

Ready to burpee?

Squat thrusts or burpees are one of the few equipment-free exercises that work your entire body

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Love it or hate it—everyone has an opinion on burpees and what makes this exercise tick is its ability to help you go from fat to fab most effectively. There are many ways to do burpees—some consist of a plank, while others encompass a full pushup, a tuck jump and even a pull-up towards the end.

Do it right

Today, it is recognised as one of the most effective exercises by both fitness trainers and practitioners due to its simplicity in execution. Burpees give you a total body workout from your legs to the shoulders and is amazing for the core, too. It not only increases muscle strength but is great for your stamina. Like with any exercise, the best way to make the most of burpees is to follow the right steps. Start the exercise by standing upright, feet—hip-distance apart—and core, engaged. Explosively lower into a squat position with your hands on the ground in front of you. Then kick your feet back into a plank position and instantly drop down your torso to the floor in a push up. Come back into the plank position and then jump into the squat and then jump up into the air as high as possible. After you land, instantly lower your back into a squat for your following rep.

The exercise effectively works your whole body. Unlike isolation workouts like bicep curls and tricep kickbacks, burpee is a full-body exercise—when you do burpees, you end up working pretty much each and every body muscle.

Says Shalini Bhargava, director at JG'S Fitness Centre: "Burpees will make your body sturdier. This workout is the ultimate instance of functional fitness, which means it will not only assist you to meet your weight reduction and fitness goals, but will also facilitate better performance in daily activities."

This full-body exercise is lively, fast-paced and a seamless addition to any fitness training, whether you are performing a HIIT-style workout or require a quick Tabata workout at any time of the day. With

each rep, you will need to work your chest, arms, hamstrings, quads, glutes and core muscles. Burpees are one of the foremost workouts that will play wonders in boosting your conditioning, durability and strength for sports and other physical activities. Just ten burpees in a row are enough to make your heart beat and your breath to get quicker. The key to getting major fat-blasting results is to do them regularly and properly.

Exercise cues

Burpee is highly recommended for those who can only perform five to ten rep prior to getting tired, because it gets almost every muscle in the body involved. But it is extremely important to do it with right technique and form. However, the elderly and the ones injured must avert from practising burpees. Burpees have an immense effect on your upper as well as lower body. They help you to strengthen your core and abs. "There are different types of burpees and you can challenge yourself as you get better control of your body. As for beginners, four-count burpees are recommended. As you get a better grip on your body, you can start doing different types of



be a warmup exercise and head into it. "If you are cold and do a burpee, some of the movements like where you sit in a deep squat could cause mobility issues or tightness in your muscles and joints and you are creating a scope to carry a micro fibre tear into your workout. So, warm up well before you get into burpees for optimal result and injury free training," says coach Huzefa Talib, cofounder, The Outfit Gym.

Take care

Burpees have no time or schedule or sets. This would depend on each individual's fitness level and tolerance for the pain that usually comes with this particular exercise. Before you start with burpees, a warmup routine is a must. Do three to five minutes of light cardio such as rowing or jogging, then go for some dynamic stretching, concentrating on your shoulders, back and hips. Perform a set of ten relaxed burpees first, execute each step gradu-

ally and under control, relax for one minute, then get to it. Pravesh Gaur, founder and director, Srauta Wellness, says, "Burpees can be performed by any individual but that person should not have any joint-related injuries. Burpees have many variations but one must stick to basic variation. Proper warmup and dynamic stretches are very important before starting a burpee workout. People who have very poor cardiovascular endurance or heart condition should not perform burpees as heart rate gets elevated in a short span of time. People with knee or ankle joint-related problem should not perform burpees." Dr Ashish Jain, an orthopaedic surgeon at P.D. Hinduja Hospital and MRC, Mahim, Mumbai, says, "Just like any other bodyweight exercise, the fitness level in every individual decides the ability to do burpees. I always suggest individuals to start slow and gradually ramp up the intensity without compromising on the exercise form. Burpees are not easy exercises. They were designed in the early 1930s to test one's fitness levels during World War II. It is a full-body exercise or movement which incorporates strength training and aerobic exercise together. So, always start at the beginner, then move to intermediate and advanced levels. Like three sets of burpees; each set of 10 repetitions, keep one-minute rest period between sets and keep progressing. If not performed right, they can cause strain on the wrist joints, front of shoulders, low back stress especially if the core is not engaged and also stress on the cardiovascular system due to poor stamina or faulty breathing." According to July Wagle, fitness instructor and nutrition expert, Metabolix, a minute of burpees (between 10 to 20 reps for most people) burns around 10 calories. "Burpees can make for an excellent conditioning finisher set and provide an excellent functional workout, improve balance and coordination along with increasing mobility of the whole body." Now with that much said, shall we get into action? □

burpees like narrow six-count burpees, ultimate burpees and one-legged four-count burpees. Each burpee has its own specific way of doing it and effect on your body. However, you need professional assistance in order to do them the right way and in right number," says Sucheta Pal, ambassador and educator, Zumba® Fitness. If you

are a beginner, do five burpees, then take a 20-second break and repeat for three minutes. After two weeks, increase the number of burpees, reduce the break and increase the time duration to five minutes. If you are at an advanced level, do 25 burpees, take a 10-second break and repeat for 8 to 10 minutes. Since they also spike up

your heart rate, they are considered as one of the best fat-burning machines. They help in improving strength, general fitness and aid weight loss. Sonia Bakshi, founder, Dance to Fitness, says, "Burpees can be done by anyone who is short of time but wants to improve strength and boost weight loss. Ten minutes of burpees, with small breaks in between, done five days a week is good enough to improve endurance, fitness and boost weight loss." A word of caution is that burpee is not a warm up and many people mistake burpee to

