

FUNDAMENTALS

FASHENIC
STYLE

dumbbell



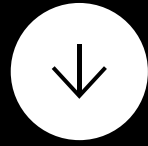


Table of contents

01

THE DUMBBELL: A CLASSIC SYMBOL OF STRENGTH

02

BENEFITS OF DUMBBELL TRAINING
What makes dumbbells unique?

03

USING DUMBBELLS TO REACH YOUR FITNESS GOALS

Losing weight

Getting stronger

Building muscle

Staying fit

Dumbbell Limitations

04

THE BASICS

Safety The Set-Up: How to rack a Dumbbell

05

DUMBBELL EXERCISES

Dumbbell Bench Press

Dumbbell Shoulder Press

Dumbbell Bent Row

Dumbbell Biceps Curl

Dumbbell Tricep Extension

Weighted Crunch

Side Bend

Dumbbell Goblet Squat

Double Dumbbell Lunges

Single-Leg Deadlift

Double Dumbbell Bulgarian Split Squat

Dumbbell Clean and Jerk

Dumbbell Snatch



The Dumbbell: A Classic Symbol of Strength

Few tools are as closely associated with strength and muscle as dumbbells. They are among the oldest strength-training implements, with origins in ancient Greece and India. Over time, dumbbells have taken many forms. Modern versions are usually plate-loaded and available in various weights for gym use. Earlier designs were far less ergonomic, consisting of handheld bells with the clappers removed—hence the term “dumb” or silent. Later, they evolved into cast-iron double bells joined by a grip, made from large, fixed metal pieces. Many famous, massive dumbbells were created in this form, some of which remain iconic today.

even named. One of them is the “Cyr Dumbbell”. It weighs around 124kg and was named after Louis Cyr, one of the strongest men who ever lived.

Cyr was a French-Canadian strongman who lived from 1863 to 1912 and boasted almost superhuman strength. Some of his most famous feats included: Lifting the famous 124kg dumbbell with one arm (later even heavier versions), lifting a platform on his back holding 18 men (weighing a total of 1967kg), and resisting the pull of four horses at once. He was an embodiment of strength from an early age, beating several famous strongmen of his time (such as Eugen Sandow) in competition. One of his favorite strength training tools? The dumbbell.



Benefits of Dumbbell Training

Dumbbells, barbells, and kettlebells are all effective training tools, with none being inherently better than the others. Which one you choose depends on your goals and the equipment available. This section will examine the qualities dumbbells share with other tools and highlight what makes them unique.



What makes dumbbells unique?

When you hold a dumbbell in your hand, your hand is placed right around the dumbbell's center of mass. This allows you to grip it firmly and move it around yourself freely if you have the strength.

02 Benefits of Dumbbell Training

DUMBBELL VS. KETTLEBELL

A kettlebell's center of mass lies outside the grip, making the bell more difficult to stabilize. Both the dumbbell and kettlebell allow you to move your weights through different planes of motion. For example, they allow both pressing over your head as well as off your chest (i.e., a Bench Press).

Dumbbells are also easier to progress than their cousin, the kettlebell. Some adjustable dumbbells can be increased by just 1kg at a time with just a turn of a lever, while kettlebells are usually progressed in 4kg increments.



DUMBBELL VS. BARBELL

With dumbbells, each arm moves independently, requiring your body's muscles—core, chest, shoulders, arms, and hands—to stabilize each side. This differs from a barbell, where your arms are connected, allowing dumbbells to help correct muscular imbalances between your left and right sides.

Additionally, the connecting bar of a barbell can limit your range of motion, whereas dumbbells allow for greater movement. For example, in a Bench Press, a barbell cannot pass through your chest, but dumbbells can. While many exercises can also be loaded with a barbell, they engage stabilizer muscles less than dumbbells do.

might also force your shoulders into more internal or external rotation. For some, this can be a cause of shoulder pain. So, dumbbells might be the better choice when training for shoulder health.

However, at a certain point in your training career, you might no longer be able to get enough weight up in the form of dumbbells. You might need to switch to the barbell as it is a tool with almost unlimited strength progression potential. Additionally, the barbell is more stable than dumbbells and it can be easier to develop power and maximal strength.

With all the differences and unique features between the tools cleared up, let's focus on how to use a dumbbell to reach your fitness goals.



Using Dumbbells to Reach Your Fitness Goals

As with any training tool, the dumbbell can be used to train for a wide array of goals. While it is primarily known as a tool for bodybuilders, it is much more versatile than that!

Losing weight

When it comes to losing weight, many people immediately think about cardio exercises like running or jogging for extended periods. But resistance training is also a very effective way to burn calories while also building a great physique. If your goal is weight loss, it is typically recommended that you exercise consistently and eat a healthy diet to burn more calories than you are consuming.

Often, a combination of steady-state cardio (like running) and reduced food intake is seen as the

While not a magic fix for weight loss, a dumbbell routine can improve body composition—burning fat while building muscle—and may also help lower the scale numbers. It's important to remember that no tool produces results without consistent use. Dumbbells provide a strong challenge for all levels, yet remain beginner-friendly, making it easy to start training and, most importantly, stay consistent.

03 Using Dumbbells to Reach Your Fitness Goals

Getting stronger

Another goal that you could have is to become stronger. Strength training is the prime method of doing exactly that, while at the same time making your joints more resilient and your muscles more defined.

Using dumbbells, you can avoid stressing your joints too much through the loads you're moving every training session. As an additional perk, your stabilizer muscles will also get stronger compared to barbell or machine training, since you're forced to stabilize two freely moving objects in your hands.



Building muscle

Most people picking up a dumbbell want to become more muscular. While it may be a cliché, there is a history of famous bodybuilders supporting that claim. Some of the most muscular humans in history used dumbbells to get there. How is that?

One of the main benefits of a dumbbell is the fact that it is a great tool to train muscle groups

in isolation. While dumbbells can be used for many compound exercises, they excel at targeting muscle groups that often lag behind.

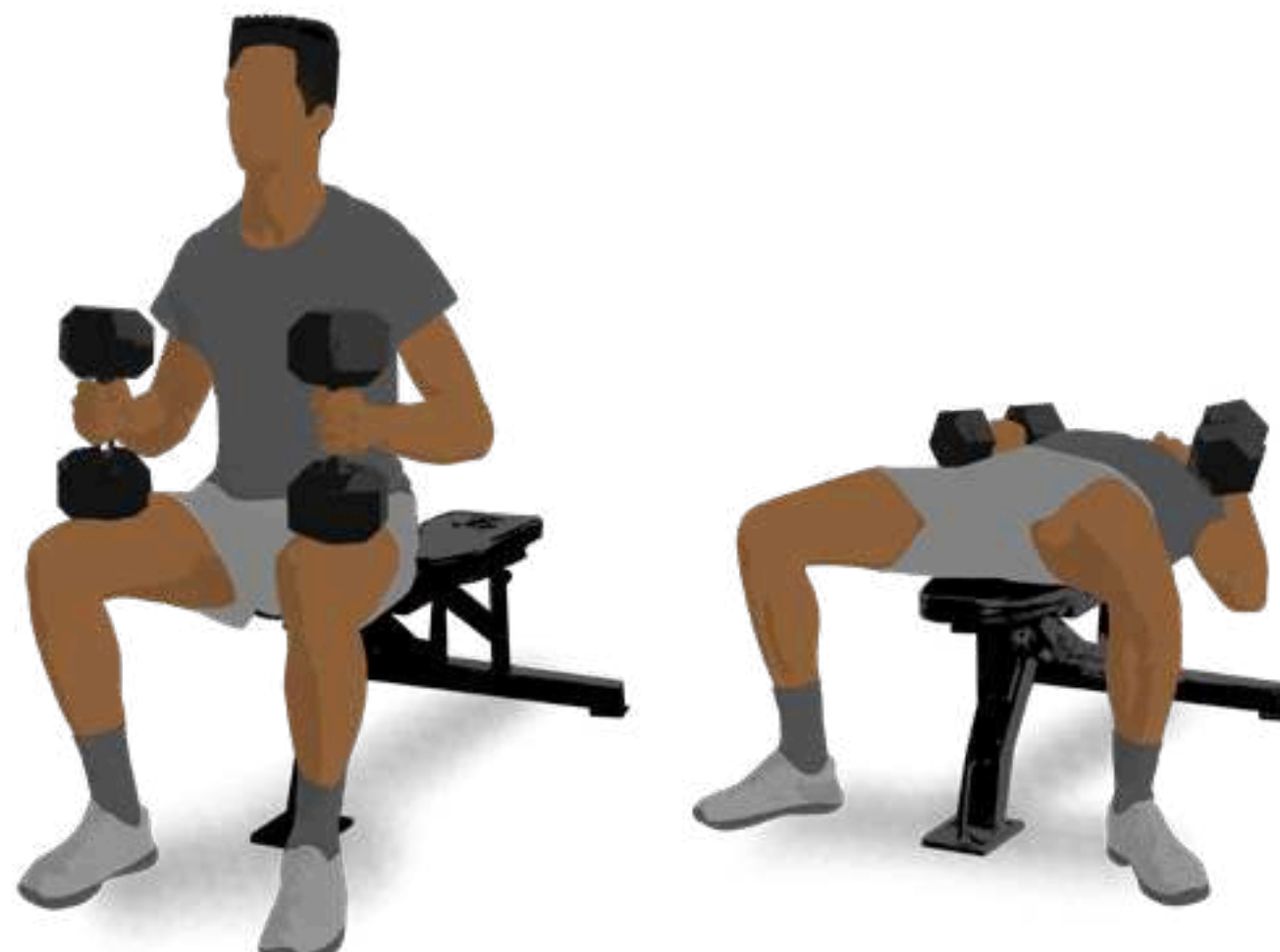
Common examples include the biceps and trapezius. This is why the Bicep Curl is most commonly performed with a dumbbell.

03 Using Dumbbells to Reach Your Fitness Goals

Staying fit

Another important reason to use dumbbells is to keep yourself fit. Including dumbbell training in your routine is not only a great way to add variety to your training, but you will also be preserving and improving muscle and movement function.

Because of the freedom of movement using dumbbells, you can train many effective exercises with a minimal amount of coaching required. While you should always strive to have a good quality of instruction before doing any new exercise, the dumbbell is one of the safest training tools to use. You don't need to go through a week-long course to be able to train with them. Therefore, it is one of the best tools to use after a day of work or when you're maybe not in your most athletic form. The dumbbell will get you fit in no time, and more importantly, keep you fit for life if you let it.



Dumbbell Limitations

Another key reason to use dumbbells is to maintain fitness. Adding dumbbell training to your routine not only introduces variety but also helps preserve and improve muscle strength and movement function.

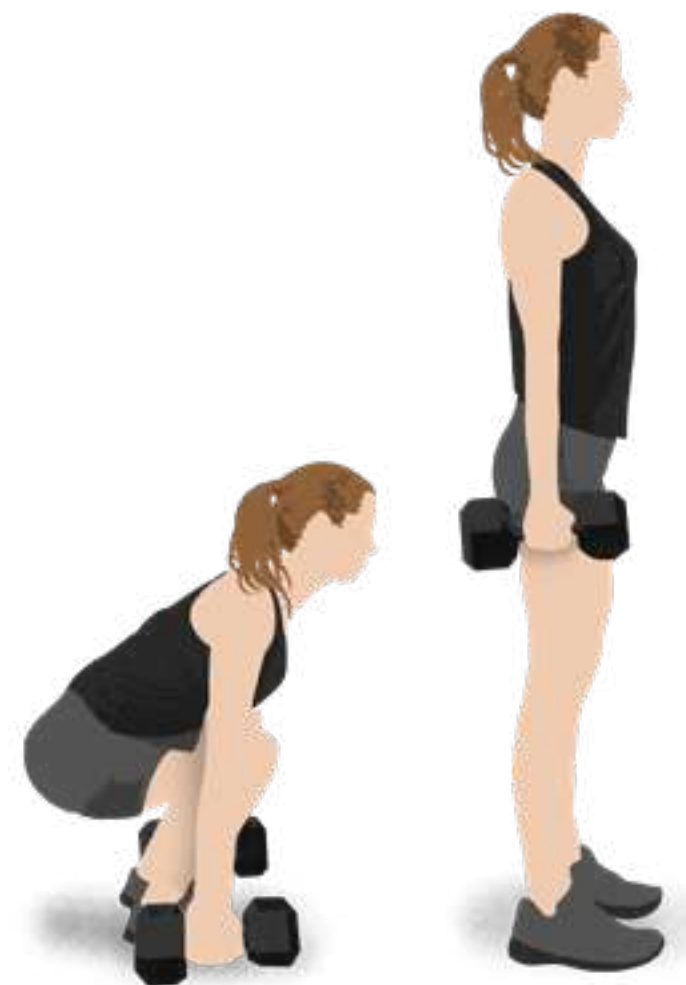
Thanks to their freedom of movement, dumbbells allow you to perform many effective exercises with minimal coaching. While good instruction is always recommended for new exercises, dumbbells are among the safest training tools and don't require a week-long course to use effectively.

This makes them ideal for training after a long day or when you're not at your most athletic. With consistent use, dumbbells can get you fit quickly and, more importantly, help you stay fit for life.



The Basics

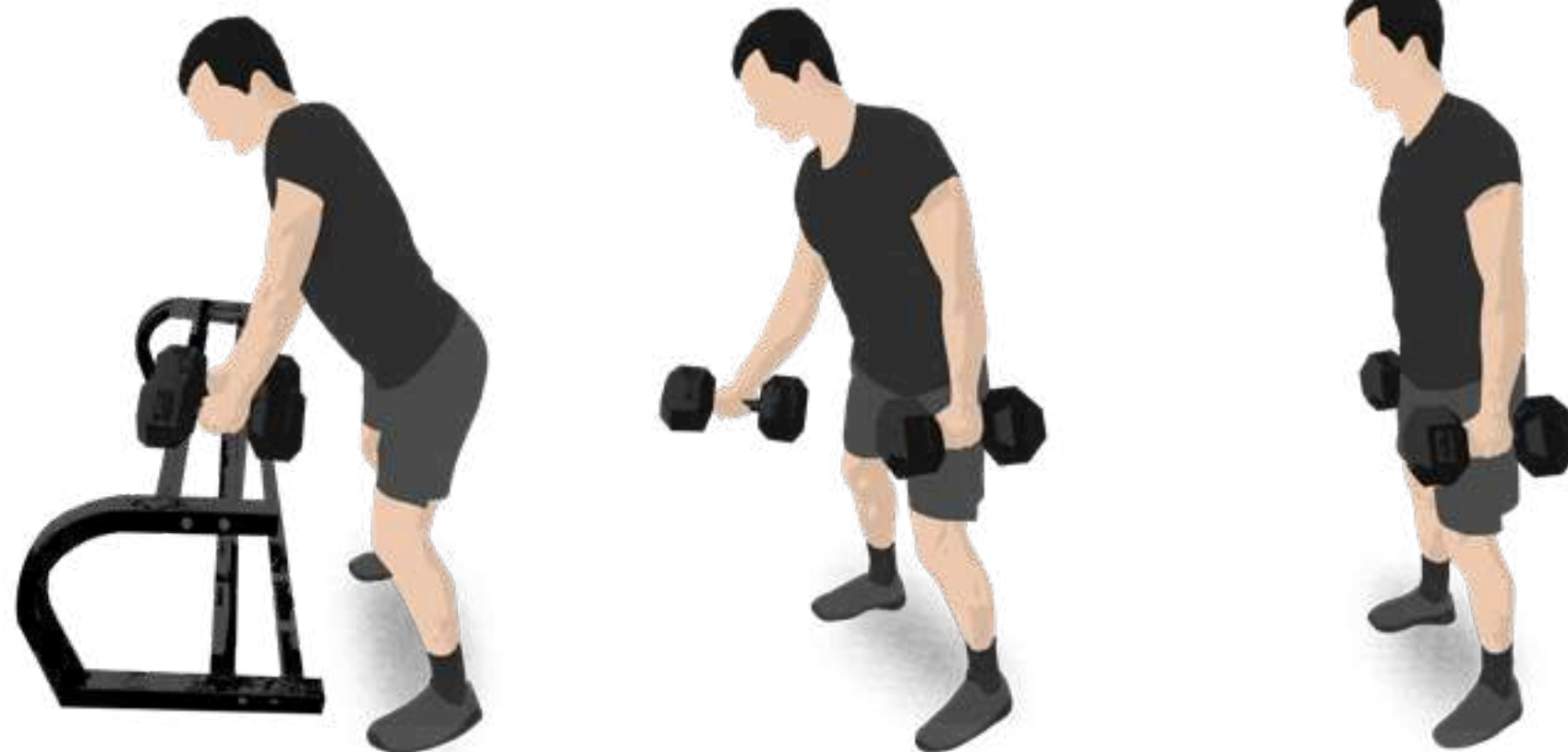
As with any training tool, aim to progress but do so cautiously. Improving performance—through heavier weights, more reps, or additional sets—is important, but movement quality is equally critical and often overlooked. Never sacrifice proper form for quantity. When unsure, opt for a lighter weight that allows correct technique. Poor form can lead to compensatory movements, increasing the risk of injury and preventing the targeted muscles from being effectively trained.



The Set-Up: How to rack a Dumbbell

When lifting a dumbbell or a pair of dumbbells, always begin with a neutral spine. Achieve this by bending at your hips and knees while keeping your core engaged.

Keep your back flat throughout the entire movement. As soon as you have the dumbbells in your hands, straighten your hips and knees again to stand back up.



Reverse the same process when putting the dumbbells down on the floor again, especially after heavy lower body exercises. Don't lose focus just because you finished your reps - your back will thank you for it.

The following section will detail how to get into the proper position and perform each exercise.



Dumbbell Exercises

UPPER BODY

Dumbbell Bench Press

The Bench Press is a classic strength exercise with dumbbells. It primarily targets your chest while also working your arms and shoulders, making it an excellent choice for building upper-body strength and muscle.



HOW TO:

1. Pick up your dumbbells while you are still sitting on the bench.
2. Place them on top of your thighs.
3. Lie back on the bench while shifting the dumbbells to the front of your shoulders while keeping your arms close to your body.
4. Make sure to keep your core braced and your shoulders pinched together into the bench.
5. Once you feel stable on the bench, press the dumbbells up towards the ceiling.
6. To finish your rep, lower the dumbbells back towards your shoulders in a controlled manner.

05 Dumbbell Exercises

TIPS:

1. Imagine you are pressing the dumbbells and the bench apart to make sure your shoulders stay anchored to the bench.
2. When you straighten your elbows, try keeping the weight in balance over your shoulders.



UPPER BODY

Dumbbell Shoulder Press

The Shoulder Press is a perfect dumbbell exercise for developing your shoulders, triceps, and upper trapezius. The freedom of movement offered by dumbbells makes it excellent for improving shoulder health and stability.

HOW TO:

1. Bend at the hips and knees to pick up the dumbbell.
2. Pull it straight up to your shoulder,
3. so that one end of the dumbbell rests on top of your delt, while the other is pointing away from you. Your elbow will rest below the weight and near your rib cage.
4. Brace your core and flex the muscles of your glutes and quads.



5. Hold your other arm straight out to the side for balance.
6. Press the dumbbell straight up to the ceiling.
7. Let it rotate freely so that in the upper position it is parallel to your shoulders.
8. To finish the rep, slowly lower it back down on top of your shoulder.

TIPS:

1. Imagine pressing the weight behind your ear or on top of your head to make sure you are pressing straight up.
2. When the weight is in the highest position, aim to have the arm straight over your head, not in front, while keeping your lumbar spine straight.

UPPER BODY

Dumbbell Bent Row

Dumbbell rows are an excellent way to strengthen and build your back, shoulders, and biceps. The unrestricted movement allowed by dumbbells makes this exercise ideal for improving back and shoulder health.



HOW TO:

1. Stand perpendicular to a flat bench with the dumbbell on the floor between your legs.
2. Bend down at the hip and stabilize yourself on the bench with your non-working arm. Your arm and legs will form a stable tripod.
3. Pick up the dumbbell with your free hand and stabilize the weight in your straightened arm.
4. Let your shoulder blade move freely, allowing your shoulder to move slightly towards the floor.
5. Brace your core while keeping the rest of your back stable.

6. Row the dumbbell up, moving your elbow up in a straight line and letting it lightly touch your ribs on its way up.
7. Bring the weight up until it touches your chest.
8. Lower the weight in a controlled manner until your arm is straight.

TIPS:

1. To create proper tension, imagine you want to touch your elbow to the ceiling.
2. For maximum results, avoid using any momentum from your body.

UPPER BODY

Dumbbell Biceps Curl

Bicep Curls are likely the most recognized exercise worldwide. They target the biceps while also strengthening the forearms. Since the biceps connect to the shoulder, curls are also a great way to support overall upper body health.

HOW TO:

1. Pick up two dumbbells using your hips and keeping a tight core.
2. Hold them in your straight arms with your elbows fully extended. Lift them both at once or in an alternating fashion.
- 3.

4. To curl up your dumbbells, bend your elbows as much as you can.
5. Slowly lower the dumbbells and extend your arms until your elbows are straight again.



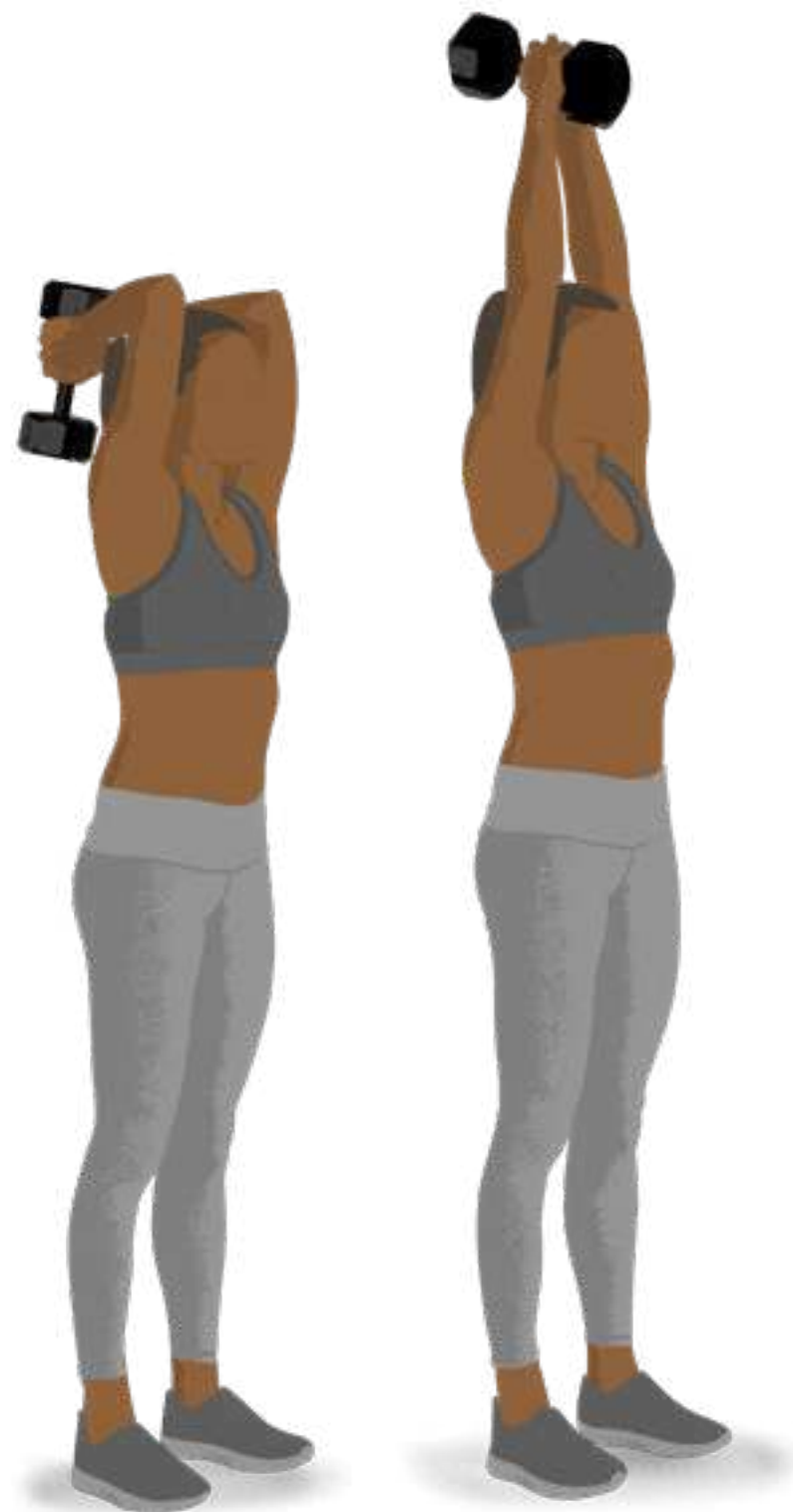
TIPS:

1. Lifting both at once will make for a shorter set while lifting them one at a time will allow you to focus more on the tension in your arms.
2. Focus on the tension in the muscles of your arms, especially in the biceps.
3. Limit the movement of your elbows by keeping them close to your ribcage at all times. There are two ways to perform your Curls: You can curl your dumbbells in the conventional way, keeping them perpendicular to your arm. This will work your elbow flexors, especially your biceps muscle. Alternatively, you can hold them like a hammer, parallel to your arms. This will train another elbow flexor located below your biceps, the brachioradialis muscle.



Dumbbell Tricep Extension

To develop a well-defined triceps muscle, there's just no way around Triceps Extensions. Doing them behind your head will allow you to train both ends of the muscle: The one attached to your shoulder as well as that attached to your lower arm.



HOW TO:

1. Pick up a dumbbell bending at the hips and keeping a braced core.
2. Hold it in both hands and move it above and slightly behind your head, keeping your elbows straight.
3. Lower the weight slowly, until your elbows are bent as much as possible.
4. Make sure that your upper arm is still pointing up to the ceiling and your ribs are tucked down.
5. Extend your elbows again to move the weight back up.

TIPS:

1. Imagine your elbows as flashlights pointing to the sky to help you keep a proper arm position.
2. To keep your ribs down, imagine bracing for a punch to tighten your core.



CORE

Weighted Crunch

Using a dumbbell increases the tension on your abdominal muscles. By gradually using heavier dumbbells, you'll handle half the work for building a six-pack. The other half, as often said, is achieved through proper nutrition.

HOW TO:

1. Lie down on your mat and place your feet on the floor in front of your glutes.
2. Your knees should be bent at around 90 degrees.
3. Take your dumbbell in both hands and hug it tight to your chest, crossing your arms.
4. Build tension in your core and start your upwards motion by flexing your abs.
5. Stop at the point where you feel the most tension in your abs without sitting up completely.
6. Make sure your glutes and feet stay in contact with the floor.
7. Slowly lie back down on the mat while keeping your core tight for the next rep.

TIPS:

1. Imagine you want to push the dumbbell on your chest up to the sky.
2. Keep your lower back in contact with the ground at all times.



05 Dumbbell Exercises

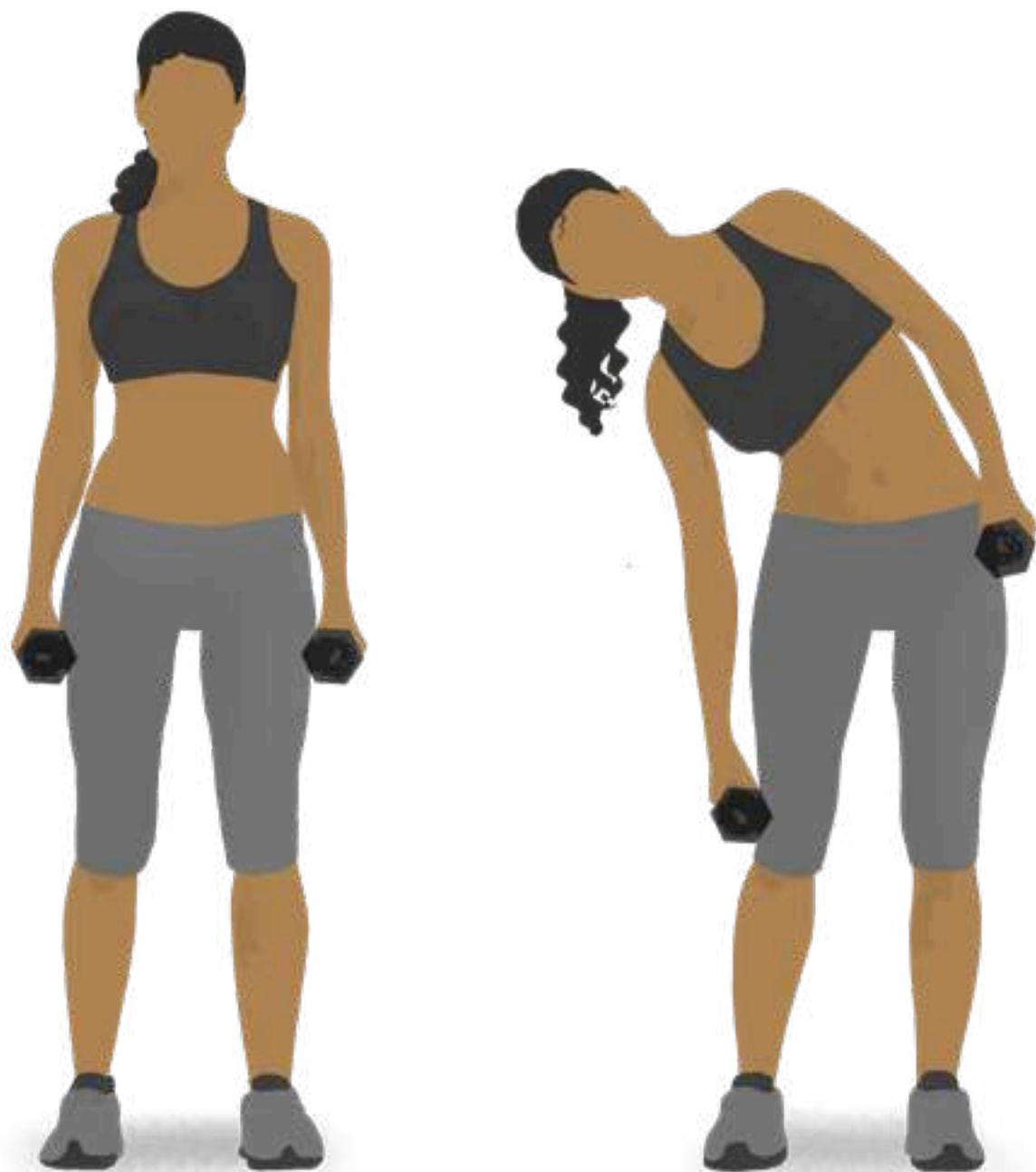
CORE

Side Bend

Most people focus on training the front of their core, but the core also includes muscles along the sides. The Side Bend is a key exercise to balance your core routine, helping to keep both your back and core strong and mobile.

HOW TO:

1. Pick up a dumbbell using good form (i.e., using your knees and hips).
2. Hold it in one hand with your arm fully extended towards the floor. Make sure you are standing upright by imagining you are pushing the crown of your head upwards.



4. Lower your dumbbell slowly towards the floor, bending sideways.
5. Move until you feel a slight stretch on the side that's lengthening. Then, quickly return to your standing position to finish the rep.
- 6.

TIPS:

1. Make sure your shoulders stay relaxed and your chest stays up.
2. Pay attention to only bend sideways and not forward or backward.

LOWER BODY

Dumbbell Goblet Squat

The Squat is a fundamental human movement and a key exercise for your knees, hips, ankles, and back. Using a dumbbell allows you to strengthen and develop your lower body while simultaneously mobilizing your joints, helping to keep your body healthy and flexible.

HOW TO:

1. Pick a dumbbell up using your knees and hips.
2. Hold it in front of you like a goblet, putting both hands under the upper weight of your dumbbell.
3. Tuck your elbows in close underneath the weight.
4. Keep your feet about shoulder-width apart with your toes pointing slightly outward.
5. Brace your core while opening your knees slightly to the side and pushing your hips back a little bit.
6. Move straight down like an elevator, bending your knees and hips.
7. Stop when your hips are below your knees.
8. Use the power of your legs to push back up.

**TIPS:**

1. Keep your chest open to also make sure your back stays straight.
2. Imagine pushing the floor away with both feet.
3. Keep your heels in contact with the ground throughout the movement.



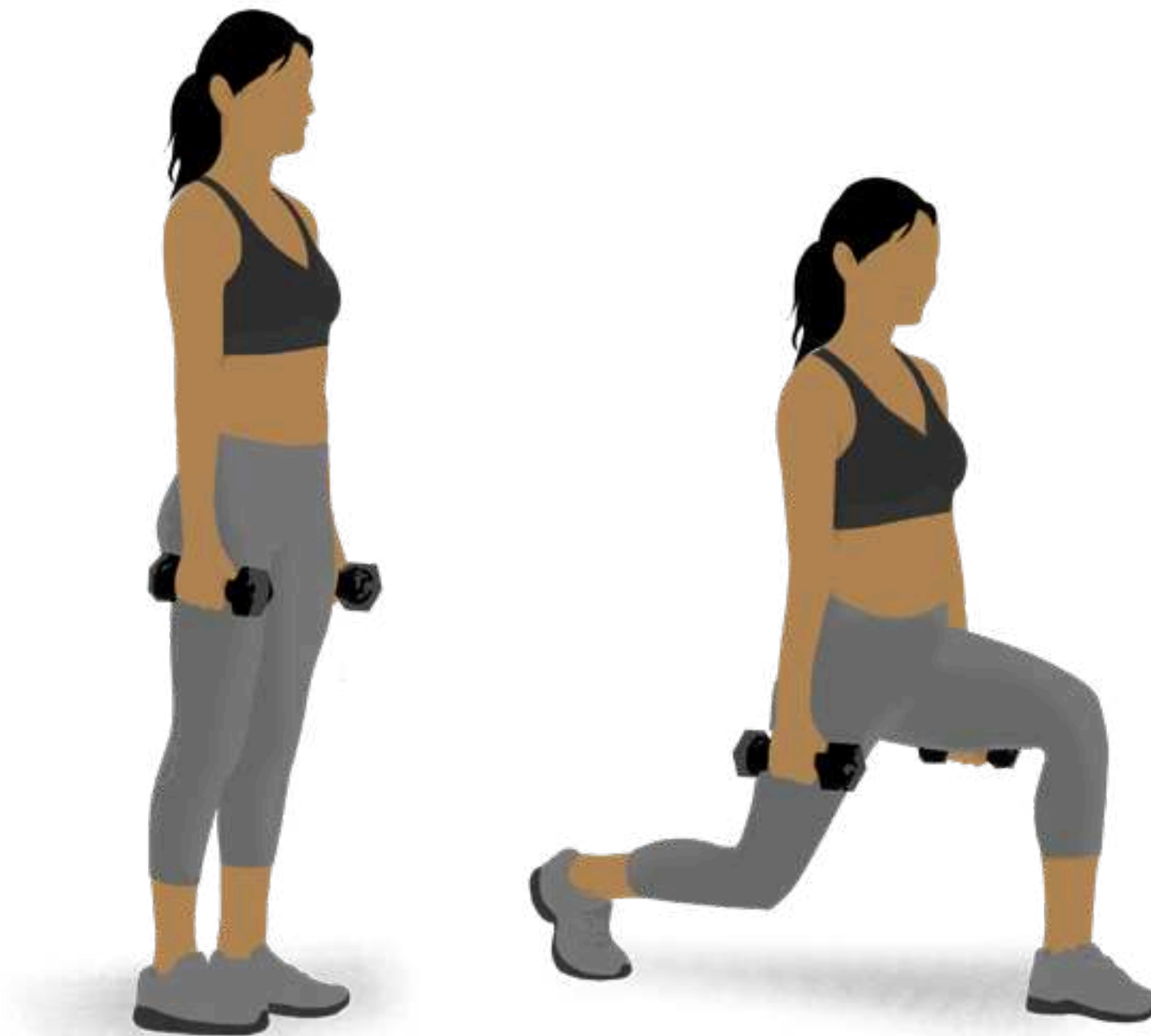
05 Dumbbell ExercisesLOWER BODY

Double Dumbbell Lunges

Lunges are a great exercise for strengthening and mobilizing the lower body while in motion. The stepping pattern engages the stabilizing muscles of your hips, knees, and ankles simultaneously, while also improving balance.

HOW TO:

1. Pick up two dumbbells using your knees and hips.
2. Hold them at your sides in your outstretched arms.
3. Make sure you are standing straight, slightly tensing your core.
4. Your feet should be next to each other in a natural standing posture.



5. Use one of your legs to step forward in a lunging step.
6. Move down by bending your knees until your back knee touches the floor.
7. Push yourself up through the heel of your front foot to get back to the starting position.

TIPS:

1. Your arms and shoulders should be relaxed while you are tightly gripping the weights.
2. Make sure to keep your chest up and avoid leaning forward or backward.
3. Avoid letting your front knee cave in during the movement.

05 Dumbbell Exercises

LOWER BODY

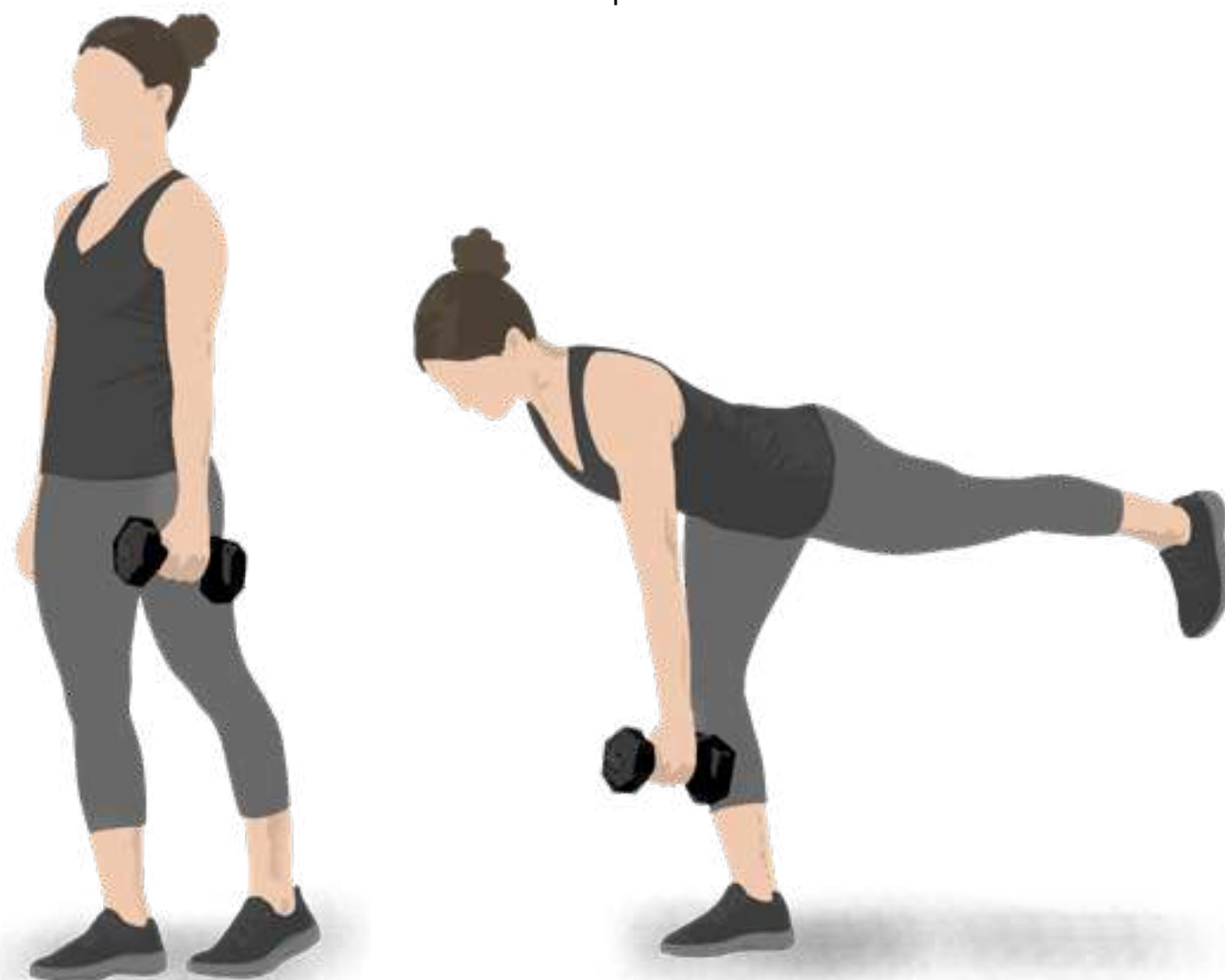
Single-Leg Deadlift

The Single-Leg Deadlift is an excellent exercise to develop stability on one leg and to strengthen the muscles surrounding your hips and ankles. Using your hip as a hinge will also teach you to keep your spine stable under load.

HOW TO:

1. Pick up a dumbbell using your knees and hips.
2. Rest it on the side of the leg where you are holding it.
3. Make sure you are standing upright with your core tense.
4. Shift your weight onto your leg on the other side.
5. If you are holding the weight in your right hand, you will stand on your left leg and vice versa.

6. When you are standing on one leg, bend your knee slightly and make sure it points forward.
7. To begin the rep, lift your unweighted foot off the floor.
8. Bend your hips and push your foot back until your leg is parallel to the floor.
Your hips bend like a perfect hinge.
- 9.
10. Hold the weight in your straight arm, letting the dumbbell hang downward.
11. To finish the rep, quickly push yourself back up using the strength of the glute on your supporting leg.



TIP:

Keep your hips square by making sure the big toe of your back leg points towards the floor.

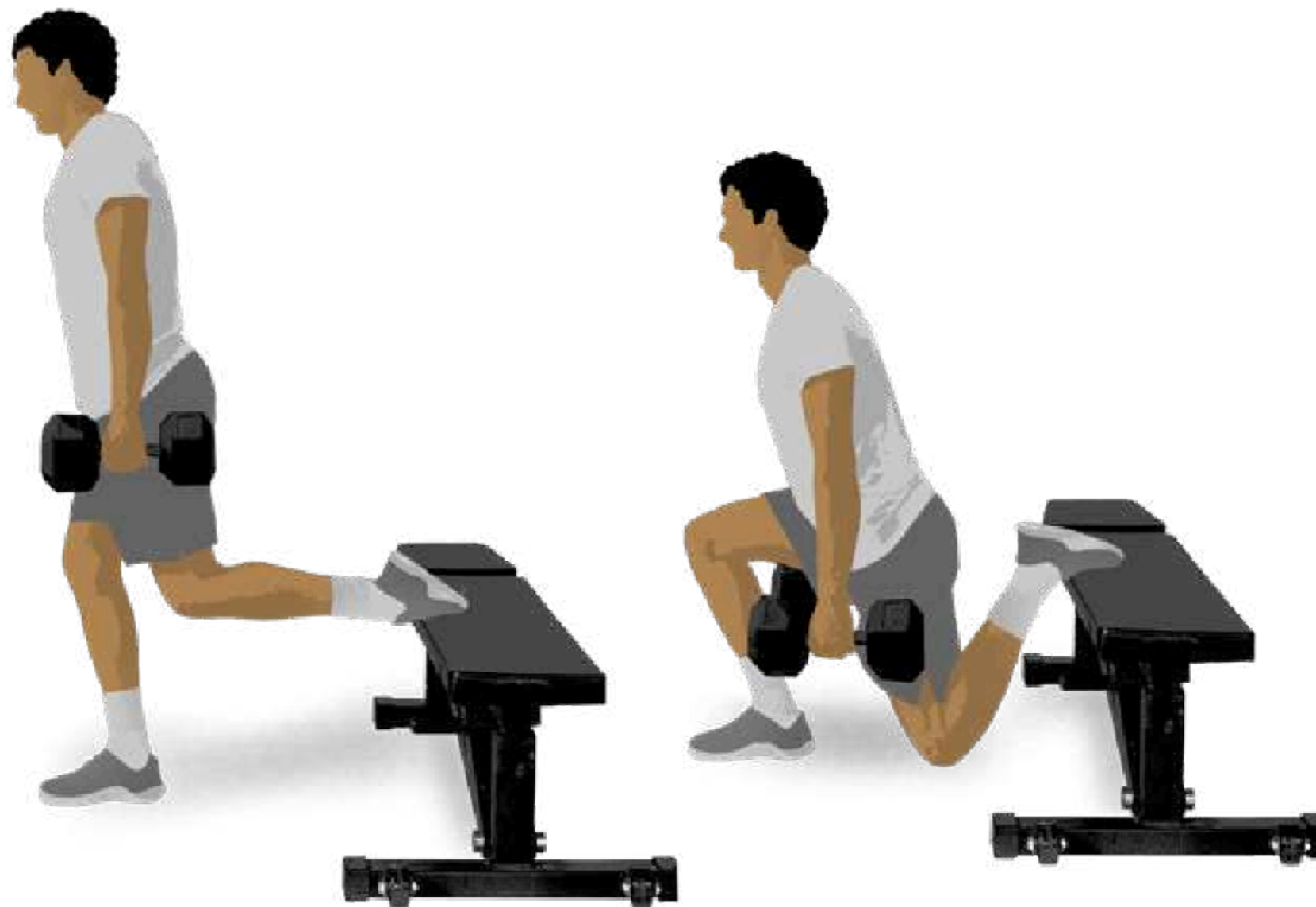
LOWER BODY

Double Dumbbell Bulgarian Split Squat

The Bulgarian Split Squat is a highly effective exercise for building strength and stability on one leg. Focusing on your knee as the main driver helps maintain stability under load while strengthening the muscles surrounding your knees and ankles.

HOW TO:

1. Stand with your back towards a bench and pick up two dumbbells, bending only at the knees and hips.
2. Hold the dumbbells at your sides in your outstretched arms.



3. Shift your center of gravity over one leg.
4. Reach back and put your unweighted leg on top of the bench.

5. Stand upright, opening your chest.
6. Shift your weight to your front leg and bend your front knee until your front thigh is parallel with the floor.
7. Keep your front knee pointing forward while you move down.
8. Quickly push yourself up until you are standing straight again to finish the rep.

TIPS:

1. Your arms and shoulders should be relaxed while you are tightly gripping the weights.
2. Maintain tension through your core.
3. Take a moment between reps to regain your balance.

Dumbbell Clean and Jerk

The Clean & Jerk is a full-body exercise that connects the strength of your lower and upper body. It includes explosive movements that allow you to lift heavier dumbbells overhead, building leg power, enhancing upper-body stability, and improving coordination between your upper and lower limbs.

HOW TO:

1. Position yourself over your dumbbell.
2. Move down towards it while bending at the knees and hips.
3. Grab the dumbbell and, using an explosive movement of your legs, create momentum to pull it up towards your shoulder.



05 Dumbbell Exercises



4. The dumbbell will accelerate with the movement of your legs.
5. To catch it, slightly bend your knees in a small dipping motion.
6. You will stand in a quarter Squat, holding the dumbbell at shoulder height.
7. Next, repeat this dipping motion to accelerate the dumbbell again. At the same time, extend your arm upwards toward the sky. You will catch the dumbbell in an overhead position while doing another quarter Squat.

8. Stand up straight to complete the lift.
9. To finish the rep and get the dumbbell back down, start bending your elbow. At the same time, bend your knees into the quarter Squat position. That way, you will catch the weight again at shoulder height.
10. You can follow up by doing another rep or place the dumbbell back on the floor using your hips and knees.

TIPS:

1. Maintain tension through your core during the entire movement.
2. Keep the dumbbell close to your body.
3. Use your legs to propel the dumbbell to shoulder height and avoid curling the weight with your arms.

FULL BODY

Dumbbell Snatch

The Snatch is a dynamic exercise that engages the full strength of your lower and upper body. This explosive movement lifts a dumbbell overhead in a single motion, boosting leg power, enhancing upper-body stability, and improving coordination between your upper and lower limbs.

HOW TO:

1. Stand over your dumbbell with your feet on either side.
2. Move down towards it while bending at your knees and hips.



05 Dumbbell Exercises

3. Grab the dumbbell and tense up your core.
4. Next, you need to create strong momentum by doing an explosive upward Squat.
5. At the same time, pull the dumbbell up towards the sky while slightly bending your elbow.
6. When the dumbbell reaches the overhead position, straighten your arm to catch it.
7. To finish the rep, you can move the dumbbell straight back down between your legs.

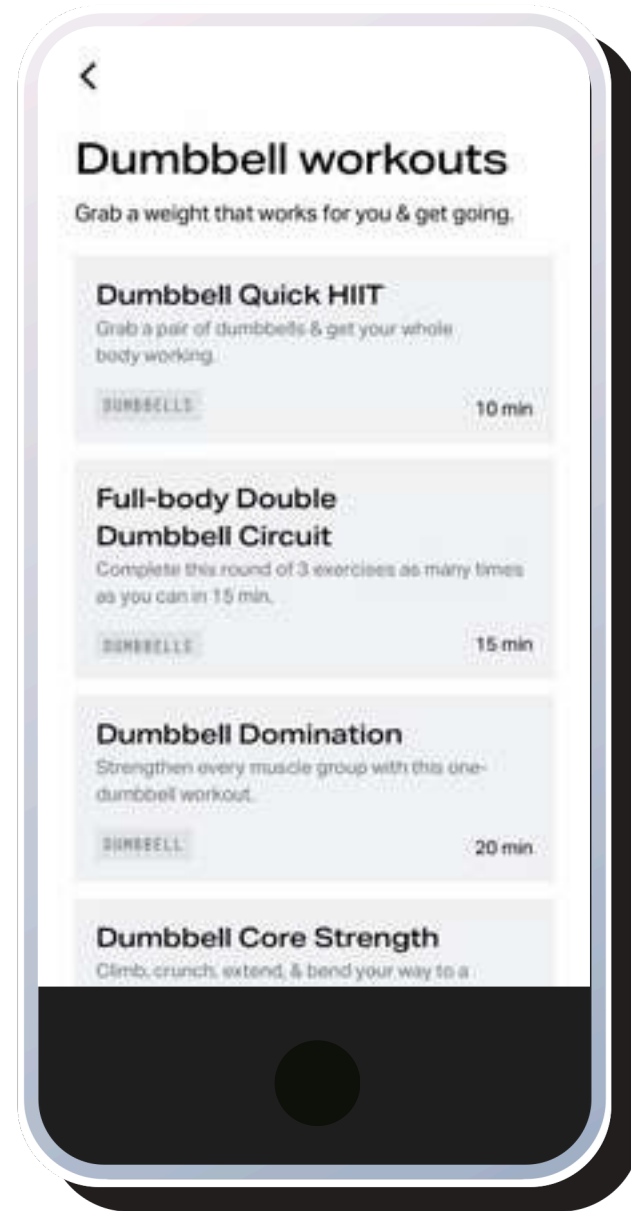


TIPS:

1. Imagine you are zipping up an imaginary jacket in front of you to avoid putting excess strain on your shoulder.
2. Bend your knees and hips to follow the weight at the end of the repetition while keeping your core braced and your spine straight to be in position for your next rep.

Challenge yourself

Looking to challenge yourself with dumbbells against the clock? Head to the Explore tab in the Fashenic App to discover time-based dumbbell workouts.



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STYLE**

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