



7-Minute Workout

By Stephanie Watson

How It Works

You're busy. But chances are, you have 7 minutes in your schedule that you could



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7-Min...

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When you don't have 30 or 60 minutes for a full workout, the 7-minute workout packs in a full-body exercise routine in a fraction of the time.

A performance coach and exercise physiologist from the Human Performance Institute in Orlando, FL, came up with this program to give their busy clients a more efficient yet still effective workout. They've put together a series of 12 different exercises that work the upper body, lower body, and core.

You do each exercise for 30 seconds -- long enough to get in about 15 to 20 repetitions. In between sets you rest for about 10 seconds.

The 12 exercises in the 7-minute workout target all the body's major muscle groups:

1. Jumping jacks (total body)
2. Wall sit (lower body)
3. Push-up (upper body)
4. Abdominal crunch (core)
5. Step-up onto chair (total body)
6. Squat (lower body)
7. Triceps dip on chair (upper body)
8. Plank (core)
9. High knees/running in place (total body)
10. Lunge (lower body)
11. Push-up and rotation (upper body)
12. Side plank (core)

Depending on how much time you have, you can do the 7-minute workout once, or repeat the whole series two or three times.

only very short breaks in between.

Areas It Targets

Core: Yes. Abdominal crunches, planks, and side planks work your core muscles.

Arms: Yes. Push-ups and triceps dips work the arms.

Legs: Yes. There are several leg exercises, including jumping jacks, wall sits, step-ups, squats, and lunges.

Glutes: Yes. Squats and lunges also work the glute muscles.

Back: Yes. Although there are no specific back exercises, this is a full-body workout, and many of the whole-body exercises also work the muscles in your back.

Type

Flexibility: No. This workout doesn't include a stretch, although you could add one afterward.

Aerobic: Yes. Because you run through the exercises very quickly and work many large muscle groups at once, you get an aerobic workout that helps burn fat and trim down body weight.

Strength: Yes. The exercises work all the major muscle groups, building strength throughout the body.

Sport: No. This is not a sport; it's a workout.

Low Impact: No. The recommended aerobic exercises (jumping jacks and high knees /running in place) are high impact.

What Else Should I Know?

Cost. The workout is free, and there are free apps you can download to your smartphone or tablet that will walk you through the program and time the intervals for you.

Good for beginners? No. It's too intense. And because you're doing this solo, it helps to have some experience with general exercises like crunches and planks, so you use good form and technique.

Outdoors. Yes. You can do this workout outside, but you will need to bring along a chair and find a wall for some of the exercises.

At home. Yes. The routine is basic enough to do anywhere in your house.

Equipment required? No. This program uses your own body weight for resistance. The only tools you need are a wall and a chair.

What Dr. Michael Smith Says:

The 7-Minute Workout could get you in the best shape of your life. But it comes at a price: intensity!

When you exercise at a vigorous level, you can get the same benefits in half the time. By limiting rest in between, you get a calorie- and fat-burning workout that also builds strong, lean muscle. Even if you can do only one round to start off, your body is gaining huge benefits.

Push yourself. The rewards will be worth the effort.

The downside of intense workouts is that you're more likely to get injured. Make sure to warm up with light cardio to get your heart, muscles, and joints ready.

Also, you need to know how to do the exercises exactly right. If the intensity is too much, rest a little longer, but the way to gain the greatest benefit is to push yourself.

The exercises in the 7-Minute Workout are examples of the types of exercises you could do in any high-intensity circuit routine. So you can swap them out for other exercises that work the same muscles.

When you're done, cool down for a few minutes to bring your heart rate and breathing slowly back down.

Is It Good for Me If I Have a Health Condition?

The 7-Minute Workout is challenging, and it will produce results. It's science-based, so you can trust it will do what it's supposed to.

But it's not for everyone. You have to push yourself hard to get the most out of it, which means it could be tough if you have joint or back problems. Moves like jumping jacks, squats, and lunges can be hard on the knees. Push-ups can be stressful on your wrists and shoulders. Planks will be tough if your back muscles are weak.

If you have joint or back problems and are not already active, this is not the workout for you -- at least not yet. You need a kinder, gentler program to get your muscles stronger to better support your joints.

Check with your doc or a trainer he recommends to find a program that's right for you. Then, once you're ready for the challenge and your doc says it's OK, talk to a trainer about adapting the 7-Minute Workout for you.

If you're working on losing weight, the 7-Minute Workout can help, along with a healthy diet. It's an extreme, calorie-burning workout that will help shed the pounds and keep them off.

If you have diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or another condition that could benefit from dropping some extra weight, this routine could be what you're looking for if your doctor agrees.

If you're pregnant, you can exercise intensely if you did so before getting pregnant, but you would need to make some changes to this specific workout. The main concern during exercise is falling, so you don't want to risk it by stepping up onto a chair. Plus, jumping jacks and high knees later in pregnancy could be painful. You can replace those exercises with others or find a workout program that doesn't involve jumping and climbing.

SOURCE:

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