

MAXIMIZING BASIC MOVEMENTS

Making Progress Outside the Gym

Working out from home forces us to implement new techniques into our training to continue making progress outside the gym. Besides increasing intensity by increasing repetition counts, a method that can be effectively used from home is increasing time under tension. This is commonly used to spur muscle growth and/or strength by increasing the time a muscle is under strain during an exercise. Slowing down movements will also help improve mind-muscle connection, improve focus during exercise and has the potential to address nagging aches and pains by fixing muscular imbalances that are exacerbated with heavy weights.

Time Under Tension Variations

Try these five methods with the bodyweight squat (reviewed at the right) or other bodyweight exercises to maximize your at-home workout.

Pause Squat At the bottom of each squat, pause for some time. Start with three seconds and increase as you build endurance. While paused, keep tension in glutes/core and avoid knees collapsing inwards. Focus!

One-and-a-half Squat At the bottom of the squat, push up only halfway then return to the bottom position. Then, push up to the top position. That is one rep – you'll feel the burn in no time.

Pulse Squat At the bottom of the squat, push up 1/4 of the way. Return to the bottom and complete reps staying low, only coming up 1/4 of the way. Keep tension in the glutes, quads and core and keep knees from caving in.

Slow Eccentric Squat Focus on the eccentric (lengthening) portion of the squat, the descend. Squat down 2x slower than you return to the top position.

Three-stop Squat Pause for a count of one one-fourth of the way down, pause again half-way down and pause at the bottom of the squat. Return to the top and repeat.

NEED A FORM CHECK?

Check in with the Optimal You Team for the correct form for your squat, pushup, plank and lunge. Follow posts on our Instagram and Facebook accounts and read a review on Tim DeBoer's blog ([linked in the More with Less tab on *fitnessamway.com/health-from-home*](#))



EVERYDAY IS ANOTHER
CHANCE TO GET STRONGER,
TO EAT BETTER, TO LIVE
HEALTHIER AND TO BE THE
BEST VERSION OF YOU.



Squat



- Put your arms straight out in front of you, parallel to the ground. Keep your chest up and proud, and your spine in a neutral position.
- Your weight should be on the heels and balls of your feet. Keep your body tight the entire time and keep your core flexed.
- Breathe deeply into your stomach, break at your hip and push your butt back.
- As you squat down, focus on keeping your knees in line with your feet. Squat down until your thighs are parallel with the floor.
- As you come up, keep everything tight, breathe out and push off from the heels back to the standing position.

Push-up



- Position your body with your arms straight out, abs tight, holding your body in a plank position.
- Hands and arms should be positioned slightly below your shoulders, fingers pointed forwards. Shoulders are pushed down away from your ears.
- Lower your body until your chest is an inch or two above the floor, elbows pulling back at roughly a 45 degree angle.
- Push your torso away from the ground until your arms lock then repeat.

Plank



- Plant hands directly under shoulders (slightly wider than shoulder width) like you're about to do a push-up.

To modify: Place forearms on the floor with elbows aligned below shoulders and arms parallel to your body at about shoulder width.

- Ground toes into the floor and squeeze glutes to stabilize your body. Your legs should be working, too — be careful not to lock or hyperextend your knees.
- Neutralize your neck and spine by looking at a spot on the floor about a foot beyond your hands. Your head should be in line with your back.
- Hold your plank for as long as possible without compromising your form or breath.



Lunge

- Keep your upper body straight, with your shoulders back and relaxed and chin up (pick a point to stare at in front of you so you don't keep looking down).
- Always engage your core.
- Step forward with one leg, lowering your hips until both knees are bent at about a 90-degree angle.
- Make sure your front knee is directly above your ankle, not pushed out too far, and make sure your other knee doesn't touch the floor.
- Keep the weight in your heels as you push back up to the starting position.

