

Dumbbell 101

Dumbbells are great for developing strength training because they are inexpensive, come in a range of weights and can be used in a variety of exercises that are truer to real-life situations. Here are 3 that will get you started!

For the arms and shoulders

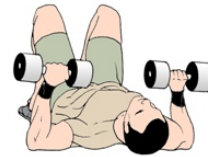
From a standing position with arms extended fully, grasp dumbbells with palms toward the body. Raise the bar to about the level of your collarbones, keeping your elbows above bar level at all times. Return to the starting position.



For the chest

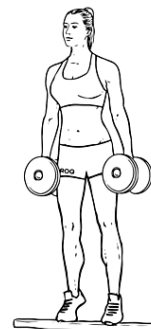
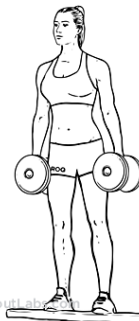
Lie on the floor with knees bent so your feet are flat on the ground. Grasp the dumbbells firmly and hold them so your elbows are at a 90-degree angle. Extend your arms above your chest so they are perpendicular to the ground, hold for a moment, then bring them down to your starting position. To avoid injury, start off with lighter weights.

Tip: wrap your thumbs **around** the dumbbell! It's easy to drop a weight using a "thumbless" grip.



For the legs

Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and toes pointed straight ahead, holding a dumbbell in each hand. Press down with your toes while lifting your heels, and then come back down. You should feel the burn in your calf muscles!



How much should you do?

To increase muscular **endurance**: use a lower weight and increase the number of repetitions for each exercise.

To increase muscular **strength**: use a bigger weight and do less repetitions.

Lift the weights smoothly and slowly; don't jerk them! Moving too fast can make you unstable, more prone injury, and can decrease the overall benefits.

When doing standing exercises, strive to maintain **proper posture**!

Source: Fahey, Thomas D., and Paul M. Insel. *Fit and Well: Core Concepts and Labs in Physical Fitness and Wellness*. Mountain View, Calif.: Mayfield Pub.1994. Print.

Top image: <http://workoutlabs.com/exercise-guide/dumbbell-upright-row/>

Middle Image: <http://www.exercisegoals.com/kettlebell-dumbbell-floor-press-exercise.html>

Bottom image: <http://workoutlabs.com/exercise-guide/standing-dumbbell-calf-raise/>