

3 exercises with a speedy payoff

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(HealthDay)—Compound strength-training exercises get fast results, because they work many muscle groups at once.

Many of these exercises use just your own bodyweight, such as pull-ups, which engage not only the shoulders and all the muscles of your arms, but also those in your back and core. Other exercises can be enhanced by holding a weight or weights.

Hand-Held Weight Options

- Kettlebells
- Dumbbells or a barbell with or without weight plates
- Jugs of water
- Heavy food cans

Here are three exercises to try:

For the **loaded carry**, engage your core muscles and hold a weight in each hand. Now simply walk for 30 to 60 seconds, then stop and release the weights. Rest for 60 seconds and then repeat the sequence up to five times.

For the **classic squat**, stand with feet shoulder-width apart, toes slightly turned out. Hold a barbell behind your head, [press](#) your shoulders back and engage your core. Keep your back straight as you press your hips behind you and lower your chest toward your thighs. Your thighs move parallel to the floor, but your knees don't go beyond your feet as they bend. Feet stay flat on floor throughout. Press heels into the floor to push up and return to standing. **Note:** It will take time to master a full squat. Beginners can start by holding an unweighted barbell. If you're new to squats, start with the number of reps you can do while maintaining good form, even if that's only a few. Build up to three sets of 12 to 15 squats each.

For the **biceps curl-to-shoulder-press**, hold a weight in each hand and

place the backs of your hands on the fronts of your thighs so that your palms are facing out. Raise your forearms to bring the weights up to your shoulders. Immediately rotate palms outward and press the weights above your head. Hold briefly, then bring [weights](#) back to [shoulder](#) level, rotate palms to face shoulders and lower to the start position. If you're new to the press, start with a light weight that you can hold while maintaining good form, even if that's only a few reps. Build up to three sets of 12 to 15 presses each.

More information: The American Council on Exercise has more on [compound exercises](#) and how to do them safely.

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