

# What is Strength Training?



Strength training is any form of physical activity that requires your muscles to work against resistance.

Some examples include:

- Body weight exercises (e.g. squats, push-ups, pull-ups, curl-ups, planks)
- Weight lifting or resistance band exercises
- Carrying groceries, a backpack, or briefcase
- Chores that require lifting, pushing, or pulling
- Even going from sitting to standing is a form of strength training

## Health Benefits of Strength Training

Aerobic activities like walking, jogging and cycling strengthen your heart and lungs. So what does strengthening do? Strength training can help:<sup>2</sup>

### Build strength and muscle

After age 30, adults lose about 3 to 5 percent of strength and muscle mass per year. That might not seem like a lot, but it adds up over time. The good news: Strength training and a healthy diet can help slow the loss of muscle mass and strength as you age.

### Improve bone health

About 54 million adults in the U.S. have weak bones. It's a major risk factor for falls and fractures. But you can do something about it. Strength training makes your bones stronger by increasing bone density.<sup>3</sup>

### Avoid injuries

If you neglect to keep your bones strong and healthy, your risk for injuries goes up...a lot. Weak bones and muscles make you 2.3 times more likely to break a bone when you fall. Just two days of strength training a week can improve balance and flexibility to help prevent injuries.

### Support brain function

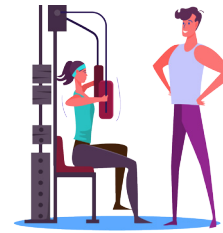
Feel stressed, anxious, depressed? These and other brain-related problems can make it hard for you to work, make good choices, and get things done. Medicine and counseling can help. But research shows resistance training can also improve brain function and mental health.<sup>4</sup>



5 benefits of strength training  
<https://tinyurl.com/ycc2debx>

Research shows strength training can also help control blood sugar, lower the risk for certain types of cancer, reduce the risk for a heart attack or stroke, and more.

## 4 Steps to Build Strong Bones and Muscles



Want to build strong bones and muscles, improve your mood, and live longer? Follow these three steps.

### 1. Choose exercises that work all the major muscle groups (chest, back, shoulders, arms, legs, core).

At home: Push-ups, planks, squats, lunges, curl-ups.

At the gym: Use the machines or free weights for exercises such as bench press, squat, deadlift, shoulder press, arm curls.

**2. Perform 2-3 sets** of 8 to 12 reps per exercise. Rest up to 1 minute between sets. For weights: Choose a weight you can handle for 8 to 12 reps. A good strength-training workout can be completed in 20-45 minutes.

**3. Use good form** for each exercise you do. This helps train your brain and muscles, and it helps prevent injuries. If you're not sure how to perform an exercise, ask a trainer or watch a workout video.

### 4. Make time for strength training at least two days a week.

You should also make time for 150 minutes of aerobic activity per week.

Try this strength training workout for beginners  
<https://tinyurl.com/y778sp6f>

Strength training isn't just for bodybuilders and athletes. It's something everyone should do. Just ask Sonny Bryant. At 76 years old, he's still going strong.

## References

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