



The Top 3 Things You Can Do Right Now If You're New To Strength Training

#1. Make a commitment

"The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor". [Vince Lombardi](#) - *NFL coach, member- Pro Football Hall of Fame*

To get stronger and healthier after 50 requires a commitment. Commitment is the starting point of all worthwhile achievement. And making a decision is the starting point of commitment.

You can turn any aspect of your life around in a matter of a few seconds - by making a decision, and then committing to that decision.

Once you make a committed decision, something special happens to you. You will find an inner drive taking hold of you, propelling you in the direction of your desired value.

If you want to get stronger and more fit, the first thing you need to do is DECIDE you are going to get stronger and more fit, and then COMMIT to that decision. Many people set a goal of getting in shape , often in the form of a New Years' resolution. Very few of these people actually see their goal through and achieve the desired result; perhaps you were one of them. The reason is they have not turned their goal into a commitment.



How do you turn a goal into a commitment? You turn a goal into a commitment by stating your goal, then adding the words "no matter what" .

For example:

"I will strength train 2 times per week for the rest of the year, no matter what."

"I will not eat dessert with dinner this month, no matter what."

Take a moment now to reflect on why you want to get on a strength training program. What do you think being getting stronger and more fit will do for you? How will it improve the quality of your life? Why is it important to you? Answering these questions will help you successfully make your way through the myriad of distractions we all deal with in day-to-day life and get your workouts done.

#2. Schedule appointments - with yourself

Now that you've made a commitment to consistent strength training, you need to figure out when you can squeeze that workout into your day. Then, you simply schedule your appointment - which is with yourself - to meet at the gym at the scheduled time.

Starting out, you should be working out 2 days a week, with a minimum of 2 rest days in between each workout. You can work out on the same days of the week, every week; or you can work out every third day, whichever day of the week that falls on.

For example, let's say your first week you work out on Monday and Thursday.



The next week, you can either: repeat the previous week, working out on Monday and Thursday; or, take 2 days off and work out on Sunday, rest 2 days and do the B workout on Wednesday, etc. You continue along in this fashion, making sure you had at least 2 rest days in between.

Scheduling these workouts is no different than scheduling any other high priority task - dentist appointment, doctor appointment, business meeting, etc.- except that your workouts will be scheduled 2 times a week instead of occasionally. You should assign the same importance to them, and commit to making a habit of keeping these appointments.

#3. Select exercises by movement

Before starting the actual workout, I recommend people spend a few minutes warming up. This will increase your internal temperature a little and prepare your body for the workout, like warming up a car before driving on a cold day.

You want to make sure your warm-up includes movement in both your upper and lower body. If you have an elliptical machine or air bike available that will do the trick. If you don't, you can use a bike or treadmill for 3-5 minutes for your lower body, and perform a few simple movements with light dumbbells for your upper body.

Just be sure not to turn your warm-up into a workout of its own – you want to do just enough so that you feel you won't injure yourself, and save your strength for the actual workout.

For a complete workout, you can cover your full body with 5 different movements:

- A lower body push, such as a leg press exercise, where you are extending or straightening your knees and hips;



- Lower body flexion, which can alternate between knee flexion, or bending, such as a leg curl exercise – and plantar flexion of the ankles, which mimics pushing the gas pedal and involves your calf muscles, such as a seated or standing calf raise.
- An upper body push, which would involve straightening the elbows, such as a barbell bench press, chest press machine, or overhead press;
- An upper body pull, an exercise where we're bending the elbows, such as a pulldown, row or chin up;
- And a midsection exercise, either trunk flexion for the abdominals, or trunk extension for the low back muscles, on a machine or a specially designed bench.

After the strength training workout is a great time to do a little stretching, especially for the shoulders and hips, which tend to lose flexibility as we get older.

Once you get the hang of things, this whole process takes under 45 minutes, and you only need to do it once or twice a week.