

Toning and Strength Exercises for Women

Strength training is an important part of any fitness or weight loss plan. It can improve your strength, help tone problem areas and help sculpt the body and prevent that unwanted “jiggle”.

As when starting any new exercise program, especially if you have any medical concerns, please get your practitioners okay to start. You should not have pain when you exercise. If you have dizziness, chest pain, shortness of breath or muscle pain, stop exercising and see your doctor!

Warm up with a few minutes of walking or jogging first, some arm circles, high knees, and a few squats.

For each exercise perform 2 sets of 10 reps with a weight. The weight should be heavy enough to challenge you at the end of each set. You should be able to keep good form. Keep the movements steady and breathe in before the lift and out with exerting.

Bra fat bulge

If you have a bulge over your bra strap and a bulge spilling over the top of the strap, you can trim down and tone this area with bent over rows. You can use a barbell, band or kettle bell. Support your body weight on a chair or bed and keep back flat. Row the weight to your chest while looking forward. Focus on using the back to “pull”. Keep your abs tight. Slowly lower your arm and straighten your elbow. 2 sets. 10-20 reps.



Age Defiers

Bad posture makes you look older than you really are. Add some pec stretches with a wall or corner to bring those shoulders back and upright and lift your chest! Stand in corner or doorway. Put arms at shoulder height and gently lean into door. Do for 3-4 reps with gentle stretch for 15-30 seconds.



Angel wings on wall to help strengthen the muscles in your mid-back to keep those shoulders back. Stand against wall. Everything touches the wall but your feet. Bring arms up and place against wall. Slide arms up and down trying to keep arms against the wall. You should feel a burn in your mid back. Slowly move up and down 5-10 reps.



Chicken Wings



Tone up the triceps with dips or triceps extensions. Support body weight on edge of sturdy chair or bed. Bend elbows and support weight on arms. Slowly straighten elbows. 2 sets, 10-20 reps. Or go into the row position mentioned above. Hold weight in hand and slowly straighten elbow and then bend. Keep shoulder still and bend at elbow. 2 sets 10-20 reps.

Work on the guns



Tone up the biceps with some arm curls. Use weights, kettlebell, or bands. Stand upright and hold weight in hand. Bend elbow up and then slowly straighten. 2 sets. 10-20 reps.

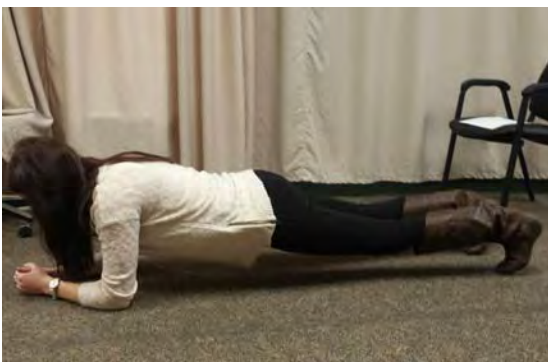
Arm Pit Overhang

Pushups work the chest, arms, and shoulders. Start with a knee push up or wall push up if you have not done a full push up before. Start with what you can with goal of working up to 10 reps.

Go on hands and knees. Keep back straight. Arms shoulder width apart. Slowly bend elbows and lower upper body toward floor. Straighten arms to get back to starting position. If this is easy, do the regular push-ups with feet hip width apart.



For A Toned Stomach



Try the plank! Start on knees and progress to push up position. Start on floor with weight on knees and elbows. Keep back straight and tighten abdominals. Arms are shoulder width apart and knees hip width apart. Hold 10-60 seconds as able. 2-3 reps. If easy, then support your weight on your feet and elbows. Make sure your back stays straight and hips are tucked.

Firmer Thighs

Lunges work the quadriceps, hamstrings, and gluts. You can do 3 types of lunges: forward, side and reverse. Start with just body weight and add dumb-bells as you are able. Start with 10 reps on each side. Make sure you can see your toes and your knee does not bend too far.



Forward: Step forward and bend at hip and knee. Make sure you can see your toes. Push back with your front leg to return to standing.



Side: Step to side and bend at hip and knee. Push back to starting position.

For A Toned Backside

Try squats, these work the largest groups of muscles in the human body. The muscles that define and shape your backside call the gluteals (maximus, medius, minimus).



Feet hip width apart. Bend at hips and knees like you are going to sit on a chair behind you. Stick your butt out! Lower down to a comfortable position, you need to be able to see your toes. Tighten your buttock muscles and return to standing. 2 sets. 10-20 reps.

For Tone Your Calves

Calf raises to get some definition in your calves. Feet hip width apart. Slowly raise up on toes and then slowly lower back to starting position. 2 sets. 10-20 reps.

