

[IMAGE]

Take the Burpee Challenge

By Editorial Staff

A burpee is a multi-step exercise that essentially combines a squat and push-up, working muscles in the upper and lower body simultaneously. What's more, because the exercise involves multiple movements and is repeated, it provides a cardiovascular workout that can't be beat. Totally confused? Read on and then try one for yourself...

How to Do It

1. Stand with feet shoulder width apart, arms by sides.
2. Bend knees as you squat; avoid rounding your back.
3. Push out your legs behind you and drop hands to the floor, assuming push-up position.
4. Do push-up and as you complete the repetition, pull your legs in toward your chest.
5. Using your hands to assist if needed, return from squat position by jumping up off the floor.

Some people like to do each burpee deliberately, moving from one position to the next; others prefer to combine steps into essentially one free-flowing movement: stand, drop, push, jump. Experiment and see what works best for you. (You'll probably choose the latter strategy as you become more comfortable with the movement.) The keys are to keep your core tight and focus on the movement; you don't want to put your back at risk or lose your balance.

The Challenge

exercise - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *Beginner:* For beginners, the challenge is simple: Do a burpee! Once you can do one, do another. Try doing one on day 1 and one additional repetition each day moving forward. See how many repetitions you can build to – either during the day or consecutively. After one month, you may only be able to do 5-10 at once (or even cumulatively), but you'll feel more confident – and you'll definitely be in better shape!

Intermediate: If you've done burpees before or if you tolerate the movement well, start out with five reps on day one (consecutively) and add an additional rep every day. Unlike the beginner program, do these reps

consecutively, not over the course of the entire day. See how many you can do by the one-month mark. If you complete the challenge, you should be doing at least 35 without stopping by day 30.

Advanced: Done some cross-fit training before? Think you can handle burpees, no sweat? For advanced exercisers, the burpee challenge starts at as many reps as you can do consecutively (let's say 10 to start) and progresses daily for 30 days. You can do the reps consecutively or cumulatively during the day. Here's the catch: For the advanced program, add 2-5 reps per day – *every day* – for the entire month. That means if you start with 10 reps, by day 30, you'll be doing upwards of 100 reps (consecutive or cumulative)!

Before Starting

As with any new exercise program, talk to your health care provider first, particularly if you have a pre-existing health condition that makes impact exercises inadvisable. The burpee isn't for everyone, but if you can do it, go for it. You'll be challenged every day – and rewarded with a stronger, tighter you!

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