

fit cards

Strength
training
exercises for
home, gym, or
anywhere!

fit cards

Fit cards are a tool to help you get (or stay) in shape at home or the gym. Contrary to popular belief you don't need a lot of time and equipment to get stronger, more toned, and to feel and look better.

Each page shows a variety of moves. Fit cards can be used in a variety of ways, see below for some ideas or make up your own.

 Need new challenges? Choose eight exercises from the cards. Perform each exercise 1-3 times. Mix and match your workout by trying new moves each week!

 Bored easily? Like a new workout every time? Cut the cards out and shuffle them. Do one set of each exercise and move to the next card.

 Want a challenging full-body workout? Do all of the cards.

 Time crunched? Do one or more cards. Any exercise is better than none!

 Want to pick and choose? Pick an exercise from each page, aiming to work a variety of body parts. Make sure you pick cards that strengthen your whole body!

 Circuit training: Perform 1-3 minutes of aerobic exercise (such as marching in place, jumping jacks, dancing, jumping rope) then do a move from the fit cards. Repeat this cycle until you have finished your fit cards. Keep the breaks to a minimum to keep your heart rate up and your body working!

Ab-solutely great form

For each move, contract your abdominals. Think of pulling your belly button towards your spine. Use at least 5-8 pound weights to start. As you get stronger, use heavier weights to keep building strength!

New Moves tip:

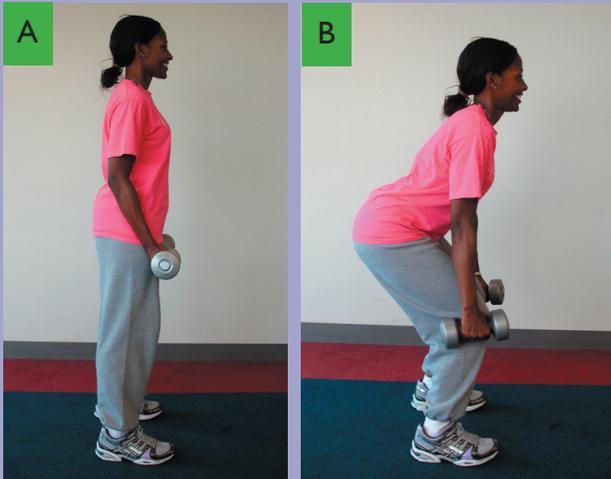
Start with what you can do and build from there. If that means 2 or 3 reps, try for one more rep the next time you exercise. Consistency and effort go a long way in building strong muscles!

Basic squat

Strengthens your legs, glutes, and lower back

Start with your feet shoulder width apart. Shift your weight to your heels (fig. A). Keep your upper body straight as you bend your knees and lower your body as though you were sitting in a chair (fig. B). Squeeze your glutes to return to standing, repeat 15-20 times.

Tip: To make sure you are going low enough, put a chair behind you and touch your glutes to the chair as you come down. Wiggle your toes to make sure you are keeping the weight in your heels.

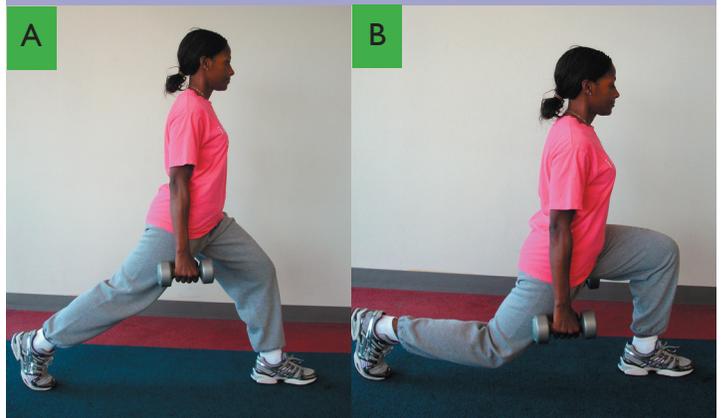


Basic lunge

Strengthens your legs

With your feet shoulder-width apart, step forward with one leg, keeping your front foot flat on the ground. You will be on the ball of your back foot (fig. A). Lower your back knee straight down towards the ground (fig. B). Return to the starting position. Perform 8-15 reps each leg. Add weights for more of a challenge!

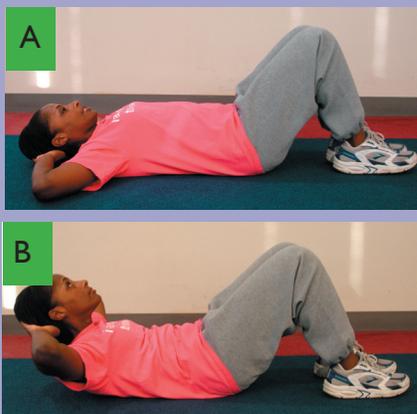
Tip: Make sure your front knee does not go over the toe. Try to almost touch the ground with your back knee as you lunge.



Basic crunch

Strengthens your abs

Lie on the floor with your legs bent, feet flat on the floor. With your arms crossed in front of your chest, pull your belly button towards your spine, and flatten your lower back against the floor (fig. A). Slowly contract your abdominals, bringing your shoulder blades about one or two inches off the floor (fig. B). Exhale as you come up and keep your neck straight, hold for 2 counts. Slowly lower back down, but don't relax all the way. Repeat for 15 to 20 repetitions.

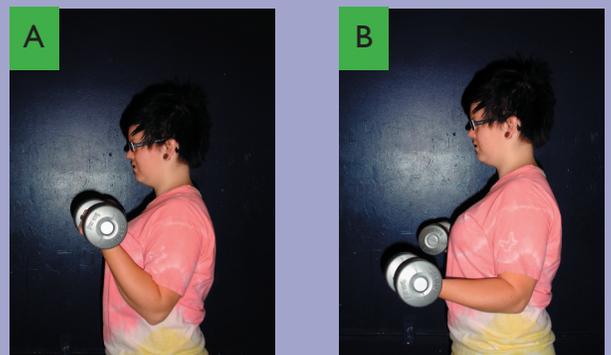


Biceps curls

Strengthens your biceps

Hold a weight in each hand, palms facing in, arms straight (fig. A). With elbows at your sides, raise the dumbbells and rotate forearm until forearm is vertical and palm faces shoulder (fig. B). Lower to original position.

Tip: You can also alternate sides by doing one arm at a time. Concentrate on using the biceps muscle instead of your back, or momentum!



Bent over row

Strengthens your back

Bend forward at your waist and contract your abs. Keep your back flat and slightly bend your knees (fig.A). With your arms by your sides, pull the weights up towards your body while retracting the shoulder blades (fig. B). Slowly return to starting position. Repeat 10-15 times.

Tip: Keep the focus on your back by imagining that you are squeezing your shoulder blades together in order to lift the weights. Keep your elbows close to your sides and try not to let them flare out to the sides.

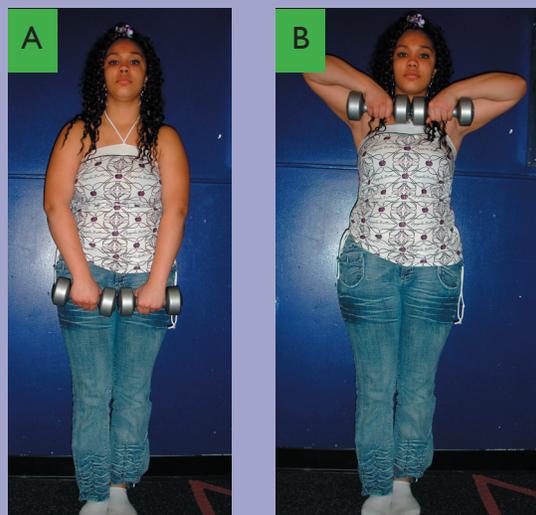


Upright rows

Strengthens your shoulders

Stand holding weights with hands close together and palms facing you (fig.A). Slowly bend the arms and pull the weights up until they are at chest level (fig. B). Your elbows should be slightly above your shoulders and your wrists should be straight. Lower to the starting position and repeat 8-15 repetitions.

Tip: Make sure the weights stay close to your body as you lift. You can also do this move with bands.



Shoulder press

Strengthens your shoulders and upper back

Standing with abs contracted and feet shoulder width apart, lift the weights up so that they are next to your shoulders like a goal post (fig.A). Push directly up with your arms, until the weights tap together above your head (fig. B). Slowly lower to start position. Repeat 8-15 times.

Tip: Do not fully straighten your arms, keep a slight bend in them at all times. Relax your shoulders so they stay down during the movement.



Triceps kickbacks

Strengthens your triceps

Hold weights in hands and bend over until torso is parallel to the floor. Contract your abs for the whole exercise. Bend elbows and pull them into your sides, so that the top of your arms are even with your back. (fig.A). Slowly straighten arms behind you, squeezing the triceps and slowly lower back (fig. B). Repeat 8-15 times.

Tip: Focus on keeping the top half of your arm still, moving only at the elbow.

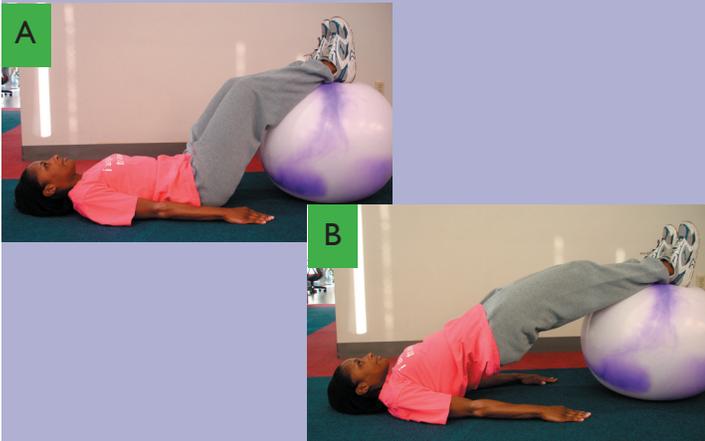


Ball lift

Strengthens your legs, glutes, and lower back

Lie on a mat or the floor with your heels and calves resting on a stability ball (fig. A). Stabilize with your arms as you slowly lift your glutes and lower back off the floor into a bridge position (fig. B). Hold for one breath and slowly lower back down to the floor. Repeat 10-15 times.

Tip: As you get more comfortable with this position, you can move faster and do more reps. Try with only one leg for a big challenge!

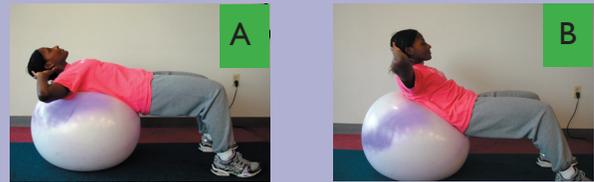


Ball crunch

Strengthens your abs

Sit on an exercise ball and walk your feet away from your body until the small of your back is on the ball (fig. A). Either fold arms over your chest or behind your head. Using your abdominals, lift your upper body off the ball in a controlled manner (fig. B). Hold for two counts, return to starting position. Repeat 10-15 times.

Tip: Focus on your abdominal muscles doing the work, not lifting your head with your arms. Vary the movement by lifting your hips at the same time you crunch.

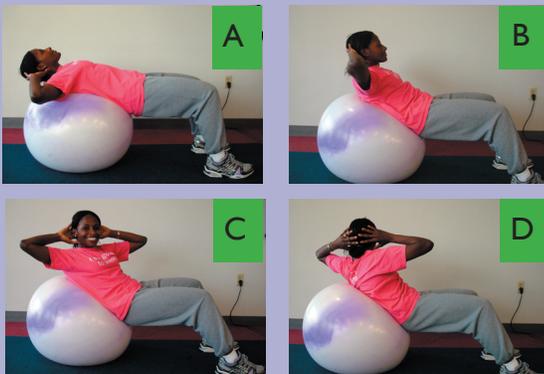


Obliques ball crunch

Strengthens your abs and obliques

Start in the ball crunch position and place each arm behind your ears (fig. A). Lift your body up like you do for a regular crunch (fig. B). Keeping your head and shoulders off the ball, twist to one side (fig. C) and return to the center. Twist to the opposite side (fig. D). Return to center, and then back to the starting position. Perform 8-12 reps.

Tip: Make sure you are lifting and twisting with your abs, not your neck and head! If you get tired, rest for a couple of seconds before doing another rep.

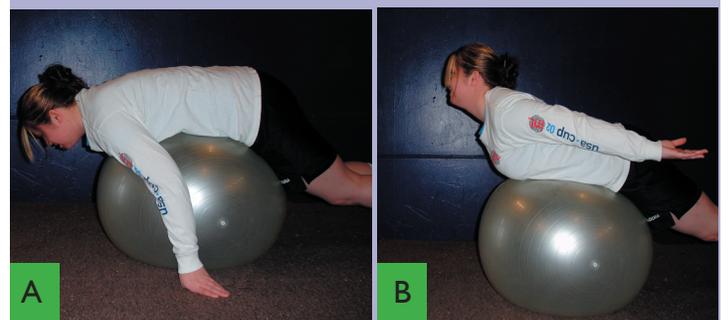


Back extension on ball

Strengthens your back

Position the ball under your hips and lower torso with the knees straight or bent and your arms next to your side (fig. A). Lift your chest off the ball, bringing your shoulders up until your body is in a straight line (fig. B). Repeat 8-15 times.

Tip: Make sure your body is in alignment when you lift up (i.e., head, neck, shoulders and back are in a straight line), and your abs are pulled in for the entire movement. As you get stronger you can reach your arms out to your sides or overhead for more of a challenge.



Booty Bridge

Strengthens your glutes, legs, and lower back

Sit on ball, feet hip-width apart. Place your hands on your thighs or keep your arms folded across your chest. Walk feet forward, leaning back so ball rolls under head and shoulders and your seat almost touches the floor (fig. A). Squeeze glutes, lifting through hips for two counts (fig. B). Lower hips to floor and rest for one count. Do 10 reps.

Tip: Keep your abs contracted the whole time to assist with stability and to protect your lower back.



A



B

Ball push-ups

Strengthens your chest, shoulders, and abs

Kneel on the floor with the ball in front of you and roll forward on it, walking your hands out to where you can comfortably support your body with your hands shoulder distance apart. Pull your abs in and your shoulders back to keep your body in a straight line (fig. A). Bend your elbows and lower until your elbows are at 90 degrees (fig. B). Squeeze your chest muscles and press up to return to the start position and repeat 8-15 reps.



A



B

Chest flies

Strengthens your chest

Lie on a ball and contract your abdominal muscles. Start with weights directly over chest, palms facing each other, elbows bent (fig. A). Keep your arms extended with a slight bend in the elbows and slowly lower weights out to sides, stopping at shoulder level (fig. B). Bring weights back up over chest, squeezing your chest muscles. Perform 8-15 reps.

Tip: To keep your arms in the correct position, imagine there is a large beach ball balancing on your chest.



A



B

Sky sculptor

Strengthens shoulders, chest, biceps, triceps, and abs

Sit on ball with feet hip-width apart, knees bent 90 degrees. Hold a dumbbell in each hand at chin level in front, elbows bent, arms shoulder-width apart and palms facing you (fig. A). Without leaning back, raise dumbbells straight up to the ceiling until arms are extended; return to start (fig. B). Repeat 10-15 times.

Tip: Think of pulling your shoulder blades down as you press up to prevent lifting your shoulders. Watch your elbows as you raise the weights to make sure they don't flare out to the sides.



A



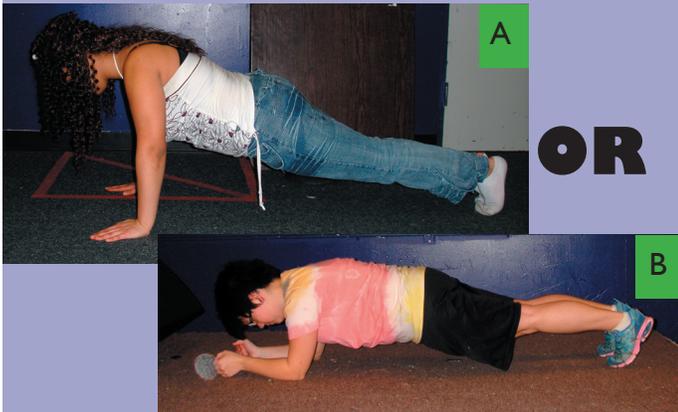
B

Plank

Strengthens your abs, back, arms, and shoulders

Start into pushup position with your arms directly under your shoulders and your body forming a straight line from your head to your heels. Your hips, shoulders, knees and ankles should all be in a straight line (fig.A). Brace yourself with your abs, squeeze your glutes, and hold the position for 10-30 seconds. Breathe as you hold, contracting your abs more with each exhale.

Tip: For an additional challenge or if your wrists hurt, you can do the plank on your elbows as shown in (fig. B).

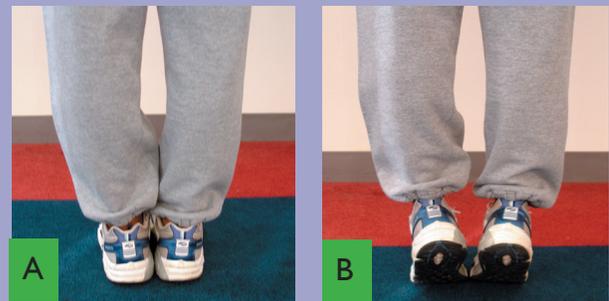


Calf raise

Strengthens your calves

Stand on the floor, feet close together with your weight on the balls of your feet (fig.A). Slowly lift your heels up as high as you can (fig. B). Return to start, repeat 15-20 times.

Tip: Make this move more challenging by adding hand weights or doing it on a stair or bench. On a stair or bench, stand with the balls of your feet on the bench and lift and lower your heels, dropping your heels lower than your toes.

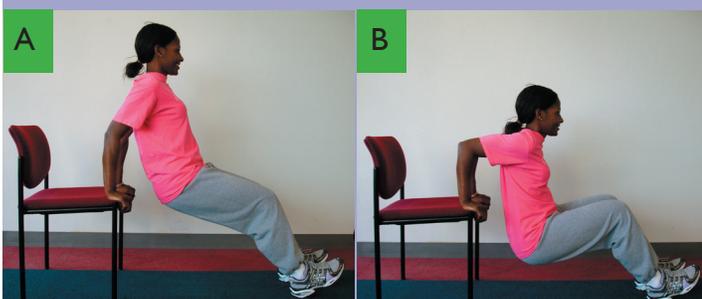


Triceps dips

Strengthens your triceps

Begin sitting on a step or chair with hands under thighs. Keeping your hands where they are, walk your legs out so that your seat is off the chair. (fig.A). To dip, bend the elbows and lower body a few inches, keeping the shoulders away from your ears and the elbows parallel to one another, going no lower than 90 degrees (fig. B). Next, straighten arms and push yourself back up. Perform 8-12 repetitions.

Tip: Think of your elbows pointing backwards the whole time to prevent them from flaring out. As you get stronger, walk legs out further.



Side plank

Strengthens your arms and obliques

Start by lying on your side with your feet on top of the other and your arm placed squarely under your shoulder. Lift your body up maintaining a solid bridge while supporting your body weight on your knee (fig.A) or foot (fig. B) and hand (fig.A) or forearm (fig. B). Hold this position 10-30 seconds or until your hips begin to sag. Repeat on the other side.

Tip: Balance on your forearm rather than your hand if this move causes any wrist pain. Remember to breathe!



Double Time

Works biceps and triceps

Hold an exercise band with hands in the middle. Keeping arms slightly bent, pull arms away from your head to the sides of the room. Slowly return to start position, repeat 12-15 times.

Tip: Keep resistance in the band the whole time. If the band is too loose, this move will be too easy to be effective. Challenge yourself by keeping tension in the band.



Offering

Strengthens chest and biceps

With weights in each hand, palms facing up, elbows slightly bent, lift your arms up until hands are in front of you at shoulder height (fig. A). Slowly rotate arms back, squeezing your shoulder blades together (fig. B). Reverse direction and return to starting position. Repeat 8-15 times.

Tip: Squeeze your chest muscles when spreading out the arms.



Hammer curls

Strengthens biceps

Hold weights with palms facing each other, elbows slightly bent (fig. A). Bend your elbows and bring the weights towards the shoulders (don't touch the shoulders), while keeping elbows "glued" to your sides (fig. B). Slowly lower the weights, but don't straighten the arm entirely, keep tension on the muscle throughout the movement.

Tip: Keep your elbows connected to your sides at all times.



Lunge with front raise

Strengthens legs and shoulders

Start in a lunge position with weights by your sides (fig. A). As you lunge with one leg, raise both arms in front of you, keeping arms straight (fig. B). Raise them as high as the shoulders, returning arms to your sides as you return to the starting lunge position. Repeat on other leg, do 5-10 on each leg.

Tip: Watch your form in a mirror to ensure that you don't raise your arms too high.

