

Resistance Bands

Working with a Resistance Band

Resistance bands are stretchy elastic bands that come in several strengths, from light to heavy. You can use them in some strength exercises instead of weights.



Wrapping a resistance band

1. Lay the band flat in your hand with the end toward your pinky finger.
2. Wrap the long end of the band around the back of your hand.
3. Grasp firmly.

TIP

If you are a beginner, try exercising without the band until you are comfortable, then add the band. Choose a light band if you are just starting to exercise, and move on to a stronger band when you can do 2 sets of 10 to 15 repetitions easily. Hold on to the band tightly (some bands have handles), or wrap it around your hand or foot to keep it from slipping and causing possible injury. Do the exercises in a slow, controlled manner, and don't let the band snap back.

This variation of the **Arm Curl** uses a resistance band instead of weights.

Arm Curl with Resistance Band



1. Sit in a sturdy, armless chair with your feet flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart.
2. Place the center of the resistance band under both feet. Hold each end of the band with palms facing inward. Keep elbows at your sides. Breathe in slowly.
3. Keep wrists straight and slowly breathe out as you bend your elbows and bring your hands toward your shoulders.
4. Hold the position for 1 second.
5. Breathe in as you slowly lower your arms.
6. Repeat 10-15 times.
7. Rest; then repeat 10-15 more times.

TIP

As you progress, use a heavier strength band.

Seated Row with Resistance Band

This exercise to strengthen upper back, shoulder, and neck muscles should make everyday activities such as raking and vacuuming easier.

1. Sit in a sturdy, armless chair with your feet flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart.
2. Place the center of the resistance band under both feet. Hold each end of the band with palms facing inward.
3. Relax your shoulders and extend your arms beside your legs. Breathe in slowly.
4. Breathe out slowly and pull both elbows back until your hands are at your hips.
5. Hold position for 1 second.
6. Breathe in as you slowly return your hands to the starting position.
7. Repeat 10-15 times.
8. Rest; then repeat 10-15 more times.

TIP

As you progress, use a heavier strength band.



This is a good over-all stretch that's fun to do with a partner. It stretches your shoulders, arms, back, and legs. If you've had hip or back surgery, talk with your doctor before trying this stretch.

Buddy Stretch



1. Sit on the floor facing your buddy and place your feet against your partner's feet.
2. Both of you should grab one end of a resistance band or towel. Depending on each person's flexibility, you may need to loop two bands or towels together.
3. Slowly pull the band or towel so that your buddy bends forward and you lean backward.
4. Hold position for 10-30 seconds.
5. Slowly return to starting position.
6. Now it's your buddy's turn to pull the band or towel so that you bend forward and your buddy leans backward. Hold for 10-30 seconds, and then return to starting position.
7. Repeat at least 3-5 times.

TIP

As you progress, try holding the band so that your hands are closer to your buddy's, or try using a heavier strength band. Some people may be able to do the stretch by reaching out and holding hands during the stretch.