

Employee Health & Well-Being Fitness Room Bodyweight Exercises

Perform 2 sets of 10 repetitions for each exercise (except plank and back bridge). Begin with the variation labeled beginner gradually move to the intermediate or advanced variations as needed to increase intensity. Perform these exercises in any order. Begin by training 1-2 days per week and then move up to 2-3 days each week. In addition to strength training, it is important to perform cardiovascular exercise and to stretch.

Bench Dip – Sit on a bench with your feet slightly further out in front of you than when normally seated. Grab the edge of the bench on either side of your hips. Slide forward and lower yourself toward the ground and rise back up focusing on using your arms rather than your legs. Try to keep elbows close to your sides.



Beginner – knees bent



Intermediate – legs straight



Advanced – feet elevated

Plank – Lie face down on the ground. Lift upper body with arms and rest on elbows. Your body should be straight from shoulder to ankle. Focus on engaging abdomen and lower back to prevent hips from sinking. Hold for 30-60 seconds. Perform twice.



Beginner – from knees



Intermediate – legs straight



Advanced – feet on Bosu

Back Bridge – Lie down on your back. Lift hips off the ground so that your body is straight from shoulder to knee. Focus on engaging lower back muscles. Hold for 30-60 seconds. Perform twice.



Beginner – feet on ground



Intermediate – feet on Bosu



Advanced – one foot

Pushup – When doing pushups, it is important to practice good form. Your body should be straight from your knees to your shoulders and your chest should be the first part of your body to touch the ground (you may begin by only bending your elbows to 90 degrees). Tighten abs and lower back to keep body straight, avoid dropping hips, and do not rest on the ground between pushups. A wider grip will incorporate the chest muscles more while a closer grip will focus on your triceps, but this is a total body exercise. Use your hands to lift your upper body off of the ground. Slowly return to the ground.



Beginner – legs bent



Intermediate – legs straight



Advanced – feet elevated

Inverted Row – Place a barbell in the squat rack remembering that the higher the bar is from the ground the easier the exercise will be. Your body should remain straight from shoulder to ankle; engage your core to do so. Use your upper back primarily and avoid sagging or swinging hips when you begin to fatigue. Place the barbell in the squat rack. Grasp the bar, place your feet in front of you and lean back so that you are hanging from the bar. With your body straight, pull your chest to the bar. Lower yourself with control.



Beginner – high angle



Intermediate – low angle



Advanced – feet elevated

Squat – Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Remember to keep your head looking forward, your chest up, and avoid arching your lower back. Try to keep your hips back so that your knees do not come in front of your toes. Squat down so that your thighs are parallel to the ground. Be sure to keep weight back on your heels. Weight can be added by holding dumbbells or a barbell.



Beginner – squat to bench



Intermediate



Advanced – holding weight