



# Exercise at home



By Penny Porter

The health benefits of regular exercise are well known, and the great news is that you don't need to invest in expensive equipment or join a gym to improve your physical fitness!

We'll show you how easy it is to do a good workout at home, using everyday household items.

For each exercise, easier and tougher options are indicated where possible to suit your ability. Aim to complete 12-15 repetitions of each exercise. As you get fitter and stronger, build up your routine so that you can complete two sets of 15 repetitions. Remember, start slowly and build up gradually.

## Equipment needed

If you already have a set of dumbbells, these are ideal for adding resistance to some of the exercises; however, they're not essential. Simply use whatever you can find at home instead. Start out with something light, like a tin of beans, and work yourself up to heavier items, such as laundry detergent bottles filled with water.

## Key points

- Wear clothing you can exercise in comfortably and safely – you don't want to be tripping over too-long trousers.
- Make sure the area you exercise in is cleared and safe.
- Have a drink with you at all times when exercising. Try to consume 200ml of water for each 15 minutes of exercise – don't wait until you're thirsty.
- If you have any underlying medical conditions, or have not exercised for many years, we recommend seeing your GP for a check-up before embarking on any exercise routine.

## Warm-up

Always warm-up first. The type of warm-up should be appropriate to the level of exercise you're about to do, and should last 5-10 minutes.

## Upper body exercises

To make any of the exercises with weights more challenging, simply increase the weight you use.



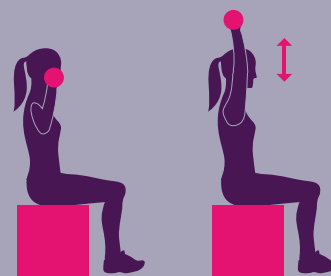
### Press-ups (chest and upper arms)

1. Start on hands and knees, with hands shoulder-width apart, fingers facing forwards, and body forming a straight line from knees to shoulders.
2. Look slightly ahead of you.
3. Slowly bend your elbows and move your body towards the floor, making sure that your elbows do not splay out to the side.
4. Stop when your chest and hips are one inch off the floor, and slowly straighten your arms to return to the starting position.



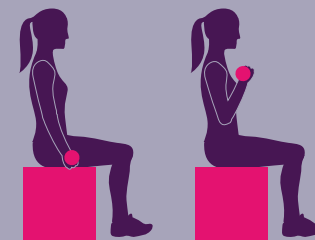
### Advanced/full press-up

Instead of starting from your knees, start with your toes on the floor, keeping your back and body in a straight line.



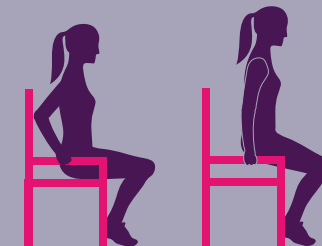
### Shoulder press (shoulders and upper back)

1. Sit up tall in a stable chair, feet flat on the floor, and knees bent to 90-degrees.
2. Hold a weight in each hand, palms facing forwards away from the body.
3. With hands at shoulder level, slowly push the arms up and straighten towards the ceiling.
4. Slowly lower the hands back to shoulder level.



### Bicep curls (front of arms)

1. Sit up tall in a stable chair, feet flat on the floor, and knees bent to 90-degrees.
2. Hold a weight in each hand, arms held by the side of the body, palms facing inwards.
3. Keeping the elbows into the side, slowly curl the hands upwards towards the upper arm, rotating the palms to face the shoulder.
4. Keeping the elbows into the side, slowly return the arms to starting position.



### Tricep dips (back of arms)

1. Sit in a stable chair with armrests.
2. Place your feet flat on the floor, slightly under the chair.
3. Place your hands on the armrests of the chair, and lean forwards slightly.
4. Slowly push your body up off the chair using your arms, not your legs, so that your arms are straight.
5. Then, slowly bend the arms and lower the body to starting position.



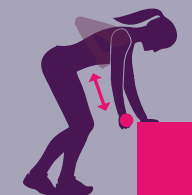
### Advanced tricep dip

1. Place your hands, fingers facing forwards, either side of your hips on a secure chair or step.
2. Extend your feet out in front of you, keeping a bend in the knee at all times.
3. The further away your feet are from the chair, the harder the exercise will be.
4. Slowly lower your body weight off the chair by bending the arms.
5. Lower your bottom towards the floor by bending your arms and extending your elbows backwards.
6. Keep your back close to the chair at all times.
7. Pause when your bottom is a few inches off the floor and slowly extend the arms to return to starting position.



### Single arm rowing (back and shoulders)

1. Bend forward at the waist, resting one arm on a stable chair. Keep looking in front of you, with your head in line with your spine.
2. Keep your back straight throughout.
3. Hold a weight in your other hand.
4. Keeping a slight bend in the knees, and back straight, slowly pull the weight up, with your elbow facing towards the ceiling and close to your body.
5. Pause briefly when your hand is near to your side, before slowly returning to start position.
6. Repeat 12-15 times with each arm.

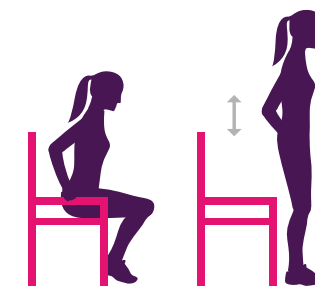


## Lower body exercises



### Supported Squats (legs and bottom)

1. Stand with feet just over shoulder-width apart, heels firmly on the floor.
2. Holding onto a wall or firm chair for support, keeping your back straight and head facing forward, slowly bend your knees into a partial squat position.
3. Slowly extend your legs to the starting position, aiding the lifting phase of the movement by pulling yourself up with your arms.
4. As you get stronger try to squat a little deeper, using less effort from the arms to pull yourself upwards.

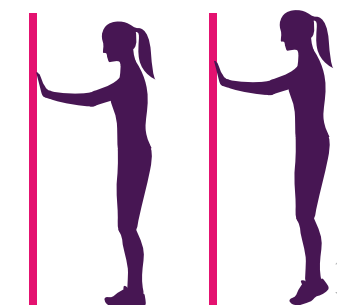


### Sit to stand (legs and bottom)

1. Sit in a chair with armrests.
2. Place your feet on the floor, slightly under the chair.
3. Place your hands on the armrests of the chair, and lean forwards slightly.
4. Slowly, using your legs, push your body up off the chair, straightening your legs.
5. Then, slowly bend the legs and lower the body to starting position.

### Advanced

As you get stronger, try to stand without using your arms at all or using only one leg at a time.



### Calf raises (lower leg)

1. Stand against a wall or firm chair for support.
2. Slowly raise your right heel off the ground, holding in the upper phase for two seconds.
3. Repeat 12-15 times.
4. Repeat the process with your left leg.

## Warm-up ideas

- Walking
- Marching on the spot (can be done seated)
- Walking up and down stairs
- Dancing to your favourite music

## Lower body exercises continued



### Advanced squats (legs and bottom)

1. Stand tall, with your feet hip-width apart, knees slightly bent, and feet flat on the floor.
2. Hold a weight in each hand, with arms extended at the side of the body.
3. Keeping your back straight, abdominals pulled in and head facing forward, slowly bend your knees.
4. Try to squat down until your knees are at a 90-degree angle, with thighs parallel to the floor. Make sure your knees do not move past your toes during the movement. Focus on pushing your weight through your heels. If you can't go this low, go as far as possible.
5. To make it harder, increase the weight you are holding.



### Forward lunge (legs and bottom)

1. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, toes facing forwards.
2. Standing tall, keeping the back straight, slowly lunge forward, allowing the back knee to travel towards the floor, and the front knee to bend, keeping it aligned above the ankle.
3. Keeping the back straight, slowly push up, straightening the legs to return to start position.
4. Repeat 12-15 times with each leg leading.

#### Advanced

Try holding weights to make this exercise harder.

## Core exercises (abdominals and back)



### Abdominal crunch

1. Lie on your back, knees bent, and feet flat on the floor.
2. Place your fingertips just behind your ears.
3. Without arching your lower back, slowly curl up, lifting your head and shoulders a few inches off the floor. Do not use your hands to pull your head up and keep a gap between your chin and chest.
5. Hold for two seconds.
6. Slowly lower upper body back to the starting position.



### Superman

1. Kneel on all fours, hands below shoulders and knees below hips.
2. Tighten your abdominal muscles, pulling them in towards your spine, to keep your back straight throughout the exercise.
3. Slowly straighten one leg out behind you, lifting the foot slightly off the floor.
4. At the same time, slide your opposite hand forwards, and lift the arm off the floor.
5. As you lift your leg and opposite arm off the floor, ensure that your abdominal muscles are contracted to help keep the back straight.
6. Do not let your body twist, or your back arch.
7. Hold the arm and leg in the extended position for five seconds.
8. Return to starting position and repeat with opposite leg and arm.
9. Keep alternating sides, aiming to do eight on each side.



### The plank

1. Lie face down, with your elbows next to your chest, palms facing towards the floor.
2. Tighten your abdominal muscles, pulling them in towards your spine.
3. Push your body up off the floor, rising up onto your elbows and toes. Keep the legs straight, but not locked.
4. Your back should be straight, angling up from toes to shoulders, with your head in line with your body.
5. Hold abdominals tight, and keep your back straight throughout.
6. Squeeze your bottom muscles together to keep your bottom in line with your back.
7. Hold for 30-60 seconds, and then lower; repeat.

**Easier:** Push up onto your knees, keeping lower leg on the floor.  
**Harder:** Holding plank position, slowly raise alternating feet off the floor, holding the leg raised for five seconds.



### Back raise

1. Lie face down on the floor.
2. Place your hands together, and rest your chin on your hands, with palms facing the floor and elbows out to the side.
3. Slowly breathe in, and pull your stomach muscles in towards your spine.
4. Continuing to breathe normally, slowly raise your head and shoulders 3-4 inches off the floor, keeping your hands on your chin, and elbows out to the side.
5. Squeeze your shoulderblades together and gently pull your shoulders down away from your ears.
6. Hold for 2-3 seconds. Your lower back, hips and legs should remain on the floor at all times.
7. Relax and slowly lower to starting position.
8. Repeat six times, gradually increasing to 15 times.

**Easier:** Place your hands on the floor and use your arms to help push your shoulders and head off the floor.

### Lisa's stats

Age: 41

Height: 6ft

Start weight: 27 stone

Previous dress size: 34

Current dress size: 14/16

# I didn't want to be in a wheelchair

Lisa Harborne from Rugby is a mum of two who lost half her body weight in 2009 when arthritis in her knees became so severe that she was afraid she would be permanently wheelchair bound.

Lisa's weight gain started during her pregnancies, and struggled to lose the weight she had put on. Lisa says: "I married and started a family quite young and didn't really have a social life when the kids came along. I would stay at home and look after the children, and I soon developed bad eating habits, particularly nibbling on the food that the kids didn't want. I put on more than 13 stone in 15 years and was wearing dress size 34."

The greatest worry for Lisa was when her knees became so painful that she could hardly walk. With every bit of extra weight, the cartilage in Lisa's knees was deteriorating, and she could only walk short distances using crutches. Taking her doctor's advice to lose weight, Lisa contacted her local Cambridge Weight Plan Consultant, Jenni Bell, and started using the Sole Source Plan.

**"Sole Source was great for me and my hectic lifestyle with the children. I found that taking conventional food out of my life for a short time and eating Cambridge meal replacements suited me and I wasn't tempted to snack on junk food," says Lisa.**

Lisa has dropped ten dress sizes and she can now walk more easily, with the aid of a stick for support. Lisa tells Inspiration: "I'm so pleased with my weight-loss results. I can do so much more now and shopping for clothes is no longer a full-on mission. The best thing to come out of losing the weight is that my kids can get their arms around me and we can have a real hug. I was so worried that I would end up in a wheelchair, but Cambridge has worked really well for me and has given me my life back."

At Cambridge Weight Plan's Convention in November 2009, Lisa was able to walk onto stage and receive her certificate for being a semi-finalist in the annual 'Slimmer of the Year' competition. And for the first time in 15 years, she enjoyed a good dance at the evening celebrations. "It felt great to be nominated for the award – it was a brilliant end to what had been a truly life-changing year. I have to thank my Consultant for all her support and encouragement – I have made a good friend and I feel fantastic!"

Lisa's now living life maintaining her new size 14 figure. She also recently underwent surgery on her knees to further improve her mobility.



Lisa before discovering Cambridge Weight Plan