

Fifteen-Minute Office Workout

Exercises you can do at your desk



Getting in shape takes effort, dedication and time. However, in the working world, time is tough to come by. Eight to 10 hours of sitting behind a computer is enough to remind everyone how important it is to exercise. The following 15-minute all-around workout includes effective body-weight resistance exercises you can easily do in the office.



Tricep Dips (Chest, Shoulders, Triceps)

Tricep dips are simple to do and very effective. Find a sturdy desk and stand with your back to the desk, your hands on the edge and your legs partially extended with heels contacting the floor. Wrap your fingers around the edge of the desk with your elbows pointed back. Slowly lower your body until your shoulders are level with your elbows, maintaining your balance. Then slowly press yourself up until your elbows are fully extended. One set, repeat to fatigue.

Desk Push-Ups (Chest, Shoulders, Triceps)

Stand a few feet away from the edge of your desk and place your hands on the edge about shoulder width apart. Slowly lower yourself until your chest lightly touches and push yourself back along the 45-degree axis back to your starting position. One set, repeat to fatigue.



Stationary Lunges (Hamstrings, Hips, Quadriceps)

Take one long step forward and maintain vertical posture. Make sure your stride is long enough to allow your front foot to be positioned directly under your front knee to ensure safe movement. From this position, lower yourself straight down. Do not lean forward or backward. Make sure you achieve a depth of 90 degrees at the hip and knee joints. Ascend back to original position in a controlled manner to a position just short of knee lockout. One set, repeat to fatigue and then switch legs in a reverse fashion.

Note: Each exercise should be performed two times (sets) to the point of muscular fatigue (reps).



Leg Lifts (Abdominals, Low Back)

Situate yourself comfortably on your chair with legs fully extended. Place both hands on your armrests for support and leverage. Begin your ascent by slowly raising your straightened legs by breaking at the hip joints. Lift your legs as high as you can. From this flexed position, carefully lower your legs back down to your original supine position. For an easier time of it, keep a slight bend in the knee joints. One set, repeat to fatigue.

Hyperextensions (Low Back)

Seated securely against the back of your chair, place your hands behind your head and maintain a flat spine. Slowly lower your upper body as far as your range of motion will allow or until your torso becomes parallel with the floor (90 degrees of hip flexion). From there, simply raise your upper back to the original position in a slow, controlled manner. One set, repeat to fatigue.



Chair Squats (Hamstrings, Hips, Quadriceps)

Make sure your chair is stable and place hands on back of chair next to your hips. Position your feet so that they are slightly wider than shoulder width, pointing your toes slightly outward. Bend your knees and lower the body until your elbows are at 90 degrees. During the lowering phase, keep your back as straight as you can and bend at the hips and knees. Keep your heels flat on the floor throughout the movement and don't let your knees extend beyond your toes (this is done by moving your hips backward on the way down). Begin the ascent by slowly lifting your body weight upward to the same position from which you started. Keep your head up and slowly extend your knees and hips. One set, repeat to fatigue.



A few ideas on staying more active during work hours

- } Rather than meeting in the conference room to go over project ideas, take a short walk with a co-worker to discuss them.
- } Take a walk during your lunch hour or breaks.
- } Skip the elevator and take the stairs instead.
- } Rather than calling a co-worker on the telephone, walk to his or her office.
- } Stand while talking on the telephone. You can even do some calf raises.
- } Join a gym near where you work. Work out before or after work, or even on your lunch hour.
- } Schedule regular exercise on your business calendar and treat it like any other important appointment.
- } Park in the farthest part of the lot so your walk to the office is more effective.



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Source: "Physical Activity in Your Daily Life." The American Heart Association.

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