

Simple Resistance Training at Home: Using Bands

A comprehensive fitness program consists of more than just cardio! Resistance training is a primary component of fitness and overall health for all people regardless of age, sport, or hobby. The good news is resistance training doesn't just mean weight machines, dumbbells, and kettlebells. There are many effective modalities to use such as resistance bands which have been shown to increase muscle mass and strength just like free weights would.

If you don't have access to a gym or free weights, don't worry, grab a resistance band for a fully effective workout. Resistance bands are very versatile and can be used for a wide range of exercises targeting all major muscle groups. Bands are relatively inexpensive, very light weight, don't take up a lot of space, and easy to use both at home or packed in a travel bag.

Every band of resistance tubing may have a different color scheme for levels of difficulty. Generally, lighter color band are easier and provide less resistance while darker color bands are more challenging. If you are new to using bands, start with a color that provides enough resistance to allow you to perform about 10-15 repetitions before reaching fatigue. Always maintain good form, alignment and control during all reps.

The National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) recommends resistance training to be performed 2-3 days per week on non-consecutive days using a variety of exercises and equipment.

This includes resistance bands. Try to allow 48 hours in between workouts using the same muscle groups.

Below are 4 exercises you can do with resistance bands:

■ **Squat with resistance band above knees:**

The squat is fundamental movement pattern and multi-joint exercise- big bang for your buck exercise!



- Step into the band and place it above your knees
- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart
- Focus on keeping a neutral spine and toes straight
- Initiate the movements with your hips
- Push your hips back and press your knees into the band as you symmetrically lower down into the squat, pause, and then continue to press your knees into the band as you return to standing
- Each repetition should be slow and controlled

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■ Upper body row:

Strength in the shoulders and upper back is key for posture. The ability to move through the shoulder blades correctly is important for daily movements such as reaching and lifting as well as athletic activities such as swimming, throwing a ball, or swinging a tennis racket or golf club.



- Wrap the band around a doorknob or some type of secure anchor. You can also have a family member act as the anchor
- Face the band and stand up nice and tall
- While keeping a proud chest and shoulders down and core engaged, pull the band in toward your body, bringing your shoulder blades towards each other and with control extend your arms back out

■ Side plank with clamshell:

This is a great exercise because it develops both core and hip strength.



- Step into the band and put it above your knees
- Start in the side lying position in a modified side plank
- Have your elbow stacked under your shoulder, bend and stack your knees and bring your hips up and forward
- Extend your top arm in the air, core tight and rib cage engaged
- Begin to make a clamshell motion with your top leg. Push down with your bottom leg as your top leg performs the clamshell

Make sure your top hip does not roll backwards throughout the movement

■ 1/2 kneeling Pallof press:

This is a great exercise for both core strength and hip stability.



- Be sure the band is tied securely to an anchor at chest height
- Have your body lined up parallel to the machine in the half kneeling position
- The knee on the ground should be your inside leg
- Hold onto the band with both hands and slowly press in and out, while keeping the band in line with your chest
- Resist the lateral pull of the band by keeping your core tight and glutes engaged
- Repeat the same movement with your other knee down and body facing the other direction

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