








The Push-up Workout for Chest, Shoulders, Triceps, and Core

* Please consult a physician before starting an exercise program.

- **Please choose the form that is right for your exercise level.** For the basic workout, do the exercises from the knees except the Pike Push-up. When the exercises from the knee are no longer challenging, try doing the exercises from the feet.
- These exercises use only body weight to target the muscles of the chest, shoulders, triceps, and core.
- When doing push-ups except the Pike Push-up, lower the chest just past the level of your bent elbows to protect shoulders.
- **This workout can be done twice a week. Rest at least 48 hours between workouts.**

	Exercise	Instructions
 <p>Figure 1: Standard push-up position from the knees</p>  <p>Figure 2: Standard push-up position from the feet.</p>	<p>Military push-up</p> <p>12-15+ reps / 2-3 sets</p> <p>Targeted muscles: chest, shoulders, triceps</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Begin either from the knees (Figure 1) or from the feet (Figure 2), with your hands placed directly under your shoulders and your elbows extended. Maintain a straight line from the crown of your head to your heels by tightening the core. The standard push-up position. 2) Inhale and bend the elbows to 90 degrees; chest should be just below the elbows. To alleviate any stress on the shoulders, let the elbows go slightly back. The muscles between the shoulder blades should be taut. 3) Exhale while pushing through the palms until the elbows are extended.
 <p>Figure 3: Wide arm push-up from the feet.</p>	<p>Wide arm push-ups</p> <p>12-15+ reps / 2-3 sets</p> <p>Targeted muscle: chest</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Begin in the standard push-up position, but with your hands about 2 ½ feet apart (Figure 3). Maintain a straight line from the crown of your head to your heels by tightening the core. 2) Inhale and bend the elbows to 90 degrees, flaring elbows slightly back. Pause briefly. 3) Exhale while pushing through the palms of the hands until the elbows are extended.
 <p>Figure 4: Archer push-up low position</p>	<p>Archer push-up</p> <p>12-16 reps / 2-3 sets</p> <p>Targeted muscles: chest, shoulders, core</p> <p>See the instructions below on how to engage the core.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Begin in a standard push-up position, but with your hands about 2 ½ feet apart (Figure 3). 2) Inhale and shift body weight over one arm while bending one elbow. The other arm is extended (Figure 4). 3) Exhale and reverse the movement to the starting position. 4) Repeat to the other side for next repetition.

	<p>Pike push-ups</p> <p>12-15+ reps / 2-3 sets</p> <p>Targeted muscle: shoulders</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Begin in a pike position (Figure 5). Hands and feet should be shoulder width. Hips are high. 2) Keeping the inverted position, inhale and bend your elbows, lowering your head between your hands. 3) Exhale and push against the floor, straightening the elbows.
	<p>Elbow presses</p> <p>8-12+ reps / 2-3 sets</p> <p>Targeted muscle: triceps</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Begin in the standard push-up position. 2) Inhale and bend the elbows so that the elbows go back tight along the rib cage (Figure 6). 3) Exhale while pushing through the palms until the elbows are extended.
	<p>Staggered hands push-ups</p> <p>8-12+ reps / 2 sets</p> <p>Targeted muscles: core, chest, shoulders</p> <p>See the instructions below on how to engage the core.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Begin in the standard push-up position. Move one hand forward and one hand back (Figure 7). The more the hands are apart, the more difficult the exercise. 2) Inhale and lower the body so that the chest is slightly below elbows. 3) Exhale and push up to starting position. Repeat to complete the set. 4) For the next set, reverse the hand positions.

How to engage the core when doing push-ups:

- 1) Facing a mirror, stand with your feet hip width apart. Allow your arms to fall gently to the sides, with palms facing the mirror.
- 2) Now take a deep breath in and allow the area around the navel to extend outward.
- 3) Begin to exhale then stiffen the abdominal muscles. Keep the abdominal area tight while completing the exhalation. Continue breathing with the abdominals taut. The core is now engaged.

Make sure to warm-up thoroughly before doing this workout, and to stretch the pectorals muscles, the shoulders, and the triceps following the workout.