

THE 5 BEST BODYWEIGHT EXERCISES YOU CAN DO



By [ERIN KELLY](#) Published On 02/03/2017

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Gyms are great, assuming you like crowded, germ-infested, smelly rooms that cost money to enter.

Oh, right: [Gyms aren't that great](#).

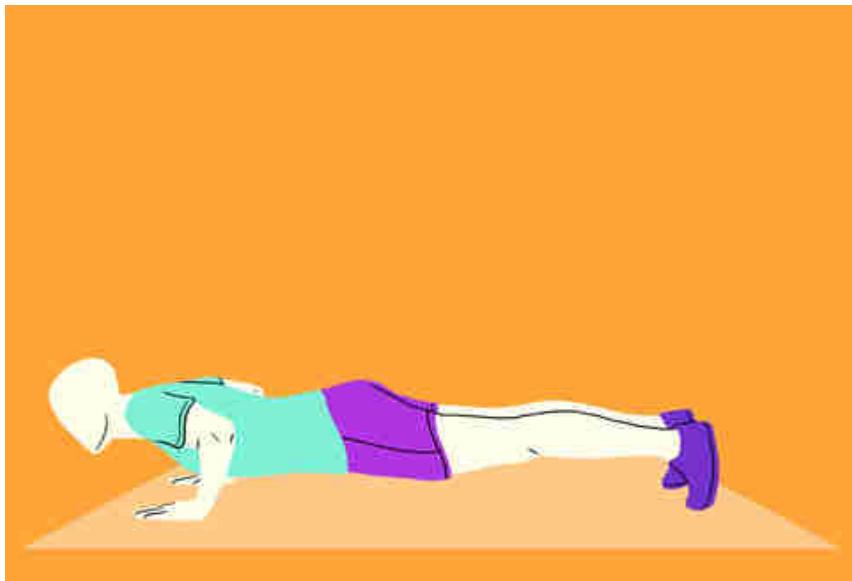
The good news is you can avoid the gym and still get a great workout. We asked personal trainers for the best bodyweight exercises you can do, so you can avoid relying on [clunky machinery](#) and monthly fees.

The best news? Not a single trainer uttered the word "burpee."



endurance exercise you'll need to focus on squeezing not only your abs and lower back, but your quads, hamstrings and glutes as well, essentially creating a full-body workout.

"Planks don't just test your core endurance, but they will test your mental resiliency as well," Ernst says. "Come on, you can do 10 more seconds!"



DANIEL FISHEL/THRILLIST

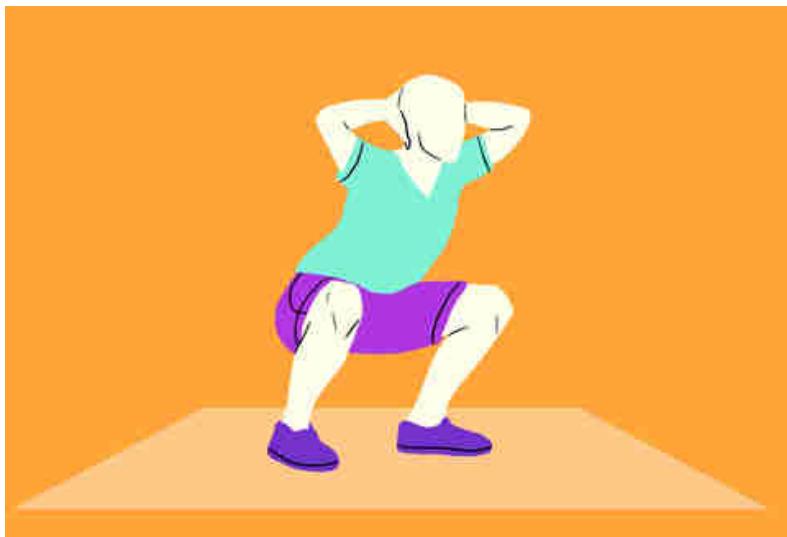
Push-ups

According to Liz Hilliard, creator and owner of [Hilliard Studio Method](#), push-ups are a top bodyweight move because they work your entire body and can be modified for both beginners and seasoned athletes.

"Push-ups fire into all four abdominal muscle groups to flatten your abs, strengthen your back, and work your chest, shoulders, and even the front of your legs," Hilliard says.

To advance the movement, she recommends a cobra push-up. Start off in a high plank, either on your toes or knees, with your feet 6in apart. Walk your hands about one foot ahead of you and bend both elbows simultaneously, lowering your body as low as you can with the goal of tapping your elbows to the floor. Make sure you feel this in your triceps, lats, and obliques -- not your shoulders. Return to a straight-arm plank by pressing your palms into the mat and engaging through the backs of your arms.

Repeat eight to 10 repetitions at a time, moving slowly to reap the benefits of this killer



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Prisoner squats

Squats, or the standing movement that mimics lowering yourself into a chair, primarily help build your leg muscles, including your quads, hamstrings, and calves. But if done correctly, your entire core region (front and back) will benefit as well.

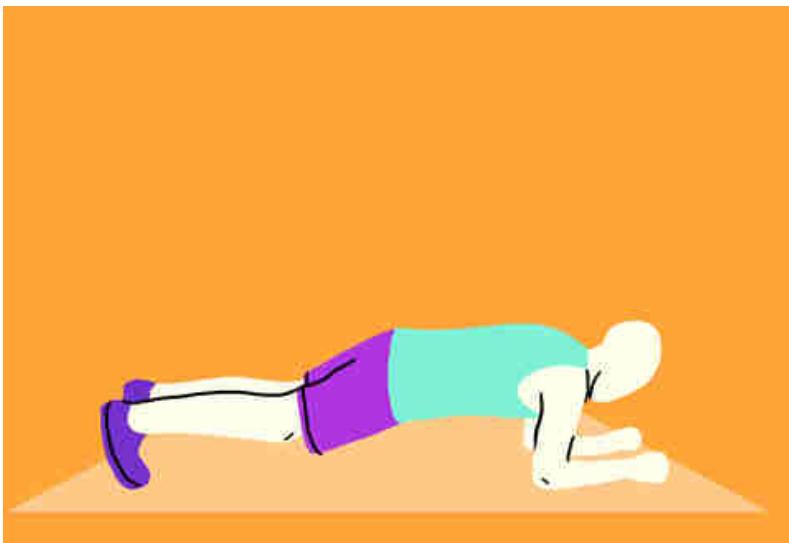
"By putting your hands behind your head -- as if you were being arrested -- the muscles in your upper back and posterior deltoids will also be engaged," Ernst says.



DANIEL FISHEL/THRILLIST

Mountain climbers

Mountain climbers develop strength in both your upper and lower regions, says James McMillian, coach at New York City's athletic-training studio Tone House, making them an ideal total-body exercise.



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Plank into downward dog

Personal trainer, weight-loss expert, and coach [Stephanie Mansour](#) recommends combining a plank with common yoga move downward-facing dog to work both your arms and core.

For this transition exercise, start in a plank position, with your shoulders over your wrists and fingers spread wide. Pull your abs in tight, and then stay on your tiptoes. Slowly exhale, and use your core to pull you up and back into a downward dog -- reaching your pelvis up toward the ceiling and drawing your sit bones toward the wall behind you as you straighten your legs (without locking your knees) so your body forms an "A" shape.

Take a deep breath before pressing forward back into a plank -- if you want to be a real go-getter, you can combine all of these into one workout, which will leave you sore and (probably) totally ripped.

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Erin Kelly is a writer, runner, and triathlete who is a strong advocate of bringing hand sanitizer to the gym. You can follow her on Twitter [@erinkellysays](#).