

For many the bench press and traditional bicep curl are a strength and conditioning comfort blanket. They are one of the first exercises we master on our maiden voyage into the gym. Most people are terrified to put down the shiny dumbbells and get off the upholstered bench and dare not attempt to lift their own body weight in case they're judged or even worse unable to. Instead most cling to the equipment and find themselves in the middle of Groundhog Day following a repetitive weight training arrangement that's printed in most fitness magazines. Gym, schym! Getting fit doesn't have to be rocket science, and simple bodyweight exercises can be a great choice for achieving gains in strength, boosting, cardiovascular fitness and burning fat. Unless the intent is to look like Arnold circa 1977, the days of hours long weight training workouts are numbered. Your own body weight is all you need to firm up your entire frame. In fact, bodyweight training was named the number two fitness trend of 2017 by the American College of Sports Medicine (beat out only by wearable tech). As a result of bodyweight training's booming popularity, it's led many to ditch their gym memberships and question the necessity of tradition gyms. Can I just lunge and bound my way to better fitness? One might argue... Yes.

Ask someone why they don't work out? Chances are "no time or inconvenience" might be the culprits. Using your own bodyweight trumps dumbbells and barbells for convenience. With your own two hands and feet (and everything in between), you can accomplish a sweaty and effective full body workout anywhere, your living room, a hotel room, or outdoors in a minimal space. Since there is no equipment involved, bodyweight workouts make it easier to transition quickly from one exercise to the next and shorter rest times promote you to quickly boost your heart rate and in turn burn some serious fat and calories. You can do these moves indoors or outdoors, alone or with a group of friends. Think about adding some strength training moves to your next run or finishing a bike ride with a quick bodyweight circuit to keep things interesting.

It can be easy to get stuck in a workout run of treadmills, bicep curls, pec dec's and bench press. That's why bodyweight workouts can be so

refreshing. There are endless exercise variations that can spice up any fitness routine. Incorporating a variety of moves not only relieves boredom, it also helps to eliminate plateaus and promote further progress. Bodyweight training is especially effective for building muscle. Some would even argue that it's better than free weights and/or machines. Bodyweight moves do not beat up your joints the same way traditional weight training exercises do. They allow for a more natural range of motion and therefore improve overall fitness levels effectively. It's the ultimate form of functional fitness. Its athletic abilities can benefit you no matter what you are attempting in everyday life., whether you're chopping down a tree, lifting a suitcase over your head in an airplane, or playing with your kids at the playground.

Your core is more than just a six pack. In Fact, at least twenty-nine muscles make up the core of the body, and several simple bodyweight movements can be used to engage all of them.

Performing quick cardio sessions (60 seconds of high knees, jumping jacks or burpees) between strength movements (Lunges or pushups) will keep that heart pumping, improving aerobic fitness and muscular endurance. When you replace steady state cardio with **HIIT** (high intensity interval training) along with strength training in the right combination, you'll burn calories WHILE you train AND even AFTER you train. This is called post exercise oxygen consumption or AFTERBURN.

Bodyweight exercise are also incredibly easy to modify to any fitness level, whether you are a recovering couch potato or a world class athlete.

Fitness on the cheap. Gym memberships and boutique classes can quickly add up, but bodyweight training is free. For the most part you can bodyweight train anywhere, and it's quick and convenient if you're short on time. Working out when you want can often mean you are more likely to stick to an exercise routine. There is an endless amount of bodyweight work out ideas and apps on the internet. Here are some great free workout ideas for staying fit at home or on the go.

<https://greatist.com/fitness/no-gym-bodyweight-workout-infographic#1>

<https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/best-body-weight-exercise-apps-fitness-anywhere/>

<https://greatist.com/fitness/50-bodyweight-exercises-you-can-do-anywhere>

**Intensity = results.** And that's when the REAL magic happens. Start giving yourself some fitness challenges and incorporate these moves into your workout routine.

- sit-ups
- pull-ups
- push-ups
- lunges
- squats
- burpees
- Heismans
- Plyo's
- tuck-jumps
- Jacks
- mountain climbers
- Spider Man's
- plank
- wall-sits
- chair pose
- limb-raises
- superman's
- tricep dips
- reverse fly
- bicycles

How do you know how many repetitions you should do? Do what feels right and always focus on form, while listening to your muscles for feedback. Usually 12–20 is a good number of reps to aim for, but it depends on your abilities and level of fitness.

Simply put, as with most things in life, balance is crucial. Obviously, any workout is better than nothing. And mixing it up is important. When it comes to being fit, sometimes the best thing you can do is set down the heavy iron and go for all-out, bare-bones bodyweight workout. And when it comes to strength training, bodyweight exercises are the safest, most convenient and least expensive workouts to do. Not only do they use your own bodyweight to work out, they build muscle that burns fat long after your workout is done.

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