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CALISTHENICS FOR BEGINNERS



A STEP-BY-STEP PROGRAM

**TO GET IN SHAPE AND TO BUILD EXPLOSIVE STRENGTH
AT ANY FITNESS LEVEL WITHOUT GOING TO THE GYM**

Book Description

Calisthenics is this decade's most popular training method to get your body into its best shape yet. If you want to gain muscle, lose weight, or sculpt your body to its ideal aesthetic, this is the perfect training option for you.

Everything from losing weight, gaining weight, and building lean muscle can seem impossible, especially if you've tried many diets and other fitness regimes.

By now, you're probably desperate and looking for something that works. To achieve a fit aesthetic shouldn't be as difficult as most of us have experienced in the past, and that's why you need a new approach that works. Your goals may seem distant now, but give it a couple of weeks, and you'll discover everything you have ever wanted to achieve for your body and more.

The step-by-step calisthenics guide will help you discover everything you need to train for muscle endurance, gain balance and flexibility and, above all else, strength, all without weights. This book will guide you on the beginning stages of calisthenics, informing you on what it takes to progress, how to prepare for it, how to prevent injuries, and how to go about your diet. There's plenty to learn about gaining fitness without visiting the gym or breaking the bank. You can train in the comfort of your own home without becoming demotivated, bored, or hitting a plateau in your fitness journey.

More to discover with Calisthenics for Beginners:

- Why calisthenics is the best way to get and stay fit, above and beyond your physical fitness.
- A step-by-step guide on how to properly perform each exercise.
- The five most common misconceptions about calisthenics that turn most people away from it, and why you should resist the very thought.

- A beginner's training guide for your first week of training with progressive exercises.
- How to go from beginner to advanced calisthenics.
- A guide on rest, recovery, and your ideal diet to support your goals.

The truth is, you can leap from mountain to mountain to gain the best quality of your life yet.

Calisthenics for Beginners

*A Step-by-Step Program to Get
in Shape and to Build
Explosive Strength at any
Fitness Level Without Going to
the Gym*

Matthew Grant

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Introduction

Everyone starts as beginners with exercise before they achieve anything. This is true in any form of training associated with fitness. Yet many people feel inadequate to join a gym or even take on a training regime in the comfort of their own home.

Unless you possess knowledge on how to train to reach your goals, it can become very frustrating to persist to the point where you reach your physical goals. Your lack of knowledge results in frustration because you don't know how to achieve real results. This is especially true for anyone who wants to "lose weight." "Losing weight" is the wrong phrase. It should be replaced with "losing fat" because that's the sustainable way to shed pounds permanently. Regardless of the average person's goals, whatever it may be, there are a lot of people who specifically want to trim down and lose a couple of pant sizes. When I refer to a lot, it's more than you can imagine. The obesity rate in the U.S. was as high as 40% in 2019, with a slight increase of 2% in 2020. That's almost half of the country's population, and that percentage is only increasing over time (Galvin G, 2020).

If losing "weight" isn't a goal yet, it should be because of the health implications excess fat holds for a person in the long-term, and believe me, there are a lot of health problems that accompany excess visceral fat around the waist that negatively affect the body's organs. As you can imagine, any excess fat you have in your stomach area piles up on your organs, which places pressure on them, and requires them to function at a more difficult and strenuous rate. The more weight you carry around your waist, the healthier you are. Many people know this, which makes the fact that so many people eat bad things and don't workout. all the worse.

Perhaps one of the worst side effects of the repetitive cycle of trying to lose weight and quitting again and again is that many people lose hope. They eventually give up because they're

tired of trying or believe they don't have the facilities, or whatever it takes to get in shape. While giving up won't get you anywhere, there is something that absolutely can. It's calisthenics training, which is the perfect option for at-home exercise because it only involves using your own body weight. As a result of its simplicity, you can skip the gym—which most people seem to dread nowadays. Since you won't have to go to a gym, you can save money on the hefty membership that you did or didn't use, have fun getting fit and, finally, reach the aesthetic goals you've always wanted to achieve.

Today, there are countless information sources available on the internet about different types of exercise methods—including calisthenics—yet people still choose to go backwards with their health instead of discovering what works for them.

The fitness industry has changed over time. For the past century, fitness with the right health-based approach barely existed up until the 2000s. "Weight loss" trends changed practically every decade depending on what was considered healthy or unhealthy. With the boom of the fitness industry, people were drawn to gyms. If they didn't have access to a gym, there would be excuses not to exercise at all, resulting in many people avoiding it altogether. However, in the past decade, people have gone from not working out at all or working out primarily at the gym, to making an effort at home. That option is much more convenient for the majority of individuals who work jobs or have to be at home with their kids, or meet other daily responsibilities.

Given the rushed life our generation lives, calisthenics has become one of the most popular training methods implemented by people at home due to its effective and myriad results. However, many people are still so uninformed that they don't even know what the word "calisthenics" means, even if they've been performing exercises of this sort at home. This is evident with online workouts that incorporate different types of training methods. Since there are so many people who are yet to embark on an effective fitness journey, there's a lot

to learn, like understanding why it is important to maintain a mobile, healthy, and fit body.

This guide is primarily designed for beginners starting a journey to health fitness with calisthenics. It can be used to also progress to an intermediate or advanced level over time by correctly implementing the training procedures, avoiding injuries, focusing on goals, and remaining consistent with the recommended diet and exercise program.

Calisthenics is a form of exercise training consisting of a wide variety of repetitive movements with the quantity and difficulty depending on your fitness level—to achieve a specific fitness goal. These exercise movements are focused on large muscle groups and often combine two or more muscle groups at the same time to reap the most benefits, including cardio, strength, agility, performance, and flexibility. Movements are all designed to utilize your body the right way, and sometimes for the best effect, push it to the extreme to increase your fitness level, and challenge your body's ability to withstand strain, all to achieve the results you seek.

Jim Rohn, the entrepreneur and motivational speaker, once said, “Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live.”

This is something true and realistic enough for everyone to grasp.

You only have one body, and it's your responsibility to take care of it. It may not seem necessary to train your body when your doctor tells you that you are healthy, but it's actually more important to maintain your present physical well-being to support your future well-being than you think.

Take climbing stairs, for instance. You may think to yourself that it's not necessary to train your body to support this action, right? But what you don't know is that as you climb stairs, you are fighting a resistance that is three times your bodyweight. If your body is not strong enough, sure, you'll be able to get up the stairs, but you'll feel like hell when you reach the top.

This is a good example of how you go through your entire life. We move our bodies every day and require it to function as optimally as possible for us to go through life and our daily regimes or activities with ease. Whether it's something as advanced as lifting heavy furniture or pushing a car if it fails to start, or something as easy as bending to pick something up from the ground, you need your body to be able to do it with ease in every phase of your life. It is especially necessary as you get older when your physical strength and function start to degrade.

It's a fact that your body starts degrading after the age of 30. That includes your bones, muscles, and joints, which is why it is of utmost importance to rebuild to maintain your body after 30. Your bones start to degrade at the age of 35, and your lungs at the early age of just 20-years old. As you can imagine, your lungs are essential for breathing; they need to be particularly well-conditioned when you exercise. That's why starting a fitness regime as early as you can is the best thing you could do for your body, along with following a balanced diet.

The earlier you start exercising consistently, the easier it will be to achieve an improved bodyweight resistance ability and fitness. This prepares you for the decades to come while you are at the strongest physical phase in your life. Starting to exercise as early as your 20s is recommended since this will make it easier for you to train and maintain your strength and health as you transition into different phases of your life, but you can also start at any age. Even if you start after a certain age, starting now, no matter how old you are, is something you'll never regret. But you have to do it *now*. You can't wait for another fifty-two Mondays away. Time goes faster than you think, in the most positive way possible (Epstein A, 2008).

Calisthenics consists of bodyweight exercises, which include running, jumping, pushing, grasping, and countless other movements that force your body past its current state of strength. When you perform a workout, whether you are at a beginner, intermediate, or advanced fitness level, these

exercises literally break your muscles down and rebuild them during your recovery period. With exercise, you may feel sore after you've completed a session—especially with calisthenics, which focuses on specific muscle groups to the point of feeling “burnout.” Sometimes, it takes a day or two to kick in, but no matter how basic or advanced the exercises were, you will feel it. It's the feeling of improvement, even though it hurts at the moment.

Exercise is going to hurt for you to get to where you want to go and reach your goals. Nothing comes easy. If it did, it wouldn't be worthwhile, now would it?

It always shocks me how people don't recognize how significant bodyweight strength is in all they do every day, especially as one gets older. It's a fact that getting old happens to everyone. If you're healthy and fit at the age of 80 you will be less likely to fall and break a hip. That happens more often than you think to elderly people because they aren't strong enough to fight resistance, even with an activity as simple as walking or climbing steps.

Whatever your age, you should be encouraged to exercise to improve your quality of life because that's what exercise is mainly all about. You only have one body, and you have to look after it.

Benefits for the Body

1. Improves the ability to move.

Calisthenics is one of the most popular training methods to help you build strength in the body but, apart from that, it also allows you to practice moving in different ways to support everyday movements. That includes bending, pulling, pushing, and even walking or jumping. Other than that, it's perfect for improving mobility to reduce your risk of injury, aches, and pains. It can help you function optimally and is especially useful to keep your

body healthy if your daily routine doesn't allow much time for moving around.

Many people today follow a sedentary lifestyle. To many it's not even a choice as they are required to sit at a desk for at least a third of their day. Still, you need to find a way to move your body smartly in a short period during your day. Calisthenics can help you with that. It's so fast and effective that you can do it any time of the day, and even implement some moves, like planks or push-ups, twice a day to keep your body moving. The training experience supports your body functioning through your everyday life. It improves health, and physical appearance, which, as a result, makes you feel good.

2. Sustains long-term health.



Calisthenics makes you feel good and reduces health complications that can be caused by a variety of factors, including obesity, stress, mental health disorders, and family history. It can help you lose weight to combat all of these factors, especially obesity, which is one of the

biggest contributing factors for heart disease and diabetes in the U.S. today. It can also help you get better sleep at night, improve heart health, and reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes.

Since . calisthenics is an adequate training method for beginners due to its simplicity, it can suffice for any person at any weight or lack of fitness ability. Given the fact that it boosts your energy and improves many facets of your life, you'll be happy to know that it's fun too. Besides, results are addictive, aren't they? With persistence, that's precisely what you'll get, which will keep you motivated and on track.

3. Burns plenty of calories.

Combining various movements to make up exercises that you put together to create a workout, calisthenics allows you to engage some of your biggest muscle groups. Calisthenics is considered more effective for losing fat than traditional cardio methods because it burns plenty of calories. Along with engaging multiple big muscle groups, the harder you work during your workout, the more likely you will burn more calories.

As an example, if you weigh around 155 pounds, you can burn 167 calories with 30 minutes of beginner to moderate calisthenics, while someone who performs a moderate to a vigorous workout of 30 minutes can burn 298 calories (Burch K, 2020).

4. Offers convenience.

You can do calisthenics anywhere from your home to a park or gym. Wherever you can find a small open space to work out in, you can do it. It is great because it offers convenience for people who can't or don't like to leave their homes. Another major bonus is the fact that you also don't need equipment to do your workout. You can invest in some fitness gear to add extra weight or resistance to your workouts. You can even do it to spice things up, but it's not required, especially not for beginner training. The

one helpful thing you can buy for yourself, however, is a fitness mat to workout on the outside or if you're on tiles or wood. Other than that, you don't need anything. When you reach the advanced to intermediate phase and you want to make it very difficult, you can purchase some hand weights, training gloves, jump rope, pull-up bar, medicine ball, or resistance bands.

Chapter 1: Beginners Training

Implementing bodyweight training as a part of your fitness regime can help you achieve a wide range of goals, like improved health, specific fitness goals, and fat loss to sculpt your physique to achieve a fit look.

With calisthenics, you will accomplish a stronger version of your body with each passing week of training. Every little bit of progress adds to your improvement, so it doesn't matter how slow you go. With each workout, you have the opportunity to improve your physical possibilities. Since you push your body beyond its current capabilities, as a beginner, you need to have different elements aligned, like warming up properly to avoid injuries. You also have to remain focused on what you are doing and how you are doing it because if you don't, it could result in inadequate recovery or injuries that you don't want.

Not preparing your body by warming up correctly or cooling it down at the end of a workout can have serious implications for the proper functioning. Since you are practicing functional exercises, you must also learn how to perform them properly. Posture and flexibility are factors that play a big role in the performance and outcome of your workouts, along with your ability to do more challenging workouts over time. It only takes one workout using bad form to injure yourself, which could halt your progress for days, weeks, or even longer.

Calisthenics exercises should never feel strenuous to a point that you feel physical pain. Sure, you'll experience fatigue in your muscles, or perhaps you're so unfit that you'll feel like your lungs want to explode, but that's normal and will subside over time. Of course, there's also the post-workout soreness that can be combated with the right post workout regimen, like drinking a post-workout shake, eating meals rich in protein, and getting enough rest to recover.

Since calisthenics requires you to move your body in various directions, injuries can be common, especially for beginners. That's why you should take care when you perform them. Whenever you attempt something new, first do your research on how to do it properly to ensure you are maintaining proper form.

Warming up your body is necessary with any form of exercise, and that can be done in various ways to support anything from basic movements to more advanced movements. If your body is not used to moving in a certain way, it will not endure a workout well without proper stretching and correct form. Calisthenics is a strenuous form of workout because it targets multiple muscle groups at the same time. That depletes your ability to resist your own body weight much faster than something simple like walking on a treadmill. With walking, your body is getting cardio, which is good for your heart, but it doesn't break down your muscle fibers to rebuild bigger, sculpted, or stronger muscles like with calisthenics.

From what we generally know about fitness, it's better to focus on fat loss than weight loss because "weight loss" can refer to many things. That includes a combination of muscles, fat, and even bone density. It can also refer to the loss of water in your body, which makes you appear as if you've lost weight even if you haven't. It commonly occurs when you follow a yo-yo diet, juice cleansing, or cutting your calories significantly to lose weight fast. The problem with weight loss, which refers to the number of pounds on your scale, is that it can mean anything that may or may not be permanent and sustainable. It is the opposite of fat loss, which is decreasing your body fat percentage and replacing it with lean muscle gains, a recommended diet and fitness goal for anyone that wants to improve their health, strength, and physical appearance.

With most workouts, people just want to get through them. Nobody wants to spend a minute longer on a strenuous workout than they have to. It may be tempting to skip either your warm-up and your cooldown—which is as important as the warm-up—but that is when injuries occur. Before you start

your workout, you are not ready to perform at your best if you haven't activated your muscles at least a little. It's the same for cooling down. If you don't bring your heart rate down gradually after a workout, and you don't move at a slower pace for a while or stretch the muscles you've used, you won't get the most out of your exercise. Many people love working out, but many also dread it. The latter is especially true for those who are very unfit because it's uncomfortable to push yourself to a point of exertion to lose fat or gain strength. It's difficult but like anything great, if you keep doing it consistently you'll reap the rewards.

Calisthenics isn't considered the most difficult form of working out, even for beginners. However, it requires real resilience. That's because it has a physiological effect on your body that pushes you past your comfort zone. It almost makes you want to quit, which you should avoid. If you ever get injured, or struggle to recover from your workouts, or even lack results because you're not warming up or cooling down as you should, it will set you back and demotivate you. When you take on any type of training, you must be aware that you are not going to see immediate results, and the more fat you have to lose, the more uncomfortable losing it with exercise will feel.

Tips for Performing Beginner Exercises

- Take time to progress.

When you start calisthenics training, it will seem challenging at first. Depending on what your goal is, however, you may see significant results at the beginning of your journey, which can become very addictive. Calisthenics is a very impactful type of fitness workout that affects your brain and the entire body because it introduces your body to a new way of moving and stimulates your ability to learn new things. It is especially true in the case of doing combined movements that work

various muscle groups because you have to use your coordination abilities to perform it correctly.

When you start working out, it can be exciting. Well, for those who have already achieved some level of fitness, that is. If you are already fit, there's a good chance you're going to feel good doing calisthenics because it's challenging and has a higher-than-average intensity. If you're used to only jogging, your body's going to get a shock of "what is this?" from the wide range of bodyweight movements you most most likely have not performed before.

If you start calisthenics and are unfit, you may have a different feeling about it because it will be more difficult. If you are cardio-fit, you will only be exposed to the effect bodyweight training has on your muscles and joints, which you are not used to. If you are unfit and don't have any knowledge about exercise, then you may feel discouraged in the beginning. If you are used to bodybuilding but not cardio, it's also going to feel difficult to do calisthenics because of the intensity involved as you progress. No matter where you're at on your fitness journey, it's going to be challenging. All you have to remember is that it is a process, and you need to build a solid foundation by being consistent and disciplined with your training if you want to progress over time.

- Focus on your journey and don't rush it.

When you start any training method, it's going to feel great in the beginning because it feels like you're accomplishing something. But just like your focus at work shouldn't be to chase money, you shouldn't chase the idea of what you think you should look like with training either. It's important to have goals, and it's good to have goals specifically associated with fat-loss, weight, strength, or just how you look overall. But you need a healthy relationship with them because fitness is not something that can be rushed. There's no quick fix to get

you to your end goal. If you don't reach your goal in a way that's sustainable, you're never really going to reach it permanently. This is what you should keep in mind when you commence that first training session.

Another thing to keep in mind is that permanent results take time. Not a little time. It takes a lot of time because you're changing your body. If you have a lot of body fat to lose, it's going to require you to burn 3,500 calories per pound of fat that you want to lose (Mayo Clinic, 2020). Keep that in mind the next time you want to skip a workout, slack off, or eat something that's got more calories than you need depending on your goal. Burning body fat requires the perfect combination of clean eating and exercise to achieve your permanent results. It's going to take time, but don't slow it down by getting demotivated. It's only going to happen for you if you don't quit.

- Understand calisthenics for what it is.

When calisthenics gets talked about, people get confused. They don't always know what it is and often confuse it with other types of popular training methods. It includes high-intensity interval training (HIIT), or segments from other exercise types like Pilates or kickboxing because of the 10 minutes of bodyweight workout segment added into these workouts, but that's not it. Sure, the squats and push-ups added to these different styles of training are exercises taken from calisthenics. However, it's more about relying on your body weight to perform exercises. Even if you use some equipment like a pull-up bar or bench, it's still all you, and you have to fight the resistance of your own body's weight to perform calisthenics successfully. That's more difficult than people who haven't tried it can imagine. And the more weight you carry, the harder it is for someone that hasn't conditioned their body to resist weight. Calisthenics is the perfect combination of movement and strength. That means that it goes beyond strength.

The word calisthenics is derived from ‘Kalos’ and ‘stenos,’ Greek for beauty and strength. Beauty refers to a movement that is controlled at the joints, acting as a support mechanism for the strength we exude from our bodies. It is a good concept as we require both mobility and flexibility from our joints to carry out the strength aspect. If you don’t have a good range of motion, there’s no point in attempting a strength move as it will just result in injury. Again, without a foundation, you can’t progress. That’s why you have to first master the basics of calisthenics training.



- Accept that you are indeed strong enough.

Although it may not feel like it when you start or even as you progress from beginner to advanced, your body *is* strong enough to lift your own weight. No matter how much it is, you can do it. People get frustrated at the beginning of their calisthenics journey. The entire concept of calisthenics is focused on using your body to move through exercises while you resist your weight. This doesn’t seem helpful to people who practice weight training to build strength. But if you think about it, you’re using your *entire* body’s weight. If you work out for 20 minutes consistently, you’re supporting your weight in pounds for the entire duration. That’s hard work, but keep

in mind that it's hard for a reason. Imagine how much you will progress in your strength if you can get comfortable resisting the weight of your body. This is a point you'll reach before you can take on more advanced exercises, and it's an amazing feeling. That's what accomplishment for your body looks like. The number on the scale or your body-fat percentage is the icing on the cake. Besides, if you think about it clearly, your body doesn't know the difference between lifting a dumbbell and lifting your own weight. It's all the same. Only with your body, you're lifting more weight. Keep the right mindset. When you tell your mind that you are strong enough to get through your exercise for the day, you will be.

“It's when the discomfort strikes that they realize a strong mind is the most powerful weapon of all.”

- Chrissie Wellington, triathlete

- Protect your joints and body alignment.

The most basic form of calisthenics exercises include pushing, pulling, dipping exercises. When you become advanced, you take the basics and vary them with other moves that require more range of motion from multiple joints at a time, including a wider range of muscles and connective tissue, like tendons, and ligaments. It is something not typically experienced with weight training because you use more isometric exercises in calisthenics.

With calisthenics, blood flow increases to connective tissues as well as your muscles, but at a slower pace, which is why it takes your body longer to adapt to it than other training methods. When you perform exercises, it is important to protect your joints, including your ankles, knees, wrists, shoulders, and elbows. To protect your joints, you have to focus on the correct form. The same goes for getting your body alignment right. If you are used to machines, this will be a challenge at first, but with practice and building up your core strength, it will eventually happen with ease. The best thing you can do

during a workout is to keep your core engaged the entire time because this protects your lower back, which is one of the most common parts of your body that you can injure with incorrect form. By keeping your core tight, you will also be able to keep your body straight, aligned correctly from your head to your toes. Now, all that's left to do is follow the basic rules of alignment. That includes keeping your wrists under your shoulders and in a comfortable position, your elbows parallel with your hips (moving forward or backward), and your knees behind your toes aligned with your feet. When you perform exercises, it's also helpful to keep your glutes tight in combination with your core to gain better control of your body alignment.

- Keep to your safe range of motion.

When it comes to pushing and pulling, the shoulders must be your main focus because you are placing all of your body's weight on them. They are designed to push and allow for a wide range of motion, but supporting your body weight in movements is very strenuous and requires conditioned stability. Having stable shoulders should be your main priority when you start calisthenics, especially if you're planning on taking on difficult moves like push-ups. It should be something you focus on at the very beginning of calisthenics. When you start, it's good to practice hanging from a bar with your shoulders and building up to pulling your weight up gradually. Even if you practice hanging from the bar for a couple of weeks and perform reps to bring yourself half-way up for a while, it's a good way to stabilize your shoulders. Good shoulder stability is also required for pushing. Holding a plank on your hands is a great way to build stability over time. Before you practice push-ups, try a plank to ensure your base is correct.

- Practice hand balance.

Caution: Handstands are not for beginners.

Isn't it crazy that kids can do it, but adults struggle? Well, children don't exactly care about their joints. But as you get older, you start realizing what's potentially dangerous or damaging and what's not. Since you're an adult, you can now build up to performing a handstand or variations thereof by practicing hand balance properly. It's fun and rewarding to get your balance to a point where you can perform it with ease without falling over. Now, it is a challenge, but it's good to practice because nothing is impossible. Imagine if you take ten minutes a day to practice your hand balance. Where will you be in a couple of weeks? To do this, you can start by practicing frog stands. Over time, practicing your hand balance will become easier and also support other calisthenics moves. Apart from gaining balance with your body, you'll also build stability in your entire body and strengthen the muscles in your upper body.



- Enjoy every workout.

When you start training, you're not going to appreciate some of the exercise moves you have to do, and as a result, you may want to skip them. This is a mistake many people make. The exercises you don't like are, nine times out of ten, those that are challenging for you or difficult to perform. While you should make your training fun, that doesn't mean you should slack off on the hard stuff. With that said, making it fun can be accomplished in many ways, including with the help of a killer motivating playlist that gets you fired up. Listening to high-tempo music increases your physical fitness, which also increases the benefits of exercise. Ever wondered why dancing doesn't feel like exercise? You just enjoy it while breaking a sweat. Well, music is the reason. You're so focused on how good the music sounds that you don't focus on the difficulty of your workout, which also applies to any other training. So, make sure you've got a good playlist ready to go. To spice up your workout, adding equipment can also be fun, as well as choosing a location to work out in that you're comfortable with and enjoy. While not every workout will be easy to get through, exploring your bodyweight training ability by pushing your physical potential is very motivating in itself. You're only getting stronger, so enjoy the process.

Chapter 2: How to Warm-Up

As the most essential part of an exercise routine, your warm-up should consist of compound exercises followed by moving different muscles to increase blood flow. This is required to ensure you don't go into exercising with stiff muscles or cold joints. Stretching out your muscles actively before your main workout is significant to prepare your weak spots for what it's about to endure. If you know some specific muscles or joints need extra attention, like your hips, try moving through an active hip flexor stretch for more reps, switching from left to right. If it's your shoulders, engage in some arm swings. The same goes for many other parts of your body. The compound exercises are set in place to get your body moving slowly, such as jumping rope or doing a set of jumping jacks followed by butt kicks or knee highs, but your active stretch is what follows before you start your main workout. It doesn't have to be the following warm-up specifically. You can incorporate stretches that suit you best and work with 10 to 12 reps of each movement to make sure you are warmed up properly. You can even go above that, but if you do, make sure t you're keeping it active and not holding a stretch for too long. Move through them gradually as you don't want to overstretch your muscles either.

2-Step warm-up routine:

1. Incorporate a compound exercise or multiple exercises to loosen your muscles. You can do it in as little as 2 to 5 minutes by doing one or a combination of the following:
 - Shadowboxing
 - Jumping rope
 - Jogging on the spot
 - Jumping jacks
 - Cross-jacks

- Butt kicks
- High knees
- Cross overs

For example: Repeat x2 sets or change it up.

- 30 seconds of jogging
- 30 seconds of shadow boxing
- 30 seconds of jumping rope
- 30 seconds of jumping jacks
- 30 seconds of butt kicks

2. Incorporate active stretching with a range of stretches that focuses on different muscles and joints in the body to ensure you are warmed up. This is a perfect example of a combination of a stretching warm-up. It includes ten exercises, which you can replace with other stretches depending on what part of your body you will focus on during your main workout. The following compilation, however, is the best for stretching your entire body before a strenuous calisthenics workout.

Active stretch exercises:



- Exercise 1: Arm Swings

This is one of the best and simplest moves to loosen the arms to prepare you for the workout ahead, including your shoulder, elbow, and wrist joints. You can perform arm swings by swinging both arms around in circles. Either swing them simultaneously or one at a time. Focus on making the circles bigger with each swing.

Repeat forward arm swings 10x left and 10x right or 10x together.

Repeat backward arm swings 10x left and 10x right or 10x together.

- Exercise 2: Scapula swings

As you'll be pushing and pulling during a workout, you need to prepare the muscles in your upper back to perform the best in your main exercise moves. Although this movement may seem too basic to work, it prepares you for what's to come. Perform scapula swings by placing your elbows right in front of your chest with your elbows touching each other. Draw small circles with both your arms by focusing on retracting the scapulas (shoulder blades). Repeat this exercise forward and backward.

Repeat forward scapula arm swings 5x.

Repeat backward scapula arm swings 5x.

- Exercise 3: Band pulls

Resistance bands are great to have around but if you don't one, towels or a simple T-shirt works too! You can create as much resistance with something in your home than you could with the help of a resistance band. If you want the real thing, however, you can purchase one. They're easy to find and pretty cheap.

Perform the band pull by holding a resistance band or towel on both ends, holding it in front of your chest, and pulling it apart to retract your scapula. By pulling the band apart towards your chest, you will create resistance and stretch your scapulas properly.

Repeat the movement 10x.

- Exercise 4: Wrist and ankle circles

Perform the wrist circles to loosen up your wrists and ankles, which are two joints that, despite their small size, get used the most.

To do it, stretch your arms out in front of your chest, and squeeze both of the hands at the same time, but apart from each other. Follow this by creating circles with your wrists. Don't use your arms to do this movement, only your wrists. It must be performed on both sides in both directions.

Repeat inside wrist circles 20x.

Repeat outside wrist circles 20x.

Repeat inside ankle circles 20x.

Repeat outside ankle circles 20x.

- Exercise 5: Wrist stretch

Perform the wrist stretch to create space in your joints to perform your workout's main exercises with ease and safely.

The body position: Sit on your knees and place the hands in front of them with your arms straight. Place both of your hands with your fingers facing inward to your knees on the ground. In this position, slowly start to move your hips, first backward and then forward. The wrist-stretch is a three-part movement.

First part: Stretch with fingers that face towards the body.

In position, start with a wrist stretch with your fingers facing outwards (away from the body), then make circles with the body while maintaining straight arms Repeat it 10x.

Second part: Stretch the wrist by making circles.

In position, turn the hands around with your palms facing inward towards the face, and the fingertips facing outward on the mat, then make circles with the body while maintaining straight arms. Repeat it 10x.

Third part: Stretch the wrist with palms facing toward the body.

Repeat the second part, but with the hands turned inward, towards the knees, palms up. Repeat it 10x.

- Exercise 6: Scapula push or pull-ups.

To perform scapula push-ups, be aware that it's not the same as regular push-ups and that the point of this warm-up stretch is not to overwork the muscles before your main workout. The movement is small, but also quite purposeful for what you are trying to achieve by stretching your muscles before you attempt strenuous exercises. This move is particularly good to incorporate if you are planning on doing pushing exercises in your main workout, like push-ups. If you are going to do moves that require you to pull in your workout, there is a similar move you can do by focusing on the scapulas.

For the scapula push-up or pull-up, take a plank position. If you are a beginner, drop your knees. It will allow for the same effect. As with a push-up, contract your scapulas without dropping your arms. Keep the movement small and controlled.

Repeat the move 2x to 10x.

- Exercise 7: Dynamic Superman hold.

The Superman hold focuses on the muscles in your back and glutes. It's a good move for firing up your glutes specifically. This is the largest muscle group in the body and has to undergo a lot of strain during certain calisthenics workouts. That is true for any moves performed in the plank position, push-ups, pull-ups, exercises that incorporate weights or require you to hold your arms above your head for long periods to create

resistance. The Superman hold is performed by lying on your mat with your belly down and stretching your body out straight. The next step is to lift your arms straight in front of you and the legs at the same time while flexing the back and glutes.

Hold this position for 30 seconds, before crossing the arms underneath your face while keeping your legs lifted and moving them in and out 5x. Only complete this move once.

- Exercise 8: Jackknife tuck.

Stretching during your warm-up is all about engaging the major muscle groups of your body. The core is crucial because, even if you're not attempting any exercise moves specifically for your abs, you are working your core throughout the entire workout. When we refer to the 'core,' remember that it doesn't only include your abs, but also your back from the shoulders to the bottom of your spine. Firing up your core not only prepares your abs for the workout it's about to endure but also your lower back.

The jackknife tuck move is essential for doing just that. To do it, lie on your back, on the ground with your scapula and legs in the air like an inverted Superman tuck. Try to maintain a straight line with your body, and hold this position for 30 seconds. You should then follow it up by bringing your legs inside and then outside to open up your hips for five reps. After doing this, get into your starting position, tuck the knees in, and bring them into your chest. Keep your head in line with your knees and don't look down, as this will place strain on your neck.

Hover your body straight for 30 seconds.

Perform the dynamic leg exercise 5x.

Perform the dynamic knees toward the chest exercise 5x.

- Exercise 9: Lower-back cobra stretch.

Many people are familiar with the cobra stretch used in yoga practice. If you're not, you are in for a treat because once you do it, it feels like it's something your body needs.

You perform the lower-back cobra stretch by lying on your stomach. Bring your elbows into your sides, palms down underneath your shoulders and the fingers facing away from the body. Push your chest off the ground while keeping your legs on the ground and your feet flexed to create length in your body. Once you are pushing yourself from the ground, keep your eyes looking straight in front of you and lift your chest as far as you feel comfortable. By holding this stretch and flexing your feet, you should feel a nice stretch through your arms, chest, spine, lower back, and legs. Hold this stretch for 30 seconds, or repeat for 10 seconds 3x.



- Exercise 10: Shoulder stretch.

The shoulder stretch is similar to what you may have seen or experienced with yoga, with the cobra stretch followed by a child's pose. While this is not a child's pose, it can be considered as half a child's pose, as you move from the lower-back cobra stretch into this move. With your knees on the ground, shift your upper-body weight back as you would with a child's pose, but keep your glutes up

at a 90-degree angle with your upper legs remaining straight and your lower legs resting behind you. Place your arms straight in front of you and bring your head as far as you can to the ground. You will feel a stretch from your neck to your lower back.

Hold the stretch position for 30 seconds.

What It Does for Your Body

- Increases your blood temperature.

You may have heard the expression of “cold muscles” during a warm-up or “warming up the muscles to prevent injury or to get your heart rate up.” These things are valid. With a warm-up, your blood temperature increases which warms your muscles. It is the best possible way to avoid injury and is considered the foundation of a good workout. As blood temperature increases, the hemoglobin in our red blood cells can deliver more oxygen to our muscles. This makes oxygen more available for working muscles to improve endurance. You can see why warming up your body to perform the most effective workout is necessary.

- Changes your hormones.

Everybody knows that exercise affects hormones like cortisol and epinephrine, but how does skipping a workout negatively impact them? Well, cortisol and epinephrine are required during exercise because they are responsible for regulating your energy production. When you warm-up, a balance of the two significant hormones makes carbohydrates and fatty acids available to support energy, you can negatively affect your performance by causing your body to produce much less energy than it would otherwise. That means that you wouldn't be able to work out at your full capacity.

- Increases your muscle temperature.

Given that warming up the body allows blood temperatures to rise, muscle temperatures also increase, which improves and speeds up muscle contraction. When this happens, your body temperature increases and improves your muscle elasticity, improving speed and strength. Simultaneously, it reduces one's risk of injuring muscles due to overstretching when you perform exercises too fast. If you don't warm up your muscles properly—particularly the muscle groups you will focus on for the day—the cost can be expensive. Avoiding those five extra minutes to your workout for a warm-up could result in an injury that sets you back days, maybe weeks. Calisthenics should always start with a few minutes of warming up and end with a cooling down.

- Improves your range of motion.

At the start of an exercise session, it's not only your muscles that are cold. Your joints are too. If you know anything about moving your body, you know you require your shoulders, knees, elbows, and ankles to perform optimally during a workout. Warming up allows you to achieve the best movement potential you can, and eventually, with practice, extend beyond what you currently can do. If you start your workout cold, you risk injuring a joint, which causes inflammation that is both painful and requires plenty of recovery time.

- Dilates your blood vessels.

One of the essential organs in the body is the heart, yet there are still people who do all sorts of things that affect it negatively. When you perform a strenuous workout, your heart beats so fast it seems like it wants to jump out of your body. By warming up properly, your blood vessels dilate or expand, allowing for increased blood flow. Less stress is placed on the heart because your body is easing into the difficult part of your workout and not starting with a fast heart rate straight off the bat.

- Prepares you mentally.

When you start a workout without a warm-up, you struggle to get hyped up to do the exercise. You also risk losing motivation because you feel overworked too quickly into your workout. Warm-ups are crucial for preparing you mentally as it allows you to focus, clear your head, recollect your skills, and strategy. When you warm up, you still have time to think before you have to focus on the moves you have to perform. It is also a good time to take a moment and breathe to prepare yourself for what's to come. With it, you can relax your mind and build concentration to face yourself or your competition.

What Not To Do



1. Focus on macro goals over micro-goals.

Goal setting is significant if you want to achieve anything in life, especially with your body because, as we all know, it's a real process. There's no quick fix to get to where you want to go or achieve anything sustainable if you are not willing to put in the work every day to achieve it. To reach your goals, it doesn't mean you have to go hard with your exercise regime every day, but it does require you to develop small habits that have a bigger effect over

time. Of course, this takes time and can often be demotivating or frustrating for people who want immediate results. It falls in line with how necessary it is to set up smaller goals for yourself every day that will build up to a point of reaching your macro goal. You shouldn't have too many macro goals for your body. Instead, you should have many small goals and one big end goal. When your goals are too big, you will get discouraged because it takes a long time to see a physical difference in your body. Fat loss—is one of the biggest physical goals people are set on achieving—will require patience and persistence. That's why you need to focus on smaller goals. If you think you can set a big goal, such as doing plenty of pull-ups, but you have no upper-body strength, it's just not going to happen for you this week. It's going to take the right movements and exercises to build your upper-body to a point where it is ready to take on pulling your bodyweight up above the bar.

If you're a beginner, it's good to have one micro goal a week with regards to your body's physical performance. You can tell yourself that you are going to complete five 20-minute workouts in your first two weeks. Once you've achieved that successfully, you can make it 30-minutes five times a week or you could add another day of exercise to your weekly regimen. You can even try something you've never done before, like an exercise move that you feel like you don't have the strength to complete. Many people struggle with push-ups at the beginning of their fitness journey. So, start on your knees with 10 reps a day. Focus on your form, core activation, and breathing while you perform this move. Repeat it every day for a week, and then try a few more the following week. Eventually, you'll build up the strength and the resilience to do 50!

Many micro-goals with one macro goal = Massive gains over time.

Many macro-goals with too few micro goals = Giving up.

2. Forget about the elements in between.

Like warming up and cooling down is essential, flexibility, your pre-workout snack or shake, post-workout meal, overall diet, and recovery time are just as important. Many people will do their workout, maybe half-do a warm-up, sometimes even skip their cooldown, and then load up on carbs after the big, grand workout. When you exercise, there's a big chance that you're not totally in love with the idea of doing it every day. You will have days where you feel sore because of your previous workouts or stressed, tired, and unmotivated. There will also be times when you feel like eating anything in sight or feel like exchanging your healthy meal for an unhealthy one. It's okay. You're only human. Self-discipline is an incredible thing, but it's also difficult to maintain every day because you're not a robot.

Beginners particularly will find it hard to get through their workouts until they feel they are strong or fit enough to do it well. At any point in your fitness journey, it will take effort to get through your workout. Sometimes you'll feel like rewarding yourself with a doughnut after your workout. It's like you're telling yourself that, because you worked out, you can have it. There's nothing wrong with an occasional 'cheat' meal or snack. But you have to be mindful of all the elements around your workout; if they're not aligned, your workout won't mean much results-wise. If you aren't getting your nutrition right, warming up and cooling down your body properly, or not giving your muscle groups enough rest in between, you're just putting in the effort for nothing. It sounds terrible because when you break a sweat, it's something to be proud of. Indulging in the incorrect elements like the wrong food, a lack of sleep, substance abuse, or not taking care of yourself in other facets, is like a slap in the face to your fitness efforts. You have a goal or several goals, so keep it in mind and be mindful before and after

your workout. Make sure everything aligns. Otherwise, you won't see results.

3. Expect results too fast.

Expecting results too quickly is a common mistake that goes hand-in-hand with focusing on macro goals instead of micro goals. In either case, you are failing to move forward. You are moving backward in your progress and may even plateau. Like everybody else, we all want everything *now*. We live in a modern society that has led us to believe everything is immediately available. That's why people are drawn to quick fixes and search things on Google like "how to lose 10 pounds in one week," something that is not feasible for your body to achieve healthily and sustainably. So don't focus only on what you're trying to achieve, also appreciate where you are and what it takes for you to get where you want to be. Don't say that you want to be 10 pounds lighter on a certain date. It's great to have a goal, but if it's not realistic you will place a lot of unnecessary pressure on yourself. Someone who is 100 pounds overweight is going to lose a lot more weight at the beginning of their fitness journey than someone who only has to lose 10 pounds because of different factors to take into consideration. No two people's bodies work the same, so it's pointless to look at other people and expect the same results they've achieved. Be process oriented, not just results oriented. Focus on what you're doing every day to get where you eventually want to go. You'll progress and move a lot faster if you do.

4. Choose quantity over quality.

There's this misconception that you have to visit the gym for at least an hour a day to reap the most benefits or to see a physical difference in your body. It's something people used to do back in the day, with many focused on getting in an hour of cardio daily. Twenty minutes a day didn't seem like it could render the body any help at all. But walking on a treadmill for an hour a day won't help

you lose fat as efficiently as fast, dynamic bursts of exercise. The same goes for doing too many reps during a calisthenics workout instead of focusing on how well you are doing them. You can do a hundred squats, but if you are not engaging your legs, glutes, and core, you won't reap the results that you are working so hard for. If you are not standing correctly, if your knees are going past your toes, or your chest is not upright, and your glutes aren't sitting back as they should, then you can get injured too. Either way, you won't get the benefits of a squat and likely end up hurting yourself or burning out with nothing to show for it. This is without weight. Adding weight to your calisthenics moves and doing them incorrectly is even worse as you can easily hurt yourself so much that you won't be able to work out for days to weeks. Not many people know what calisthenics is before they either get informed about this specific training method or do their research about it. So essentially, most who attempt it are beginners and should first focus on getting their form right before doing a full workout. It's better to start with five squats or push-ups or any other workout move, and do them correctly than repeatedly doing them incorrectly, injuring yourself, and delaying your body's recovery time. When starting out, focus on quality reps before taking on more than you can handle. You'll save more time because you'll be building a foundation you can add on to.

5. Only focus on your strengths.

When we workout, we tend to prefer exercises that make us feel good and slack off on those that don't. To workout effectively, however, means to push your body and its muscles to the extreme threshold. If you want to build muscle, for instance, you have to push it past its threshold, meaning the point that is still safe but feels uncomfortable. The same goes for flexibility. If you want to become more flexible, it's going to hurt because you have to extend your muscles and joints beyond a point

that feels comfortable to you. Another good example is someone who is very unfit, attempting long periods of cardio. That's probably the worst of all because you feel like your lungs want to explode.

All of these instances are very uncomfortable, but pushing past them is the only thing that will allow you the space to grow.

What people often don't understand is that skipping any exercise because they're not good at it means they'll never be good at it. In the first place, the reason why it's so difficult to do it is because some of your body parts are weaker than others. That should be addressed and not skipped over or be less focused on. Eventually, you're going to progress past your beginner's stage, and you want to be fully prepared for the next phase of your fitness journey.

6. Compare yourself with anyone else.

This is a point that doesn't often get talked about. Since it's so easy to scroll through online photos and look at other people's bodies or progress shots nowadays, it can be easy to make all of the above-mentioned mistakes, including this one.

You know that you get told it often, but this is true: Most people on social media, especially Instagram, only post their best photos after taking hundreds of them. Influencers know how to stand, which lighting to use, and have their own make-up and camera gang following them around. They don't post the photos where they are bloated, tired, or having a bad day workout. No. They only post the good stuff, which probably took a long time to snap anyway. Other than that, fitness influencers, athletes, trainers, models, actors, and singers all have one thing in common that you don't. They all have the jobs that require them to look physically on point all the time. That doesn't mean you can't achieve it, but if you're working an office job and have plenty of other

responsibilities, you're not going to be hitting the gym for hours every day, and you're not going to eat a salad for each meal, and it's okay. The point is, whenever you do compare your body or progress to another person, make sure it is kind, loving, and realistic. Also, remember that you are on your own journey. It is unique to you, and it's your progress, which is all the more reason to be disciplined and dedicated, yet realistic. Don't hope to look like someone else. Just work hard to be the best version of yourself, with your body, you can possibly be.

Chapter 3: How to Prevent Injuries

Many false fitness beliefs have been taught over the years. Some gradually faded away due after being exposed as incorrect by fitness professionals. There are still some myths that people believe. One of these is that if you have an injury, you should stay off your feet and relax until you are recovered. Well, this may be the case with a neck injury, or if your doctor tells you to stay off your broken foot. Listen to your doctor, folks.

When you injure yourself, the presence of pain does not mean you are dysfunctional. With doctor's orders you should rest. But with exercise, you may experience the following body signals that indicate some form of pain, like:

- Decreased balance
- Lack of coordination
- Numbness in body parts
- Stiffness with movement
- Body cramping with movement
- Inability to catch your breath during exercise.

These are not a cause for concern, and you don't have to stop moving because of them. If you feel sore as a result of a pinched nerve in a sensitive place like your neck or back, you should see your doctor or wait it out a few days. Most of the time, however, it's not necessary to take the above-mentioned symptoms too seriously. All you have to do is continue your workout regime with caution and perhaps move through it a little slower, depending on how comfortable you feel working out with it.

Some of the most common workout injuries include:

- Sprained ankle
- Knee injuries

- Shin splint
- Shoulder injury
- Tendinitis
- Wrist sprain/dislocation

There are many more workout injuries, but these occur most frequently. They can be prevented by following simple steps that form a part of your fitness journey. By consistently making calisthenics exercises part of your workout, you create a fitness regime that requires you to consider the possibility of injury, especially as you progress. You have to progress gradually and carefully. You must check with your doctor before attempting any new exercise program. That is particularly recommended for anyone who is living with an illness, disability, or any physical constraints. If your doctor clears you for your exercise program, you can take your workout on with ease while being cautious about what you're doing.



Injury prevention steps to support your progress:

1. Don't skip one warm-up or cooldown.

This will be repeated several times because it is crucial to remember and implement. You have to walk before you can run. Well, consider your main workout running. Walk

a little before you run, then run before returning to walking. Many people do warm-up but skip their cooldown. While they gain brownie points for warming up, cooling down the body is just as important. Implementing both is the best way to prevent injuries altogether. Cooling down is as simple as walking for 5 to 10 minutes or practicing a 10-minute yoga routine after your workout.

2. Stretch your entire body.

When you perform calisthenics exercises, you will likely work every part of your body. Whether you jump, push, pull, lift, or hold, you will always engage your core, legs, lower back, and many other parts of your body. Even when you focus your workout on specific body parts, you still need to stretch everything else. So, make sure your stretching routine includes a variety of moves to prevent injury and increase flexibility so that you aren't as sore after your workout or feel limited with your next workout. During a warm-up, your stretch should be active, and you shouldn't hold positions for too long; however, with a cool down, you should.

3. Gradual is best.

Beginners, advanced, and intermediate exercisers shouldn't rush any part of a workout, especially the straining parts, because that's how injuries occur. If you're not familiar with an exercise move, learn how to do it before you try it. It's often helpful to practice new exercise moves in front of a mirror to ensure that your posture is correct. You can also ask a friend to look at your posture and form to ensure you are doing it correctly. Don't forget to inhale and exhale where it is necessary, and breathe per rep so that you exert the force of the exercise properly. For instance, when you are performing mountain climbers, inhale in a plank position with your feet together, and exhale as you bring one knee to your chest. When you put it back together, inhale again, and repeat. Where you exert your muscle is when

you should exhale. Once you get your form and execution right, you can build up the number, intensity, and frequency of reps.

4. Mix it up.

When you become repetitive with your workouts, exercising certain parts of your body, your body gets used to it—and not in a “it’s getting boring” way.

Your body builds up a resistance towards progress and then stops progressing altogether. Whether it’s fat loss or muscle gain, your body will have a slower reaction to workouts it has become used to. It also occurs when you overuse your muscles, which is why you shouldn’t repeat working the same muscles too frequently as this will lead to repetitive-use injuries like tendonitis and shin splints. To vary your workout, you can switch up calisthenics by focusing on different body parts or switch it up with different types of cardio and strength training. Consider doing three calisthenics workouts a week with one day of strength training and one or two cardio workouts, like running, cycling, or swimming. Be sure to push yourself at some point in each of your workouts.

5. Be aware of your weak spots.

If you’ve exercised consistently or tried various workout moves before, you are aware that the one side of your body is weaker than the other side. This indicates you are using one side of your body more than the other. To address this, you should focus on getting the same number of reps on both sides of your body. Don’t slack off on your weaker side. Any imbalance in strength in your body impairs your posture and your ability to do basic things with ease, like carrying a bag or walking up a hill. One body part that is often not focused on enough is the lower back, which like everything else, can be strengthened with the right movements. Even though you don’t think it’s weak, it—along with your core—needs to be exercised to resist injuries caused by exercise or daily

activities. If you've had an injury before, or are living with a condition like arthritis in a specific body part, check with your doctor to determine what you can and can't do. In this case, don't exert any part of your body that has been damaged before or doesn't function as optimally as it should.

6. Your body speaks. Listen.

The best way to improve your body and find a harmonic balance with it is to listen to it. When you eat dairy products but feel sick afterward, it's probably an indication that you should stop eating dairy products, right? The same goes for eating gluten, certain fish, or anything else that makes you feel unwell or uncomfortable after. The same goes for exercise. Sure, you should push past the feeling of being uncomfortable during a workout, but if you still shouldn't push yourself past the point of pain. There's good pain and bad pain, and when it feels like unbearable pain, your body is trying to tell you to slow down. In this case, take a rest day.

7. Fuel up.

Eating the right food for your body is necessary if you ever want to progress with your goals. Two common goals, fat loss and muscle gain, especially require you to eat the right foods. You should eat a balanced diet that focuses on the perfect ratio of protein, carbohydrates, and fat, depending on your health and fitness goals. The more intensely you train, the more calories you should take in. Before, during, and after your workout, you should also drink plenty of water to hydrate your body properly. To do this effectively, drink 20 ounces of water two hours before your workout, 8 ounces every 15 minutes during your workout, and 8 ounces 30 minutes after your workout. Apart from hydrating properly, don't eat too much before your workout. The only thing you should be eating is a snack. Some people manage to feel energized with just a cup of coffee. But if you need real fuel, opt for something small and simple, like a banana or pre-workout

shake. Don't workout with a full stomach or an empty one, especially if you're planning on doing an intense workout. After your workout, you should also be mindful of what you do. Since you have depleted your energy stores during the workout, you should replenish it within 30 to 60 minutes after you finish. The best source of fuel, in this case, would be a healthy carbohydrate combined with a portion of lean protein.

8. Ask a trainer.

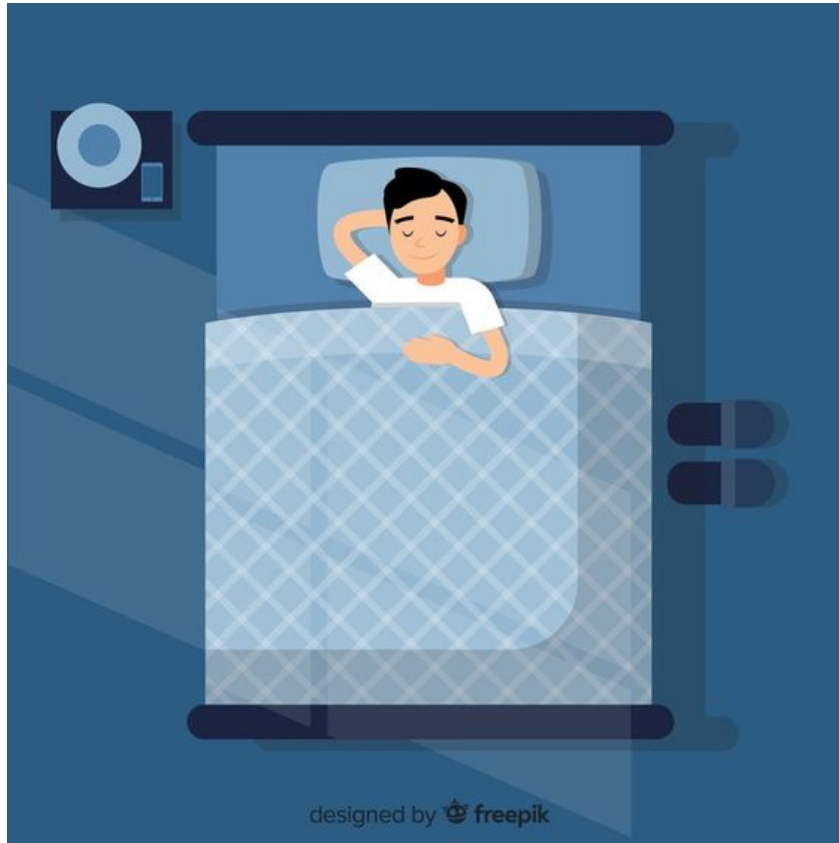
Sometimes, beginners need a little extra help to ensure they're performing their workout correctly. You don't generally need a personal trainer when you are attempting calisthenics but it can be helpful to get an expert's opinion before you attempt it, particularly exercises you feel uncertain about or may have injured yourself with before. Visit a personal trainer to determine how to perform calisthenics exercises properly. It's better to know how to do exercises correctly during the beginning stages of your fitness journey than doing it incorrectly, injuring yourself, and slowing your progress over time. Consulting a trainer can help you create a realistic and safe approach to calisthenics exercises, particularly if you have existing injuries.

9. Dress the part.

If you're going to wear shoes that are not made for running, you're going to wreak havoc on your legs and cause shin splints or ankle sprains. If you're going to attempt bodyweight exercises without proper training shoes, you also won't be able to perform calisthenics exercises properly, which will halt your progress. Apart from proper footwear, there is also such a thing as having proper workout clothing. Depending on the workout you do, you're going to need comfortable, durable, and breathable workout clothing. Getting workout clothes that make you feel good is also a plus, because if you look good, you feel good. Even though you will finish your workout sweaty and in need of a shower, looking the part

is motivating. Choosing workout clothes that are not too restricting, loose, or uncomfortable will improve the quality of your workout and prevent injuries as a result, especially with regards to your shoes.

10. Rest to recover.



If you do an adequate workout that pushes your body, your body is bound to feel sore afterwards. While it isn't necessary to stop working out for a day or two because of the soreness, you should take one to two days a week to rest. It's for your own good because when your body gets pushed beyond a point of being comfortable, muscle fibers break down and need time to rebuild. For this reason, you also need to get enough quality sleep, which is the time when your muscles, along with your entire body, recovers for the next day's activities and workout. A lack of sleep impairs your recovery and makes you more prone to injury, just like skipping your rest day does. If you don't like rest days, consider simply being active on those days by going for a walk or riding your

bicycle to run an errand. You can also consider doing a relaxed yoga stretching routine to stretch out your muscles.

Top Mistakes to Avoid Starting Out

- **Bad form and poor habits.**

Every type of exercise move, whether it has variations or not, requires you to pay attention to a specific type of form. For instance, if you work your legs, whether it's a variation of a squat or lunge, your knees should never go past your toes. Your lower leg should remain in a straight line from your knees to your ankles. If you move your knees past your toes or too close to them during exercise moves, you could damage your knees permanently over time. If you feel pain or strain in your knees, you should stop what you're doing. Many people that have been training in gyms for years still don't know how to do squats and lunges safely, even though they are two of the most popular workout moves in calisthenics. Besides your knees, your back can get injured if you don't maintain proper form. It's the same for any other exercise move. While squats and lunges are easy to learn, there may be exercise moves that you struggle to do. In this case, you should always start with the most basic form of the move, which is usually presented as the modification. By doing this, you can focus on the most basic elements that make up the move. By understanding which muscles it works and which ones to engage, you can do the amount of reps comfortable for you before progressing to a full set of the move. After that, you can try a few reps of the advanced version until you also work your way up to the full set. The same with the intermediate level.

- **Working in progressions to perform the complete exercise.**

Not everybody can afford a personal trainer, right? They can be quite expensive. The same goes for joining a gym.

By attempting to reach your health and fitness goals at home, the number one place where you will probably find inspiration is Instagram, among other social media platforms. Health and fitness are two of the biggest topics on social media. While social media can inspire you, it can also lead you to make many mistakes. Just as Instagram influencers only show you the best version of themselves, social media exercise practitioners do the same. Take a handstand, for instance. If you attempt a handstand now, without practice, balance, or the knowledge of the proper form, you won't be able to do it. You could end up injuring your neck because beginners tend to put their weight in their neck. Since your neck is heavily involved in this move, you should attempt it with ease and plenty of knowledge. So, while the fella on Instagram, with his ripped body, looks great doing a one-arm handstand, it's not recommended for you to do at home, especially not in your beginner stage of fitness.

- Only exercising in your home.

This book is primarily a guide for doing calisthenics at home. But just because you're working out at home does not mean you can't take it outside, to the beach, or a park with your friends. Even if you only do calisthenics in the comfort of your own home, you can still do other activities when varying workouts in other settings. Outside areas are always great because you're less likely to feel like you're working out. If you jog by the beach for 20 minutes, there's a big chance that you'll enjoy the scenery and fresh air. It will also inspire you to do more at home during your calisthenics workouts. If you're comfortable in public, you can also take your calisthenics workouts to public settings outside, like parks, because it's fun!

However, not everybody feels comfortable exercising in front of others. That's why they prefer not going to a gym. In that case, you can do your leg lifts in your living room. Just keep it creative and fun.

- Not considering your hands.

We do so much with our hands. Without them, we wouldn't be able to function. That's why it's important to look after them. Even with exercise, you need it to lift your entire body weight, and whether you use your hands directly, your elbows, or lie on your stomach or back and use it in some way, you are going to need them to work. If you don't have a yoga mat or you're on rough terrain, invest in a pair of gloves to protect your hands. This is also a great option for people who have sensitive hands or get hurt easily. If you don't use gloves, over time calluses can form on your hands, which most people don't want to have. If you do develop calluses or already have them, you can soak your hands in warm water. This will soften the skin around the calluses and remove the dead skin once it softens. If your grip is prone to slipping during your workouts, you can use climber's chalk on your hands, which will help you perform better throughout your workout.

- Underestimating wrist flexibility.

A common mistake many exercise newbies make is to over-extend their wrists. If you're in a standard plank position on your hands, keep in mind that your wrists are holding your full body weight, and the more you weigh, the more strain they will have to endure. Given that our wrists are quite small in comparison to other joints, we need to take extra care when we use them during our workouts. Take a side plank, for instance. Just like a regular plank on your hands, you position yourself to the side and stack your feet. Still, you are holding your body up with your hand, which is attached to your wrist. So, all of your weight sits on your wrist. If it's not in the right position, it will place a lot of strain on the wrist, which is why you have to keep it directly underneath your shoulder, and in a comfortable plane—something many people neglect to do. The same goes for handstands, plank variations, and pull-ups. Apart from focusing on

proper form, you also have to consider the strength of your wrists. If they are weak, you can increase their strength with the help of a dumbbell. You can start out light with a 1- to a 2-pound dumbbell and work your way up to a heavier one. You can use it to make figure 8's by holding one at both ends with your hands, like a hammer, and rotating it into the shape of an 8, with the one half on your right side and one half on the left side. Another option would be to hold a softball in one hand and squeeze it hard. You can squeeze it for a couple of seconds before releasing it. Repeat it 10 times, 2 to 3 times weekly.

How to Treat Calisthenics Injuries

Calisthenics training includes rehab principles that you can implement when injured so you can continue to exercise despite being hurt.

The principles include:

- Joint distraction—The distraction of a specific joint with calisthenics training. The purpose is to increase its healing and fluid circulation.
- Proprioception—With neuro-muscular disorders, people can lose their ability to sense joints in their position, which helps one move workout injuries with more ease.
- Sensory input—The ability to feel things in contact with the body, like our mind to muscle connection, which can be taught with the help of calisthenics training. It's effective for improving sensing ability for a specific movement to improve the function.

That's why adding calisthenics to your fitness regime is a good way to deal with the injury pain. The point is not to endure pain with calisthenics, it is to help you move through it with ease and safety without making it worse. For instance, if you

have a wrist injury, you can still train your legs and core, but with taking caution with your wrists.

The truth is, even if you've never been injured before, there's always a possibility of getting injured. When it happens, you have to know how to treat it. To prevent it from getting worse, the best thing you can do for yourself is to follow the RICE method.

Rest the body part that is injured.

Ice your injury to combat the swelling, inflammation, and bleeding.

Compression should be applied with a bandage to reduce swelling.

Elevate your injury to reduce swelling.

As you can see, this is a simple method for treating your injuries, yet many people turn toward passive treatment instead because they think they need additional help to treat their injury. Passive treatment includes electrotherapy, TheraGun, trigger point therapy, posture correction belts and straps, and surgery. Some of these passive treatment options treat pain but don't treat the dysfunction of the injured body part. Surgery is also considered a very extreme option, one that shouldn't be entered into if there is another way for you to implement active treatment and see results.

Active treatment will treat pain and the dysfunction you've endured with injury, eventually restoring your full mobility. The RICE method is the best active treatment because apart from decreasing pain and treating dysfunction, it makes you feel stronger in movements, makes you resistant to your previous dysfunctions, and allows you to move much better than before.

Steering away from passive treatment, apart from the RICE method, you can take nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications like ibuprofen which can help with the pain until your swelling goes down and the injury gets better. It's not recommended to take it daily for more than two weeks,

however, which is something your doctor will inform you about, along with the daily dosage you're allowed to take for your level of pain. With most injuries, pain typically doesn't last that long, and injuries heal within four weeks. Should your injury be so severe that it does not improve after the first week or continues getting worse, it's necessary to seek medical care. Since injuries are normal, they are not something to be concerned about. Yet it's necessary to use your common sense and not place strain on them or endure the pain until it potentially passes. Generally, when you injure yourself, it's necessary to visit your doctor because even if your injury is light, he or she can advise you on whether it's safe to continue with your daily activities and exercise. The last thing you want to do is prolong your healing time or damage a body part permanently. So be sure to visit your doctor, refrain from placing stress on the area injured, and stay active at a comfortable rate to help you heal faster. Once you are fully recovered, getting back into your exercise routine will seem exciting but not as easy because you've endured an injury. So, take it easy with basic or modified workouts, and don't push yourself for the first few weeks of restarting your exercise regime.

Chapter 4: 5 Exercises to Start Calisthenics

1. L-Sit



The L-Sit is an exercise move that often gets mistaken for being easy. It's not. It is, however, the perfect beginner calisthenics training move as it can help you build strength in your body to support other moves. Since all calisthenics exercises make use of body weight to build strength, it's quite necessary to become strong in your body. The L-Sit is a lifting and stability exercise, and the perfect move to build strength in the entire length of your arms, including your wrists, biceps, triceps, and shoulders. It also builds strength in your legs with the help of your core, which acts as a stabilizer to support the weight of your legs. For this exercise, the weaker your core is, the more difficult it will be to lift your legs and to keep them steadily elevated. Since you have to keep your body in an upright position with your legs lifted, you are fighting resistance, it also strengthens and sculpts your abdominal muscles, stabilizes the pelvis, spine, and

transfers strength to the limbs, which safeguards you from a potential injury. By strengthening your core with this move, you are improving your back and making it stronger by focusing on good posture. When your core is strong, it allows you to do everything else with ease, including some of the most difficult calisthenics moves.

The L-Sit seems impossible to do when you first try one, but it's really good for beginners starting with calisthenics because it has many variations that you can practice based on your ability and strength. With practice, it becomes easier to perform, so don't worry if you struggle in the beginning. It may mean that you need to strengthen your core more, which can simply be done with the help of core-centric exercises, like holding a plank or boat exercise daily.

The difficult part of the L-Sit reveals itself the longer you have to hold the position. Given that you're not performing reps, but holding it steady for a set amount of seconds, you are bound to start shaking after a while. That just means it's working, and that you should try to resist the urge of coming out of your position. Hold it for as long as you can until you struggle to maintain your posture. You should never stay in a position once it compromises your form.

You don't need equipment to perform an L-Sit, but for variations you can invest in some type of parallette, like a dip bar. Alternatively, you can also perform the beginner variations of this exercise move with two parallel boxes or benches that are the same height.

- How to do it: Exercise mat or floor

Keeping your arms straight, place both hands on the surface of the equipment or floor, and lift your legs. They should be straight and parallel with the floor, so that you make an L-shape with your body. When you do this, keep your shoulders back and down,

with your chest lifted and your back straight. keep your eyes straight ahead and your neck neutral.

Your ideal beginner L-Sit: Start with 10 seconds and see if you can progress gradually by adding 5 seconds with each progression.

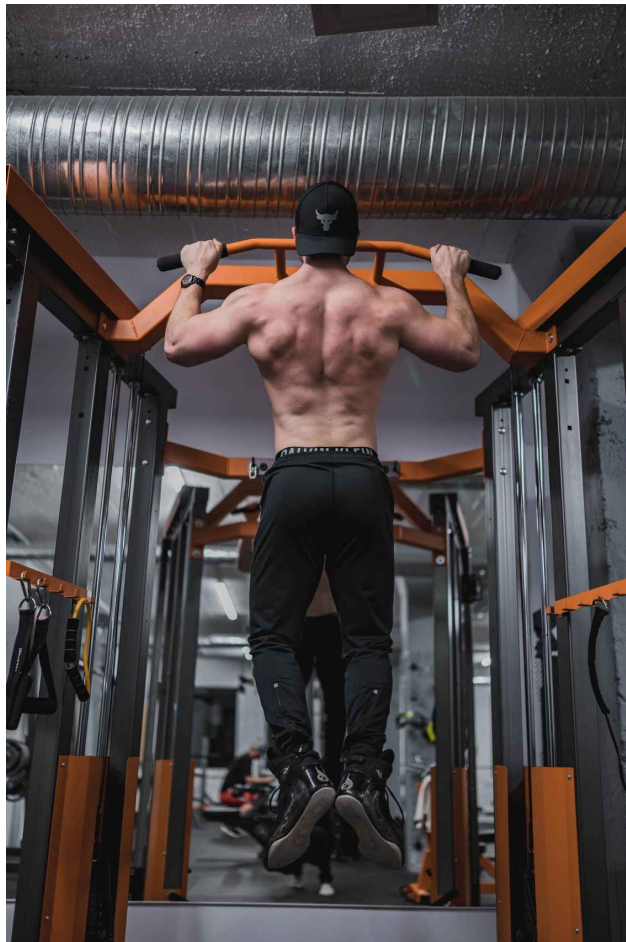
- How to do it: Parallettes, boxes, or benches.

You can use any of these to do the L-Sit. Since this is a beginners guide without equipment, the mat or any ground surface is good to start with, but if you do have boxes/crates or benches available, you can use them. Just make sure they are parallel with one another and stable enough to support your balance. If you have access to an outside gym at a park, you can even get creative and use the gymnastic poles or monkey bars, but this requires a lot of practice perfecting the L-Sit before you progress. Another option is to buy a dip bar, which is also a good progression after you've perfected the L-Sit on the exercise mat or ground before taking it to the park. When you use boxes, benches, or parallettes, align them so that you can get a narrow grip that is less than shoulder width apart. You should be able to stand in the space between the two pieces of equipment you choose so that you can find the proper placement of your palms on both sides, while still ensuring they remain under your shoulders. Then, you should straighten your arms, lock the elbows at the sides, pull your shoulder blades down (away from the ears), and engage your lats. Follow this by pushing down steadily into your palms while engaging your core tightly, and lifting your legs together into a straight position off the floor. They should be parallel with the floor. If this is too difficult you can first practice by only lifting both of your knees until you feel comfortable extending your legs. Remember that the L-Sit combined with

equipment is a progression from the beginner version of the L-Sit.

Your ideal progression L-Sit: For one rep, 30 seconds on, 30 seconds rest, which can progress to 45 seconds on, and 1 minute of rest.

2. Pull-Ups



This is one exercise move in calisthenics that many people want to be able to do, but so few can do. Whether it's quitting too soon due to its difficulty, not getting the form down, or accepting that one simply can't do it because of a lack of upper-body strength, there are many reasons why people fail to do it. However, it is an exercise that everybody who exercises wants to be able to do with ease. For men, it's a proud feeling to be able to perform a few sets of it. For women, it's another level of achievement in proving that they too can accomplish this upper-body strength move that has been considered a men's exercise move for a long time. That's because men tend to have more upper-body strength than women naturally, yet nothing is impossible with persistent training. The same goes for the men who believe they

can't do it. Pull-ups is a very discipline-oriented type of move. You have to practice it often, but also prepare your upper-body and core strength for it. It's one of the best exercises to perform to achieve greater upper body strength and, with variations, core strength. It can literally give you that ripped look that you've always wanted. That's how powerful it is, which is probably also why it's so difficult to do.

To do pull-ups correctly and with ease. requires you to first start practicing beginner moves so that you can transition to the difficult exercise move that is pull-ups. When you perform it, you must pay attention to your body, not push yourself too hard, or neglect being mindful about the areas the pull-up allows you to work. If you are mindful, you will perform it slowly and with control. Apart from working your abdominal muscles, it also works your biceps, triceps, scapula, trap, pectoral, and lat muscles.

- How to do it: Indoor and outdoor pull-up bar

Beginner—To start, you can hang from the bar. You can purchase an indoor pull-up bar or visit an outdoor multi-gym in a park and use an elevated bar to do the same. This is referred to as the *flexed arm hang*, which is your starting position. Cross your ankles to prevent your legs from swinging and to create stability in your form. Since this exercise move is not focused on your legs, you will focus more on your upper-body and core to perform it correctly. If you can't reach the bar easily, place a box or step below the bar to reach it more easily in the beginning. When your hands are placed on the bar, your palms should be facing forwards with the direction of your body. With your hands gripped, pull yourself up using your arms while moving your gaze slightly up to the bar.

As a beginner, you can start with half a pull-up, which only requires you to lift yourself to the point

where your elbows are flexed. With progressing to a full pull-up, you can lift yourself higher to a position where your chin is above the bar. With your elbows in a flexed position, hang for as long as you feel comfortable, and gradually increase the duration and progression until you can do complete pull-ups.

Progression 1: To do pull-ups with ease over time, you are going to have to build arm strength. This can be done by practicing a dead hang. You can do this by placing a chair underneath the pull-up bar for your arms to reach the bar to start. Grabbing the bar using both of your palms still facing to the front, pull yourself one inch, and move both elbows to your sides while pulling your body up. When you do this, bend your knees while lifting your feet from the stool. Hold this position until you feel uncomfortable. Don't let your shoulders raise up when you are performing dead hangs. If it does, it's an indication that you need to build strength before attempting pull-ups altogether.

Progression 2: The second progression will require you to lower your body at a slow and controlled pace. Once you've reached the point of being able to pull yourself up into a full pull-up, you can start practicing lifting yourself up and down. This is where the chair will come in handy, because after you pull yourself into a pull-up, you will descend to place one foot on the chair while keeping the other straight. Don't stop when you touch the chair with your one foot, keep descending and bend the knee of the foot that is on the chair until your arms are straight. Then pull yourself back up while straightening your leg. Alternate sides, and keep doing it until you can lower your body very slowly to maintain control. If you're falling or moving down too quickly, you're also not ready for pull-ups.

Advanced progression: At this point, you will start with chin off with pulls, followed by negative pull-ups that transition into rows, and then, full pull-ups.

Your ideal progression pull ups:

Beginner—Start with a few sets of 20 to 30 seconds and take 1 to 2 minute breaks between each set. Perform this daily.

Progression 1—8 Reps lowering the body for 2 to 3 sets, resting 1 minute between sets. Perform this every two to three days.

Progression 2—Combine beginner and progression 1 and add the necessary breaks. At this stage, you will be able to do a pull-up with ease, which means you can increase the reps to 12 to 15 for 2 to 3 sets with 1 to 2 minutes break in between.

3. Push-Ups



Most people fear attempting push-ups because they are very conscious about how they look when they do it, especially because most do it incorrectly or can't do it at all. If you have either of these concerns, lucky for you, you can perform push-ups in your home before taking it to the beach, the park, or trying it out as a challenge with other people. Don't ever be embarrassed about what you look like when you do it because everybody starts, or started, somewhere, in their fitness journey. Nobody got it right the first time either, so there is nothing to worry about.

Some people loathe push-ups, while others consider it to be their favorite exercise move. Once you get it right, who knows? You may learn to like it too. Until then, appreciate it for what it is, the optimal strength moves not only upper-body, but the full-body once you progress. When you perform beginner push ups, note that it's called 'beginner' for a reason. You can drop down to your knees to modify in the beginning. Don't attempt a push-up in a plank position if your body isn't there yet. Push-ups can help you build strength, and is the exercise move that you want to incorporate into your workout to focus on upper-body strength as it works your biceps, triceps, shoulders, traps, and chest. It's also considered a core exercise as you have to flex your core muscles throughout the entire exercise and maintain a straight line in your back without dipping your stomach to the floor.

How to do it:

To begin, get onto your hands and feet in a plank position, ensuring your body is in a straight line before dropping to your knees for the modified version of the push-up. When you drop to your knees, even though your body isn't parallel to the floor, you still have to maintain a straight line from your head to your glutes. It will prevent you from leaning forward or backward and putting your weight in your shoulders or neck as you ascend and descend. Keep your elbows at a 45-degree angle as you descend into the push-up position. While you descend, keep your abs engaged to protect your back and squeeze your glutes. This will help you perform the push up correctly. Perform the push up slowly. When you descend, don't touch the ground with your stomach or chest. Push yourself back up once you get close to the floor. It is recommended to perform a beginner push up on your knees until you perfect the form and perform the modified version with ease before taking on the standard version.

Progression: Transition from your knees to your feet in a plank position while maintaining a straight line from your head to your toes, and your feet slightly apart. Repeat the same exercise in a plank position.

Your ideal beginner or advanced push up: 3 Sets of 8 to 12 reps.

4. Dips



If you want to work out the back of your arms or get started with any basic arm exercises to sculpt them, then this is the calisthenics move for you. While there are different types of exercises you can do to combat trouble areas on your arms—or what some may call “chicken wings”—incorporating tricep dips are the easiest way to tackle stubborn fat on your arms, build strength, and lean muscle tone. If you are not used to exercising, you are probably very weak in your arms. Tricep dips require no weight except that of your body, as with all calisthenics exercises. The beginner version requires an exercise mat, so grab it or find a soft but stable surface to perform it on. If you don’t like the mat option, you can also perform it with the help of a chair or a step. During this exercise, you won’t only focus on working out your triceps, but also your shoulders and legs. Why do you want to work your triceps? Well, apart from doing weights, you have to find a way to create lean muscles, which is the best way to get rid of fat on the arms. Exercising this specific muscle consistently can help you diminish arm fat over time. Since we don’t believe in spot reduction, it’s best paired with cardio in your fitness regime, of course.

How to do it:

Pick your surface. It can be an exercise mat/ground, step, or a chair/bench.

Beginner: On the mat, you can sit with your legs in front of you, and your arms to your sides, but slightly behind you with your fingers facing toward your feet. Ensure your arms are directly underneath your shoulders and not too far back on the mat or ground surface. Lift your glutes from the floor into a bridge position while keeping your arms straight and maintaining a tight grip with your hands on the surface. Balance with your legs straight on your heels. With your arms straight in position, keep your body in a straight line from your head to your toes, and descend your elbows to bring your glutes towards the floor, but don't touch it. Then, ascend your arms into a straight position again lifting your glutes back up into a bridge. Perform the tricep dips slowly, inhaling in the starting position, and exhaling as you descend.

Progression: With a step, chair, or bench.

Position both hands shoulder-width apart on your step, chair, or bench, and slide your butt off the seat to the front while keeping your legs extended in front of your body. Straighten both arms while keeping a slight bend in the elbows to maintain tension on the triceps and off the elbow joints. Then, by moving your elbows slowly, bend them lower to the floor. You should bend your elbows into a 90-degree angle and keep your back close to your step, chair, or bench. Press down into your bench to return to the starting position by straightening the elbows to complete one rep.

Your ideal beginner or advanced dips: 3 sets of 15 to 20 reps.

5. Pistol squats



Squats are generally the most common, basic, and effective full-body exercise moves, and learning how to do them correctly can significantly aid in your knowledge about how to do a wide variety of calisthenics exercises. Although progressions are more difficult, if you can learn how to do the most basic form of a pistol squat effectively, you can build the strength and resistance to also progress to doing the variations with weights. The rule about squats is that they're great, but only if you know how to do them properly. A common problem with this popular calisthenics move, which gets used in multiple types of training, is that many people don't know how to perform it properly. Squats are popular because they act as a base move to progress to maintaining proper posture during your entire workout. When you perform it, you have to be mindful of many different areas of your body, including your lower back, hips, glutes, knees, foot placement, neck, chest, and core.

Even if you've done squats before, there is a big chance that you are either not doing them correctly or not getting the most benefit from them that you possibly can. It's

always good to take the time to learn how to do them properly, especially if you're a beginner. It's safe to say that pistol squats are a challenge compared to regular squats because you only perform them with one leg. It is considered an advanced calisthenics strength move, and requires that you know how to first do a regular squat with proper form and ease. These advanced squats test your core strength, muscles stabilizers, and the strength in your entire leg from your glutes to your ankles. Needless to say, you have to get it right to prevent injuring yourself as the progression needs you to go quite low and maintain control.

How to do it:

Beginner: Once you've nailed a regular squat, you can try a beginner version of a pistol squat, and eventually, build up to an advanced version. To begin, stand with both feet parallel together. Continue by extending your arms straight in front of you with your palms facing each other and keeping your fingers straight. Extend one leg in front of you as straight as possible while bending to a comfortable position with your other knee. Your leg must still be straight. Keeping the core tight and the back straight, progress by bending your knee even further, lowering to the ground. The opposite leg must remain extended and straight in front of you for the duration of the entire rep. The bending leg should remain flat to accomplish proper form. Bend with your knee as far down as possible, or to the point where your extended leg becomes parallel with the floor. Hold it for a second, and straighten your standing leg back up slowly, while keeping your opposite leg still straight and extended in front of you. Once you've completed one rep, alternate sides. To prevent injury, keep your core engaged at all times.

Progression: Add dumbbells, starting with 2 to 3 pounds in each hand and progress the weight gradually over time.

Your ideal beginner and advanced pistol squat set: 3 Sets
of 10 to 12 reps.

Chapter 5: Seven-Day Program to Start

Day 1

Warm-up:

- Cardio x 2 sets
 1. 30 seconds jogging (On the spot)
 2. 30 seconds jumping jacks
 3. 30 seconds jumping rope
 4. 30 seconds cross jacks
 5. 30 seconds butt kicks

- Active stretch x 1 set
 1. Arm swings - x10 forward + x10 backward
 2. Scapula swings - x5 forward + x5 backward
 3. Band pulls - 10 reps
 4. Wrist and ankle circles - 20 reps per joint, 10 clockwise + 10 opposite
 5. Wrist stretch - 10 reps per part (1, 2, and 3)
 6. Scapula push-ups - 10 reps x 2 sets
 7. Scapula pull-ups - 10 reps x 2 sets
 8. Dynamic Superman hold - 30 seconds hold + 5 reps
 9. Jackknife tuck - x 10 reps (combining part 1,2, and 3)
 10. Lower-back cobra stretch - 10 second hold x 3 sets
 11. Shoulder stretch - 30 second hold

Workout:

1. Move 1: L-Sit - 30 Seconds on, 30 seconds rest x 3 sets
2. Move 2: Pull-ups (Hang only)- 30 Seconds on, 1 minute rest x 3

3. Move 3: Push-ups (Drop knees) - 10 Reps x 3 sets
4. Move 4: Dips - 15 Reps x 3 sets
5. Move 5: Pistol squats - 12-15 Reps x 3 sets

Cooldown:

- Slow active recovery - 5 minutes of walking

Day 2

Warm-up:

- Cardio x 2 sets
 1. 30 seconds shadowboxing (On the spot)
 2. 30 seconds jumping jacks
 3. 30 seconds crossovers
 4. 30 seconds high knees
 5. 30 seconds mountain climbers

- Active stretch x 1 set
 1. Arm swings - x10 forward + x10 backward
 2. Scapula swings - x5 forward + x5 backward
 3. Band pulls - 10 reps
 4. Wrist and ankle circles - 20 reps per joint, 10 clockwise + 10 opposite
 5. Wrist stretch - 10 reps per part (1, 2, and 3)
 6. Scapula push-ups - 10 reps x 2 sets
 7. Scapula pull-ups - 10 reps x 2 sets
 8. Dynamic Superman hold - 30 seconds hold + 5 reps
 9. Jackknife tuck - x 10 reps (combining part 1,2, and 3)
 10. Lower-back cobra stretch - 10 second hold x 3 sets
 11. Shoulder stretch - 30 second hold

Workout:

1. Move 1: L-Sit - 40 Seconds on, 1 minute rest x 3

2. Move 2: Pull-ups (Halfway) - 30 Seconds on, 1 minute rest x 3
3. Move 3: Push-ups (Drop knees) - 12 Reps x 3 sets
4. Move 4: Dips - 20 Reps x 3 sets
5. Move 5: Pistol squats - 15 Reps x 3 sets

Cooldown:

- Slow active recovery - 5 minutes of walking

Day 3

Warm-up:

- Cardio x 2 sets
 1. 30 seconds jumping jacks
 2. 30 seconds jogging (On the spot)
 3. 30 second jumping rope
 4. 30 seconds crossovers
 5. 30 seconds high knees

- Active stretch x 1 set
 1. Arm swings - x10 forward + x10 backward
 2. Scapula swings - x5 forward + x5 backward
 3. Band pulls - 10 reps
 4. Wrist and ankle circles - 20 reps per joint, 10 clockwise + 10 opposite
 5. Wrist stretch - 10 reps per part (1, 2, and 3)
 6. Scapula push-ups - 10 reps x 2 sets
 7. Scapula pull-ups - 10 reps x 2 sets
 8. Dynamic Superman hold - 30 seconds hold + 5 reps
 9. Jackknife tuck - x 10 reps (combining part 1,2, and 3)
 10. Lower-back cobra stretch - 10 second hold x 3 sets
 11. Shoulder stretch - 30 second hold

Workout:

1. Move 1: L-Sit - 40 Seconds on, 30 seconds rest x 3 sets
2. Move 2: Pull-ups (Halfway) - 30 Seconds on, 1 minute rest x 3
3. Move 3: Push-ups (Drop knees) - 15 Reps x 3 sets
4. Move 4: Dips - 20 Reps x 3 sets
5. Move 5: Pistol squats - 15 Reps x 3 sets

Cooldown:

- Slow active recovery - 5 minutes of walking

Day 4 (Optional rest day)

Warm-up:

- Cardio x 2 sets
 1. 30 seconds jogging (On the spot)
 2. 30 seconds high knees
 3. 30 seconds cross jacks
 4. 30 seconds butt kicks
 5. 30 seconds jumping jacks

- Active stretch x 1 set
 1. Arm swings - x10 forward + x10 backward
 2. Scapula swings - x5 forward + x5 backward
 3. Band pulls - 10 reps
 4. Wrist and ankle circles - 20 reps per joint, 10 clockwise + 10 opposite
 5. Wrist stretch - 10 reps per part (1, 2, and 3)
 6. Scapula push-ups - 10 reps x 2 sets
 7. Scapula pull-ups - 10 reps x 2 sets
 8. Dynamic Superman hold - 30 seconds hold + 5 reps
 9. Jackknife tuck - x 10 reps (combining part 1,2, and 3)
 10. Lower-back cobra stretch - 10 second hold x 3 sets
 11. Shoulder stretch - 30 second hold

Workout:

1. Move 1: L-Sit - 45 Seconds on, 1 minute rest x 3 sets
2. Move 2: Pull-ups (Progression 1) - 8 Reps + 1 minute rest x 2 sets
3. Move 3: Push-ups (Drop knees) - 15 Reps x 3 sets
4. Move 4: Dips - 25 Reps x 3 sets
5. Move 5: Pistol squats - 15 Reps x 3 sets

Cooldown:

- Slow active recovery - 5 minutes of walking

Day 5

Warm-up:

- Cardio x 2 sets
 1. 30 seconds shadowboxing
 2. 30 seconds high knees
 3. 30 seconds jumping rope
 4. 30 seconds jogging (On the spot)
 5. 30 seconds butt kicks

- Active stretch x 1 set
 1. Arm swings - x10 forward + x10 backward
 2. Scapula swings - x5 forward + x5 backward
 3. Band pulls - 10 reps
 4. Wrist and ankle circles - 20 reps per joint, 10 clockwise + 10 opposite
 5. Wrist stretch - 10 reps per part (1, 2, and 3)
 6. Scapula push-ups - 10 reps x 2 sets
 7. Scapula pull-ups - 10 reps x 2 sets
 8. Dynamic Superman hold - 30 seconds hold + 5 reps
 9. Jackknife tuck - x 10 reps (combining part 1,2, and 3)
 10. Lower-back cobra stretch - 10 second hold x 3 sets
 11. Shoulder stretch - 30 second hold

Workout:

1. Move 1: L-Sit - 45 Seconds on, 1 minute rest x 3 sets
2. Move 2: Pull-ups (Progression 1) - 10 Reps + 1 minute rest x 2 sets
3. Move 3: Push-ups (Plank) - 15 Reps x 3 sets
4. Move 4: Dips - 25 Reps x 3 sets
5. Move 5: Pistol squats - 15 Reps x 3 sets

Cooldown:

- Slow active recovery - 5 minutes of walking

Day 6

Warm-up:

- Cardio x 2 sets
 1. 30 seconds jumping jacks
 2. 30 seconds high knees
 3. 30 seconds butt kicks
 4. 30 seconds cross-jacks
 5. 30 seconds crossovers

- Active stretch x 1 set
 1. Arm swings - x10 forward + x10 backward
 2. Scapula swings - x5 forward + x5 backward
 3. Band pulls - 10 reps
 4. Wrist and ankle circles - 20 reps per joint, 10 clockwise + 10 opposite
 5. Wrist stretch - 10 reps per part (1, 2, and 3)
 6. Scapula push-ups - 10 reps x 2 sets
 7. Scapula pull-ups - 10 reps x 2 sets
 8. Dynamic Superman hold - 30 seconds hold + 5 reps
 9. Jackknife tuck - x 10 reps (combining part 1,2, and 3)
 10. Lower-back cobra stretch - 10 second hold x 3 sets
 11. Shoulder stretch - 30 second hold

Workout:

1. Move 1: L-Sit - 45 Seconds on, 1 minute rest x 3 sets
2. Move 2: Pull-ups (Progression 1) - 10 Reps + 1 minute rest x 2 sets
3. Move 3: Push-ups (Plank) - 10 Reps x 3 sets
4. Move 4: Dips - 30 Reps x 3 sets
5. Move 5: Pistol squats - 20 Reps x 3 sets

Cooldown:

- Slow active recovery - 5 minutes of walking

Day 7

Rest day

Chapter 6: The Role of Rest and Recovery

When you exert your body in any type of training, it needs to recover from the exertion. One way to recover is pretty simple—get seven to eight hours of sleep at night. Even though this is straightforward and doesn't seem difficult to do, many people don't. The truth is, sleep is not just something we do at the end of our day because we were taught to go to sleep when it gets dark at night. It is something that should be made a priority if you want to lose weight, specifically fat, or build muscle. Some people argue that less than seven hours of sleep in a night is adequate for them to function during the day. But is it really good for your brain, body, and health? Or do the energy drinks and coffee refills try to convince you otherwise? Perhaps it's the fast food during mid-day which also makes you crash.

No matter which way you slice it, not getting enough sleep is bad for you. Even if you are getting enough sleep at night, but you are still tired early in the day, it means there's something wrong with your health that needs to be addressed by a doctor. Being tired is not normal, and doctors will always ask their patients whether they are getting enough sleep at night before attempting other questions or tests to check what's wrong.

Sleep is important for many reasons. It's the only way we can naturally restore our energy after a long day. To sleep enough means to prioritize your health in the best way, next to drinking enough water, eating a clean diet, and taking time to unwind. A lack of sleep can increase your anxiety, make you emotional, and cause depression. It can also be one of the main reasons your body holds on to fat as not getting enough sleep slows down your metabolism. Needless to say, it can make you feel bad and unwell. So, the more sleep you get, the better. If you are serious about your health and your fitness goals, calisthenics specifically, then you will prioritize sleep. When

you do, it'll feel good. Your health may improve instantly, providing you with a greater enjoyment of life. Since it will reduce anxiety and stress, you'll feel more at ease and naturally relaxed, which is something we don't often get to experience with countless responsibilities we have these days.

With intense training methods, sleep is required to recover. With calisthenics, you need to be mentally ready to reach your goals, so you shouldn't only plan how you are going to train every day, but also when you rest and recover. In fact, you should have an entire list of priorities because you can't half-do calisthenics. If you try, you won't reach your goals as fast as you can or as effectively.

The big question with calisthenics is, do you have to take a rest day?

If you are dedicated to getting in shape, you may develop a "rush mentality," meaning you want to rush through everything. As you are already aware, that doesn't quite work with calisthenics.

In calisthenics, you have to use your strength to support the weight of your body in every exercise you perform. That energizes you during the day, but it also makes you physically tired. That's also why it's recommended that you take it slow at first. If you're really unfit, it's recommended to take at least two days to rest during the week. If you've got some level of fitness intact, you can try one day of rest. However, if you feel like six days is still too much for you, make it twice a week. In this case, you can train two to three days on, and one day off.

Calisthenics will seem difficult with every phase you work through, including beginner, intermediate, and advanced. If you feel pain during a workout due to exercise burn and not because of an injury, then there's no need to stop your workout. On the contrary, you should try and finish it as the point of serious burn, or what feels like over-exertion, is often the point where you step into your next point of fitness growth. So, even if it feels uncomfortable, a little pain is good for you. When you feel like you can't do one more rep, that

means you've got the golden opportunity to achieve something, which is why you should finish strong. That's the only way that you progress. So, when you start a workout, don't quit it. If you feel tired, you can always modify it. If you feel tired before a workout, take a rest day, because if you don't you will regress and not progress.

When you're clear about your goals for health and fitness, it's easy to get obsessed. It's good to stay mindful and notice the point where you risk overtraining. You can notice this risk when you exercise and feel too tired to perform the exercises. Not as a result of lactic acid build up in the muscles, but being physically without the energy to perform the rest of your exercises. That's when you should realize that it's time to stop. Don't get the pain of enduring a workout and overtraining confused, because people also tend to use it as an excuse not to train. The best thing you can do to continue progressing, especially after all of the work you've put in to start your journey with calisthenics, is to stay mindful about how you feel and to always listen to your body. Respect it enough to give a truthful response, and don't think you're slacking off because you're taking a day off. You're still progressing by recovering from your previous workouts.



How to Identify Overtraining

- Physical performance decline.

The most noticeable difference you will experience when you overtrain is when you feel like you can't do as much as you usually do during a workout. If you can't do the same workout you've done recently as effectively or experience too much soreness from it afterward, it's an indication that you are burned out and need some rest. Working hard with calisthenics is a good thing. But consistently working out too much or too hard can potentially strain your body, which will put you back more than just one workout. At this point, you shouldn't push through your workout. You should take a rest day instead because your body will stop benefiting from exercise. It will be negatively impacted to the point where you start to lose strength, agility, and endurance, which, if anything, can make you feel very demotivated from exercise.

- Exercises are becoming consistently difficult/challenging.

Beginner exercises will be difficult to perform at first, or at least until you get used to the effect it has on your muscles and joints. If you do calisthenics consistently, after a while, you will get used to it. That's also the point when you need to move on to a more advanced workout. Since you want to achieve results, you can't get too comfortable with your workouts. But if they consistently become too difficult, it's a sign that you are probably doing too much. Progression should be very balanced and happen gradually over time. You can't do beginner's training for two weeks and then jump straight into a full week of advanced workouts. It's simply not going to work, because your body will reject it. Gradually increasing the difficulty of your work could include slightly increasing your exercise reps, adding an extra set, or adding one or two new moves to your beginner's

training program. If you make your workout too difficult too quickly, not only your muscles will reject it, but also your heart. It's not used to beating as fast as it will with a workout that is too physically strenuous for your current fitness level.

- You lack energy for no reason.

Sometimes, when you are tired, you have to push through your workout because it will without a doubt benefit your progress. If we only exercised and pushed ourselves when we felt good or comfortable, we wouldn't get very far in life, now would we? However, when you're getting enough sleep (seven to eight hours every night), eating enough food or a balanced diet, and relaxing as you should at some point in your day or week, there's no reason why you should be lacking physical energy. Overtraining is a serious thing because, like cigarettes, alcohol, and even food, exercise can become addictive. While it's much healthier than most addictions, if it makes you feel fatigued or tired all the time, it will affect everything else in your life too. That includes your workout, your mood, relationships, and daily activities. When we are overtired, we don't want to do much, which means that you will be slacking off in some area of your life. So it's best to maintain a balance in your exercise routine and take a day off where your body says it's due.

- Concentration runs low.

The moment we struggle to concentrate is a clear sign of being tired. It usually results in irritability and anxiety because you struggle to get things done, like work, or even your workout, during the day. You may force yourself through your priorities, schedule, and activities, but if you can't concentrate, what's the point? You'll just drag your feet, and possibly make mistakes, which can make you feel even worse. It can potentially also affect your communication with people around you, which can have a negative effect on you. If you feel like you struggle to concentrate, it may not seem necessary to

consider your workout regime, but you should. Just like overtraining can cause you to feel bad physically, it can also bear consequences in other areas of your life.

- Increased stress levels.

Feeling like you constantly have to achieve something with your physical fitness is exhausting, and it's unnecessary stress that you don't need. Unfortunately, many fitness junkies don't see that. It's helpful and motivating to look forward to reaching one of your many benchmarks. But instead of putting pressure on yourself to do it, be excited about it when you achieve the goal. It's much more rewarding. Besides, every person feels some form of pressure or stress in their lives, particularly from work. Exercising is supposed to be a stress reliever, not the cause of it. If you overtrain, your stress levels are bound to increase, which will cause you to become restless when you sleep. Since it's crucial to get enough quality shut-eye—which is connected to everything else—you will suffer in more ways than one.

- Pain increases in specific parts of the body.

If you have any knowledge of exercise, you know that you can't train your legs intensively on Monday, and then repeat it on Tuesday or Wednesday, because it will hurt. Training your legs causes pain that lasts for days, which is good. It lets you know you did some real work that will burn fat and build muscle. It's all very positive. That is until the pain increases due to too much training. When it comes to training your legs, you may be a little sore the next day but you usually feel the most pain the day after that. That's the only exception with pain increasing. If you exercise any other body part, pain should not last more than a day. If it does, it should be mild, and not get any worse than it was the day after you trained. It's a clear indication that you've overused your muscles and joints and they haven't had time to recover properly. This additional pain can cause your body's immune system to weaken, making it difficult for the body to fight off

viruses and other illnesses. So, before you think you can grow your muscles faster than you're told, don't consider trying.

- You become unmotivated or develop a quitting mentality.

Feeling like you can't accomplish a goal is not a good feeling. It demotivates you and makes you feel there's no point in continuing to try what you've diverted all of your energy towards. Going slow, however, does not mean you're behind or failing. All it means is you have to take a connecting flight before you can reach your destination. Going too fast is never an option when it comes to results that will last you a lifetime. Before you develop a quitting mentality, resist it. Take a step back, and assess where you're at. It usually only requires you to take a minute to breathe and recollect your thoughts before you realize what's up. Throw depression out the window. Remain positive and resist the negative as much as you can. When you feel like you're going to a bad place in your mind because you're not *'there'* yet, remember that you are on a connecting flight. Eventually, you'll get to where you want to go. In no time, you'll achieve what you want to achieve.

When you're overtraining, do this:

1. Take a week off. Seriously, it's okay.
2. Reduce the intensity of your workouts.
3. Eat a variety of clean food sources that include vitamins, minerals, protein, good carbohydrates, healthy fats, and antioxidants.
4. Make sure you get enough sleep.
5. Space your workouts and don't overtrain again.

Chapter 7: Take on Advanced Exercises

You're not going to take one week to get used to your beginner training routine. However long you take is entirely up to you and how disciplined you are with getting your exercise in every day and doing it correctly. Since calisthenics is generally quite difficult to perform, no matter what progression you're at, you aren't going to want to make it more difficult if you're not ready for it. Progressing with fitness is always going to hurt if you want results and to take your abilities to the next level, but you can't rush it. The moment that you feel like your beginner exercise routine feels too easy and doesn't make you feel the burn you used to, that's when you should intensify your workout. Transitioning from a beginner to an advanced level is a very good feeling, but as you can see the five main exercises listed in the beginner's guide, isn't that easy. So, if you're ready to move on to an advanced regime, you're in for a treat.

Don't be discouraged by this challenge to progress. If you feel like you're getting through your beginner workouts with ease, first switch from the modified to the progression version. Try that for a while. If you're confident that you can perform the progressions with ease after practicing it for a few weeks, we can say "Welcome to advanced."

I bet you think to yourself sometimes, "I wish I could do that." Well, nothing is impossible. If you managed to get through a pull-up or any other of the beginner's exercises, you most certainly can. While the beginner's phase teaches you the basics and lays a foundation of strength exercises, getting your body to a point of doing advanced calisthenics moves becomes the ultimate test for your body. It displays how much control you have over it because it requires mobility, balance, strength, body control, and coordination all at the same time.

To pull off advanced exercises in calisthenics, your foundation must be right. If you're not ready and haven't had enough time

to condition your body in the beginner phase, you will injure yourself. Unlike most types of exercise people do today, calisthenics only requires you to push yourself and not use different elements at once. Calisthenics requires you to think. Without your mind connected to your body, you can't listen to your body, which will show a lack of performance. To gain advanced skills, you will need a progressing level of strength, combined with an adequate time frame to learn it. You should regard calisthenics progression to be a skill, much like acrobatics or ballet. It's not something you can pick up overnight; it requires dedication and focus. If you're not fully dedicated, your goals will always be far away. But if you practice a little every day, you will walk a staircase that will get you to the top in no time.

In this case, practice makes perfect. If you don't get something right, try again, and then repeat it until you do. When you get it right, try again until you perfect it with ease. The key to progressing is mainly not to lose motivation because you're going to need it to push yourself every day.

So, how will you transition from beginner to advanced?

There are progressions for a reason. They are steps that enable you to develop the strength that supports advanced skills. If you were doing weight training in a gym, it would be to add more weight to your exercises or even progressing without weights to adding weights to exercises like squats. Just as you have to start adding a little weight to prevent injury, the same goes for bodyweight training with calisthenics. The slower you go, the more conditioned your body will become, which is the fastest way to become advanced.

You should also never skip progressions. If you have a beginner version, along with three progressions, don't think you can hop from beginner to progression two or from one to three. There are steps for a reason. Once you master your foundational strength, coordination, and mobility, the sky's the limit. Have patience with it.

Advanced skills target specific muscle groups from your head to your toes, and there are exercises for each. That's why it's good to have a variety of exercises to make up for a workout session. If you train daily, five to six days a week, you want to progress every muscle group. You don't have to overwork just one or two at a time as you do with weight training. You can mix it up, depending on your goal. If you still want to lose fat, you're going to have to include a variety of exercise moves that target different areas of the body. Luckily, a lot of calisthenics exercises combine different muscles in the body, so this shouldn't be difficult for you.

When consistency and patience align with diet, proper rest, and recovery, that's when you'll see results.

The presence of movement dysfunction and too much pain as you try to progress is a clear indication your body is not ready to move forward. There's no shame in moving a step backward to your previous progression, or even to the beginner version because it will only support your growth in calisthenics. It won't halt it as most people think. That's also why it's important to step away from comparisons. You're not going to achieve the same results a gymnast of ten years achieves with calisthenics training in the same period. There's no way that is possible.

The same goes for starting a calisthenics training program at the same time as someone else, but the other person has more weight to lose than you or you don't have the same fitness levels. No two people will progress the same way. Apart from your fitness level, your health and body type also plays a role. If you're less flexible than somebody else, it's going to take you longer to progress from the beginner version to the advanced version of calisthenics. Although the "get it done now" mindset is good to have, it's only good in a certain context.

You should also refrain from staying too comfortable, which many people do. You get extreme fitness fanatics that are goal-oriented and too motivated for their own good, and then you get people who have to force themselves to get their workout

in every day or who skip an exercise because it's too difficult to attempt the modified version. You have to find a balance. Rome wasn't built in a day, but it wasn't built in a million years either. You should never be comfortable, but you should also never be too uncomfortable. Find a middle ground and keep taking steps. Just ensure that you're moving forward.



The Top Exercises to Progress

1. Upper body and vertical pushing exercises

- Upper body pushing

Targeted areas: Chest, anterior and medial shoulder, and triceps

Beginner: Standard push-ups, wall push-ups, incline push-ups, and kneeling push-ups

Intermediate: Close-grip push-ups, decline push-ups, decline close-grip push-ups, wide grip push-ups, tempo push-ups, and shoulder dips

Advanced: Uneven push-ups, one-handed push-ups, dynamic push-ups, weighted push-ups, pseudo planche push-ups, and planche push-ups.

- Vertical pushing exercise

Targeted areas: Chest, anterior and medial shoulder, and triceps

Beginner: Kneeling pike push-ups and incline pike push-ups

Intermediate: Close grip pike push-ups, decline pike push-ups, and wall handstands

Advanced: Handstand push-ups, close grip handstand push-ups, and freestanding handstand push-ups

2. Upper body pulling exercises

Targeted areas: Posterior shoulders, rhomboids, trapezius, lats, and biceps

Beginner: Wall pulls, pull-up negatives, feet-supported pull-ups, chin-ups, and inverted row or horizontal pull-up.

Intermediate: Close grip pull-ups, chest to bar pull-ups, wide grip pull-ups, and L pull-ups.

Advanced: Pseudo one-arm pull-ups, assisted one-arm pull-ups, weighted pull-ups, muscle-ups, and typewriter pull-ups

3. Knee flexion exercises

Targeted areas: Quadriceps, adductors, hip muscles, and glutes

Beginner: Half squats, full depth supported squats, box squats, and wall sits

Intermediate: Weighted squats, close stance squats, and tempo pause squats

Advanced: Leg box squats, pistol squats, and box jumps

4. Single leg exercises

Targeted areas: Quadriceps, adductors, core musculature, and small stabilizer muscles stimulated by bilateral exercises

Beginner: Split squats and step-ups

Intermediate and advanced: Walking lunges, lateral lunges, deficit reverse lunges, Bulgarian split squats, and weighted Bulgarian split squats

5. Hip extension exercises

Targeted areas: Hamstrings, glutes, and low-back

Beginner: Kneeling squats and hip thrusts

Intermediate: Single leg glute bridges and feet elevated glute bridges

Advanced: Ball leg curls

6. Core stabilizing exercises

Targeted areas: Abdominal, hip, and lower-back muscles

Beginner: Planks, lying knee tucks, and straight leg raises

Intermediate: Three limb planks, two limb planks, decline planks, weighted planks, and side planks

Advanced: Hanging straight leg raises, hanging knees to elbows, toes to bar, L-Sit, dragon flag negatives,

Chapter 8: General Diet

Recommendations

Men are wired a little differently than women when it comes to fitness and physique goals. However, today more than ever women have raised the bar and caught up to the training methods of men. They even embrace the body fat loss and muscle gain approach that men have. It's not so much about losing weight to look skinny anymore as it is to be strong and healthy in your body. In some cases, it's the same for men. Not all men want big gains. Some want to keep it lean and maintain a fit look. The point is it's not about losing weight on the scale anymore. For both genders, it's more about increasing your ability to be strong in your body, along with feeling confident about your aesthetic. In the past two decades, people have realized what it is about committing to a sustainable diet and fitness regime that is so appealing. It not only improves the way you look, which is bound to make you feel good in your body and confident, it also improves your health and makes you feel like you can do anything you want.

We often put many limitations in front of ourselves, all of which is created by the mind. If you take something as difficult as a pull-up, many women don't believe that they can accomplish it because they lack upper-body strength in comparison to men. But with consistent practice and the right workout regime, they can accomplish it. These things have always been possible, but we've either been told that they aren't or that you need to have a specific body type to accomplish it. We have been fed diet after diet, and trend after trend, only to learn the truth.

When you eat the right amount of calories for your body or for your health and fitness goal, combined with calisthenics, you'll lose all of the weight you want and keep it off or build muscle, even if you think you can't because you're skinny. The same goes for any other realistic goal you have. When

you align all of the chess pieces, you can make it happen. Now, steering away from the millions of diets available to you online or the magic supplements and teas that will make you look thinner overnight, there's one method that will help you reach your goal. It's not fancy, quick, outrageous, or damaging to your body like many things people do out of pure desperation today. It's so simple, in fact, anyone can do it.

The first thing you have to do is assess your goal. What do you want from your diet and exercise plan? The calisthenics beginner plan is very specific. It promotes fat loss, increases balance, coordination, and strength as a result of building lean muscle in the body. It makes you more able to move your body, and because it benefits you by increasing strength and range of motion, it also supports you in everything you do daily. Since this is clear, you can have one of two specific goals with your calisthenics fitness plan, which also includes your diet.

Goal #1: Gain weight and muscle

Goal # 2 Lose weight and gain muscle

The golden rule of any healthy approach to your diet is to eat a clean and balanced diet. You need to restrict sugar and salt in your diet, along with certain carbohydrates, fats, preservatives, and additives.

If you want to gain weight and build lean muscle, then you must eat more calories and combine it with your training regime. If you want to lose weight and build lean muscle, you have to eat clean, cut calories, and combine it with a training regime. Both goals require a high protein intake to build lean muscle.

Some would argue that it's easier to gain weight for someone that's been a small size their entire life than it is for someone who is heavier to lose weight in body fat. However, picking up weight is difficult for some people and can be equally challenging as losing weight for somebody that struggles to shake it off. Both require undeniable hard work, which isn't something that you can fake on your journey. If you don't put

in the work with your diet and exercise regime, it will show. If you compromise one day, you'll set yourself back. It has nothing to do with taking a rest day. But if you do, it's not a reason to go overboard cheating on your diet. Now that you have the basic concept on how to reach your goals, you have to learn how to count your calories.

Calisthenics works best when you combine it with "counting macros." It is a popular method of weight loss, so you may have heard about it before. It's the best way to lose fat because what it does is it allows you to remain aware of everything you eat every day, which also makes you more mindful about your progress and how to achieve your goals effectively. In the beginning, it may feel strange to write down everything you eat, but fear not. You'll get used to it, and even learn to enjoy it. If anything, it will get you in a disciplined habit, which will keep you focused on your goal.

The thing about following my beginner calisthenics exercise routine and counting your macros is that it can help you stay accountable. You have a starting point, and if you work consistently, you have a finish point with each little goal in between your big goals. Imagine sticking with your diet and exercise plan and reaching not one but several goals. Once you see the incredible effect it has on your body, you'll never want to stop pushing harder and do what you have to do to get you further than you've ever been physically and healthwise.

Counting Macros For Weight-Loss/Gains



When you look at the concept of calories and weight loss, it's easy to feel like you want to run away. Counting calories is sometimes mistaken for being a restrictive approach to losing fat. On the other hand, if you want to gain weight you need to consume more calories. Keeping this in mind, you can see that the more you eat, the more you'll gain, and the less you eat, the more you lose. That doesn't mean restricting yourself beyond what you need to operate in the day. And just because you go a tiny bit over your allotted calorie consumption for a day doesn't mean you're diminishing your results either.

What are calories?

They are a measurement unit for the energy consumed by our bodies. We need calories to sustain our energy levels. You can't go below your calorie deficit for the day as this will cause you to feel tired and lack the energy to function optimally. Calories indicate how much the body needs foodwise. To gain weight, it will be more, otherwise, you'll burn everything and stay the same without any gains. To lose weight, you need to consume fewer calories. will be less, That's because if you have too much fat on your body, it's a sure sign that you've been consuming too many calories. The only way to reverse this is to healthily reduce your food intake.

It's easy to think that you can take your body's macros and subtract the number of calories you've burned during your workout to see whether you're meeting your goals. But you also have to take into consideration that your body also burns calories during other times of the day. It burns a lot of calories when we sleep and when we go about our work or daily activities. It even burns calories when our metabolism is hard at work during the day. So, it's not as simple as taking your macros and subtracting calories burned from a workout. It goes beyond that.

Calories are found in three types of food known as macronutrients (macros). These three components must be counted together and not be regarded separately.

Macros include:

- Carbohydrates- 1 gram = 4 calories
- Proteins - 1 gram = 4 calories
- Fats - 1 gram = 9 calories

Fats contain more calories than carbohydrates and protein, and they must be consumed sparingly.

To count macros in food, you will see calories indicated on all packaging as 'Kcal.'

You can count calories by yourself or using an app.

Calculating macros, you need to do the following:

- Total grams of carbohydrates x 4 = Total Kcal
- Total grams of protein x 4 = Total Kcal
- Total grams of fats x 9 = Total Kcal

Your macros will be the three totals combined in the unit Kcal, which is an easy way to count calories, which will become easier for you to interpret over time.

Since every person burns calories differently, you can't look at what someone else does and copy what worked for them. You

have to consider a variety of factors, including your activity level, metabolism, body factors, among others.

The point of exercise is to burn calories. If you train harder on a day or move more frequently, you will naturally burn more calories because you'll require more energy. Keeping this in mind, no two days of food consumption will look the same unless you repeat your daily routine and workout intensity.

Calculating the basal metabolic rate (BMR), you need to do the following:

Men: $BMR = 66.47 + (13.75 \times \text{weight in kg}) + (4.799 \times \text{height in cm}) - (5.677 \times \text{age in years})$

Women: $447.593 + (9.247 \times \text{weight in kg}) + (3.098 \times \text{height in cm}) - (4.330 \times \text{age in years})$

For example: If your day-to-day calorie basal metabolic rate is around 2,400 Kcal, and you exercise at least three days in a week, and you manage to burn around 400 Kcal additionally during the day, you can calculate your weekly balance like this:

Total calories = 4 days x 2,400 Kcal = 9,600
+3 days x 2,800 = 8,400
= 18,000 Kcal

In a single week, you'll burn 18,000 Kcal, which can then be divided by 7 to get your daily calorie requirements. In this case, it's 2,571. The result indicates how much you can eat in one day. If you consume a couple of hundred calories, let's say 400 more on a day, you can consume 100 calories less on four days of your week. In this way, you can still reach your limit at the end of the week. This total is to maintain your current weight. To lose weight, you will have to cut calories. To gain weight, you will have to add calories to the total.

To gain weight, if your calorie basal metabolic rate is 2,400 Kcal and you burn 400 from exercise, you can consume 2,800 or more, which will mean that you will be in excess of 400 calories or more daily. If you want to lose weight and you have

the same stats, you can consume 2,000 calories a day, which will mean that you'll be in a calorie deficit of 400 a day. To avoid losing muscle mass with a weight-loss approach, you can eat more protein to build lean muscle mass.

Now that you know how many calories you need, you have to learn how to distribute your macros with each meal, which will depend on your goal:

- Weight loss: 35–50% proteins, 25–45% carbohydrates, and 20–35% fats.
- Maintenance: 25–40% proteins, 35–55% carbohydrates, and 25–40% fats.
- Muscle gain: 35% proteins, 45% carbohydrates, and 20% fats.

To calculate your food intake per macro, you can take the total calories of your goal and divide it by the percentage of proteins, carbs, and fats.

If your daily calorie intake is 2,000 after subtracting the calories burned during exercise and you want to lose weight, an example macro distribution will be the following:

- Proteins - 45% = 900 calories
- Carbohydrates - 35% = 700 calories
- Fats - 20% = 400 calories

Diet Guide Tips for Beginners

1. Eat whole foods.

The cleaner you keep your diet, the faster you'll obtain long-lasting results. When you see a change in your physical appearance, you become even more motivated to eat clean. The trick is to get to that point because you may feel demotivated to stick to a clean diet otherwise. Once you get into the habit of eating healthier and more wholesome food options, you'll get addicted to feeling

good. Whole foods include lean protein, whole grains, dairy products, and fresh produce like fruits and vegetables. Since you'll mainly focus on protein, you can include eggs, fish, seafood, and meat into your diet. For the best results, eat more white meat than red meat. And make sure it's lean, like eating a chicken breast instead of eating parts of the chicken that contains skin, or a lean cut of beef instead of eating it with fat.

2. Eat fruits and vegetables.

It doesn't matter what your goal is, it's always a good idea to bulk up on vegetables. It's going to make your meal bigger, but help you maintain your total calories daily. Since fruit contains sugar, you should eat more vegetables than fruit. Still fruit is a healthy source of energy to include in your diet daily. If you replace processed sugar with fruit, you're already winning. Vitamins and minerals help you maintain a healthy immune system, which is also required if you want to prevent getting sick and halting your health and fitness journey. Fruit and vegetables also contain more fiber, and due to their low caloric content, you can opt for an extra serving whenever you feel like you need to eat more at a meal.

3. Eliminate junk food.

Recognize where you are going wrong in your diet by avoiding processed food. This includes pastries, sweets, cakes, chips, cookies, cereals, juices, soft drinks, and white flour found in pasta, bread, and rice. You should avoid eating food that comes in a box because it usually contains a ton of sugar, unhealthy fats, and unnecessary calories.

4. Eat more in less time.

Intermittent fasting is a common practice for people who practice calisthenics training. It's a weight-loss method that has become very popular in the past few years as it produces results. With intermittent fasting, you reduce the

window that you consume food in, apart from your water, coffee, and tea. It's the most ideal to start with a 12-hour fasting window where you only eat for 12 hours a day. Once you get used to this fasting method, you can try the 16:8 fasting method, where you fast for 16 hours and eat for 8 hours. If you find it difficult to fast, you should opt for the 12:12 method, which is also helpful for weight loss. If you want to gain weight, you should avoid fasting.

5. Take supplements:

- BCAAs—Branched-chain amino acids to support existing muscles and new gains.
- Multivitamins—A safeguard supplement to ensure you're getting all the necessary vitamins, like B-complex, C, D, E, and minerals essential for the immune system and energy support like magnesium and zinc.
- Creatine—Aids in faster muscle recovery and supports the building of muscle mass.

6. Eat a high-protein meal for breakfast.

Any choice you make to start your day right is always a step in the right direction if you want to excel. What you do in the first hour of your day is crucial to set a tone for the rest of your day, and that is why it's got to be good. The same goes for what you feed your body, which should include water the moment you wake up to hydrate yourself after sleeping for seven to eight hours. It should be followed up with a high-protein breakfast that will keep you full and energized for the rest of the morning and at least the early afternoon. The biggest mistake people make when they try to lose weight is to skip breakfast. The only exception of skipping breakfast is fasting. In this case, your late breakfast or brunch should also be packed with protein to keep you satisfied for a longer period and to avoid mindless snacking throughout the day. Eating a high-protein breakfast can significantly cut your calorie intake throughout the day. Breakfast

options should include eggs, Greek yogurt, peanut butter, cottage cheese, or lean turkey slices.

7. Eat soluble fiber.

What happens if your metabolism stops working or doesn't perform as it should every day? You get bloated, feel heavy, uncomfortable, and halt your weight-loss journey. This can all be avoided if you eat enough soluble fiber every day. If you do this consistently, you will increase the chances of losing more belly fat and also, have a leaner look. Soluble fiber includes glucomannan and beta-glucan, which, when mixed with water, forms a gel-like substance that mainly slows down the rate that your stomach releases food that is digested into your gut. By eating more soluble fiber, you have a better chance to lose visceral fat from your stomach, and prevent gaining it again. Soluble fiber boosts the production of healthy gut bacteria, which also protects your stomach, ensuring that everything is working optimally at all times. As a result, it reduces the chances of developing conditions like heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and insulin resistance. Some of the best soluble fiber foods include rolled oats, oat bran, barley, dried beans, rice bran, apples, strawberries, citrus fruits, potatoes, and peas.

8. Drink water before each meal.

We all know how important water is for maintaining a healthy body and weight-loss, yet many people don't drink half the amount of water that is recommended daily. The memory of eight glasses of water a day taught by our elders is evident, but what we weren't taught was that how much water you drink a day is just as important as when you choose to consume it. The first and the best thing you should do in the morning is to drink a large glass of water, but not for no reason. There are specific reasons why it will benefit you. First of all, it wakes up your brain and organs because you have been hibernating in your sleep. When you wake up, you need a little boost, which is what a tall glass of room temperature water will

do for you. Since your brain consists mostly of water, you can imagine why it's necessary to hydrate after your resting period. It also activates your organs and boosts your metabolism, which improves the effectiveness of all functions in your body. You should also consider drinking a glass of water half an hour before each meal to aid in digestion. It will help dilute your digestive juices and help your body absorb more nutrients. Additionally, it also fills you up, and if it fills half of your stomach, you won't feel the need or hunger sensation to eat as much as you used to. It's a great way to help you cut calories.

Two other times you can drink water right before a bath and before you go to sleep. When you drink a glass of water before a bath, you lower your blood pressure, which helps you destress. Believe it or not, the less stress you have, the more successful your weight-loss journey will be. By drinking water one hour before bed, you can also replenish fluids that have been lost during sleep

9. Drink healthy beverages.

By drinking a cup of 'clean' coffee in the morning not only kick starts your day, but it also boosts your metabolism. It provides you with the energy you need to ease into your day, and since it is filled with antioxidants, it's also healthy. You also burn more fat if you consume a cup or two of caffeine in the morning, and drink it fifteen minutes before a workout, it aids in higher energy levels to improve your workout experience and performance.

What does it mean to keep coffee clean?

Well, it means no sugar, creamer, flavoring, or some types of milk. If you want to do it right, opt for a black cup of coffee, but if you can't do without the milk, you can always opt for a sugar-free plant-based milk option.

Apart from coffee, which should be limited to two to three cups a day, you can also drink as much tea as you like. Drinking teas that boost your metabolism and are packed with antioxidants, like green tea, is a great

alternative to other beverages during a busy day. Ideally, teas should also be consumed in its purest form. Adding a pinch of honey isn't a crime, but adding too much or to a few cups may very well be. Keep it clean.

10. Take time to eat.

With a busy schedule, it can be extremely difficult to find time to eat a meal without doing anything else. Most people work, text, or watch TV while they eat, which means that they are not focusing on the meal in front of them. This usually results in mindless eating that can cause one to eat too fast. Eating food slowly, allowing yourself the time to look at it, smell it, and chew it slowly, are all components that help you eat less at a meal. Your body also slows down toward the end of the day, which means that you shouldn't be eating small meals at the start of your day and bigger meals toward the end of it. While fasting is good for your body, many people get confused with the concept thereof because they think that skipping breakfast allows them to eat more later in the day. Even if you're supposed to eat your calories in an eight-hour window. That doesn't mean that you should be overeating at each meal or snack time. That's why for some people, fasting can be great, but for others, it's not such a good idea. It all depends on the discipline you can maintain with food. If you can fast and still stick to proper portions, you will cut a lot of calories in your day, but you have to do it correctly.

Chapter 9: What Can You Gain From Calisthenics?

Bodyweight training is a unique type of exercise method because it requires plenty of challenges for your body. These challenges are scenarios that you have not experienced before, which makes it all the more unique. It allows you to push yourself beyond what you think you're physically and mentally capable of. As a result, it offers you some of the best results for your body you'll ever achieve.



Since it is so physically challenging, it can help you raise the bar in many aspects of your life. It can train your mind to take more accountability for your actions, which is something everybody can use a little more of. You sort of develop a vivid consciousness with calisthenics because once you're in it, you don't only get addicted to the physical results, you also get obsessed with how it makes you feel. It becomes enjoyable, and because it's necessary for humans to evolve at a constant pace, including in our careers, relationships, hobbies, and self, it's helpful for many reasons. It benefits your physical body, which then transcends energy and daily practices into other

areas of your life. If you've ever wondered how you can obtain discipline that lasts, now you'll know that it indeed lies in fitness. Accomplishments in life don't come easy, but if you persist with a training program like calisthenics every day, in a couple of weeks you are guaranteed to start seeing real results. You can't say that with other things in your life, can you?

Another plus point is that calisthenics doesn't only make you feel good a few minutes after your workout, it makes you feel good for the entire day and longer. It makes you sleep more deeply and soundly, promotes consistent energy levels, and makes you feel like you can do anything you set your mind to, which in itself is a gift.

Calisthenics benefits extend way beyond weight loss and muscle gain. It also includes this:

- Increases physical abilities and awareness.

If you don't move optimally, you are living a sedentary lifestyle, which means you don't move as much as you should every day. You get up in the morning to *sit* and drive to work where you *sit* behind a computer for eight hours a day, and then *sit* as you drive back home, and then order dinner from UberEats and *sit* on your couch until you go to sleep. This is not normal, and it harms your health more than you think and it's a problem that's getting worse in our society. Incorporating calisthenics into your everyday routine, instead of sitting on the couch for as long as you do, is a great way to push your body. If anything, it allows your muscles and joints to receive adequate blood flow, which is not the case when you're sitting down all day. Since calisthenics pushes you out of your comfort zone, it gives you the boost you need to work towards achieving a healthy body. Your muscles, joints, bones, and connective tissues all need TLC, and calisthenics will help you provide your body with just that. It also improves your coordination, increases range of movement, flexibility, balance, posture, and the best of all, your physical strength to do more than you could have ever thought you'd be capable of.

- Promotes your best physical aesthetic.

There's no denying that when you look good, you feel good. That doesn't mean you have to be a certain dress size or have an incredibly low body fat percentage. But the more you exercise and eat healthier, over time you'll feel better in your skin. You will have more confidence to wear clothing you like and feel motivated to put yourself out there and excel. Obtaining a strong physical aesthetic is something men, and sometimes women, strive to do. Whether you're on the smaller or bigger side, you can lose weight or gain it and sculpt your body according to what you want it to look like. When you look good, you also feel more energized and positive to take on your day and all you have to do. As a result, you become more approachable, and your confidence supports your best communication skills yet.

- Supports mental well-being.

Exercise activates neurotransmitters in the brain, which includes serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine. These neurotransmitters are responsible for the brain's activity and signaling. Serotonin is responsible for managing brain activity. It also reduces depression and anxiety because it influences mood, impulsivity, anger, and aggression responses. Norepinephrine influences motivation, attention, perception, and arousal in the brain, while dopamine is responsible for attention, reward, and learning. Doctors usually prescribe drugs to treat depression and mental or emotional constraints that boost these neurotransmitters, but exercise boosts it naturally, making it the better and healthier option to treat any mental or emotional problems you may be faced with. The great thing about exercise, as opposed to medication, is that you can reap the benefits permanently, where with medication, you eventually have to stop taking it. When you do, your brain doesn't know how to activate neurotransmitters by itself which may result in a worsening of symptoms or the need for a higher dosage

of medicine. That's why exercise is considered the most sustainable way to treat your mental wellbeing.

- Provides accessibility.

If you want to get equipment crazy, you can invest in some pieces of training gear and props. But all you really need is an exercise mat, and if you have that you're good to go. If you don't like exercising in your house every day, you can take it outside to a park or beach. However, many people like to work out at home, and calisthenics makes training accessible for you to do it without having to visit a gym. It's also very effective to support any goal you wish to achieve with fitness, so there's no need to use equipment unless you want to do certain exercises like pull-ups. You can also personalize your training routine according to what suits you.

- Promotes a growth mindset.

Getting yourself to the point of doing something you think you are not capable of is a great accomplishment. It means you took the plunge and persisted with something that can be quite difficult for most people to do. That's especially because many people don't exercise regularly, and find it even more difficult to workout with excess weight. Every time you make time for a workout, opt for a clean meal, or go to bed early, you prioritize yourself and make a point of choosing a growth mindset over a fixed one. It then also promotes a growth mindset to make decisions in other areas of your life. It makes you feel confident and like you're capable of more than you think you are, which can give you the strength and courage to do even more than you ever thought was possible. Calisthenics accomplishes this mindset because it's very definition can be considered challenging in every move you attempt and with every challenge you face.

Chapter 10: False Myths About Calisthenics



1. “You can’t build muscle with calisthenics.”

It’s very possible to gain muscle mass with calisthenics, just like it’s possible to build mass as a vegan. It may not look like it due to what we’ve been taught previously, but it’s true. That’s because your body can’t distinguish between weight lifting and bodyweight training. It can’t tell the two apart, which is why your body responds to it in the same way. If anything, calisthenics can define your muscles even more than weight lifting. It’s the perfect combination of promoting your fitness level in combination with strength and movement ability. Weight lifting, on the other hand, doesn’t promote anything but

strength, so you can see why calisthenics is a better option if you want to improve your strength in combination with everything else. Calisthenics is primarily known for promoting muscle endurance, yet it allows you to build as much strength in your body as you can or have previously done with weight training.

2. “Calisthenics is not for everyone: it is only for lightweight and short people.”

Anybody can do calisthenics training, it may just be more frustrating for people that are either naturally tall, big, or carry excess weight on the body. The taller you are, the longer your spine is, which means your body can feel heavier than someone who is short. The same goes for someone who is overweight versus skinny. You’re going to feel that extra weight in every move you perform, but that also means that you’ll work harder to perform your exercises, which will allow you to exert more energy, burn more calories, and thus more fat. You’ll achieve results before you know it.

3. “The progress in calisthenics is slower than that with weight lifting.”

If you don’t know how to make calisthenics harder with progressions or how to do it effectively, then you won’t be able to progress as much as you could with weight lifting. But if you take time to build a solid foundation with beginner exercises, followed by progressions over time, you’ll be able to achieve the same strength results as you can with lifting weights. Perhaps the biggest misconception of all is that you need equipment to help you gain muscle. You can do it in the comfort of your house or at the jungle gym at the park. Both work equally well.

4. “Calisthenics is only good for endurance.”

This is a big misconception with calisthenics training. Calisthenics promotes muscle endurance and builds strength at the same time. The reason why calisthenics is

as effective as weight lifting to build strength in the body is that you can increase the difficulty of each exercise and progress to an advanced and intermediate phase just like you can increase the weight of the dumbbells or barbells you lift. It's the same thing. Calisthenics exercises are also specific to certain muscle groups. It can train every muscle group individually and have the same effect as weights have with building your muscles.

5. "You can't develop strong legs with calisthenics."

Since you can't do weighted leg exercises with calisthenics, it's easy to think that you can't build muscle in your legs as you normally would with weighted squats, lunges, or with the help of machines. The truth is that most calisthenics athletes don't want to build too much muscle in their legs because they want to have more endurance. Having muscular legs makes advanced exercises in calisthenics much more difficult to perform. That's not good if you're an athlete or like to do a range of exercise, like boxing, jogging, and cycling. The only time this myth can be potentially true is in the case of building certain muscles in your legs as big as you can with weight lifting. Otherwise, there are plenty of bodyweight exercises to choose from to strengthen and gain muscle in your quads.

Conclusion

Getting in shape when you're out of shape is probably one of the biggest difficulties people face in their everyday lives. It doesn't seem like something major or impossible to do for those who are motivated or have already accomplished their ideal body, but it's difficult for most people. You need to get past all those doubts and negative feelings or you won't get you to your final destination. You won't have the space you need to flourish into all you can be.



Embarking on a fitness journey like calisthenics is a commitment. People hesitate to say that out loud because it feels like they are putting pressure on themselves. But it's the truth, and if you start seeing it like that, you'll feel more inclined to get your daily workout in. Don't look at your 30 to 45 minutes a day of training as some awful thing that you want to skip or can't wait to finish. Think instead, "I can't wait to do my workout" or "My workout will make me feel like I can take on the rest of my day today and I can't wait to do it." If you do, you'll create the habit and the desire to do it. Remember you're adjusting your diet and lifestyle choices to better yourself. We all have bad days when we don't feel like

we have the energy or strength to perform a workout. Nevertheless, you have to face each workout knowing that you're growing with every step of the way. When you tick off that workout from your to-do list at the end of the day, you've accomplished something and become a better version of yourself because of it.

Possibly, the best thing you can do to stay on top of your game is to look at your workout, health, and fitness journey overall as a natural habit. Treat it like brushing your teeth or going to bed to sleep every day. It shouldn't be a chore. It should simply be a part of your day that you must do no matter what, apart from rest days. The moment you start contemplating whether you should or shouldn't do it, that's when you've hit a red zone. You can counteract this by staying focused. Calisthenics should be your commitment, just like improving yourself daily should be a commitment. I can't think of something better than choosing to be a better version of myself and crushing my goals, can you?

I express my utmost gratitude that you purchased and took the time to read my book. Please feel free to leave a review for *Calisthenics for Beginners*.

Now, go out and choose to be a better version of yourself every single day. You already have what it takes.

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