

Primary Strength Training Movements — Basic Overview

PUSH

(Upper body pushing away from you)

Examples: Push-ups, bench press, overhead press, incline press

Purpose

- Upper-body strength
- Shoulder and trunk stability
- Functional pushing capacity

Sets & Reps (general)

- Strength: 3–5 sets of 3–6 reps
- Hypertrophy: 3–4 sets of 6–10 reps
- Nervous-system supportive: 2–4 sets of 5–8 reps

Increase load when:

- ✓ last 2 reps feel challenging but controlled
- ✓ breathing doesn't spike or lock
- ✓ you finish feeling stable, not shaky

Key cues

- Ribcage stacked over pelvis
- Shoulder blades glide, don't pin
- Press through the floor/bench

Breathing

- Inhale before lowering the weight
 - Exhale as you press (through effort)
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PULL

(Upper body pulling toward you)

Examples: Rows, pull-ups, lat pulldowns, face pulls

Purpose

- Postural balance
- Scapular control
- Nervous system grounding

Sets & Reps

- Strength: 3–5 sets of 4–6 reps
- Hypertrophy: 3–4 sets of 8–12 reps
- NS-supportive: 2–4 sets of 6–10 reps

Progress when:

- ✓ you can pause briefly at peak contraction
- ✓ neck stays relaxed
- ✓ no gripping in jaw or breath

Key cues

- Initiate from the back, not arms
- Long spine, wide collarbones
- Pull elbows toward ribs

Breathing

- Inhale as arms extend
- Exhale as you pull

HINGE

(Hip-dominant loading)

Examples: Deadlift, Romanian deadlift, hip thrust, kettlebell swing

Purpose

- Posterior chain strength
- Hormonal & metabolic signal
- Grounding and confidence

Sets & Reps

- Strength: 3–5 sets of 3–5 reps
- Hypertrophy: 3–4 sets of 6–8 reps
- NS-supportive: 2–4 sets of 4–6 reps

Progress when:

- ✓ spine stays neutral
- ✓ no rush or rebound
- ✓ breath stays steady

Key cues:

- Push the floor away
- Hips move back, ribs stay down
- Load hamstrings, not lower back

Breathing

- Inhale before the lift
 - Exhale as you stand tall
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SQUAT

(Knee-dominant lower body)

Examples: Back squat, goblet squat, split squat

Purpose

- Leg strength
- Pelvic floor coordination
- Whole-body integration

Sets & Reps

- Strength: 3–5 sets of 3–6 reps
- Hypertrophy: 3–4 sets of 6–10 reps
- NS-supportive: 2–4 sets of 5–8 reps

Increase load when:

- ✓ depth stays consistent
- ✓ heels stay grounded
- ✓ no breath holding at bottom

Key cues

- Sit between your hips
- Knees track over toes
- Stay tall through spine

Breathing

- Inhale on the way down
 - Exhale as you stand
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CARRY

(Load transported while walking or holding)

Examples: Farmer carry, suitcase carry, front rack carry

Purpose

- Core integration
- Grip strength
- Nervous system regulation

Sets & Reps

- Distance: 20–60 seconds per set
- Sets: 2–4
- Load should feel “heavy but manageable”

Progress when:

- ✓ posture stays upright
- ✓ breathing remains nasal
- ✓ no side-leaning or bracing panic

Key cues

- Walk tall and slow
- Ribcage stacked over pelvis
- Let arms hang naturally

Breathing

- Breathe continuously (no holds)
- Aim for slow nasal breathing

ACCESSORY MOVEMENTS

(Single-joint or supportive work)

Examples: Lunges, step-ups, glute bridges, lateral raises, core work

Purpose:

- Address imbalances
- Support main lifts
- Build capacity safely

Sets & Reps

- 2–4 sets of 8–15 reps
- Slow tempo favored
- Progression self-check

Progress when:

- ✓ movement feels smooth
- ✓ no compensation patterns
- ✓ soreness resolves quickly

Key cues:

- Move with control
- Feel target muscle working
- No rushing reps

Breathing:

- Exhale during effort
- Inhale during return

Global Strength Training Principles (Important)

- ✓ Weight progression
 - Add load slowly (2.5–5%)
 - Never sacrifice breath or control
 - If sleep, cycle, or stress is off → hold weight steady
- ✓ Nervous system check
 - After training you should feel:
 - Grounded
 - Calm but alert
 - Stable in mood

Not:

✗ shaky

✗ wired

✗ depleted

- ✓ Breath rule

If breathing becomes forced or held, the load is too heavy for today.