

8 Ultra-Effective Workout Moves That Top Fitness Trainers Love

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When it comes to dinner you're always down for trying something new. But when you want a no-fuss dish that satisfies, you have a few go-to recipes that you cook on the reg.

It's kind of the same situation when it comes to your fitness routine. Maybe you're interested in going to a new class, but when you're short on time and need something that gets the job done, you have a cheat sheet of favorite exercises you pull from.

Here's a look at those go-to moves top trainers rely on. The exercises make the cut not because they are insanely fun (that's something no one has said about burpees...ever), but because they are insanely effective at burning fat and strengthening from head to toe. Give the moves below a try, you might just find a few new favorites.

1. The Move: Short Plank Twists



Jackie Dragone

This isn't a dance move, it's a super-effective exercise that targets multiple muscles at once, explains Jackie Dragone, director of FlexBarre and FlexTRX at Flex Studios in New York City. "You're using your shoulders and shoulder stabilizers, obliques, transverse abdominals, and

your glutes. And if you speed up this exercise, it becomes cardiovascular and will get your heart rate up, too!”

Try It: Start on all fours, shoulders over wrists. Tuck your toes and lift your body so your knees are hovering a few inches off the ground (pictured, left). Twist hips to the right and kick left leg underneath you and to the right as you lift your right arm off the ground (pictured, right). Return to the hover position and repeat on the other side.

2. The Move: Kettlebell Swings

The exercise [Kelvin Gary](#), personal trainer and founder of [Body Space Fitness](#) in New York City, swears by is the kettlebell swing. “This move is a great way to get your heart rate up while at the same time working your backside, your hamstrings, and your core.” See more [beginner-friendly kettlebell exercises here](#).

Try It: First, you'll need a kettlebell. Start with one that is 10 to 15 pounds (4 to 6 kilograms) if you're a beginner, 15 to 20 pounds (6 to 8 kilograms) if you have experience with them. Now to the swing: Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, gripping the kettlebell with both hands. Bend knees, then hinge at hips to swing kettlebell between legs. Stand as you swing it to chest height.

3. The Move: Plyo Lunges

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Tamara Pridgett

“This is my go-to exercise—no matter how fit I am, it always tires my legs out instantly,” says [Tamara Pridgett](#), former D1 All-American sprinter and trainer at [Tone House in New York City](#). “We use this move in training because it's great for explosive power, reaction, and working those [fast twitch muscles!](#)”

Try It: Start in a lunge position with your right foot forward. Jump off the ground and switch your legs in mid-air, landing in a lunge position with your left foot forward. Continue alternating sides with each rep.

4. The Move: Sprints

[Noah Neiman](#), master trainer at [Barry's Bootcamp](#), relies on sprints to get the job done sans equipment. “Sprints force your major muscles and your aerobic systems to work together at an extremely high intensity—and our bodies respond best to movements and stressors that force multiple muscles to fire over the course of the exercise.”

Try It: You can do this move on a treadmill or outside on a track. All you need to do is pick a distance (say 400 meters), or time interval (one minute for example), and try to run from start to finish as fast as possible. And repeat that...a few times.

5. The Move: Burpees

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Luke Lombardo

The burpee is everyone's favorite move, jokes [Mile High Run Club](#) trainer and Ironman [Luke Lombardo](#). While people might dread the burpee, Lombardo loves it because it's so effective at engaging your entire body and spiking your heart rate. "It combines elements of strength and cardio, and it can be done anywhere."

Try It: Start standing. Place hands on the ground in front of you and jump feet back so that you're in a high plank position. Lower your chest to the ground. Push back up, jump feet in, and jump up bringing arms overhead. Immediately lower into your next rep.

6. The Move: Squats

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Keith Wittenstein

According to [Keith Wittenstein](#), certified CrossFit Level 4 coach at [Guerrilla Fitness in Morristown](#), the squat is unrivaled in its ability to make you stronger from head to toe. "It works the all the muscles of the lower body as well as the core musculature," he says. Basically, squats help you get shit done...in the gym and in life.

Try It: Stand with feet shoulder-width apart. Point your toes forward or have them angled out slightly—play around to see which foot position feels more comfortable for you and allows for a deeper range of motion. Keeping the weight in your heels, hinge at your hips, bend your knees, and sit back as if you're sitting into a chair. Get low, as low as you can while still keeping your chest lifted (pictured). Now push through your heels and straighten your legs to stand back up. Learn more about squats [here](#).

7. The Move: Push-Ups

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Jon-Erik Kawamoto

The push-up works so much more than your triceps, which is why [Jon-Erik Kawamoto](#), personal trainer and founder of [JK Conditioning](#), can't live without them. "This exercise targets your pecs and triceps but it also recruits the serratus anterior, an importance scapular stabilizer. It will also work your abs if you can maintain a neutral lower back while doing it."

Try It: Get into a high plank position with your shoulders directly over your hands, legs extended, abs engaged, and pelvis tucked so body is in a straight line from head to toe. Keeping elbows close to body, bend them and lower your torso until you're hovering just above the ground (pictured). Then push through your arms to straighten your arms. At the top of the push-up focus on pulling your shoulder blades away from each other to really activate those stabilizing muscles.

Here's how to do the perfect push-up:

8. The Move: Deadlifts

"I am a deadlift fanatic," says [Alex Silver-Fagan](#), Nike trainer and [City Row](#) instructor. "Not only is it one of the key movements for functional training, it also fires nearly every muscle in the body, including your glutes, hamstrings, core, and back muscles." Here's how to master the lift:

Try It: Start with a set of medium-weight dumbbells (or [here's how to do the move with a barbell](#) as pictured). Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and knees slightly bent. Hold a dumbbell in each hand with your palms facing your body. Now push hips back and lower your torso toward the floor, sliding weights down just in front of your legs. Keep a flat back and weight in your heels. Then slowly reverse the movement to return to standing.