

Strength & Cardio at Home

Supports: Building Block 20 — Make Being Active a Way of Life: Overcoming Barriers

Why It Matters

Not having a gym or a rack of equipment is no reason to skip a workout. Your own body weight and a few common household items are plenty to build both strength and cardio right at home. This quick-reference gives you equipment-light options and clever substitutes so you can stay active wherever you are, on your own schedule.

What to Know

Strength with little or no equipment

Body-weight moves can build real strength, and everyday objects make great stand-ins for weights when you want more resistance.

- Body-weight basics: squats or half-squats, wall push-ups, calf raises, and wall sits
- No dumbbells? Use a filled water bottle, a jug of water or detergent, canned goods, or heavy books
- Load a backpack with books or cans for a scalable, hands-free weight
- Aim for strength work about twice a week and give muscle groups a day or so to recover

Cardio in a small space

You can raise your heart rate without any gear at all, even in a living room.

- Marching, jogging, or walking in place — great for bad-weather days
- Dancing to a few favorite songs
- Standing moves like high knees, butt kicks, or cross punches
- Lower-impact swaps, such as stepping side to side instead of jumping

Start where you are. Begin with lower intensity and easier versions of each move, then build up gradually as your body adapts — good form matters more than speed. Talk with your physician before starting or increasing exercise, especially if you have a health condition or symptoms.

Want the full routines?

This page is a quick reference to get you moving. For complete, follow-along routines at three difficulty levels, turn to Appendix D, A Year in Motion, in your EAT materials.

Try This

Pick a couple of at-home moves and household items you could use, and imagine fitting a short session into your space.

- ? Which household objects could double as weights for you at home?
- ? What is one strength move and one cardio move you would feel comfortable starting with?
- ? Where and when in your home could a short workout realistically happen?