

[IMAGE]

Get a Great Workout Without Lifting a Finger

By Editorial Staff

Who says it takes all kinds of effort to stay in shape? Sometimes the best exercises are so simple they don't even require you to lift a finger. Actually, we're talking about great *lower-body* exercises that tone, tighten and keep your hips, glutes, hamstrings and calves looking great using only your body weight (no fingers / hands required) as resistance. Here are a few fundamental ones that should definitely be a part of your workout routine:

Squats: The squat is one of the most basic exercises, but it's also one of the best for your lower body. Stand with your back straight and your feet approximately shoulder-width apart, toes turned in slightly. With hands on hips, slowly bend at the knees and lower your body toward the floor, contracting your buttocks as you do so. Do anywhere from 10-20 repetitions and repeat for 2-3 sets. Make sure you do not overflex the knees (go too low) and ensure your back stays straight (not rounded) throughout.

Lunges: Standing straight with your feet shoulder-width apart and hands at your sides, step forward on one leg, bending at the knee to approximately a 90 degree angle (lower leg should be perpendicular to upper leg). Return to the starting position and repeat for 10-15 repetitions, 2-3 sets. You can either do all repetitions on one leg and then switch sides, or alternate one repetition per side / leg.

Jumps: Plyometric exercises involve quick bursts of explosive power. Jumps are one example of a plyometric exercise, and you might expect, they're easy to do. With feet shoulder-width apart, hands at sides, back straight, lower into a squat position and then power up immediately, using arm swing to help maintain balance and increase the height of your jump. Jumps can be performed from ground to air or from the ground to a stable surface, such as a metal box or wall. Build to 10-20 repetitions, 2-3 sets.

These are just three of the many exercises you can perform to get your lower body in great shape using only your body weight. Your doctor of chiropractic can suggest a complete exercise routine suitable to your fitness goals and health needs.

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