TOP 20 ISOMETRIC EXERCISES FOR STATIC STRENGTH TRAINING

Jay Hyber

"Isometric exercises increase the target muscle's time under tension, which is a key growth stimulus," - Trevor Thieme C.S.C.S., Openfit Senior Fitness and Nutrition Content Manager

Want to accelerate your strength, speed and power gains while adding some variation in the weight room? Incorporate isometric exercises into your strength training program.

Isometric exercises, also known as static strength training, are contractions of a particular muscle for an extended period of time. Simply put, an isometric exercise is one that involves muscle engagement without movement. Instead, you pick one position and hold it. For example, in a plank or wall sit, the muscles are working, but not actively changing lengths.

In positions like these, the muscle fibers are activated but since there are equal forces against each other, there is no movement. (Compare this to picking up a 20-pound dumbbell to do biceps curls—the force of the weight pushing down is less than the force you are using to lift the weight up).

How can you benefit from isometric exercises?

Every athlete wants to be able to generate a lot of explosive force. Isometric exercises, when added to a functional strength training program, have been shown to help athletes produce more speed and power. Studies have shown that that a 7 second muscle contraction increases your strength by about 5 percent.

In addition, As you get older, you lose muscle tone, flexibility and the ability to digest essential amino acids, but regular isometric exercises can allow you to maintain your muscle strength. In fact, isometric exercises are a necessary kind of strength training for an older person who would like to stay healthy and mobile and for everyone else who would want to avoid muscular decline.

Including isometric exercise in your training routine has the dual benefit of injury prevention and strength building. If you have or have had damaged muscles in your lifetime, this method can help you to rehabilitate your injury and reduce recovery time of your muscles. While it may seem like a good idea to just sit and rest, you may recover healing muscle more quickly by training. Isometrics are great at this because they don't put too much strain on your muscles and joints.

These isometric exercises build a foundation of functional strength to support you when you advance to more dynamic, explosive routines. They are particularly beneficial when rebuilding from injury.

20 Isometric Exercises

The following exercises will ensure your entire body is being challenged to get stronger and reveal any areas of weakness. They're simple to try, you can do them anywhere and they'll give you a solid start toward gaining new levels of strength.

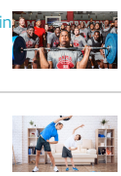
1. Plank

More Posts

February Recap: VertiMax On The Go!

How Does VertiMax Work? VertiMax Science and Research

Why Athletes Should Train on Game Day



9 Tips For Training At Home

Coaches Getting Better: SCHSSCA 5th Annual Coaches Clinic

Hi How may we help you today?

- Get on all fours with your feet together, your body straight from head to heels, and your hands in line with (but slightly wider than) your shoulders.
- Clench your glutes, draw your shoulders down, and brace your core to lock your body into position.
- Hold until fatigued. (Can also be performed on forearms and on each side.)

2. Low Squat

- Stand tall with your feet hip- to shoulder-width apart and your hands by your sides, toes pointed forward.
- Keeping your back flat and core braced, push your hips back, bend your knees, extend your arms forward, and lower your body as far as possible.
- Hold for time.

3. Split Squat

- If you have weak glutes and quads, then you are running a high risk of runner knee and a plethora of other overuse injuries - Split squats will help off set that risk.
- Take an athletic stance with back straight and core engaged, then step into a lunge position.
- Make the pose more challenging by sinking down until your front knee is bent to a 90 degrees and your back knee nearly touches the floor.

4. Wall Sit

- Stand with your back against a wall, your feet hip-width apart and your hands by your sides.
- Slide down the wall until your hips and knees are 90 degrees, with your shoulders and butt touching the wall.
- Hold until fatigued.

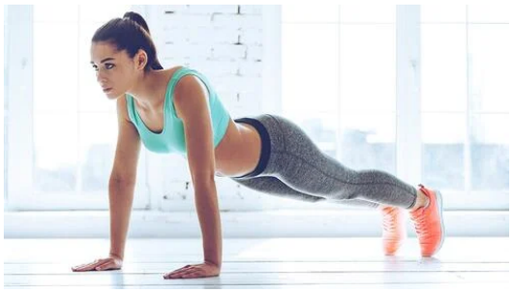
5. Calf Raise Hold

- Start by using with both legs, raise your heels and lift your body off the ground.
- Once you get as high as you can go, hold this position for 1 minute, then slowly come back down.
- As your body gets comfortable with this new stress, you can add another 30 seconds at a time you until you reach 5 minutes.

6. Leg Extensions

- Sit on a chair with your tailbone firmly against the back of the chair, hands resting on the chair with both feet flat on the floor.
- Slowly extend your right leg out in front of you, engage your quads, and reach your toes toward your hin as much as you can without losing form.
- Hold the position for 30 seconds to one minute, then lower down to starting position and change sides.

7. Isometric Push-up



- Get on all fours with your feet together, your body straight from head to heels, and your hands in line with (but slightly wider than) your shoulders.
- Bend your elbows so that your upper arms flare out diagonally from your torso (you should form an arrow when viewed from above).
- Lower your body until your elbows form 90-degree angles, and hold until fatigued.

8. Static Lunge

- Stand tall with your feet hip-width apart and your hands at your sides.
- Keeping your chest up, shoulders back, back flat, and core engaged, take a large step forward with your right foot. Lower your body until your front thigh is parallel with the ground and your left knee is bent 90 degrees.
- Hold until fatigued, performing equal reps on both sides.

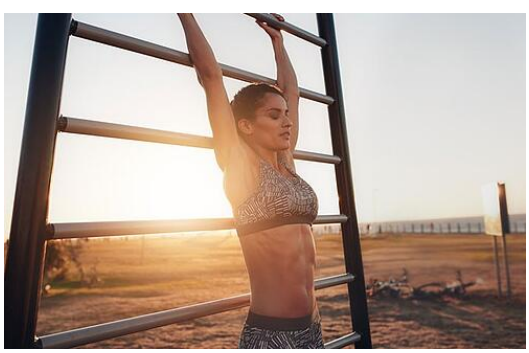
9. Dumbbell Curl

- Stand holding a pair of dumbbells at arm's length by your sides, palms facing forward.
- Keeping your elbows tucked and your upper arms locked in place, curl the dumbbells until your forearms are parallel to the floor.
- Hold until fatigued.

10. Bench Press

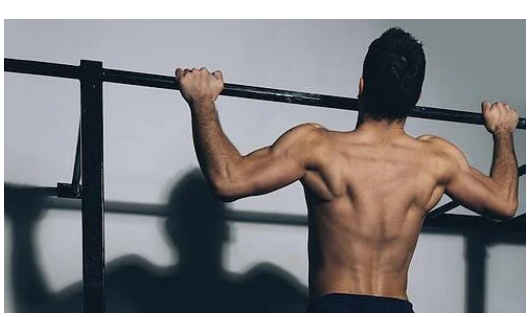
- Lie on a flat bench holding a pair of dumbbells or barbell directly above your chest with your palms facing forward. Your head, upper back, and butt should touch the bench, and your feet should be flat on the floor.
- Slowly lower to the sides of your chest, keeping your elbows close to your body.
- Stop when the weights are a few inches above your chest, and hold until fatigued.

11. Dead Hang



- Grab a pull-up bar with an over- or underhand grip, your hands shoulder-width apart.
- Allow your body to hang with your legs crossed behind you or toes pointed toward the floor.
- Hold until fatigued.

12. Pull-Up Hold



- Grasp pull-up bar with hands shoulder-width apart.
- Pull yourself up until your upper chest is even with the bar.
- With elbow down, focus on squeezing the shoulder blades together and hold the position for 1–2 minutes.

13. Scapular Retraction

- Grab a pull-up bar with an overhand grip, your hands shoulder-width apart, and let your body hang.
- Draw your shoulders down and back to raise your shoulders just slightly toward the bar.
- Hold until fatigued.

14. Flexed-Arm Hang

- Grab a pull-up bar with an underhand grip, your hands shoulder-width apart, and let your body hang.
- Pinch your shoulder blades down, then bend your elbows until your upper arms are parallel to the floor.
- Hold until fatigued.

15. Hollow-Body Hold

- Lie supine with the arms and legs in the air and the knees bent. Flatten out the lumbar spine so there's no gap between the floor and the low back.
- Pinch your shoulder blades down, and position your feet just in front of your body, with your legs straight. Engage your core. Your body should form a gentle C shape.
- Hold until fatigued.

16. Good Morning

- Place an barbell on your back as if preparing to back squat. Hinge at the hips, and lower your chest until it's parallel to the floor.
- Hold for 10 seconds, then return to standing.
- Next, hinge again, lowering torso to just 45 degrees. Hold 10 seconds, then return to standing.

17. Goblet Squat

- Holding a heavy dumbbell or kettlebell in the front racked position with both hands in front of your chest, elbows tight to your sides, lower into a squat.
- Hold at the bottom of your range of motion (ideally parallel or just below) for 5 seconds, then press through heels and return to standing.

18. Lateral Shoulder Raise

- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, with your knees slightly bent.
- Hold the weights at your sides with your arms straight but elbows unlocked.
- Raise the weights equally out to either side until they are shoulder height.

19. Upright Row

- Stand upright with your feet hip-distance apart and your knees slightly bent.
- Hold the barbell lightly in front of you with your arms straight.
- Bend your elbows to raise the weight up to shoulder level.

20. Bridge

- Lie down on your back on the floor. Flex your knees, keep your hands on the sides, and feet and palms flat on the ground.
- Support your body on your feet on and palms and gently thrust your hip upwards.
- Hold this position for 10 seconds before lowering your body back to the starting position.

The Takeaway...

These exercises are amazing examples of how you can get the most out of isometric exercise. But it's important to note that a lot of other workouts can easily become isometric! During an exercise, if you hold your position during its peak contraction, you're good to go.

With so many different ways to exercise, it can be hard to choose which path is right for you. Isometric exercises just may be the perfect addition to your workout routine if you:

- Have a shoulder injury
- Are looking for a different kind of fitness approach
- Are recovering from a knee surgery
- Experience chronic knee pain
- Are seeking a low-impact exercise

GET THE VERTIMAX APP

Access FREE Resources Get The VertiMax App With Drills Or Let's Chat

First Name:*

Customer Type*

Please Select

Last Name:*

Sport Of Interest:*

Select One

Email:*

Country:*

United States

Phone:*

State*

Please Select

Message:

☐ Do You Currently Own A Vertimax?

Vertimax is committed to protecting and respecting your privacy, and we'll only use your personal information to administer your account and to provide the products and services you requested from us. From time to time, we would like to contact you about our products and services, as well as other content that may be of interest to you. If you consent to us contacting you for this purpose, please tick below to say how you would like us to contact you:

☐ I Agree To Receive Other Communications From Vertimax.

You may unsubscribe from these communications at any time. For more information on how to unsubscribe, our privacy practices, and how we are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy, please review our Privacy Policy.

By clicking submit below, you consent to allow Vertimax to store and process the personal information submitted above to provide you the content requested.

SEND

amazon

© 2019 Vertimax. All Rights Reserved