

Weight-free strength training

May 13 2019, by Len Canter, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—You don't have to go to the gym for a strength-training workout. With these three moves, your own body weight provides the resistance needed to develop key muscles.

Start with the classic **wall sit**. Press your back into a wall and slide it down the wall as you walk your [feet](#) out in front of you, bending at the knees. Your thighs should be parallel to the [floor](#) and make right angles with your calves. Try to keep shoulders relaxed. Hold for up to 90 seconds, return to standing and repeat.

For a challenging twist, once you're in the wall-sit position, straighten your right leg out in front of you, holding it parallel to the floor for five seconds, return and switch legs. As the exercise becomes easier to do, increase the number of times you alternately straighten legs while holding the sit.

Jumping jacks, an old standby, are still effective and offer a cardio workout as well. Here's how to make them more fun and more challenging: Start by standing with feet together, arms at your sides and then jump out with feet as wide apart as is comfortable as arms lift out to the sides and up to shoulder-level. When you jump back in, cross your right arm over your left at mid-chest and cross your right leg over your left leg. Jump back out, then [jump](#) in as you reverse arm and leg positions. Continue alternating right and left until you've completed 10 to 20 jumps in all.

You don't have to hold a barbell while doing **squats** for them to effectively work the muscles in your legs and butt. Stand up straight with feet shoulder-width apart and slightly turned out. Place your hands on the back of your head so you can't use them for momentum. Lower your body, bending at your knees, with the goal of bringing your thighs parallel to the ground. Go only as far as you comfortably can, but aim to go deeper with practice. Hold for a count of one before straightening to the start [position](#). Repeat up to 15 times for one set. As you progress, increase the number of sets you do in each session.

More information: The American Council on Exercise has more

[bodyweight exercises](#) to add to your regimen.

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Citation: Weight-free strength training (2019, May 13) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-05-weight-free-strength.html>

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