



Men'sHealth

A PERFECT HOME WORKOUT

You don't need marathon sweat sessions at the gym to lose weight. With this workout, a bit of space and a few pieces of equipment are all you need to drop unwanted fat and sculpt lean muscle.

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You simply can't beat the perks of working out at home: Parking's a snap, and you can always listen to the music you like. Even better, a home workout may help you reap bigger gains—especially when you're just starting out.

First, it's convenient, which means that unlike the 30 percent of people with gym memberships who quit each year, you're more likely to capitalize on your investment—and reap the hard-body rewards.

Second, it eliminates a common source of gym frustration: crowds. Too many people in your workout space can slow your progress and your results—or discourage you from going at all.

So don't waste another minute in the gym. This fat-burning, muscle-building workout requires only a single set of dumbbells and an adjustable bench. The order in which you perform the exercises—along with the number of reps for each—allows the same pair of dumbbells to challenge each muscle equally. The upshot: There's never been a simpler way to chisel a better body.

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DON'T WASTE ANOTHER MINUTE IN THE GYM

Trainers like to say the best gym is the one you pass every day. That sets one place above the rest almost by default: your home. Convenience, after all, has a way of inspiring results. This workout proves that you don't need a ton of equipment to sculpt a stronger physique from the comfort of anywhere.

Workout A



1a Dumbbell Chest Press

(3 sets of 8 reps)

Lie on your back on a flat bench and hold a pair of dumbbells above your chest with your arms straight [A]. Lower the dumbbells to the sides of your chest [B], pause, and then push them back up to the starting position.



1b Dumbbell Bent-Over Row

(3 sets of 12 reps)

With a dumbbell in your right hand, place your left hand and left knee on a flat bench. Keep your back flat and let your right arm hang straight down, with your palm facing in [A]. Pull your arm up to the side of your chest by bending your elbow [B]. Pause and lower your arm to return to the starting position.



2a Dumbbell Incline Press

(2 sets of 5 reps)

Lie on a bench with the backrest set at a 45-degree incline. Hold a pair of dumbbells above your chest with your arms straight and your palms turned toward your feet [A]. Lower the dumbbells to chest level [B] and then press them above your chest to return to the starting position.



2b Dumbbell Squat

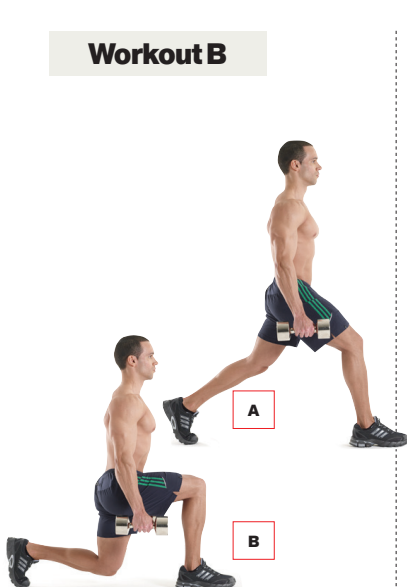
(3 sets of 12 reps)

Holding a pair of dumbbells at your sides, stand with your feet just beyond shoulder-width apart [A]. Push your hips back and squat as deeply as possible, keeping your lower back naturally arched [B]. Push back up to the starting position without rounding your back.

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► **DIRECTIONS** PERFORM EACH WORKOUT (A, B, AND C) ONCE A WEEK, RESTING AT LEAST A DAY BETWEEN SESSIONS. WITHIN EACH WORKOUT, ALTERNATE SETS BETWEEN EXERCISES OF THE SAME NUMBER (1A AND 1B, FOR EXAMPLE) UNTIL YOU COMPLETE ALL SETS IN THAT PAIRING. (IN OTHER WORDS, FOLLOW A SET OF THE FIRST EXERCISE WITH A SET OF THE SECOND EXERCISE.) REST 1 MINUTE BETWEEN 1A AND 1B, BUT PERFORM EXERCISES 2A AND 2B BACK-TO-BACK, WITH NO REST. AFTER YOU'VE DONE A SET OF EACH EXERCISE PAIR, REST FOR A MINUTE AND THEN REPEAT THE CYCLE UNTIL YOU'VE COMPLETED ALL THE PRESCRIBED SETS.

Workout B



1a Dumbbell Split Squat

(3 sets of 8 reps)

Hold dumbbells at your sides and stand with your right foot forward and your left foot back [A]. Lower your body until your front knee is bent 90 degrees and your rear knee nearly touches the floor [B]. Return to the starting position. Do 8 reps, switch legs, and repeat. That's 1 set.

1b Single-Arm Standing Shoulder Press

(3 sets of 12 reps)

Stand holding a dumbbell at eye level with your arm bent, palm forward, and your other hand on your hip [A]. Press the dumbbell overhead [B] and then lower. Do 12 reps on one side and repeat with your other arm. That's 1 set.



Lower the dumbbell to around ear level to avoid shoulder stress.



2a Dumbbell Swing

(2 sets of 20 reps)

With your feet shoulder-width apart, hold a dumbbell's handle with both hands. Extend your arms in front of your chest [A]. Next, slightly bend your knees and swing the dumbbell between your legs [B]. Bring the dumbbell back up to chest level as you rise. That's 1 rep.



2b Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift

(3 sets of 12 reps)

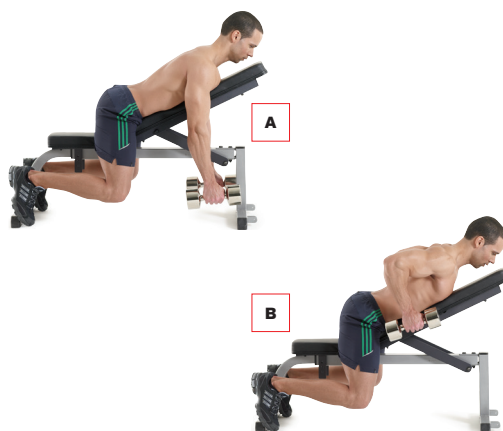
Hold a dumbbell in each hand in front of your thighs, palms facing your body [A]. With your knees slightly bent and feet shoulder-width apart, bend at your hips and lower your torso until it's nearly parallel to the floor, without rounding your back [B]. Pause and then rise to the starting position.

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Workout C

**1a Dumbbell Stepup***(3 sets of 8 reps)*

With a dumbbell in each hand, stand facing a bench. Place one foot on the bench **[A]** and lift your body up to the standing position without letting your opposite foot touch the bench **[B]**. Lower your body slowly and repeat. Complete 8 reps, switch legs, and repeat. That's 1 set.

**1b Chest-Supported Incline Row***(3 sets of 12 reps)*

Grab a pair of dumbbells and lie chest-down on a 45-degree incline bench. Let your arms hang down, palms facing each other **[A]**. Row the dumbbells to the side of your chest by bending your elbows and squeezing your shoulder blades **[B]**. Pause and lower the weights.

**2a Lying Dumbbell Triceps Extension***(2 sets of 12 reps)*

Lie faceup on a bench, holding a pair of dumbbells with your arms extended above your chest, palms facing each other **[A]**. Without moving your upper arms, bend your elbows until your forearms are past parallel to the floor **[B]**. Return to the starting position and repeat.

BY THE NUMBERS

36

Percentage increase in quadriceps strength when beginners did eight heavy-load reps per knee extension for 12 weeks, Danish researchers found

31

Minutes of resistance training it takes to keep your metabolism elevated for 38 hours, according to a University of Wisconsin at La Crosse study

(continued III→)



2b Dumbbell Curl

(2 sets of 10 reps)

Grab a pair of dumbbells with an underhand grip and hold them at arm's length next to your thighs **[A]**. Curl the dumbbells toward your chest as far as you can without moving your upper arms **[B]**. Pause and slowly lower the weights to the starting position.

THE BENEFITS OF WEIGHT TRAINING WITH DUMBBELLS

Does it make a difference whether I use dumbbells, barbells, or machines when I exercise?

The numbers on the weight plates may be the same, but your body can tell the difference. "When you use dumbbells, you have to lift and balance two objects—so your smaller stabilizing muscles have to work harder," says Bill Hartman, P.T., C.S.C.S., co-owner of Indianapolis Fitness and Sports Training. Machines are at the other end of the stability spectrum. When you use, say, a chest press, it keeps the weight steady for you, which makes it possible for you to activate more of your larger muscles and lift many more pounds than you would be able to with free weights—and therefore bulk up faster. But don't let those bigger numbers seduce you; if you train using only machines, your smaller stabilizers will be neglected, and that can lead to injuries.

9

Percentage decrease in body fat in active men after 12 weeks of a circuit resistance-training program, say researchers from Tunisia

50

Percentage by which a 10 percent loss of body weight can relieve knee arthritis pain, according to the American College of Rheumatology

15

Percentage increase in vertical jump height after six weeks of performing squats during twice-weekly workouts, report Oklahoma researchers