

6 Quick and Effective Vacation Workouts

In last week's article, I discussed ways in which we can all keep our health on track while still enjoying our vacation. From packing homemade meals and snacks for the road or plane to choosing active excursions while cruising, I explained how with a little prep work and self-control, we can all return home just as fit—or fitter—than when we departed.

In today's post, I want to give you six **total-body** workouts that will take you *less than 20 minutes* to complete. Before I go on, let me clarify that you won't be doing all six! The first set of three is for those of you who will have a gym at your disposal, while the second set is for those who won't have gym access. In other words, no matter what your accommodations, **there is no excuse for skimping on exercise!**

I recommend completing one workout every other day to give the body time to recover. Also, try to do these the first thing in the morning after a light breakfast, or with no breakfast at all. Here are a few benefits of early-morning, fasted workouts, especially quick, high-intensity ones like you will be doing:

- Research has shown that fasted cardiovascular workouts results in **more fat loss** than “fed” cardio routines. Stubborn fat is eliminated, in particular.
- An early trip to the gym has been shown to result in **fewer food cravings** throughout the day.
- Working out in the morning means that your body will **burn calories faster** and more efficiently throughout the day.
- There's **less risk of things “popping up”** when you do your workout early in the day.
- Working out in the morning can **increase the impact that**

exercise has on your heart. Reason being, one of the ways that your body naturally wakes you up is by increasing levels of hormones like adrenaline, which causes your heart to beat faster. This means that you can **obtain extra cardiovascular benefits** when you work out in the morning.

- Exercise has been proven to **increase mental focus** and acuity for up to ten whole hours post-workout.
- Exercise **releases feel-good compounds like endorphins** that improve your mood and boost energy levels, an effect that can last well into the afternoon if you get your workout in early.
- Working out in the morning can **promote better sleep** since you're not getting that extra energy boost as you're trying to settle in for the night.

I hope you find the eight reasons listed above motivating! And now, for six total-body workouts for travelers.

Oh, one more thing I should mention ... Each of the six workouts are in the AMRAP format. "AMRAP" is an acronym for "as many rounds as possible." This means you will complete the workout's featured circuit as many times as you can within the given time period. The intent here is to *keep the intensity high* so you can incinerate body fat, build lean muscle, and challenge your heart in very little time. *Efficiency* is the name of the game.

In the Gym

Equipment Needed: A medium-weight pair of dumbbells (something at which you can perform 8-12 reps) and a treadmill

Workout 1

Warm-Up: On the treadmill, crank up the incline to 3.0 and walk at a comfortable pace for minutes 00:00 – 5:00. For minutes 5:00-10:00, increase your speed so that you're

jogging. Remain on a slight incline.

Off the treadmill, perform the following:

- 10 stationary lunges each leg
- 20 stationary butt kicks
- 10 air squats
- 10 push-ups
- 10 arm circles forward and backward

Workout

- 10 minute AMRAP
- Run miles on treadmill
- 10 push-ups
- 10 dumbbell stationary lunges each leg

Workout 2

Warmup

- Five-minute brisk walk on treadmill followed by a jog.
- 10 walk-outs/walk-ins
- 20 arm circles forward
- 20 arm circles reverse
- 20 mountain-climbers (right/left is 1 rep)
- 20 air squats
- 10 burpees

Workout

- 12-min AMRAP
- 8 dumbbell thrusters
- 10 oblique twists holding dumbbell (each side is one rep)
- 12 bent-over dumbbell rows

Workout 3

Warmup

3 rounds

- 10 high skips (5 each side)
- 20 butt kicks (10 each side)
- 20 high knees (10 each side)
- 100 meter run (miles)
- 20 scorpions (10 each side)
- 5 jump squats

Workout

- 14-minute AMRAP
- Run miles on treadmill 200-meter run
- 20 reverse lunges with dumbbell (10 each leg)
- 12 renegade rows

In Your Room (Or Outside)

Equipment needed: Just you

Workout 1

Warmup

- 20 lunges (10 each leg)
- 10 walk-out/walk-ins
- 20 lateral lunges (10 each leg)
- 10 arm circles, forward and backward
- 20 scorpions (10 each side)
- 20 reverse lunges (10 each leg)
- 10 burpees

Workout

- 10-min. AMRAP
- 20 butt-kicks
- 10 push-ups
- 5 jump squats

Workout 2

Warmup

- 50 jumping jacks
- 20 air squats
- 20 lunges with oblique twist (10 each side)
- 5 jump squats
- 20 mock kettlebell swings

Workout

- 15-min. AMRAP
- 20 reverse lunges
- 15 air squats
- 10 mountain-climbers (right/left is 1 rep)

Workout 3

Warmup

- 20 lunges (10 each leg)
- 10 high knees (5 each leg)
- 20 butt kicks (10 each leg)
- 30 jumping jacks
- 10 air squats
- 10 arm circles forward and backward
- 5 push-ups

Workout

- 12-min. AMRAP
- 5 tuck jumps
- 10 pendulum lunges each leg
- 20 bicycle crunches (each side is one rep)

Exercise Instructions (in alphabetical order)

Air squats: Stand with your feet spread apart at a distance slightly wider than the shoulders. Position your feet so that your toes angle out. This angle varies from person to person, but should be about 30 degrees. Keep your weight on the heels

to prevent yourself from rolling up onto the balls of your feet.

Keep your chest up, shoulders back, head up. This helps promote a nice, safe, intact lumbar curve.

Place arms straight out in front of your chest. The arms should be in a comfortable position as they act as counter balance to the motion of the exercise.

Bend your knees as you lower yourself down. Pretend there is a chair behind you that you're reaching back to sit on. Your knees should track over your feet and never jut out over them. In other words, your knees should be pointing in the same direction as your toes. If you find your knees starting to cave in, focus on pushing them out. A good way to achieve this is by imagining you are tearing the floor apart with your feet.

The push back up should be generated from your hamstrings and glutes. Your chest and head should remain pointing straight forward. As you rise, your arms will probably lower back to your sides naturally. Make sure your knees keep tracking with your toes and do not begin to buckle inwards. Also be sure and keep your lumbar curve intact (curved).

Generally speaking, if you have your chest and head up, your lumbar curve will be in the correct position.

Arm circles: Stand in a neutral position with feet hip-width apart. Your arms should be straight out to the sides so your body forms a "T."

Begin making slow circles in a forward motion with your arms, then gradually make larger ones and complete the given number of repetitions.

Repeat in the opposite direction.

Bent-Over Dumbbell Rows

1. Stand with knees bent and your torso at a 60-degree angle.
2. With the weights fully extended in your hands, bring them straight up to your chest, contracting your shoulder blades fully.
3. Slowly return to the starting position.

Bicycle Crunches

1. Lie flat on the floor with the lower back pressed into the ground.
2. Place your hands slightly either side of your head. Do not lock your fingers or pull your head up.
3. Lift your knees to a 45-degree angle.
4. Lift your head up and touch your right elbow to the left knee while pulling your knee up towards your head. At the same time, straighten your right leg, keeping it several inches off of the floor, similar to the motion you'd make while pedaling a bicycle.
5. Touch your left elbow to your right knee. At the same time, straighten your left leg, keeping it off of the floor. Don't forget to tighten your abs!

Burpees

1. Lower your body down using proper squat form. Place hands on the ground in front of you.
2. Jump your feet back to a plank position, then quickly lower your chest to the ground.
3. Push yourself back up to a plank position and jump your feet back in toward your hands.
4. Jump back up and simultaneously clap your hands behind your head. Stand all the way, extending the hips fully before beginning your next rep.

Butt Kicks

1. Begin by jogging normally, either in place or traveling for a short distance.

2. 2. Then begin raising your heels up toward your bottom as you jog, using rapid, forceful movements. Again, you may either do these in place or traveling.

Dumbbell stationary lunges

See the instructions for lunges below, and simply add a dumbbell in each hand to perform the movement.

Dumbbell Thrusters

1. Hold a pair of dumbbells in front of your shoulders with bent elbows. Feet should be in your squat stance (see the description for “Air Squats” or “Dumbbell Squats” above).
2. Initiate the squat by pushing your hips back, then bend your knees as you lower yourself down as in a normal squat. Make sure your torso remains upright. Do not allow the dumbbells to pull you forward .
3. As your return to a standing position, explosively press the dumbbells overhead. Make sure your biceps are by your ears in the overhead position and that your legs are straight.
4. Lower the dumbbells to your shoulders and repeat for the given number of repetitions.

High Knees

1. Begin jogging, either in place or over a short distance.
2. Drive one knee up toward your chest and quickly return it to the ground. Follow immediately with the opposite knee.
3. Continue alternating for the given number of repetitions.

High Skips

1. Begin by standing with feet together, arms at your sides.

2. 2. Bend your knees and jump, moving your feet apart until they are wider than shoulder-width. (You should be on the balls of your feet.) At the same time, raise your arms all the way overhead.
3. 3. Maintain a slight bend in your knees as you jump your feet back together and return your arms to your sides. Repeat for the given number of reps.

Jumping Jacks

1. Begin by standing feet together with arms at your sides.
2. 2. Bend your knees and jump, moving your feet apart until they are wider than shoulder-width. (You should be on the balls of your feet.) At the same time, raise your arms all the way overhead.
3. 3. Maintain a slight bend in your knees as you jump your feet back together and return your arms to your sides.

Jump Squats

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Start by doing a regular squat, then engage your core and jump up explosively.
3. When you land, lower your body back into the squat position to complete one rep. Land as quietly as possible, which requires control.

Lateral Lunges

1. Stand with your feet hip-width apart and make sure you have about two to three feet of space on either side of you.
2. Step sideways a comfortable distance, 2 or 3 feet, with one leg. Plant the heel of the lunging foot and keep the foot of the non-lunging leg pointed forward.
3. Sit back into the lunging leg to create a definite crease in your hip. Keep your weight in the heel.
4. Push off the heel of the lunging foot to bring feet together to the standing position. Repeat on opposite

side and alternate for given number of repetitions.

Lunges (Reverse)

1. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, torso upright with arms hanging straight at your sides.
2. Take a slow, controlled lunge backward with one foot.
3. Lower your hips so that your front leg becomes parallel to the floor. At this point your right knee should be positioned directly over your ankle and your front foot should be pointing straight ahead. Your left knee should be bent at a 90-degree angle and pointing toward the floor. Your left heel should be lifted.
4. Push through both feet to straighten your legs. Bring your left foot back to meet your right in the starting position. Repeat on the other side, and continue alternating for the given number of repetitions.

Lunges (Stationary)

1. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, torso upright with arms hanging straight at your sides.
2. Take a slow, controlled lunge forward with one foot. As you lunge, lower your body and allow the lunging knee to bend until your thigh is parallel to the ground.
3. If performing a stationary lunge, push explosively off the lunging foot to return to the starting position. If performing walking lunges, push through the heel of the lunging foot to bring the back foot to meet it.

Lunges With Twist Over Lunging Knee

1. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, torso upright with arms hanging straight at your sides.
2. Take a slow, controlled lunge forward with one foot. As you lunge, lower your body and allow the lunging knee to bend until your thigh is parallel to the ground.
3. In the lunge position, bend your elbows at ninety

degrees and rotate your torso in the direction of your bent knee.

4. If performing walking lunges, push through the heel of the lunging foot to bring the back foot to meet it.

Mock Kettlebell Swings

1. Assume an air squat stance with feet shoulder-width apart, toes angled out slightly.
2. Keeping your chest lifted and your lower back arched, reach down to the floor with your fingertips.
3. Thrust your hips forward as you stand from the squat position. Your arms should be straight, as if your hands are holding an invisible weight.
4. Swing your arms overhead until your biceps are beside your ears.
5. Squat to lower your arms back down toward the floor.

NOTE: Fully extend or "open up" your hips when you stand.

Mountain-Climbers

1. Place your hands on the floor, slightly wider than shoulder-width. Step out with your feet to assume a plank position.
2. While holding your upper body in place, alternating bringing the right and left knees toward your chest.
3. Keep your hips down and increase the intensity by performing the movement faster as you feel comfortable.

Oblique Twists holding Dumbbell

1. Sit on the floor holding a dumbbell at your chest. Lift your feet off the floor a few inches and cross your ankles.
2. Keeping your core tight, twist to one side, bringing the weight toward your hip. Repeat on the opposite side.

Pendulum Lunges

Perform a stationary forward lunges, immediately followed by a reverse lunge on the same leg.

Push-Ups (Traditional)

1. Get into a plank position on the ground: hands and feet slightly wider than shoulder-width apart.
2. Keeping your core (abdominals and back) tight, slowly lower yourself in a straight line. Make sure your neck stays neutral, naturally aligned with your spine. Don't let your hips pike up in the air or your lower back sag.
3. Continue to lower yourself until your chest touches the mat or floor or, for beginners, your arms form a ninety-degree angle.

Push-Ups (Modified)

1. Get into a hands-and-knees position on a mat or floor. Hands should be slightly wider than shoulder-width apart, fingers facing forward.
2. Keeping your core (abdominals and back) tight, slowly lower yourself in a straight line. Make sure your neck stays neutral, naturally aligned with your spine. Don't let your hips pike up in the air or your lower back sag.
3. Continue to lower yourself until your chest touches the mat or floor or, for beginners, your arms form a ninety-degree angle.
4. Keeping your spine rigid and tummy pulled in, press your hands into the floor to return to start position.

Renegade Row

1. Place a pair of dumbbells side by side on the floor. Then get into a plank position with hands gripping either dumbbell, feet hip-width apart. Make sure dumbbells are about shoulder-width apart.
2. Bend your right elbow and pull the dumbbell until your elbow passes your torso. Keep the elbow tight and close to your body. Keep abdominals engaged and neck in a

neutral position. Press the left dumbbell into the floor for balance.

3. Lower your arm and repeat on the opposite side.

Scorpions

1. Lie face down on a mat or on the floor. Stretch your arms out to either side, forming a T.
2. Lift your left leg away from the floor as far as you can, then move it to the right, crossing it over your right leg. As you do this, twist your hips to the right, allowing the left leg to touch the ground on the right side.
3. Return your left leg back to starting position and repeat the movement with your right leg.

Tuck Jumps

1. Stand with feet under hips.
2. Jump up, tucking your knees into your chest.
3. Land softly with feet under hips.
4. Immediately explode into another jump.

Walk-Out/Walk-Ins

1. Begin in a standing position. Bend over to touch your toes and walk your hands out until you are in a plank position.
2. Walk the hands back in to your feet keeping legs as straight as possible, and repeat for the given number of repetitions.

For over 100 at-home workouts like the six in this article, please check out my book, available in print and e-book format!

Stay fit, stay faithful.

Diana Anderson-Tyler is the author of *Creation House's Fit for Faith: A Christian Woman's Guide to Total Fitness, Perfect*

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