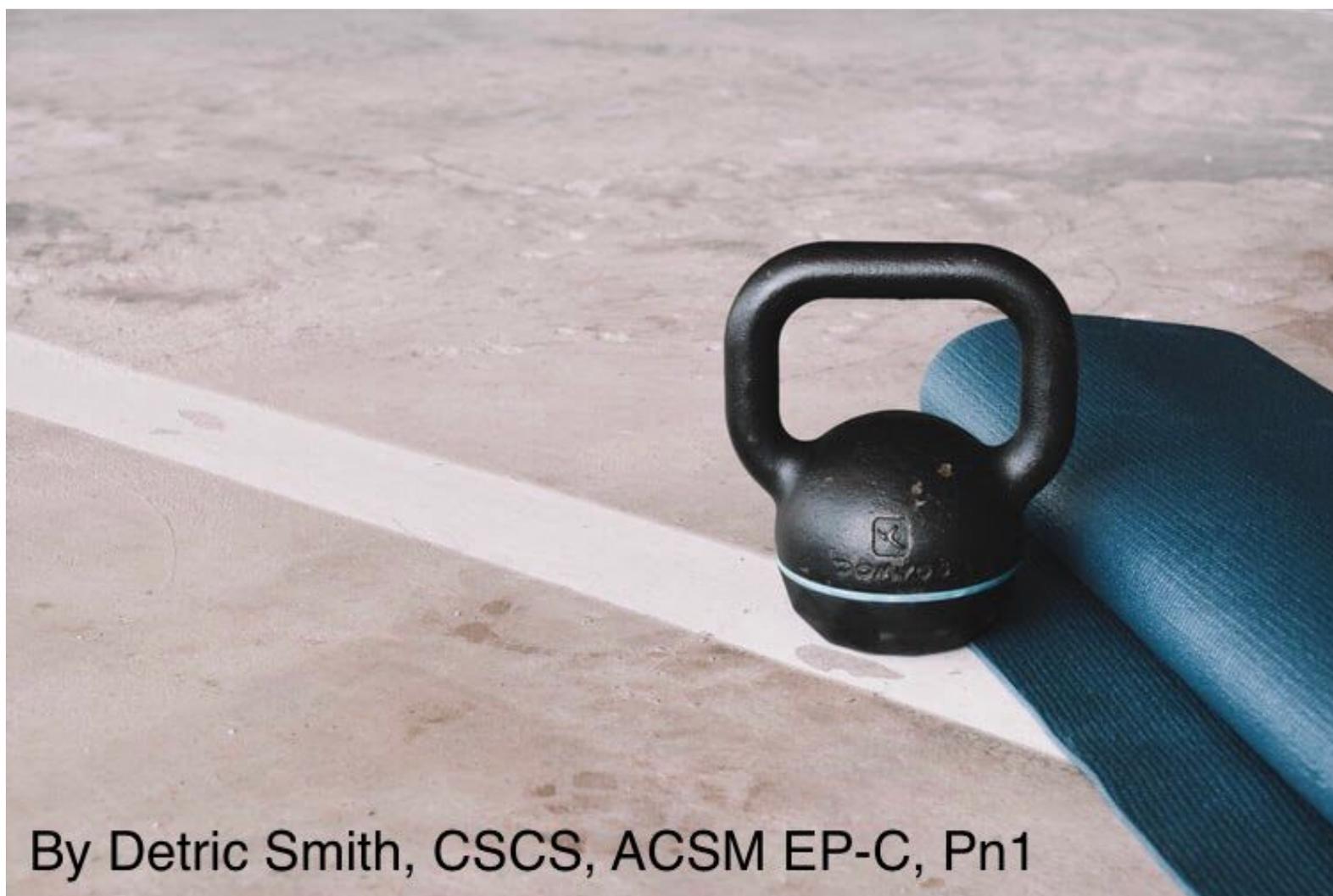


# The Complete Guide to Creating the Perfect At-Home Workout

*Crafting a Workout that Works for You, Your Schedule, and The Results You Want*



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# How you can use this guide

Welcome to your Complete Guide to Creating the Perfect At-Home Workout! I'm thrilled you've decided to download this resource, and can't wait for you to start seeing results.

This guide will show you how to create a workout you can do at home, whether you have no equipment or a fully fleshed-out garage gym. The Complete Guide to Creating the Perfect At-home Workout is catered to all fitness levels, yet we do recommend you have *some* experience with working out. For your own safety, you should have a general grasp of movement, such as squatting, hip hinging, pushing, pulling, carrying, and crawling. If you don't, that's okay! We simply recommend meeting with a certified and trained professional to get an assessment and some coaching before heading out on your own.

Grabbing this guide signals a critical first step on your fitness journey. So congratulations! You've already done the hard part - making a decision to commit. With this guide at hand, you'll be able to train regularly within the comfort of your own home.

One last thing, in case you're wondering why I'm qualified to offer advice on a home gym. As an NSCA certified CSCS, ACSM EP-C, and Pn-1 certified coach, I've been working for over 15 years in the fitness industry since graduating from VCU with a BS in Kinesiology. . I now own Results Performance Training in Williamsburg, VA, where we specialize in Active Aging, Sports Performance Training, and Fat Loss Transformations. I've worked with countless clients with busy schedules, and, while I love working with them in the gym, I (and the rest of my staff) recognize that most of their lives are spent elsewhere. That's why I've helped many design workouts for the hours/days they can't make it in the gym. And now, I pass along that information to you.

# Basic Principles of Training

Before you get started on your home workout, we need to discuss a few basic principles. These will save you time and energy, help avoid injury, and overall yield better results. Because that's what we're all about.

## Figure out your "lead domino"

What's the one thing that, if you tackle it, many other things will start to fall into place?

Much like the first domino in a long train, taking care of the biggest obstacle first accelerates progress. For some, it may be getting enough sleep at night so that you have the energy and willpower to work out. For others, it comes in the form of mobility and flexibility to alleviate the pain of movement. It could be as simple as purchasing equipment and clearing out space in your garage. Once you take care of that, you're on the way to success.

At Results, we work one-on-one with clients in our free success session to discover their lead domino. Using our red light/green light system, we make personal, prescribed recommendations to remove the biggest obstacle to your success. You can do this at home - take some time and ask yourself these questions:

1. What's the one thing that, if I took care of it today, would lead to more consistent, better fitness?
2. What are the barriers to achieving that task, and why do they exist?
3. Am I ready and willing to make a change?
4. If so, what is my true motivation for doing so?
5. What are three things I can do right now to chip away at those barriers?

The magic comes when you put your needs first. Understanding your why and identifying the biggest obstacles helps get results. We want you to know why things work, why you're doing what you do, and encourage you to reach out with any questions.

## Focus on your abilities and improve overall strength

In a world rife with Instagram models and videos of impressive lifts, it's easy to get caught up in the drama of what you *can't* do. Instead, focus on what you can do. Unless you're a competitive weightlifter, there's absolutely no reason you *have* to barbell squat, bench press, or clean and jerk. If it hurts, puts you at risk for injury, or is expensive and cumbersome to set up, don't do it! There are plenty of exercises, tools, and variations that you can use and still see progress.

If you *do* experience pain somewhere, it's likely caused by dysfunction elsewhere. For example, a chronic shoulder injury could stem from lack of mobility in your thoracic spine, causing you to press overhead with faulty form. A knee problem could result from lack of glute or core strength, or over-reliance on one leg over the other. Get an expert to assess the cause of your issue at the start, and work backwards from there.

**In general, however, improving overall strength as you age involves:**

- Multi-joint, appropriately modified resistance exercises
- Taking the time to do the extras – mobility, function, and recovery
- Regular assessment and analysis – if an exercise hurts, take the time to figure out why and where the origin is
- Build a generally balanced foundation - the human body is built to push, pull, rotate, bend, stand on one leg, and stabilize. Utilize all of these movements in whatever way is right for you.

## **Apply the 80/20 rule**

“20% of what you do will give you 80% of the results”

Your focus should be on becoming great at these things. Not only will you get results, but you'll save time. Those working out at home often don't have a ton of time, money, or motivation to get to the gym. Hit the big rocks and you can address everything in 45 minutes or less. Plus, you can recover more quickly, stay consistent, and continue to see results over time.

Time (and timing) is everything. It's not about how long you work out, but finding the right intensity and using the 80/20 rule. Find the actions that will give you the most results and perform them well. We make a few suggestions later on in this e-book, but every individual is different. If you need advice, we encourage you to reach out to one of our trained experts.

The most important thing is that we find the big rocks for you. What does your body need the most, and how can we make you move better and feel more energized as you thrive?

# The Best Equipment for your At-Home Workouts

Can you get a great workout using just your bodyweight? Absolutely. However, it's still slightly restrictive. Some of us struggle getting up and down off of the ground. Others might not have the strength to do a full bodyweight pull-up or push-up. Some of us might just want more versatility in our workouts. For those reasons and more, we recommend investing in the following pieces of equipment for your at-home workouts.

## A set of PowerBlocks

As far as home gyms go, this is your *pièce de résistance*. Achieving total fitness at home warrants a varied workout routine, and for that - you need multiple weights. Sure, you could buy an entire set of dumbbells, but that takes up a lot of space in your house (and your wallet).

PowerBlocks, however, provide an adjustable resistance in 2.5 lb increments, starting at 2.5lbs and going up to 50 lbs per dumbbell. For most, that provides enough versatility and weight to do almost any exercise you want.

## A resistance band

Resistance bands make for lightweight, versatile, and portable exercise equipment. They're a vital strength training tool for any home gym, especially alongside PowerBlocks. Resistance bands can be tied to a door or a pole for pulling exercises, wrapped around the body for leg work, or even used to decrease bodyweight resistance in movements like pull-ups or push-ups. As you can take them anywhere, resistance bands are great travel workout companions.

## A bench

An exercise bench rounds out any home gym, providing a stable base for pressing, a seat to rest on (or squat to), or a step to climb upon. The ideal workout bench adjusts for incline, allowing for incline presses or chest-supported rows.

## TRX or other suspension trainer

Everyone needs more horizontal pulling, and rowing against a suspension trainer is one of the best ways to do it. Learning to control your own body protects the core, spine, and posture to improve

strength AND function. Plus, like a resistance band, TRX straps are portable and versatile. They can be used for single leg work, core work, assisted squats, elevated push-ups, and even pull-ups.

## **Foam Roller and Lacrosse/Tennis ball**

Soft tissue treatment is a critical part of working out, especially as we age. Self-myofascial release helps relax muscles and release tension so that you can move and feel better. Foam rolling doesn't cure everything, but it can sure help avoid injury. Remember - a little self care goes a long way!

## **A barbell, plates, and a power rack**

Getting in to the more expensive (and expansive) equipment, you might want to invest in a barbell, a set of plates, and/or a power rack. This is by no means necessary for a home gym, but some people love the barbell movements. We regularly use the barbell for landmine exercises, such as presses, squats, and hinges, so it can add a bit more versatility to your sessions.

If you know you'll want to bench, squat, or deadlift - you'll need a barbell. But this is for a select population with experience who *enjoys* barbell training and knows how to do it safely. A power rack also features a pull-up bar and a place to attach things like bands, TRX straps, and more. These features, while making for a more comprehensive "home gym", are easily worked around by using a pole or hook in your house.

It really comes down to your budget - if you have years of experience working out in gyms (and want your home to mimic your expectations), a power rack might be up your ally. However, as it can be expensive and takes up a lot of space, choose wisely for your needs.

# Bodyweight Training at Home

Bodyweight training challenges your strength against gravity, using your muscles to overcome the natural force that weighs us down. It helps build core strength, stability, and total body physique. And the best part? You can do it anywhere.

## **Benefits of bodyweight training include:**

- Increased strength
- Improved balance and proprioception
- Better coordination
- Useful for aerobic conditioning
- Ease of use - no equipment required!

You can't build a house without a strong foundation, and bodyweight exercises form the foundation of movement. A large majority of them are closed chain movements, meaning your arms or legs are locked in place while your body moves. For example, in a push-up, your arms are secured to the floor while your body moves up and down. As such, they reinforce control. As there's less room for error, without coordination, you'll either fail to do the exercise, fall over, or compensate somehow. Learning the proper way to do bodyweight movements, therefore, sets a strong foundation for other kinds of exercise.

## **Here are just a few examples of bodyweight exercises you can use:**

- Push-ups
- Pull-ups
- Squats
- Split squats
- Inverted rows
- Romanian deadlifts
- Glute Bridges

## **A “secret” benefit of using body weight training at home**

One of the benefits of working out at home is that it often forces you to work with what you've got. And what's the one thing we always have on hand? Our own bodies, of course! Since it's just you and your body, bodyweight training provides ample opportunity to receive feedback about your posture. These cues help reinforce healthy joint positioning before biting off more than we can chew, so to speak.

For example, bracing your core, or activating the muscles between your hips and your shoulders to stabilize movement, protects the spine and creates a stable base for strength and power. Learn bracing with bodyweight movements, such as push-ups, before attempting to lift heavier weights, and you'll be on your way to long-lasting strength and function.

### **But can you build total body strength with just your bodyweight?**

Bodyweight squats, push-ups, and pull-ups all demonstrate relative strength - the control, stability, and power to lift a certain amount of weight compared to your bodyweight. When just getting started, many will struggle to complete these with full range. However, with slight modifications, we can use them to develop a baseline of strength and coordination. Elevated push-ups against a barbell, inverted rows, and sitting and standing on a box are great starting points. As strength improves, you can manipulate reps, time-under-tension, and positioning to make bodyweight exercises more challenging.

Bodyweight exercises can be used as safe, effective tools for high-rep aerobic work as well. You could realistically cycle through the above list with sets of 10-20 reps a few times and get a great workout! Access to a bench, resistance band, or TRX straps opens up even more possibilities. It all comes down to how you use them. So how do you choose?

# How to choose the correct exercises

Exercise selection is highly personal. There's no "one" required exercise to get results. That being said, there are a few ways to assure you get the most out of a home workout.

## Consider your goals

A work out only good if it fits in the big picture. What are your long-term goals? Nothing occurs overnight - not pain relief, longevity or wellness, weight loss, strength, nor muscle mass. When training for strength, for example, you'll need to lift heavy weights. It's tough to get *really* strong by only lifting your bodyweight. While doing a lot of pull-ups and push-ups is great, it might be a good idea to invest in heavier weights. On the flip side, training for longevity and injury prevention warrants controlled, total-body movements. That often means dumbbells, bands, bodyweight, and core strengthening.

## Know your injury history

Got a bad shoulder or a bum knee? Are you prone to lower back pain? Understanding your injury history is critical to proper exercise selection, especially in a home gym. Without a certified professional around to monitor your form and adjust on the fly, choose safety over flair or intensity.

Below is only a small portion of exercise modifications that may be right for you. The goal is to exercise through your current ability and maximize what you can already do.

### For lower back issues:

- Increase work for hip mobility
- Loading lower body with more single leg work
- Less barbell work
- Soft tissue work/massage/foam roller for areas around the low back
- Learn technique and how to use your abs/brace

### For aging or injured shoulders:

- Switch to dumbbells in place of barbells
- Less volume in any overhead pressing
- Add tons of rows and upper back work - less pushing
- More mobility and soft tissue work

### **General Workout Changes:**

- Plan the high/hard days with less frequency
- Use higher reps (10 to 15) for most exercises
- Use joint-friendly exercises
- Pay more attention to sleep, overall lifestyle

### **What's your budget?**

In order to stick to a workout, it has to feasibly fit your lifestyle. That means budgeting your time *and* money so you can dedicate some to fitness each week. For instance, there's no reason to spend thousands of dollars on a high-end power rack if it's going to cause financial stress. You'll be so stressed out trying to work and make up for it that you won't be able to use it! In that same vein, if you know you can only realistically spare 45 minutes every day for a workout, don't design one that takes two hours. Again, you'll never get it done.

Take some time to assess your budget. How much time can you commit to working out each week? Can you afford to invest in some new gym equipment, or would you be better off working with a band and your own body weight? The answers to these questions will guide you toward successful, consistent, at-home workouts.

# How to put your exercises together into a workout

For most goals, you'll want to use 2-3 total body workouts per week. Training for hypertrophy is one exception that may warrant a body part split (i.e. upper body one day, lower body the next, etc). However, working your entire body with multi-joint exercises will train a lot of muscles at once. This will allow you to save time, and get more bang for your buck. It's way better than sitting trying to isolate every muscle, especially in a home gym. Multi-joint exercises transfer to things you do in real life.

## The fundamental movements to include in your workouts are:

- Push- push away from your body to work chest, shoulder, triceps
- Pull- pull towards your body to work back and biceps
- Hip Hinge- bend over and pick up something, hamstrings and glutes
- Squat - work your quads, entire lower body
- Carry /anti rotation - you can carry stuff, but this category also including learning to brace/use abs
- Lunge - lower body strength, flexibility, balance

## Depending on your goals, focus on the following amounts of sets/reps in your exercises:

	Sets	Reps	Weight	<a href="#">Rest periods</a>
Muscular Endurance	3-5	12+	light	20-60 seconds
Muscle size	3-6	6-12	Moderate to heavy	30-60 seconds
Muscular Strength	4-10	1-5	heavy	3-5 minutes
Weight Loss	3-6	6-20	moderate	30-60 seconds/supersets
Injury Prevention*	varies	varies	Light to moderate	1-3 minutes

\*training for injury prevention should focus on form and execution over rep count. If at any point form falters due to fatigue, stop

## **What about cardio?**

For cardio, you should always choose something you enjoy. If you love cycling, get out on the trails or add a stationary bike to your home gym. Why not head out for a walk? If you live in an area with extreme climates (and love to walk), consider getting a treadmill. But there's nothing that says you have to do lots of running, jumping, or pounding. We use metabolic conditioning, supersets, and circuits in our gym to "lift weights faster" and get a cardiovascular benefit.

I know you're probably looking for some complicated formula about sets, reps, time, and rest periods. The truth? Do what you can do, now. Do what you will do. Do it better tomorrow, and stay safe. If you're tired, rest, and go again when you regain the energy. If your joints are starting to hurt, stop or move to a more joint-friendly exercise. By preventing injury and focusing on what feels good, we can make cardio fun, consistent, and a lasting part of your workout routine.

# Sample workouts

*\*\*\*Warning - these are geared towards those who have some experience. They'll work best for those with some initial guidance and accountability.*

## **For those who haven't worked out in forever:**

### 3-5 rounds of:

10 Goblet Squat to Box  
15 TRX Rows  
6-10 Push-ups  
15 Glute Bridges

### 3-5 rounds of:

10 Low box DB step ups  
15 Pallof Press with band (each)  
15 Banded RDL  
10 Plank with Shoulder tap (each)

## **For those with no equipment at home:**

### 3-4 rounds of:

15 Pike push ups  
10 Dead bugs (each side)  
10 Pull ups  
30 seconds isometric prone reverse fly hold

### 3-4 rounds of:

20 Bodyweight squats  
30 second plank  
20 glute bridge marches  
30 second side plank (each)

### 3-4 rounds of 20 seconds on, 10 seconds off of:

Close grip push ups  
Lunges

Wall sit

**For those whose home gym has minimal equipment:**

4x6 DB Romanian Deadlift

4x6 DB Bench Press

4x8 DB Rows

4x 5 each DB Split squat

3x10 DB Reverse Fly

3x20 DB triceps extension

7 minutes of:

10 Pallof Press with Band (each)

10 Bench Hip Thrust

20m Suitcase carry (each side)

15 Inverted Row

**For those who want only strength (but have more equipment):**

Barbell Box Squat/Hex bar deadlift - 5x5

Landmine Press - 4x5 each

Landmine RDL - 4x 8

Pull-ups - 4x4-6 (use band as needed)

Single arm Bench Press 4x4 each

Rear foot elevated split squat 3x12

TRX Rows 3x15

Hanging Leg raises 3x15

**For those who travel a lot - A hotel workout:**

5 rounds of:

8 DB Rear foot elevated split squat

8-10 Pushups

10-12 Seated row variation

4x 8 DB RDLS

4x8 Single arm DB Overhead press

3x10 Low box step up (each)

3x 40 m farmers walk

5 rounds of:

1 minute on/1 minute off bike sprint