

# Strong At Home



# **Strong At Home:**

**A 6-Week Program For Beginners To Build  
Strength With No Equipment**

**by Ryan Hoover, NASM-CPT**

**NOTICE:**

The information presented is not intended for the treatment or prevention of disease, nor is it a substitute for medical treatment, nor as an alternative to medical advice.

This publication is presented for information purposes, to increase the public knowledge of developments in the field of strength and conditioning. The program outlined herein should not be adopted without a consultation with your health professional.

Use of the information provided is at the sole choice and risk of the reader. You must get your physician's approval before beginning this or any other exercise or nutrition program. This information is not a prescription. Consult your doctor, nutritionist or dietician for further information.

## Introduction

Hello, thank you for investing your time and energy to check out this program! I hope that you come to enjoy these exercises as much as I do.

You should take a moment to congratulate yourself right now, as most people don't even really try to make positive changes in their life. They might think about it, maybe do a little research on the internet, but they keep putting off taking action until next week, next month, or worst of all, next New Year!

It's so much easier to just keep doing what we've been doing, even if we know the long-term effects are bad. It's human nature to want to take the easy path. Unfortunately that path leads to being overweight and weak, popping pills for various ailments and probably dying far too young. Or going into a nursing home for something simple like a broken hip and never coming back out, as your life savings go to the nursing home! Don't let that be you. As for me, I want to spend my golden years being physically active, still doing whatever I want – traveling, hiking, and playing with my grandkids.

We can stay relatively strong and youthful as we age. We just have to invest some time and effort into **resistance training**. Resistance training is any time you are using your muscles to move something that is difficult (heavy) enough that you can't do it for very long. This applies whether the resistance is weights or your own body. So doing a set of pushups qualifies, unless you're a pushup master who can easily knock out 100. Walking or jogging are not resistance training, since the limiting factor is your lungs, not your leg muscles.

Why should we care? Because resistance training is truly the closest thing we have to a fountain of youth! No drug or surgery even comes close. Here are just a few of the many benefits:

- Increased strength (duh)
- Increased metabolism (through maintenance of muscle)
- Lower body fat (boo, fat!)
- Increased bone density (especially important for women)
- Increased balance & coordination (especially important as we age)
- Increased mental function (who couldn't use that?)

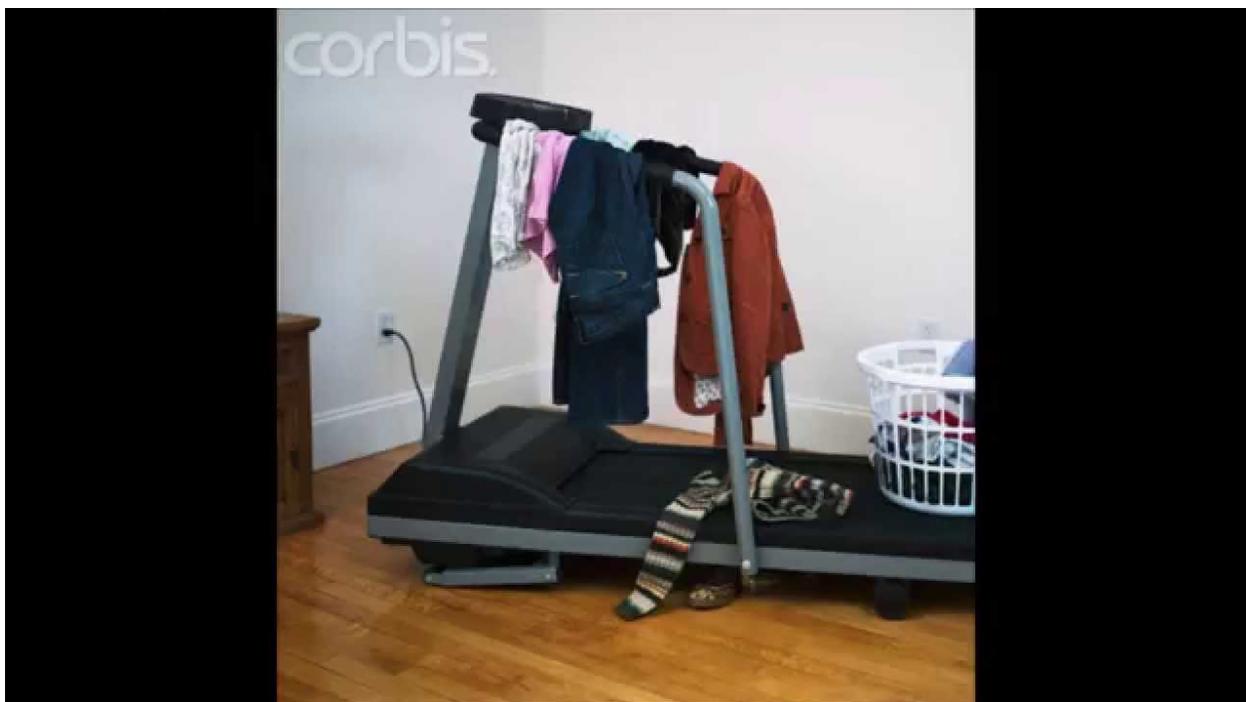
Imagine yourself stronger, leaner, more confident in your body's ability to do everything that you want it to do. That confidence carries over into every area of your life, by the way. People think exercise is just about aesthetics (how you look) but that is only the surface level; there is so much more to it than that.

Who am I, and how do I know so much about exercise? I've been working out at home for over 10 years, mainly because I didn't like going to the gym. It felt intimidating. Whenever I went I felt like a scrawny weakling compared to some of the huge bros at the weight racks.

So I worked out at home, mostly using nothing but my body weight. I made a lot of mistakes; for years I didn't even look like I worked out. But I slowly learned, and improved. Eventually I came to love fitness so much that I became a personal trainer and nutrition coach.

Over the years I invested thousands of dollars into equipment (and twice as much into education), which I now use to train myself and my in-person clients. However I know most people don't want to buy a lot of equipment that just takes up space in their home. Trust me, my poor wife has put up with living in a half-house, half-gym for years!

You know how it usually goes when you buy workout equipment; you're motivated at first and use it religiously for a week or two. Then you start getting bored, miss a workout here and there, and soon you have a big, expensive clothes hanger taking up valuable square footage in your house.



How do we solve this problem? Learn to use our own body to get stronger, that way we can work out wherever and whenever we want. There is no gym to go to, and no equipment to buy.

(Not that I'm against people buying equipment; on the contrary, there are a few key items that I think should be in every household: at the least, a set of resistance bands and a Swiss ball. But we still need to have a good understanding of how to use our body as resistance. That way you can always keep training and making progress, even if you have no equipment, are traveling, or only have a few minutes to exercise at work on your lunch hour, for example.)

Resistance training using just your body is usually called **bodyweight training**, or **calisthenics**.

But why spend time learning to do this? Why not just go to the closest gym? There are many advantages to bodyweight training:

1. No/little equipment needed – can start training **today!**
2. Can be done anywhere – home, office, park, hotel room, etc.
3. Time-efficient – no equipment to set up or take down
4. Time-scalable - whether you have a whole hour to train or just 5-10 minutes, it can be done, since you don't have to drive anywhere and there is no equipment to set up
5. Effort-scalable – whether you are a complete beginner who has never worked out before, or a calisthenics veteran who is insanely strong, there are exercises for all levels, no weights needed
6. Balance – bodyweight exercises are great at building balance. Since there are no weights, you will start out on both feet, pushing your weight in various directions. Once that gets easy you'll start working on one foot at a time, building excellent balance
7. Coordination – like balance, since you are not using weights you'll have to get in all kinds of creative positions to push/pull your body weight, both with your feet and hands (and eventually one foot/hand at a time). This makes you far more coordinated and better at moving your body than the typical gym rat
8. Movement Variability – our bodies are made to move in every direction. Not just body/limbs moving forwards & backwards but laterally, rotationally, all different combinations of the above, etc. If we just move in the same direction all the time (think walking, running, or riding a bike) we don't get our muscles, joints or brains used to all the other ways our body can move, often leading to injury. Again, body weight resistance training forces you to move in many different directions, which builds various muscles (not just the ones that most people train, like chest and biceps), lubricates all the joints and builds a better mind/body connection
9. Less boring – Many people find bodyweight resistance training more interesting than weights. With weights you do the same movements forever; you just keep adding more weight. But when using just your body you constantly have to learn and master new movements to keep it challenging.

I always try to be fair, and realistic; there are pros and cons to everything, including calisthenics. So we'll list the negatives of bodyweight training too:

1. Learning curve – this is the counterpoint to the “Less Boring” section above. There is definitely more to learn with bodyweight training. Since we can't just keep adding more weight to make exercises harder, we have to be more creative and find entirely new movements to do. In the example of a pushup, once you can easily do sets of 25-30 if you want to keep building strength we have to use different types of pushups; doing more than 30 is building muscular endurance, not strength. So first we start doing them on a decline (put your feet on a chair) to shift more weight to your hands. When that gets easy we start shifting more of our weight onto one hand. So with this style of training there is always more to learn, which some people don't like. Some prefer to just mindlessly slog through their workout. That won't work here
2. Maximum leg strength – while bodyweight training can build plenty of leg strength for most people's needs, for truly maximum strength in your lower body you need weights. The biggest, strongest muscles in your body are in your hips and legs, and with some training they are

capable of lifting hundreds of pounds (while lifting your body at the same time). Look at powerlifters, or Olympic weight lifters, who put twice their bodyweight on a bar and lift it over their head! However I would point out that while bodyweight training is not as good for maximum strength, it does build more **athletic** legs, able to move quickly in every direction.

3. Pulling movements – Pushing movements are easy with bodyweight; there are various types of pushups and shoulder presses, depending on your current strength level. However finding ways to pull your bodyweight up against gravity are much harder; it takes a pullup bar to truly do it, and most people can't do pullups at first anyway. This is one of the main reasons I said earlier that everyone should have a few key pieces of equipment at home (resistance bands offer an easy, fairly cheap way to do pulling movements at home). This is important because we don't want to get strong on pushing movements and stay weak at pulling; that is an imbalance in your upper body that will eventually lead to injury. However this is a beginner program, meant to be short-term so we will assume you have no equipment at all, and we'll make do. For beginners a basic Row in a doorway works fine anyway, as you'll see
4. Lack of Community – many people enjoy the social aspect of going to the gym. They may have friends there, or at least casual acquaintances they enjoy talking to. You don't have this when training at home, of course. But remember you can always invite a friend or family member to train with you, if not in person then over the internet. Also there is a [Facebook Group](#) for students of this program to get together any time (virtually), ask questions and share their successes.

Overall, I **absolutely** believe that bodyweight resistance training is the most important type of exercise or activity you can do for your body. Is it all that you should do, ideally? No, of course not. You should also get in some general movement (light cardio) every day, you should stretch and do mobility work. You should even incorporate some work with weights if you have access to them, especially for the lower body. When you put all of this together, it forms an ideal fitness plan.

But guess what? Few people have time or energy to follow an ideal fitness plan for very long. No one I know lives in a perfect world. Life gets in the way. Maybe you work a lot of hours, or you're a stay-at-home parent who is lucky to get a half-hour per day to yourself. My point is this: no matter how busy life gets, you can do some squats in the kitchen while cooking dinner. You can do pushups while watching cartoons with your kids. Even if you're traveling, you can workout in your hotel room in the morning if you know what you're doing. With calisthenics you can keep getting stronger, no matter what life throws your way.

Hopefully by now you've learned a little about why training at home with no/minimal equipment can make lots of positive changes in your life. So how do we get started?

That's what this program is for. In the next section we'll go over 8 movements that can be performed by almost anyone, even complete beginners who have never worked out before. These movements will work all the big, major muscles in the body.

It should be noted that this program is just the beginning; it does not work **all** the movements or muscles of the human body. But for a beginning 6-week program it's tough to beat. Please feel free to

email me any time at [Ryan@FitnessWherever.com](mailto:Ryan@FitnessWherever.com) if you have any questions about these exercises, or wonder what to do next.

## The Exercises

There are 8 exercise movements that we'll go over in this program:

1. Beginner Squats
2. Beginner Shoulder Press
3. Beginner Doorway Pullup
4. Doorway Iso Side Push
5. Glute Bridge
6. Doorway Row
7. Elevated Pushup
8. Elevated Bodyweight Twist

Let's go over them in order. We'll show pictures and discuss proper form for each exercise below, but please **also make sure to watch the video** for each; the link to touch/click on is below the pictures for each exercise. Both reading/understanding this text and watching the videos are *vital* to getting all of the little nuances you need to learn; remember that when it comes to any kind of strength training, working hard isn't going to do you much good unless you're also working smart.

First, some general workout tips:

1. Safety – if you ever feel like you're going to fall over, or otherwise don't feel safe **stop working immediately** and sit down. Safety always comes first. Also remember that when doing this type of workout your muscles will definitely burn, your lungs might even burn but if you feel any pain in a joint (such as a knee, shoulder, hip, elbow or neck) something is wrong, **stop the movement immediately**. This usually means there is something wrong with your form while doing that movement, unless you have a pre-existing injury to that joint. Carefully review the instructions for that exercise and wait a day or two before trying it again. When you do, take a video of yourself doing just 1 or 2 repetitions of the exercise and try to spot what you're doing wrong. If you need help email me at [Ryan@FitnessWherever.com](mailto:Ryan@FitnessWherever.com)
2. Work out barefoot whenever possible. This helps to build small muscles in the ankles that we use to balance ourselves while standing and moving; most tennis shoes have big, thick soles that do too much of this for us, which is a bad idea in the long run; when we're older this is a factor in why we lose our balance, and then it takes a whole lot of work to get it back when we could have just maintained it by training barefoot in the first place
3. Make sure you are properly hydrated before exercising. Most people don't drink enough water, which is bad for health in general but especially affects our ability to exercise. All the trillions of cells in your body are made up of at least half water, thus being dehydrated affects every part of your body, including your muscles, heart and lungs. Aim to drink one-third of your bodyweight in ounces of pure water every day; so if I weigh 175 pounds, over the course of each day I want to drink approximately 58 ounces of water. This is on top of any other liquids you might drink, such as tea or coffee. And of course, minimize unhealthy drinks such as soda and alcohol

4. Breathing – we'll discuss this more specifically under each exercise, but remember that breathing is what powers all movement of your body. So you need to try to control your breath while you exercise; if you don't, you will breathe too fast and too shallow (just using the top of the lungs) and you will tire out much faster. Generally when resistance training we'll breathe out during the **positive**, or hardest phase of a movement (imagine a pushup, you exhale while you push yourself away from the floor). Then you inhale during the **negative**, easier part of the movement (in the pushup, while lowering yourself back down to the floor). If you continue focusing on your breathing while working out this will improve, along with everything else
5. Time – You'll notice I suggest increments of time to perform exercises for (example: 30 seconds), whereas most workout programs want you to count repetitions (example: 12 reps). I want you to focus on your form and making sure you're performing the exercise correctly; spending any of your attention on counting reps makes no sense to me. There are many free timer apps you can download on your phone. Once you've done that I suggest making pre-set timers for every 5-second increment from 15 seconds all the way up to 1 minute (1 minute straight is actually a long time to do any type of resistance exercise before taking a break, if you can do it with perfect form for a whole minute that usually means the movement is too easy for you)
6. Muscle vs. Momentum – Whenever you move fast, you are letting momentum do most of the work. This is a good thing once you're more advanced; athletes have to practice fast, as sports (and real life) happen fast. However the down side is that you never get as strong; we want our muscles controlling every inch of every movement. This is especially important when you are first learning any movement or exercise; you must master it at slow speed before you try it fast, otherwise injury is *far* more likely. This program is meant for beginners, so we will take 2 seconds for the positive part of each movement, and 3 seconds for the negative part.

# Beginner Squats



Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/503110039/3dd45c8875>

1. We will be doing squats with our back to a solid wall or door; a door is usually better because you're less likely to damage the paint or wall finish
2. We want something soft between our back and the door. Ideally it would be a Swiss ball or a foam roller, but if you don't have either of those a big pillow or couch cushion will do, as shown at the end of the video

3. Suck in your belly button 1-2 inches toward your spine. Keep it there throughout movement as much as possible (will move slightly, even just from breathing)
4. When ready, bend at the hips and knees and sit back, as if sitting in a chair. Don't just fall, try to control your descent
5. Try to spread knees apart as you descend
6. Lower your hips as far as you can comfortably go, ideally at least to where your thighs are parallel with the floor. This descent should take 3 seconds
7. Now to raise yourself back to standing. First squeeze your Glutes (butt muscles) as if you're trying not to go to the bathroom
8. Push the ground away with your feet. Try to feel the whole foot – your heels, big toe and smallest toe especially, forming a triangle – and push through all three corners, gripping the ground with your toes
9. Pushing yourself back to standing should take 2 seconds. Remember we want to control every inch of the movement
10. Try to stay as erect with your upper body as possible throughout movement; stick your chest out and look up at the top of the wall on the other side of the room
11. Inhale through your nose as you descend, exhale through your nose if you can (or through your mouth if not) as you push back to standing
12. Repeat for desired time
13. This exercise works all the major muscles in the lower body: the Quadriceps, Hamstrings and calf muscles of your legs, as well as the Glutes and hip flexors in the hips. Functionally it's like getting up & down, something we all need to be good at if we want to live independently

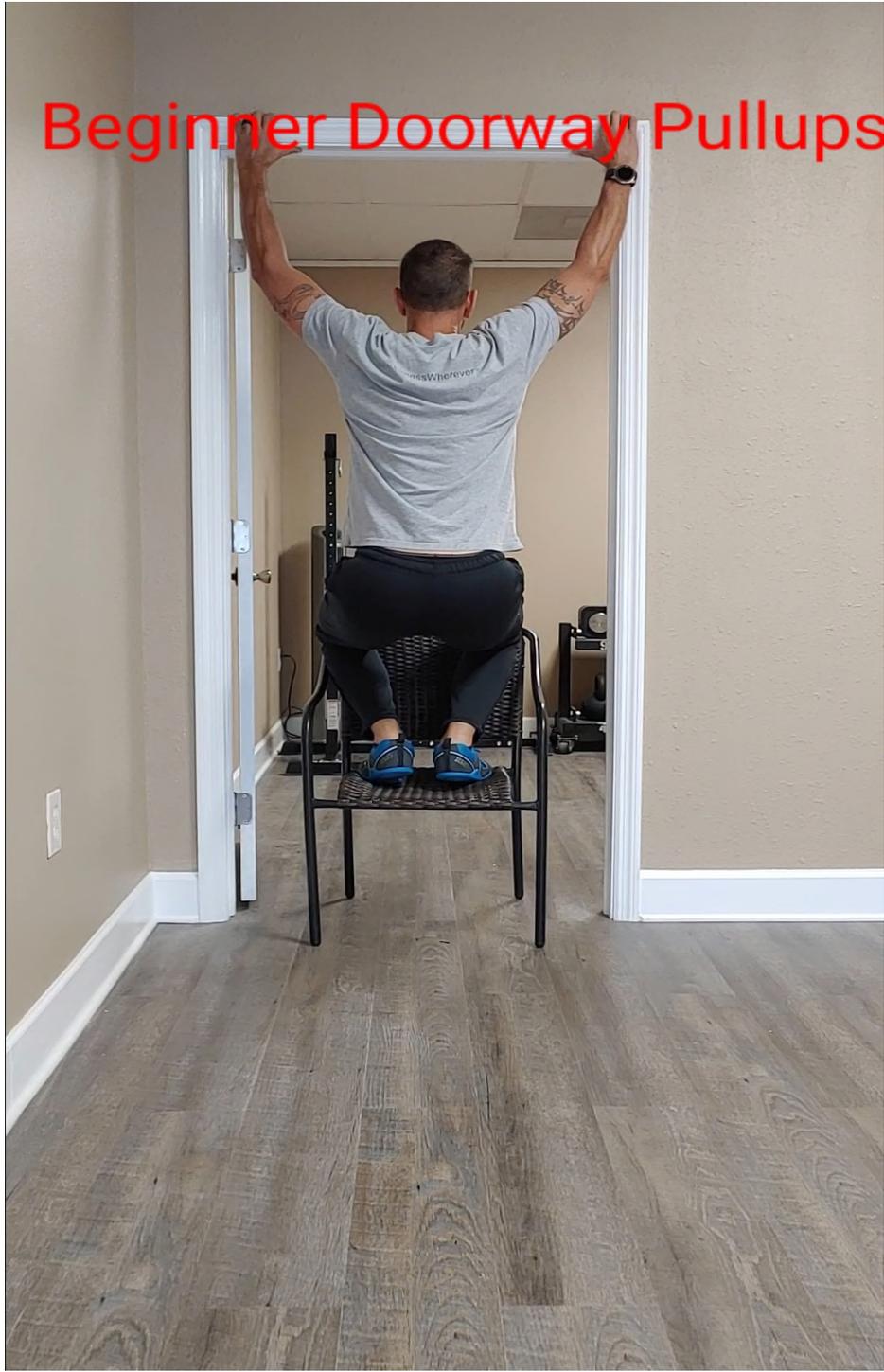


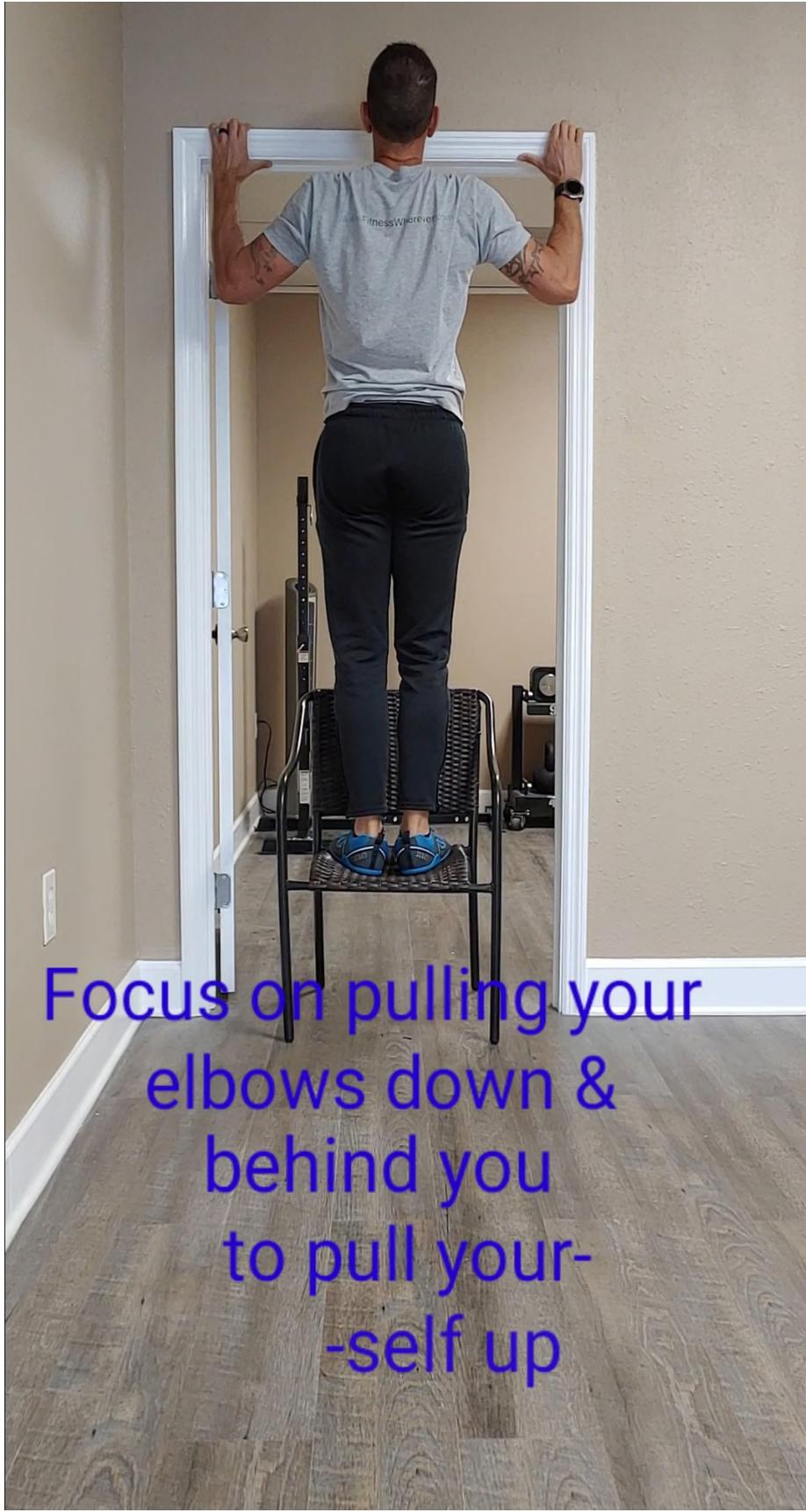
Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/504891537/84645461e3>

1. Stand facing a wall
2. Suck in your belly button 1-2 inches toward your spine. Keep it there throughout movement as much as possible (will move slightly, even just from breathing)
3. Bend at the hips (NOT the lower back – no rounding) touching the wall with your palms, going down until your upper body is about parallel with the floor
4. From here bend at the shoulders and elbows, slowly and *carefully* lowering your head toward the wall. Pause when you feel your hair at the crown of your head touch the wall. This part of the movement should take 2-3 seconds
5. Push against the wall, straightening your elbows and shoulders until you're back to the beginning position. This should take 1-2 seconds
6. Inhale through your nose as you lower your head toward the wall, exhale through your nose if you can (or through your mouth if not) as you push away from the wall
7. Repeat for desired time

8. This exercise mainly works the front and side Deltoids (shoulder muscles) and works the Triceps (back side of your upper arms) a little. Functionally it prepares you to lift something overhead, while also starting to build the mobility and flexibility to reach all the way overhead without needing to arch your lower back

# Beginner Doorway Pullups





Focus on pulling your  
elbows down &  
behind you  
to pull your-  
self up

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/504900021/0f12140fde>

1. You'll need some type of stool or chair for this exercise. The lower it is (closer to the ground) the harder the exercise will be
2. Stand on top of the stool/chair in a doorway; must have door jamb (trim around door) as shown in video. Of course, you need enough room for head clearance so if you're in a room with a low ceiling you won't be able to do this exercise, find a room with a higher ceiling
3. Place fingertips around top of doorjamb, slightly wider than your shoulders
4. Suck in your belly button 1-2 inches toward your spine. Keep it there throughout movement as much as possible (will move slightly, even just from breathing)
5. Lower your body until your elbows and shoulders are straight
6. Pull yourself up, trying as much as possible to use your upper body; focus on pulling your elbows downward and behind your back. This will help you to use your back muscles, instead of trying to do it all with your arms
7. Use your legs to assist as much as you need to, but not more than needed; again, we're trying to do most of the work with our upper body
8. Raising yourself to the top should take 2 seconds
9. Pause at the top, then lower yourself under control by reversing the movement; first start straightening your shoulders, then your elbows. Control the descent, it should take 3 seconds. Use your legs to assist, but only as much as needed, no more
10. Inhale through your nose while lowering yourself down, exhale through your nose if you can (through your mouth if not) as you pull yourself up
11. This exercise mainly works the Latissimus Dorsi, or Lats (big back muscles that pull your upper arm down and back) as well as part of the Triceps, the rear Deltoids (shoulders) and the Brachialis. Functionally it prepares you to pull something down to you from overhead, or pull yourself up (into a tree, for example). The great thing about practicing these is it allows you to work your Lats in almost the full range of motion, which is important for strength



Doorway Iso  
Side Push

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/504908840/a045041a1c>

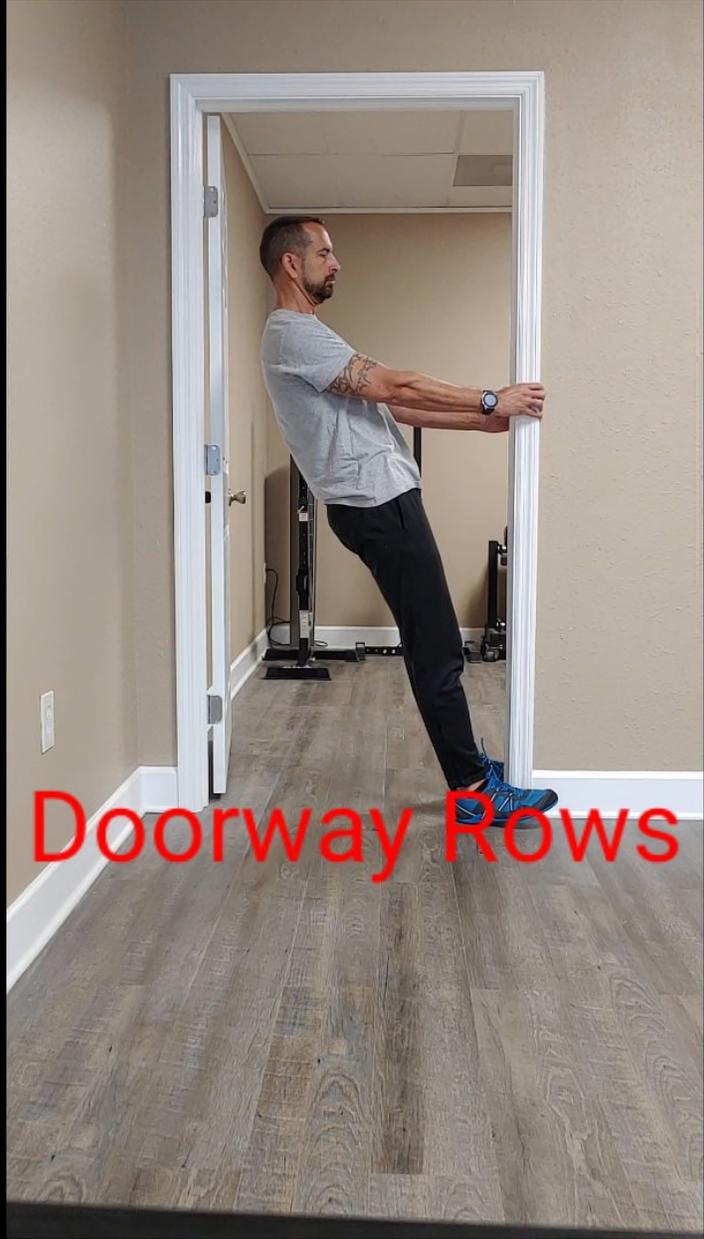
1. This is an Isometric exercise, meaning you're tensing your muscles (hard) but not moving
2. Stand in a doorway, facing the door jamb or side of the door
3. Place your left hand on the door jamb. Ideally there is space for your whole palm to fit, not just the fingertips
4. Suck in your belly button 1-2 inches toward your spine. Keep it there throughout exercise as much as possible
5. Now push against the door frame/wall *hard*. You'll notice that your core contracts to keep your body from rotating to the left
6. Keep pushing hard for 5 seconds; once you've been doing this exercise for awhile you can increase to 7-8 seconds. We don't want to try to go longer than that because we're trying to target the fast-twitch (strongest) muscle fibers in our core
7. Rest for a few seconds, then repeat on the right side
8. This exercise works all of the core, but especially the Obliques (sides), the Transverse Abdominis (deep core muscle that stabilizes the pelvis) and the Rectus Abdominis (6-pack muscles). It also works the whole chest, shoulder and arm to a degree. Functionally this exercise trains anti-rotation, a very important action that is often neglected in workout programs. Anti-rotation is what helps you maintain good posture when you do something on just one side of your body



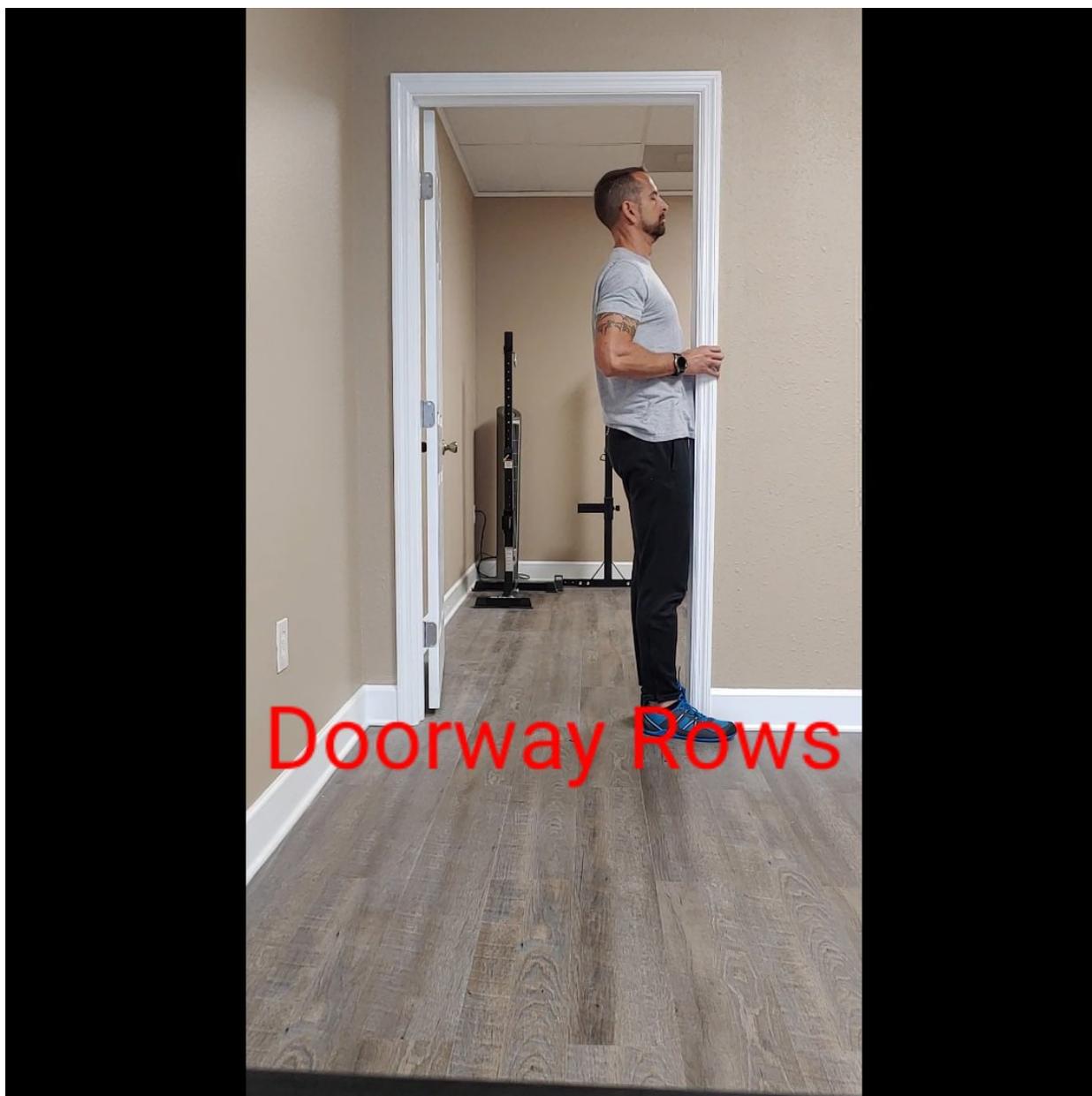
Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/504918050/f0c2c1fb0a>

1. Lay on your back on the floor, ideally where there is carpet or a little bit of padding. Doing these on a wood or tile floor would be uncomfortable, especially for your lower back and head
2. Bring your heels closer to your butt, raising your knees. Heels should be close enough that you can just barely touch them with your fingertips

3. Feet are hip-width apart, toes pointing outward slightly
4. (Gently) push your lower back into the ground. This turns on your abs, and also helps you to hinge at the hips while we do this exercise, instead of the lumbar spine (lower back)
5. Push through your feet, especially the heels, raising your hips off the ground
6. Focus on extending the hips (again, NOT the lower back) at the top of the movement, squeezing the Glutes as if you're trying not to go to the bathroom
7. The movement upward should take 2 seconds
8. Pause, then reverse movement to lower your hips back down: first bend at the hips, then lower to the ground under control. This should take 3 seconds
9. Inhale through your nose as you lower yourself down, exhale through your nose if you can (or through your mouth if not) as you push your hips up
10. Repeat for desired time
11. This exercise works the Glutes (the big butt muscles, that extend the hips), the Hamstrings, and the calf muscles. The Glutes especially are often weak due to our modern lives of sitting way too much. Functionally, strong Glutes and Hamstrings help with walking, running, jumping, and even carrying heavy things with your upper body, as the lower body is the foundation, your connection to the ground. You know what happens to buildings with a weak foundation? They fall



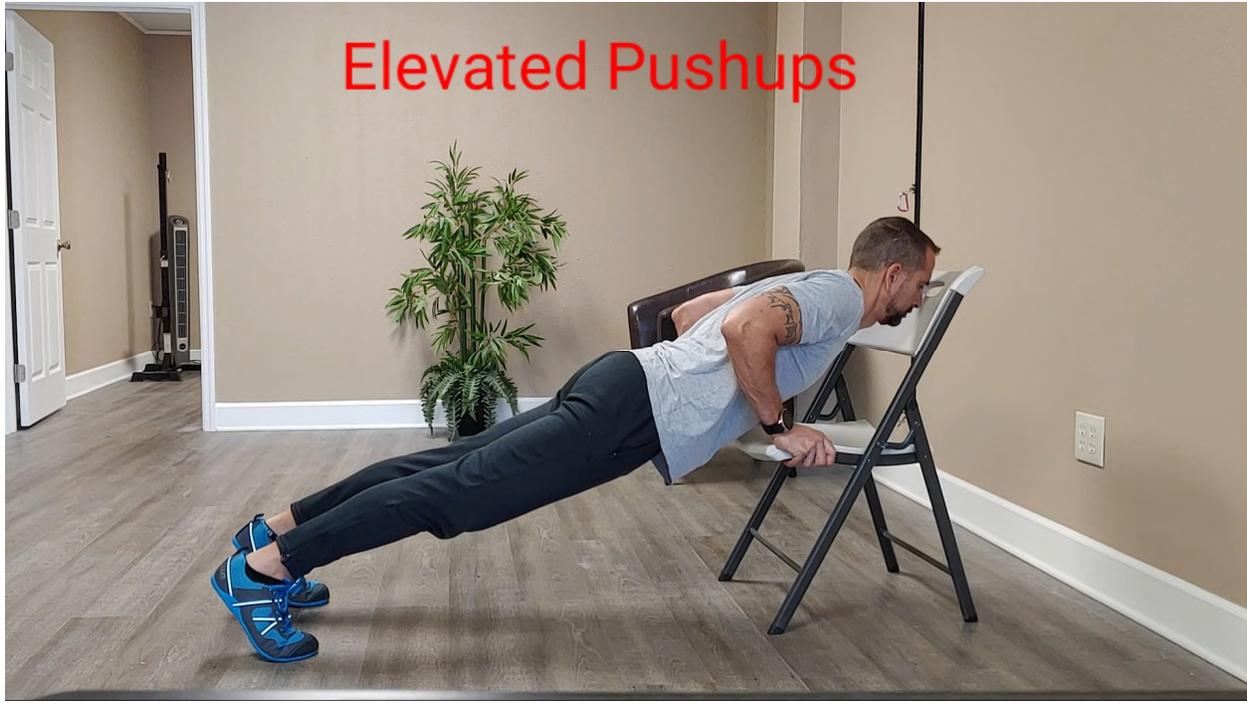
Doorway Rows



Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/505027296/afb627b26e>

1. Stand in a doorway; must have door jamb (trim around door) as shown in video
2. Stand close to one side of door. Toes should be past the door jamb
3. Put fingertips around door jamb at lower chest level, about the height of your bottom ribs
4. Suck in your belly button 1-2 inches toward your spine. Keep it there throughout movement as much as possible (will move slightly, even just from breathing)
5. Lower your body backwards, rising up onto your heels. Control every inch of the movement. This lowering should take 3 seconds
6. Keep shoulders down the whole time; do not allow them to shrug upwards (towards your ears)

7. When your arms are straight, pause and reverse the movement by focusing on pulling your elbows backwards. This helps you to use your back muscles, not try to do it all with your arms. This part of the movement should take 2 seconds
8. Keep your whole body straight as a board throughout movement. Do this by keeping your Glutes tight, as if you're trying not to go to the bathroom
9. Inhale through your nose as you lower yourself backwards, exhale through your nose if you can (through your mouth if not) as you pull yourself back toward the door jamb
10. Repeat for desired time
11. This exercise mainly works the Lats, the rear Deltoids, the Biceps and even part of the Triceps. However most importantly, it works all the muscles in between your shoulder blades to pull them together (very important for posture and balance around the shoulder joint, and to counteract our modern lifestyle of sitting, typing and holding phones). Functionally, helps you to pull things closer to you, open heavy doors, and carry grocery bags. Both this and the Doorway Pullups are important for different reasons, however if you can't do the Doorway Pullups or are short on time, at least do the Doorway Rows, they are arguably the most important upper-body exercise you can do



Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/504982667/6a52e53b0a>

1. We are going to do pushups but on an elevated surface, such as a sturdy table. This allows us to push less of our body weight than doing them from the floor, while still getting the core strength benefits of pushups (which you don't get by doing pushups on your knees)
2. Stand facing a sturdy table or chair, ideally the height will be a few inches below your hips in the beginning. (Later on when these become too easy look for a lower surface to use, like a chair)

3. Put your hands on the edge of the table, then scoot your feet back as far as they can go while keeping your body straight like a board all the way down
4. Keep your shoulders directly over your hands
5. Suck in your belly button 1-2 inches toward your spine. Keep it there throughout movement as much as possible (will move slightly, even just from breathing)
6. Bending your elbows and shoulders, lower yourself down until your chest touches the table, going up on your toes. Lowering should take 3 seconds
7. Pause, then push yourself back to standing, straightening your shoulders and elbows. Pushing yourself back to the beginning position should take 2 seconds
8. Keep body straight like a board throughout movement; do not let your hips sag down, or shoot your hips upwards. If you can do this you'll build a strong core and strong upper body at the same time
9. Inhale through your nose as you lower yourself down, exhale through your nose if you can (or through your mouth if not) as you push yourself back up
10. Repeat for desired time
11. This exercise mainly works the Pectoral (chest) muscles, but also the Deltoids and Triceps. It also works core stabilization from the front when performed correctly. Functionally, it helps you to push yourself up off the floor (duh) and push things away from you



Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/505240431/330877fe3b>

1. Like the pushup, we are going to work on an elevated surface, such as a sturdy table. This allows us to use less of our body weight than doing them from the floor, while still getting the core strength benefits we're looking for

2. Stand facing a sturdy table or chair, ideally the height will be a few inches below your hips in the beginning. (Later on when these become too easy look for a lower surface to use, like a chair, see video)
3. Put your hands on the edge of the table, then scoot your feet back as far as they can go while keeping your body straight like a board all the way down
4. Keep your shoulders directly over your hands
5. Suck in your belly button 1-2 inches toward your spine. Keep it there throughout movement as much as possible (will move slightly, even just from breathing)
6. Remove your right hand from the table and pivot your whole body backwards, turning your feet and hips as you go. Stretch your arm out and keep your eyes on your outstretched hand
7. Pause when your arm & body are pointing straight backwards, then reverse movement, controlling every inch
8. Twisting backwards should take 2 seconds, then returning to start should take another 2 seconds
9. Try to feel this in your core throughout the whole movement. When done correctly it should feel like your core is controlling the whole thing
10. Repeat for desired time, then perform on the other side
11. This exercise works all of the core muscles but especially the Obliques, Transverse Abdominis and Rectus Abdominis. Functionally we are training rotation, a key action that is often left out of workout programs. If we don't train it we are asking for injury when we do need to rotate, such as to pick up a baby out of a car seat or to lift carry-on luggage and put it in the overhead compartment. And pretty much every sport relies on rotational movements, such as hitting a tennis ball, kicking a soccer ball or throwing a punch or kick

## The Program

Now we'll discuss the workout program specifics, such as when to do the workouts, for how long, how often, etc. We can remember the basic variables with the acronym **F.I.T. = Frequency, Intensity & Time.**

First let's discuss **Frequency**: how many times per week to work out.

In the Beginning phase (first 2 weeks) we'll do all 8 of these movements 5 days per week, preferably twice per day. However we won't do them for long at all, each workout should only take 5-10 minutes (we'll discuss this further when we talk about Intensity).

In the Work phase (next 4 weeks) we'll work out three times per week on non-consecutive days, such as Monday-Wednesday-Friday or Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday, whichever works best for your schedule. There will be an A workout consisting of exercises 1-4, and a B workout with exercises 5-8. We'll alternate them: first week you would do the A workout on Monday, the B workout on Wednesday, then the A workout again on Friday. Next week it would switch and you would do the B workout on Monday and Friday, the A workout on Wednesday. Then we switch back & forth every week. This makes sure we are performing the movements an equal amount, while giving your muscles, joints and connective tissues some rest before doing the same exercises again.

Also, on your non-training days try to be a little more active! Whatever you enjoy: walking, riding a bike, swimming, maybe some gentle yoga. Basically the more you move, the healthier you will be. Go with however you feel (which is usually based on the quality of your sleep and nutrition, and your stress level); if you feel great then do more, if you feel run-down then do less. But try to move every day, even on rest days we need to walk a little, just to increase circulation. Our bodies are always adapting to what we do (or don't do) every second of every day. If we do nothing and sit on our butts all the time, our body adapts by losing muscle, gaining fat, weaker bones, lower mental and immune system function. I don't know anyone who wants any of these things!

Now let's talk about **Intensity**: how hard to work, which we're measuring in this program by how long you perform each exercise for.

In the beginning phase we want to do all of the movements almost every day (5-6 days per week, take 1-2 days off) twice per day, but only for 10-15 seconds each (which should equal 2-3 repetitions of each movement). If 15 seconds/3 reps is at all challenging for you, meaning you would rate the difficulty more than 4-5 on a scale of 10, then lower it to 8-10 seconds for this phase. For the Doorway Iso Side Push, we'll only do 2-3 seconds per side for this phase.

In the beginning we're just trying to learn and perfect the form for each movement, we aren't trying to work hard. Learning a new skill is on the opposite side of the spectrum from working hard, just think back to when you first learned to drive a car. At first you had to concentrate on every little detail. Now you do it automatically, without even thinking about it. On the other hand, if you were forced to drive for 4 hours straight the very first time you sat behind a steering wheel, you probably would be so freaked out you wouldn't learn anything, assuming you didn't get in an accident.

The Beginner phase also acts like a break-in period, giving your body some time to adjust before we increase the intensity.

In the Work phase we will start at 3 sets of each exercise for 30 seconds per set, with a 45 second rest between sets. This means we'll work out for about 35 minutes per session. Then we'll increase this time by 5 seconds per week on each movement. (Except for the Doorway Iso Side Push, where we will do 5 seconds per side at first and increase to 7-8 seconds per side as the weeks go on. If you can hold an isometric contraction for longer than that, you aren't pushing hard enough).

**Time** we've already discussed; for each repetition of each exercise, you'll do a 2-second positive (the push part of a pushup, the pull part of a doorway row or the upward push of a squat) and a 3-second negative. Only differences are the Iso Doorway Push (seconds per side) and the Elevated Bodyweight Twist (2 second positive and 2 second negative).

---

**Beginner  
Phase**  
(first 2  
weeks)

**Frequency:** Daily (2X per  
day, 5 days per week)

---

**Intensity:** 10-15 seconds  
per exercise

---

**Time:** 2-second positive, 3-  
second negative

---

---

**Work  
Phase  
(weeks  
3-6)**

**Frequency:** 3 times per week, alternating between Workout A (exercises 1-4) and Workout B (exercises 5-8)

---

**Intensity:** 3 sets of each exercise for 30 seconds (per side, if appropriate) with 45 seconds rest between sets. *Increase by 5 seconds every week*

---

**Time:** 2-second positive, 3-second negative

---

## Next Steps

After you've done the full 6-week program, there are lots of ways you can go to make progress.

If doing the exercises *with perfect form* for the prescribed amount of time is fairly easy (you feel like you could do them for at least another 10-15 seconds with no problem) then you can progress the exercises by:

- Increase Time – this is the easiest option, just do the same exercise for longer (again, assuming you can do it with perfect form). However there is a point of diminishing returns where you're training more for muscular endurance than for strength; generally 60 seconds, or 10 seconds for isometric exercises like the Doorway Iso Push
- Pauses – Incorporate pauses into each repetition. Start with a full 1-second pause at the top and bottom of your movements, then when that gets easy add a pause in the middle too
- Range of Motion – in case you weren't able to achieve full ROM in a movement (for example, during squats you can't get far down enough that your thighs are at least parallel with the floor) work toward achieving that full ROM before you seek ways to make it harder
- Body Angle – For the Elevated Pushups and Elevated Bodyweight Twists, use a lower surface, like a sturdy chair (and eventually, the floor). For Glute Bridges, do the opposite: put your feet up on a chair to make them harder
- Number of Limbs – For the Doorway Row, start trying to do all the work with one arm at a time (but still have the other hand holding the door frame too, just in case)
- Tension – Just because a movement isn't difficult for you doesn't mean you can't make it more difficult internally! Your muscular system is controlled by your nervous system (your brain and spinal cord). Tense your muscles as hard as possible while doing the movement. For example, if Squats are getting easy, start focusing on tensing your legs and hips the whole time, far more tense than is needed to move your body through the squat. I guarantee you'll tire out more quickly, and if you keep doing this you'll get stronger

Also please make sure to join the [Facebook Group](#) so that we can all ask questions and celebrate our wins together. Even if you enjoy working out alone, it always feels good to know there are other people facing the same challenges you're facing, and to talk to them whenever you like.

Soon we'll have a complete bodyweight & resistance band training program available in the Fitness Wherever app, detailing basic all the way up to advanced movements, with tons of ways to progress each, as well as tips on nutrition, recovery, flexibility and mobility. It will be a game changer for those wanting to work out from home with minimal equipment. So be on the lookout for that.

I'm always happy to help if you have questions about a specific exercise, please email me at [Ryan@FitnessWherever.com](mailto:Ryan@FitnessWherever.com)

## Conclusion

If you're currently either following the program or if you've completed the full 6 weeks, take a moment to congratulate yourself for sticking with it! It's tough to finish anything these days with all the constant distractions we have coming at us.

However, even if you've completed the 6-week program, your fitness journey is not over; it's just beginning. If you want to maintain (or hopefully increase) your strength, flexibility and mobility, you have to keep working at it, keep pushing yourself to improve. If we want strong bodies (and minds) for life, we have to keep pushing the limits of our strength (both physical and mental) for life.

So however you choose to do that, I hope you keep doing it. For yourself, so that you live a longer, healthier and happier life. For your family and friends, so that you're around longer and able to help others when needed. Even for society in general, because people that are strong physically are usually strong mentally too, and both make a more useful member of any community.

Whatever you do and however you do it, get strong and stay strong!

*Ryan*

## **About Me**

Ryan Hoover is a certified personal trainer and nutrition coach living in the Tampa Bay area of Florida. He is obsessed with helping clients move better and get stronger, so they can lead longer, healthier, happier lives. He does this through personal training and nutrition coaching, both in person and online.

To contact Ryan, please email him at [Ryan@FitnessWherever.com](mailto:Ryan@FitnessWherever.com) He is always happy to help!