointing away from your shins) and avoiding any rotation in your leg. Maintain your head and torso position, avoiding any arching in your back or raising of your head. Hold this position briefly before returning to your starting position.

Exercise Variation(2): From your starting position, contract your abdominal/core muscles to stabilize your spine and slowly extend one hip (raise one leg) a few inches off the floor while simultaneously raising the opposite arm a few inches off the floor. Keep both your leg and arm extended and avoiding any rotation in each. Maintain your head and torso position, avoiding any arching in your back or raising of your head. Hold this position briefly before returning to your starting position



Side Lying Hip Abduction

Perform 12-20 repetitions with each leg, rest for 45-60 seconds; repeat 1-2 more times for a total of 2-3 sets

Step 1: Starting Position: Lie on your side on a mat/floor with your legs extended straight away from your body. Hold your feet together in neutral position (at 90 degrees to your shinbone) and your lower arm bent and positioned under your head for support, while the upper arm rests upon your upper hip. Your hips and shoulder should be aligned vertically to the floor. Your head should be aligned with your spine.

Step 2: Upward Phase: Exhale and gently raise the upper leg off the lower leg while keeping the knee extended and the foot in a neutral position (avoid flexion and extension). The hips should remain vertical to the floor and the knee of the raised leg should point straight away from you (do not rotate upward towards the ceiling or downward towards the floor). Continue raising the leg until the hips begin to tilt upwards or until your feel tension develop in your low back or oblique muscles.

Step 3: Downward Phase: Gently inhale and slowly return your raised leg to your starting position in a controlled manner. After completing your set, roll over and repeat with the opposite leg.



Side Lying Hip Adduction

Perform 12-20 repetitions with each leg, rest for 45-60 seconds; repeat 1-2 more times for a total of 2-3 sets

Step 1: Starting Position: Lie on your side on a mat/floor with your legs extended, feet together in neutral position pointing away from your body (at 90 degrees to your shinbone). Keep your lower arm bent and positioned under your head for support while the upper arm rests upon your upper hip. Your hips and shoulder should be aligned vertically to the floor. Your head should be aligned with your spine. Slowly flex (move forward) your lower leg until it lies in front of your upper leg. Rest both feet on the floor and keep both legs extended with feet in neutral position.

Step 2: Upward Phase: Exhale and gently raise the lower leg off the floor while keeping the knee extended and the foot in a neutral position. The hips should remain vertical to the floor (knee of the raised leg should not rotate upward towards the ceiling or downward towards the floor). Continue raising the leg until your hips begin to tilt sideways or until your feel tension develop in your low back or oblique muscles.

Step 3: Downward Phase: Gently inhale and slowly return the raised leg to your starting position in a controlled manner. After completing your set, roll over and repeat with the opposite leg.



Side Plank with Straight Leg

Hold position for 5-20 seconds, alternate sides; repeat 1-2 more times for a total of 2-3 sets

Step 1: Starting Position: Lie on your right side on an exercise mat with extended legs, placing your left leg directly over your right leg and stacking your feet one on top of the other. Place your right elbow directly

under your shoulder, align your head with your spine and keep your hips and right knee in contact with the exercise mat.

Step 2: Upward Phase: Exhale, gently contract your abdominal / core muscles to stiffen your spine and lift your hips and knees off the mat, keeping contact with the side of your right foot and keep head aligned with your spine. Keep your right elbow positioned directly under your shoulder.

Step 3: Lowering Phase: Inhale and gently return yourself to your starting position. Alternate sides and repeat.





Push-up

Perform 12-20 repetitions, rest for 45-60 seconds; repeat 1-2 more times for a total of 2-3 sets

Step 1: Starting Position: Kneel on an exercise mat or floor and bring your feet together behind you.

Step 2: Slowly bend forward to place your palms flat on the mat, positioning your hands shoulder-width apart with your fingers facing forward or turned slightly inward. Slowly shift your weight forward until your shoulders are positioned directly over your hands. Reposition your hands as needed to allow full extension of your body without any bend at the hips or knees. Stiffen your torso by contracting your core/abdominal muscles ("bracing"), your glute and quadriceps muscles and align your head with your spine. Place your feet together with your ankles dorsiflexed (toes pointed towards your shins).

Step 3: Downward Phase: Slowly lower your body towards the floor while maintaining a rigid torso and head aligned with your spine. Do not allow your low back to sag or your hips to hike upwards during this downward phase. Continue to lower yourself until your chest or chin touch the mat/floor. Allow your elbows to flare outwards during the lowering phase.

Step 4: Upward Phase: Press upwards through your arms while maintaining a rigid torso and head aligned with your spine. For extra strength think about pushing the floor away from you. Do not allow your low back to sag or your hips to hike upwards. Continue pressing until the arms are fully extended at the elbows.

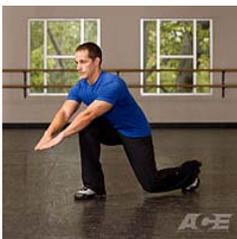
Step 5: An alternative position is to turn your hands to face forwards and keep your your elbows close to your sides during the downward phase. This shifts the emphasis from the chest muscles onto the triceps and may reduce stresses in the shoulder joint.



Forward Lunge with Arm Drivers

Perform 12-20 repetitions, rest for 45-60 seconds; repeat 1-2 more times for a total of 2-3 sets

Step 1: Starting Position: Stand with your feet together and your arms raised in front to shoulder height, with your elbows fully extended. Depress and retract your scapulae (pull your shoulders down and back) without arching your low back, and "brace" (engage your abdominal / core muscles) to stiffen your spine.



Step 2: In preparation to step forward, slowly lift one foot off the floor, stabilizing your body on the stance (supporting) leg. Avoid any sideways tilting or swaying in your upper body and try not to move the stance (supporting) foot. Hold this position momentarily before stepping forward. The raised (swing) leg should initiate contact with a heel strike first, slowly transferring your body weight into the leading (forward) foot placed firmly on the floor. As you load into this leg, avoid any sideways tilting or swaying in your upper body and try not to move the stance (supporting) foot.

Step 3: As you lunge forward, focus more on dropping your hips towards the floor rather than driving your hips forward. This will help control the amount of forward movement of your shinbone (forward tibial translation) over your foot. Continue lowering your body to a comfortable position or until your front thigh becomes parallel with the floor and your tibia (shinbone) is in a slight forward lean. While lunging, simultaneously, bend forward at your hips, maintaining a flat back and drive your extended arms towards the floor in front of you (hands should reach somewhere below your knees). This increases the load on your gluteal muscle group

Step 4: Firmly push off with your front leg, activating both your quads and glutes (thighs and butt muscles) to return to your upright, starting position.



Side Lunge

Perform 12-20 repetitions, rest for 45-60 seconds; repeat 1-2 more times for a total of 2-3 sets

Step 1: Starting Position: Stand with your feet parallel facing forward and hip-width apart. Position your hands where comfortable to help you maintain your balance during the exercise. Stiffen your torso by contracting your core and abdominal muscles ("bracing"). Keep your head facing slightly upwards and shift your weight onto your heels.



Step 2: Inhale and gently unload your right leg, slowly stepping to the right while keeping your weight over your heels and both feet facing forward. Once your right foot is firmly placed on the floor, bend at the hips, pushing them backwards while simultaneously shifting your weight towards the right foot. Continue shifting your weight over the right foot until your tibia (shinbone) is vertical to the floor and your right knee is aligned directly over the second toe of your right foot. Your left leg should be near, or at full extension at the knee

and your body weight should still be distributed into the right hip. The heels of both feet should stay flat on the floor. Keep your left foot flat on the floor as you allow your weight to shift into your right hip and alternate. Feel free to position your arms where necessary to help maintain your balance, reaching for your right foot with your left hand will emphasize hip flexion (alternate with the right hand reaching for the left foot).

Step 3: Exhale and push off firmly with your right leg, returning your body to your starting position. Repeat the movement for the opposite side.



Supine Reverse Crunches

Perform 6-12 repetitions, rest for 45-60 seconds; repeat 1-2 more times for a total of 2-3 sets. To increase the intensity of the exercise hold a small weight or medicine ball between the feet

Step 1: Starting Position: Lie in a supine (on your back) position on a mat with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor and arms spread out to your sides with your palms facing down. Gently exhale, stiffen your torso by contracting your abdominal/core muscles ("bracing") and slowly lift your feet off the floor, raising your knees directly above your hips while maintaining a 90 degree bend in the knees. Hold this position and breathe normally. Use your arms as a balance support.



Step 2: Upward Phase: Exhale, contract your abdominal, core and hip flexor muscles and slowly raise your hips off the mat, rolling your spine up as if trying to bring your knees towards your head (your hips and pelvis should move towards your rib cage). Avoid any change in the angle of your knees during the roll-up. Use your arms and hands to assist with maintaining your balance and continue to curl-up until your spine cannot roll any further. Hold this position briefly.

Step 3: Downward Phase: Gently inhale and lower your spine back towards the mat in a controlled fashion, moving your upper thighs backwards until they are positioned directly over your hips. Continue rolling out until your spine and pelvis (hips) contact the mat and your knees are positioned directly over the your hips with a 90 degree bend with your lower leg.



Bent-Knee Sit-up / Crunches

Perform 6-12 repetitions, rest for 45-60 seconds; repeat 1-2 more times for a total of 2-3 sets. To increase the intensity of the exercise extend the body's lever arm by extending both arms straight over the head.

Step 1: Starting Position: Lie in a supine (on your back) position on a mat with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor and heels 12 - 18" from your tailbone.

Step 2: Place your hands behind your head, squeezing your scapulae (shoulder blades) together and pulling your elbows back without arching your low back. This elbow position should be maintained throughout the exercise. Align your head with your spine, but allow it to move into slight flexion (moving the chin towards the chest) during the upward phase of the exercise.

Step 3: Upward Phase: Exhale, contract your abdominal and core muscles and flex your chin slightly towards your chest while slowly curling your torso towards your thighs. The movement should focus on pulling your rib cage towards your pelvis (the neck stays relaxed while the chin is tucked towards the neck). Your feet, tailbone and lower back should remain in contact with the mat at all times. Continue curling up until your upper back is lifted off the mat. Hold this position briefly.

Step 4: Downward Phase: Gently inhale and slowly uncurl (lower) your torso back towards the mat in a controlled fashion keeping your feet, tailbone and low back in contact with the mat.

Cool-down

Options: Walk-in place until your heart-rate drops down closer to a resting level. You may also practice some balancing poses and do a variety of stretches.



Cobra

Hold position for 20-30 seconds, return to a comfortable resting position; rest 30 seconds, repeat stretch 1-2 more times.



Downward-facing Dog

Hold position for 20-30 seconds, return to a comfortable resting position; rest 30 seconds, repeat stretch 1-2 more times.

Step 1: Starting Position: Kneel on an exercise mat or floor and bring your feet together behind you. Slowly bend forward to place your palms flat on the mat, positioning your hands shoulder-width apart with your fingers facing forward. Slowly lift yourself into a push-up position, shifting your hands until your shoulders are positioned directly over your hands. Reposition your feet as needed to allow full extension of your body. Stiffen your torso by contracting your core and abdominal muscles to prevent any arching in your low back or hiking of your hips towards the ceiling.

Step 2: Upward Phase: While maintaining a rigid torso and full extension in your arms and legs, slowly exhale and shift your weight backwards by pushing your hips backwards and upwards. Maintain your head alignment with your spine, but slowly move your head between your shoulders as your body moves backwards and attempt to push your heels towards the floor. Maintain the stiffness in your torso to prevent the tendency of your back to arch. Continue moving until your body forms an inverted-V, keeping both arms and legs extended and a neutral (flat) spine. Allow a slight bend in the knees if required to achieve the inverted-V position.

Step 3: Downward Phase: Inhale and return your body to the starting push-up position, maintaining the alignment of all your body segments.