

## Fantastic Five-Minute Workouts

Time is in short supply for nearly everyone these days but it's still important to include physical activity throughout your busy day. Most people believe that to get a good workout, you must exercise for thirty minutes or more without stopping or else you don't get anything out of it. Wrong! Research proves that short, intense segments of activity spread throughout the day are just as effective as one long workout, so there are no more excuses about not having enough time. Everyone can spare at least five minutes somewhere and there are brief workouts that challenge your whole body in that amount of time. To get you started, here are some fantastic workouts that really only take five minutes!

### Workout 1: Fast and Furious Cardio & Conditioning Work

Have hand weights nearby and ready the use of.

0:00 - 0:30: Warm up by briskly walking in place.

0:31 - 1:00: Increase the pace to a power-walk speed.

1:01 - 1:30: Keep walking and add a simple overhead reach by raising your arms straight up with every two steps.

1:31 - 2:00: Change the arm movement to reaching in front and then pulling back. Continue walking.

2:01 - 2:45: Pick up the hand weights and perform as many bicep curls as possible while you continue your walk.

2:46 - 3:30: Change the movement to pushing the weight directly overhead and then lowering as you keep the pace.

3:31 - 4:00: Put the weights down and slow down to your original pace.

4:01 - 4:30: Perform as many squats as you can by sitting back and keeping your heels pressed into the ground.

4:31 - 5:00: Walk slowly as your breathing and heart rate return to normal.

This workout increases your heart rate quickly and conditions the cardiovascular system with the high speed of walking in place. Using weights for arm work while you walk maintains the aerobic work while you build muscle at the same time. By gradually slowing down, you allow your body to return to a normal state slowly but still fit in muscle toning by doing squats. The steadily decreased demand on the body allows the body to stabilize comfortably. By combining aerobic conditioning with muscle toning, you get twice the benefits in one brief workout - what may be better?

### Workout 2: Steady Muscle Work

0:01 - 0:30: Warm up by walking gently and moving your arms at the same time.

0:31 - 1:00: Get started working the lower body muscles by doing as many squats as you can for thirty seconds. Make sure your body is properly aligned with your knees forming a right angle with your thighs and your back staying centered over your buttocks. Keep your heels pressed into the floor for support as you slowly lower and raise the body.

1:01 - 1:30: Stand up straight with your feet slightly wider than shoulder-width. With hands on hips, lower your body and then raise for as many repetitions as possible in thirty seconds. At the end of the time, lower your body one more time and hold.

1:31 - 1:45: Stay in your lowered position and move up and down extremely gently, no more than an inch or so. This helps isolate the inner thighs and tone them up.

1:46 - 2:15: Stand with your weight on your left leg, point your right foot behind you, and lift your right leg as many times as possible in thirty seconds. This helps tone the muscle at the back of the leg.

2:16 - 2:45: Switch legs, stand with your weight on your right leg, and lift your left leg behind you as many times as possible in thirty seconds.

2:46 - 3:15: Stand up straight with feet shoulder-width apart and then bend from the waist until you are slightly more than at right angles with your lower body. Stretch your arms in front of you and then raise each arm back. Repeat for thirty seconds. Be sure to hold your abdominal muscles in tightly. This tones the arms and upper back as well as the abs.

3:16 - 3:45: Stand up straight and place hands at shoulders. Begin reaching arms up and bringing back down to shoulder height. Repeat for thirty seconds.

3:46 - 4:15: Drop to the floor on hands and knees, and then walk your hands forward several inches. Begin performing modified push-ups and do as many repetitions as possible.

4:16 - 4:30: Lay on your back, knees bent, with arms behind head and fingertips just touching the back of the head. Use your abdominal muscles to pull your upper body towards your knees but not too far. Lower down slowly for maximum muscle building.

4:31 - 5:00: Still lying on your back on the floor, stretch legs out and raise arms above the head, inhale deeply and stretch. Let your breath out slowly and let your body relax.

This workout focuses on building muscle and strength all over. The variety of exercises works dozens of muscles all over the body for an overall toning effect. Switch between the two workouts for maximum results in your weight and muscle tone.

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#### About the Author

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