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20 minute workouts posted Monday thru Saturday requiring little or no equipment to complete.

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Topic: Bodybuilding - High Volume Push-ups

A Simple But Effective Bodybuilding Technique

I hesitate to even use the term *bodybuilding* in the title of this article. Modern bodybuilding is a bloated, disgusting freak show full of steroid junkies with little or no real-world strength and endurance. Nevertheless, bodybuilding is what we are discussing, the natural development of the physique with function as our priority and form a distant second. To develop functional strength we need compound, strength-building movements performed at an aerobic pace to cultivate the muscular endurance required in the real-world. We also need anaerobic stimulation for cardiovascular fitness, HGH production, and additional endurance development. If you perform the Twenty Minute Fitness Solution Daily Workout on a regular basis, you will have each of the components for functional strength listed above. But what if you want to go to another level? What if you would like to add muscle mass or increase fat burning throughout the day? To accomplish these goals, we will add a simple technique using the greatest bodyweight exercise of all time: the push-up.

The push-up is a compound exercise that is highly underrated in the general fitness community. Performed properly, the standard military push-up develops the chest, triceps, and shoulders while simultaneously strengthening the upper back and core (lower back and abs) muscles. There is even a secondary workload placed upon the glutes and leg muscles, and many high volume push-ups advocates also experience an increase in biceps size due to their use in stabilization. Push-ups were the cornerstone of many old-time bodybuilding courses including those published by [Earl Liederman](#) and [Charles Atlas](#), and athletes like [Herschel Walker](#) and [Shaun Alexander](#) (and [here](#)) have used push-ups to build strength and add muscle mass to improve their on the field performance. Push-ups are one of the primary exercises used in the Twenty Minute Fitness Solution. Now we're going to take the push-ups that are so familiar to us all and pump up the volume, literally.

High volume training is a time-tested bodybuilding method whether it is performed using weights or bodyweight exercises. Many of the old-time strongmen that depended on push-ups for upper body development stressed the need to increase the daily repetitions of that exercise into the hundreds. In fact, it has been the experience of many trainees that the greatest physique changes occur once a level of five hundred or more push-ups per day, two to five days per week is attained. You may wonder how anyone can perform five hundred push-ups in a single day. If so, it might surprise you to learn that some people regularly perform much more than five hundred daily reps, including taekwondo master [Jhoon Rhee](#) (One thousand push-ups per day) and [Herschel Walker](#) (Fifteen hundred push-ups per day). You don't have to be a superhero to post these kind of numbers. You don't even have to be able to do large sets of push-ups. All you have to do is scatter smaller sets of push-ups throughout the day, stopping each set well short of muscle failure and burnout.

Let's look at three simple ways to work up to five hundred push-ups per day.

1. Grease the Groove

Russian strength coach Pavel Tsatsouline popularized this highly effective method for developing strength and muscular endurance. [Greasing the groove](#) involves performing small sets of a particular exercise at specific intervals throughout the day. Since our goal is muscle building and fat burning, we don't have to get too technical about the details. A sub-maximal set of push-ups performed once every hour or so will help us progress toward our goal. Choose a number that is between thirty-five and sixty-five percent of your single set max for push-ups. For example, if your current max on push-ups is forty reps, perform a set of twenty push-ups every hour throughout the day. If you do so for fourteen hours – congratulations, you successfully accumulated two hundred and eighty push-ups. That's not five hundred, but it is probably significantly more than you are currently performing after your daily blog workout. You may find that you can perform a set of twenty push-ups every thirty minutes. If so, the same fourteen hour period will yield five hundred and sixty push-ups.

2. Mini-Workouts

Not everyone will be able to drop down and do push-ups every hour throughout the day. For these people, mini-workouts are an excellent alternative for building volume. Most people can take ten minutes to perform a few exercises, provided doing so doesn't build a sweat and make conditions unpleasant for their co-workers. Perform a set of push-ups at the top of every minute for ten minutes, three to five times during the day. Most office workers will be able to take a ten minute break every two or three hours, or you might do a ten minute workout on your lunch break or a few times during the hours before or after you go to work. Perform small enough sets that you won't burn yourself out or break a sweat. If you can do fifteen push-ups every minute for ten minutes three times during the day, you will have totaled four hundred and fifty push-ups.

3. Once (or Twice) Per Day

Maybe neither of the above methods appeals to you or is practical for your situation. You can still work up to performing five hundred push-ups in a single workout. You can do so in twenty minutes, but thirty minutes might be a better goal for beginners. Decide how often you will perform push-ups during your twenty to thirty minute workout; this will determine how many sets you will perform. When performing five hundred push-ups in a single workout, it may be

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best to spread out your sets every ninety to one hundred and twenty seconds, instead of every minute. This will allow a little extra rest time between sets. You can perform fifteen sets in twenty minutes by doing one every ninety seconds, or fifteen sets in thirty minutes by doing one every two minutes. Now choose a number of reps that you can easily perform fifteen times within your preferred timeframe. You might start with fifteen sets of ten reps. By adding one rep to each set every workout, you will reach your goal of five hundred reps in twenty-four workouts (eight weeks if performed three days per week).

While some people can perform high volume push-ups back to back, five days per week, I recommend those new to volume training begin by using it two or three non-consecutive days per week. This program is not intended to replace your daily blog workouts. Those daily workouts are a complete program unto themselves. This is only a supplemental routine to add extra muscle and burn additional fat. It is not necessary. If you must choose between doing the blog workouts regularly or the high volume push-up routine – choose the daily blog workouts. Remember not to push yourself to muscle failure in these volume workouts, and listen to your body; if you need a day off, take it. Don't be obsessed with numbers. Five hundred reps is a goal, not a divine mandate. Even adding two hundred reps two days per week will stimulate muscle growth and fat burning. If you choose to begin high volume push training, perform it on Mondays, Wednesdays, and/or Fridays in conjunction with the upper body training scheduled for those days on the blog.

The daily blog workouts are all you need to develop functional strength and endurance, but high volume push-up work is a simple and effective complement to add to your training. -JME

Posted by JME at [06:48](#)

13 comments:

Anonymous said...

Masahiko Kimura (1917-1993), 7th dan obtained at age 29, is undoubtedly the greatest Judoka to ever live. He stood 5'6" (170 cm) tall and weighed 185 pounds (84kg). He is the only man to have defeated Helio Gracie.

The secret to Kimura's success is called San Bai Ro Rioku. Under this belief, Kimura did 300 pushups daily in High School, in his University, Taku-Shoku, the number increased to 500.

Here is a short piece on him:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkDBfIFtPlw>

[10 February, 2007 03:25](#)

Anonymous said...

Kimura isn't the only man to have defeated Helio Gracie- he has been beaten by other fighters.

[26 December, 2008 05:27](#)

Dread Lord said...

True, push ups are a phenomenal exercise. If you want some serious foundation strength, try this:

Do a set of:

Upright Dips x 12

Pull ups (medium to wide grip) x 6

Full squats x 20

Push ups x 12

Chins (under grip/palm facing you) x 6

Calf Hops (Rope Skips without rope) x 50

Supermans (extend limbs and hold up for a 3 count, then relax) x 12

Follow the structure of doing this circuit once every hour. Start before you eat breakfast, and end at about an hour to two hours before sleep. Eat one to two less sweets, or non-organic foods per meal. You'll be in serious shape in a short amount of time. This might prove tough to do in an office, but bathroom breaks are enough time.

[02 March, 2009 09:34](#)

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Anonymous said...

What about a ladder of 32, 2 to 5 times a week. You'll easily surpass the magic 500.

29 December, 2009 11:15

Jin@Combat Sports Fitness said...

Hmm...I never thought of incorporating pushups in this manner into my workouts. Might give this one a go.

22 March, 2011 08:21

Anonymous said...

@DreadLord

that's a terrible routine

01 January, 2012 13:48

Anonymous said...

Ridiculous. You do not do pushups everyday. It is like any resistance exercise, it needs rest. You are better off doing 100 to 200 reps of one type of pushup spread out doing 8 to 12 reps, hence German Volume training! Do this twice a week, your push routine, call it. Resting in between at least 3 to 4 days.

19 October, 2012 14:43

Anonymous said...

I agree that rest is important for strength development and overall fitness and health. But that does not mean a person cannot have intense workouts on workout days. I usually go to the gym 2 times a week and complete an intense total upper body workout. Also, once per week I stay home and do an intense, high volume pushup workout. I usually do 50 pushups every 3-4 minutes for an hour. That means I do 800 - 1000 pushups in that hour. I also do curls and planks to complete my home workout. Interestingly, I have noticed increased strength and endurance during my gym workout days. I am a bit sore the following day, but not bad. I have seen chest and back development because of my pushup day workout.

06 July, 2013 08:51



Shashi Suryawanshi said...

awsome piece of information, I had come to know about your website from my friend vinod, indore,i have read atleast seven posts of yours by now, and let me tell you, your blog gives the best and the most interesting information. This is just the kind of information that i had been looking for, i'm already your rss reader now and i would regularly watch out for the new posts, once again hats off to you! Thanks a ton once again, Regards,
[bicep workouts](#)

01 September, 2013 03:50

Harris Scott said...

Interesting post. When you get to a certain age you do need to work on things the young bucks take for granted. I recently did a similar post myself, it is shocking how basic and old school the tips where.

06 December, 2013 06:52

Fernando said...

Hi, very interesting, congrats for that, im trying to find the better way to do my pushups but its difficult, thanks for the info.

31 January, 2014 20:00

superhumanradio said...

Wow! A great list of blogs to learn more about fitness regime, health and well

The No "S" Diet



being. I've bookmarked this blog to come later.

[07 March, 2014 02:06](#)

John said...

That's right, push ups are helpful try to make them your daily routine and it can add more strength.

[28 July, 2015 02:40](#)

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