

MOM BOD

The Chair Workout

When you're home with the kids or short on time, this is all the gym you need to get a routine done.

By Lauren Mazzo

Behold the most efficient workout circuit: no weights necessary, not much floor room to clear, zero need for anything else that can make exercise a nonstarter. "By facing the different parts of the chair—back, sides, front, and seat—you essentially have five exercise stations," says trainer Sara Haley, the creator of the *Expecting More* prenatal fitness video program and a mom of three, who has made the common chair her workout go-to.

Plus, the chair functions as a spotter and an added challenge for body-weight moves. "For example, most people don't get their knees nearly high enough doing high knees, but if you turn them into toe taps on the chair seat, your heart, legs, and abs will work harder," Haley says. As for push-ups, the elevated surface offers a modification that—unlike push-ups done on your knees—still demands stability from your core (keep the chair pressed against a wall so it doesn't slide). And doing leg lifts from a bent-over position, with hands on the seat back instead of on all fours, makes the lifts higher and the balance demand on your core greater.

Haley's got your moves at right for a solid, total-body workout. Go for three full circuits, and you're good to get on with your day.

*A chair
can add
challenge
to just
about any
body-weight
move.*

1

Toe Tap

Works: abs, quads, hamstrings, calves

Stand facing the front of the chair and quickly alternate lifting your knees high to lightly tap the seat with your toes. Go for speed. Do 30 reps on each leg, pumping your arms.

2

Up and Over

Works: back, abs, butt, hamstrings

Stand facing the back of chair. Hold top with both hands, using it as a barre. Walk feet backward until your back and extended arms are parallel to the floor to start (you'll be looking at floor). Lift your right leg up behind you to hip level, then bring it out to side; next, lower to side to touch toes to floor. Reverse motion back to start. Do 10 reps. Switch sides; repeat.

3

Pulse Squat Jump

Works: butt, quads, hamstrings, calves

Stand with back facing the seat of the chair. Take 2 steps away (so your booty just touches the seat if you try to sit). Lower into a squat and pulse 3 times, each time tapping butt to seat, then jump straight up. Do 20 reps.

4

Oblique Push-Up

Works: shoulders, chest, triceps, core, obliques

Facing the chair, place your hands on the sides of the seat. Walk your feet backward until you're in a plank, forming a straight line from head to ankles to start.

Keeping your elbows close to your sides, lower your chest down to the chair. Press away from the seat to return to plank, then draw your right knee to your right elbow. Return right foot to plank, then draw left knee to left elbow.

That's 1 rep. Do 10 reps.