

Muscle Strengthening at Home (Push Ups)

(Dave Patania)

There are three different ways you can do push-ups, which works your chest, shoulders, and arm muscles. We'll start with the easiest way to do this activity. You don't even have to get down on the floor for this one.

Use a clear wall -- no pictures or windows. Face the wall, just a bit farther than arm's length away, and lean forward, placing your palms flat against the wall at about shoulder-height and shoulder-width apart. Bend your elbows as you lower your upper body toward the wall in a controlled motion, keeping your feet planted, your back straight, and your abdominal muscles tightened the whole time. Pause for a just a second and then push yourself back until your arms are straight. Be careful not to lock your elbows.

Do 1 set a least 2 times per week. As you get stronger, these will become easier. You can modify this activity by getting on your knees.

Make sure your hands are about shoulder-width apart and your head is looking straight forward. Keep your abdominal muscles tight and bend your elbows as you lower your upper body just to the floor and then come back up. Even this modified push-up works your arms, shoulders, and chest muscles.

For the traditional push-up, get on your toes instead of your knees, for the maximum effect.