

Your Ultimate Fitness Plan

The strength moves in the Ultimate Fitness Plan are designed as a circuit: You do one move right after another, with little rest between. Research shows that this type of training boosts your kilojoule burn rate both during a workout and for an hour afterward – by 10 percent!

Do each move for 30 seconds (weeks one and two), then for 60 seconds (weeks three and four). Rest for 30 seconds between moves. Do each circuit four times, resting for two minutes after the second one. Follow the schedule below.

Rising Sun

Position a bar across your upper back and stand with your feet hip-width apart (A). Bend forward with your back straight until your torso is as close to parallel to the floor as possible (B). Come back up, then immediately thrust your hips slightly forward, squeeze your glutes, and arch your back slightly (C). Return to start and repeat.

1 Move



Hammy Curl

Lie on your back with your arms extended in line with your shoulders and your ankles resting on top of a stability ball (A). Squeeze your glutes and lift your hips off the ground while pulling the ball toward your butt with your heels (B). Return to start and repeat.

2 Move



Renegade Row

Grab a pair of 2 - 3 kilogram dumbbells and get in plank position with your hands on the weights and your feet hip-width apart (A). Bend your right elbow and raise the dumbbell until your elbow passes your torso, pressing the left dumbbell into the floor for balance (B). Lower your arm and repeat on the other side. Continue alternating.

3 Move



Raise-the-Roof Squat

Grab a 3 - 4 kilogram dumbbell with your left hand and stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Extend the dumbbell overhead (A). Looking up at the dumbbell and keeping your heels flat on the floor, squat until your thighs are parallel to the floor (B). Hold for 15 seconds (weeks 1 and 2) or 30 (weeks 3 and 4), then finish the set on the other side.

4 Move



Scorpion

Lie face-down with your arms extended out to the sides at shoulder height (A). Lift your left leg off the floor, bend your knee 90 degrees, and, twisting your torso, reach your foot across your body and touch the floor outside your right leg (B). Return to start and repeat, alternating sides.

5 Move



Cross-Body Chop

Grab a 2 Kilogram medicine ball and stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Extend the ball over your right shoulder (A). Sweep the ball down and across your body, finishing with the ball over your left foot (B). Spend half the set working in this direction, then finish the set working in the other.

6 Move



Your Ultimate Fitness Plan

The strength moves in the Ultimate Fitness Plan are designed as a circuit: You do one move right after another, with little rest between. Research shows that this type of training boosts your kilojoule burn rate both during a workout and for an hour afterward – by 10 percent!

Do each move for 30 seconds (weeks one and two), then for 60 seconds (weeks three and four). Rest for 30 seconds between moves. Do each circuit four times, resting for two minutes after the second one. Follow the schedule below.

Traveling Lunge

Grab a pair of 2 - 4 kilogram dumbbells and stand with your feet hip-width apart. Position the dumbbells in front of your shoulders, palms facing each other (A). Take a giant step forward with your left foot and sink into a lunge so that your front knee is bent 90 degrees (B). Return to standing by bringing your back leg forward to meet your front leg. Repeat, stepping forward with the other leg. Continue alternating.



Swimmer

Wrap a resistance band around a fixed structure (like a doorjamb) so that the ends are at shoulder height. Grab an end with each hand and step back until the band is taut and position your feet hip-width apart (A). Keeping your arms straight and your wrists locked, sit back into a squat while pulling the band down and behind your hips (B). Return to start.



Hindu Push-Up

From downward-facing dog pose (A), bend your elbows (keep your upper arms tight to your sides) and lower your body so your chest nearly brushes the floor (B). As your chest passes between your hands, straighten your arms and go into upward-facing dog (C). Raise your hips and press back up to downward dog.



Seated Tuck

Sit with your legs extended, feet together. Extend your arms straight out in front of you, palms facing the floor. Lean back slightly and lift your legs a few inches off the floor (A). Pull your knees toward your chest, keeping your back straight (B). Return to start but don't let your feet touch the floor; repeat.



Interval Training

Do this sprint interval workout using whatever cardio-based training you like best (running, cycling, swimming etc.).

1. Warm up at an easy pace for 5 to 10 minutes until your muscles feel loose and you break a light sweat.
2. Crank up to a sprint pace (an 8 to 9 on a scale of 1 to 10) for 10 seconds.
3. Ease back to a jog (about a 6) for 30 seconds.
4. Repeat for 15 to 25 minutes.
5. Cool down for 5 to 10 minutes.

Each week, increase the length of the sprint by 5 seconds until you're doing 30-second sprints and 30-second recoveries. "Just be sure not to increase the length of the sprint if you can't maintain the intensity. When you can't go faster, make the workout harder by adjusting the incline or resistance," says workout creator Scott H. Mendelson

11 Move



WH online
Go to www.WomensHealthSA.co.za for the rest of the Ultimate Fitness Plan.