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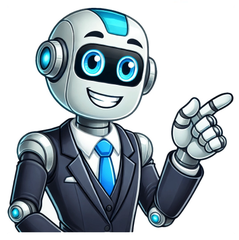

As a functional training specialist, I constantly research the most effective weight loss and full-body toning exercises. After analyzing over 50 peer-reviewed studies on resistance training and high-intensity interval training (HIIT) published in exercise science journals, I have identified the top 7 functional exercises proven to boost fat-burning and support weight loss. Unlike traditional cardio, which burns calories only during the workout, these compound movements spark fat loss hours after you leave the gym by speeding up your metabolic rate. Research shows that functional training workouts utilizing multi-joint exercises that engage multiple large muscle groups can increase your excess post-exercise oxygen consumption (EPOC) by 9.5%, leading to more calories burned (Scott, 2020). Additionally, a meta-analysis of 33 clinical trials confirmed that high-intensity, full-body training is significantly more effective for fat loss than steady-state cardio (Wewege, 2017). In this extensively researched post, I will break down the 7 best functional exercises along with proper form and reps to maximize fat burn. Let us dig in! This type of exercise uses movements such as lifting, pushing, and pulling, to improve overall strength, balance, and coordination. Here is the analysis of the most effective exercises: The burpee is one of the most effective full-body exercises for weight loss. To do a burpee, start in a standing position. Drop down into a push-up position, perform one push-up, then jump your feet towards your hands. From there, explode up into a jump, reaching arms overhead. Burpees engage your core, legs, chest, shoulders, triceps, and more in one fluid motion. Do 10-15 reps for a HIIT workout and feel the burn! The deadlift works your posterior chain, sculpting the hamstrings, glutes, and back. To deadlift, stand with feet hip-width apart, holding a barbell or dumbbell in front of your thighs. Push hips back and bend knees to lower into a squat, keeping back flat and chest up. Drive through heels to return to standing, squeezing glutes at the top. 2-3 sets of 10-12 reps with heavy weight will strengthen your backside and stoke your metabolism. Elevate a basic push-up by starting from a plank position, engaging your core. Set up in a high plank with hands under shoulders and arms extended. Keeping the body in one straight line, bend your elbows to lower chest towards the floor. Push back to start for 1 rep. Do 10-15 reps to sculpt the chest, shoulders, arms, and core in one move. Pull-ups build incredible upper body strength through the lats, biceps, and grip. Grasp the pull-up bar with hands slightly wider than shoulder-width apart. Retract shoulder blades and engage the core. Pull yourself up until your chin rises above the bar, then lower back down with control. Box jumps are a high-intensity plyometric move that torches calories. Stand facing a stable box or platform. Bend knees to load legs, swing arms behind you, then jump onto the box, landing softly with bent knees. Step back down and repeat for 10-15 reps. Work on increasing height to continually challenge your fast-twitch muscles and coordination. Mountain climbers mimic a running motion while improving balance and control. Start in a high plank. Bring the right knee towards the chest, tapping the foot on the floor. Return to plank and repeat with left leg to complete 1 rep. Increase speed for 30-60 seconds. This unique cardio exercise will elevate heart rate and stroke fat burning. Jump rope provides an intense cardiovascular challenge that helps strip away fat. Use a speed rope turned quickly for 30-60 seconds, getting as many revolutions as possible with short breaks. Work towards skipping for 2-3 minutes straight. This plyometric exercise blasts calories and sculpts lean, athletic legs. One of the critical benefits of functional training is its ability to engage multiple muscle groups simultaneously. This burns more calories during each workout and increases metabolism, promoting weight loss even after your workout. Functional training also helps build core strength, improve posture, and reduce the risk of injuries. Another critical benefit of functional training for weight loss is its versatility. You can perform functional exercises with little equipment, making them ideal for at-home workouts or traveling. Functional workouts can be tailored to your fitness level, making them a safe and effective option for beginners and advanced athletes. Functional fitness is exercises that train multiple muscles and joints in coordinated movements that mimic real-world actions. Unlike isolated machine exercises that only work one muscle group, functional fitness exercises train the body as an integrated system. This full-body training approach is highly effective for weight loss and overall fitness. As gymnast athletes explain, Functional training refers to a style of exercise, typically designed to reflect the complex, multi-chain movements that we use in our everyday lives. Functional exercises like squats, lunges, and push-ups require core stability, balance, coordination, and muscle recruitment to perform the movement correctly. Just like lifting a heavy box off the floor, doing a proper deadlift in your workout will strengthen the muscles needed for daily functional tasks. The other key aspect of functional fitness training is that it incorporates high-intensity interval training (HIIT) principles. By mixing cardio bursts, strength training, and full-body moves, functional workouts help you burn calories long after your workout. The result is faster weight loss and full-body toning without spending hours doing traditional steady-state cardio. The most effective workout plan for weight loss incorporates a blend of circuits, strength training, and cardio. As my experience recommends: You should aim to target your entire body where you can. Full-body circuit workouts that flow from one exercise to the next with little rest maximize calorie burn by working multiple muscle groups. Bodyweight circuits, in particular, are great for weight loss because they elevate your heart rate while sculpting lean muscle mass. The more muscles engaged in each movement, the more energy expenditure. While steady cardio and strength training have benefits, circuits help you burn fat fast by mixing elements of both into one sweat session. High-intensity intervals with full-body exercises like squats, push-ups, and lunges have proven to be some of the best exercises to help you lose weight. To lose weight successfully, staying consistent with an exercise routine is essential. High is critical intensity interval training (HIIT) workouts that blend strength and cardio exercises and are efficient for fat loss. Aim to do full-body circuit training 3-5 days per week, tracking your heart rate and calories burned each session. Do more than focus on the workout proper nutrition, hydration, and sleep are critical for sustainable weight loss and lean muscle development. Make small, manageable lifestyle changes rather than overhaul everything at once. An accountability partner can motivate you to stick to your diet and workout routine. You will lose weight effectively over time with a commitment to consistent, challenging exercise and a clean and balanced diet. Suppose you want to burn fat, build lean muscle, and reshape your body. In that case, incorporating these 7 functional exercises into your workout routine is necessary. Compound movements like burpees, deadlifts, and push-ups from plank activate multiple muscle groups at once, taking your workouts to the next level. Mixing in plyometric moves like box jumps and jump rope adds intense bursts of calorie burn. With metabolic benefits that continue long after you leave the gym, functional training is the most time-efficient way to lose weight. I suggest to follow this routine 2-3 times per week, doing 10-15 reps of each exercise in a circuit fashion to raise your heart rate. Along with a clean, portion-controlled diet, these full-body calorie-scorchers will help you burn fat, revealing toned, athletic muscle. Try to stay consistent with your functional training regimen to transform your physique and improve your overall fitness. Functional training exercises mimic real-life activities and engage multiple muscle groups. These exercises improve strength, balance, and coordination and are highly effective for weight loss. Yes, functional training is a great way to lose weight. These exercises increase calorie burn, build muscle, and boost metabolism, leading to fat loss and improved body composition. Yes, functional training exercises can be adapted for all fitness levels. Beginners can start with basic movements and gradually progress to more challenging exercises as they build strength and confidence. The frequency of functional training depends on your fitness goals and current fitness level. It is recommended to incorporate functional exercises at least 2-3 times weekly for optimal results. Functional training can be done with minimal equipment or just your body weight. However, tools like resistance bands, dumbbells, or stability balls can add variety and intensity to your workouts. Absolutely! Functional training improves overall fitness by enhancing strength, flexibility, balance, and coordination. It also helps prevent injuries and enhances performance in everyday activities. Functional training can be beneficial for individuals of all ages. However, consulting with a healthcare professional or fitness expert is essential to ensure the exercises are appropriate for your needs and abilities. Results will vary depending on various factors, including your current fitness level, diet, and consistency with workouts. With regular practice and a healthy lifestyle, you can see significant results within a few weeks to a few months. You probably got into functional fitness to lose weight. The vast majority of new folks walking into the gym tell me they want to lose weight and get in better shape. Theyre quickly hooked on WODs and metcons when they see some initial progress. However, these athletes can become disheartened when they stop losing weight, or actually gain weight due to increasing muscle mass. It can be even more disheartening for athletes that have been grinding away in the gym for years, and have yet to reach their ideal body. This functional fitness weight loss program is designed to get you on the right track, with everything you need to start dropping pounds. Keep reading for the full functional fitness program, nutrition plan, and downloads. The first thing that you should know is that this program is not magic. I do not have any miracle supplements, nor do I have a certain exercises that will melt the weight right off of you. This program is the culmination of much research, and no small amount of trial and error on my part. The most important part of any plan to lose weight is consistency, or adherence to the plan. When researchers examine people that are trying to lose weight, they routinely find that only around 60% of people stick to the plan (1). I find this statistic to be be roughly in line with my own personal experience as a functional fitness coach. Less committed athletes in my gym can often stick to a workout program consistently for a few weeks. Participation starts to drop off after that. We are all adults, and we have many priorities pulling at us. If you truly want to lose weight, and change your body composition, you need to make this a priority for the duration of this 12 week weight loss program. My goal for you is to stick with this program, hit your weigh-ins, macros, and all the little details that add up to success. Newer athletes can build both muscle and lower body fat. I expect my advanced athletes to maintain their fitness levels, and solely focus on dropping fat. Now lets talk about some factors that will help you achieve your body composition goals. The most important factor that predicts long term weight loss success is adherence to a plan. Notice I said a plan. There are a million diets, and they can all work, given the right circumstances. Check out this IG post that compares some of the most popular diets with how much weight the subject lost in the long term. Youll notice they are almost all the exact same. Adherence is truly the only factor that matters. This is where the art of dieting comes into play. While there isnt a best diet for all people, there certainly is a best diet for individuals with their specific goals. This program is designed for a very specific population, trying to drop body fat. I couldnt just give this program to a 60 year old type II diabetic, with no training history, and expect her to succeed. In all likelihood it would kill her. This diet is specifically tailored for hard training athletes who want to maintain the fitness gains they have acquired. Given this population of athletes, we need to talk about factors that will improve adherence, and thus increase the chances that you will reach your body composition goals. Rest assured Im not talking about yelling cheesy phrases or motivational posters on drab office walls. The motivation Im talking about is the specific psychological motivation that will help increase your adherence to the program, and thus help you drop weight. Some athletes are extrinsically motivated, meaning that having external goals, and praise from others gives them a sense of accomplishment. Other athletes are intrinsically motivated, meaning they do no require outside motivation to push themselves. These two types of athletes require different types of motivation. Here is the motivational method that you should use to keep on the right track. If youre this type of athlete, then you will do best with external social motivation, and recognition. In fact, research indicates that weight loss programs that utilize social support increase adherence by 29% (2). The best thing about social support is that you already have a powerful support network in your pocket. You should utilize the power of social media to help you on the road to your weight loss. You can do this several ways. Try joining weight loss Facebook groups or Sub Reddits that focus on this topic, or you can use your friends and family on Instagram or other sites to help keep you on the program. I want you to publicly state your intention to drop some body fat, and you need to post regular check-ins with your preferred social media network. I dont want you to post something like, Im going to lose thirty pounds in 12 weeks. Instead, Id like you to post your goal of following this program, and then regularly post your progress on a daily basis. You could do this by taking screen shots of your weigh-ins, or take photos and videos of your workouts, including the healthy food you are eating. The content of your check-in doesnt matter. It matters that you are following through with your stated intention and keeping yourself honest on a daily basis. Now that weve covered how an extrinsically motivated athlete can succeed with this program, lets talk about intrinsically motivated athletes. These athletes generally do not require external factors to motivate them. Things like personal goals, and feelings of competency, are often decisive in creating behavioral change. I find that these athletes are best motivated by meaningful personal goals. First, you need to think long and hard about your number one motivator for losing weight. Is it so you can be more competitive in a local Crossfit Competition? Or is it something a little simpler, like wanting to fit into a dress you used to wear? Whatever your reason for wanting to change your body composition, you need to find a way to keep that in the fore front of your mind. I recommend taking a photo of something that reminds you of your reasons for completing this challenge. You might take a screen shot of the local competition logo, or use a photo of a dress, or any personally meaningful photo. You should then put this on your phones lock screen or, perhaps the background of your phone. This will make sure that you regularly see the reminder. Whatever your motivational style, you need to commit to following through with the whole program, and getting the daily details correct. It doesnt matter if you can RX every workout, or if you eat a little too many carbs one day. Its the day in and day out consistency that matters. Now, lets cover the full program details. This program has three components: the workouts, nutrition, and outside of gym activities. I will provide you with several tools to make following these components a piece of cake. Once you download the fitness program, youll see that youll be in the gym 6 times per week, with a few days per week of activity outside of the gym. These activities might be a running workout, or a simple walk. If I had to pick the most important piece of this program, it would be your nutrition. After all, you can ace all the workouts, and still not lose any weight if you dont create a caloric deficit. Here is a flow chart of how often you will be doing each activity. You will be weighing yourself each day, and logging your body fat progress each week. Its important to weigh-in each day as youll find that your body weight will fluctuate (mainly due to water weight). Daily weigh-ins give you an accurate view of your weight loss trend. The once a week body fat checks, with a tape measure, will allow you to see exactly how much progress youve made. The scale is less important than what the tape says. If you like fitness plans, nutrition advice, and fitness awesomeness, thenclick here to join the Tier Three Team.Its totally free, and thousands are already getting the latest articles sent directly to them. For the nutrition section of the program, I will provide you with a research backed nutrition tool that Ive created. It will calculate your ideal weight loss rate, your current body fat, and give overall caloric and macro nutrient goals to aim for. I will also provide you with lists of nutritious sources of carbs, proteins, and fats, as well as some websites you can use to help prepare delicious meals that follow your energy recommendations. Here are the downloads. Now that weve covered the broad strokes of this program, as well as methods to increase program adherence, lets talk about the nutrition in a little more detail. This is where most athletes mess up when trying to lose weight. As I stated above, it is incredibly important, and cant be overlooked. You should ask yourself why you bother recording the weights you lift, or the times for your WODs, and yet you spend no time planning and recording your food intake. Putting together a nutrition plan for fat loss isnt complicated, in fact you can read all about it here. The first step for determining your nutrition plan, is to put your information into the nutrition calculator. Check out the read me tab, and then navigate through the various tabs, until you get to the fat loss nutrition tab. Once you input all of your information into red sections it will calculate your energy requirements. I want to emphasize that this is a best guess, that will be broadly applicable to most athletes. If you find yourself doing well with a little less or more of a certain macronutrient then thats fine. Your macro split is a starting point that should be pretty accurate. In the fat loss tab, it will auto calculate the 500 calorie deficit for men, and 300 calorie deficit for women. It will also give you recommendations for training days and non training days. You want to start out with as small of a deficit as possible, and only increase if your weight loss stalls. Do not go maverick on me, and start off with a 1,000 cal deficit. This is a recipe for failure. I recommend tracking your daily weigh-ins in MyFitnessPal, and your weekly body composition checks in the spreadsheet. The app is just a little easier, and the spreadsheet is good at showing you overall progress. When we are talking about weight loss, food choice does matter. However, it matters less than many people think. The caloric deficit is the primary nutritional goal we are trying to create. We need to consider how to do this while making sure we are eating healthy, nutritious food. After all, we could just eat meal replacement bars, but that wouldnt be very healthy, nor would it be appealing. Check out this list of healthy foods Ive created. Its broken down by macronutrient. Obviously, this isnt a complete list of everything you can eat. I compiled this list to give you a good idea of the types of foods that are the most nutritious in each category. Its ok to eat food not on the list, but if you find a large portion of your food is processed (meaning something was done to make it) then you should aim to include more foods from the list. As you will see, there are some amazing dishes you can create with this food list. One of the easiest methods of staving off hunger pangs is to eat more whole foods, that are less calorically dense. For example you could eat a whole potato, or one slice of potato bread. Potato bread is processed with other ingredients, and has a fair amount of calories per slice. I dont know about you, but Id rather eat a whole potato than one slice of bread. If you want to build real functional muscle mass then check this out! If you do want to eat bread, then try to find lower calorie bread. Most stores sell it, and it makes toast just as well as high calorie bread. The point is that you need to read food labels and pay attention to what MyFitnessPal is telling you to make sure you are staying on plan. I personally struggle with this piece of dieting the most. Im not a particularly good cook, and my meals have been known to be less than savory. The good news is that there are several websites, that I will link to below, that can help you prepare healthy high protein meals. Some of these meals are going to require a fair amount of prep time; however, many of them are very easy to cook and can be saved as left overs. Some athletes prefer to do all of their cooking once or twice a week, and others like to cook almost every night. Youll have to do a little trial and error to make sure that you have nutritious meals available. This doesnt mean that you always have to cook meals like this. You can have something simple like a Quest bar, protein shake, or hard boiled eggs, and some fruit. It doesnt really matter what you eat as long you are eating mainly unprocessed foods, and hitting your energy requirements. This is one of the best tools you can use to achieve your weight loss goals. Ive written a whole article on how to use MyFitnessPal, so make sure you read it. I find it easiest to figure out a meal I want to eat and then I put the serving sizes in, determining how much food Im allowed to eat for the meal. You can also scan barcodes on items, and it will often be able to find exactly what you are eating. I will also input the type of exercise I did and use the info from the activity calculator to track my energy expenditure more accurately. You can use data from a smart watch if you wear one of those as well. The main point of this tool is to make sure that you are eating the amount you should be. Now that weve covered the nutrition plan, lets move into the fitness portion of the program. If you want to learn even more info about functional fitness, then check out this ebook. The overall goal of this program is to lose body fat. We arent trying to set new PRs with our lifts, or our benchmark WODs. It is possible for intermediate athletes to build some muscle and strength, while losing body fat, but that isnt the norm for more experienced athletes. For advanced athletes, I expect you to maintain the majority of your strength, and fitness, while dropping body fat. Lets take a look at week one. As Ive alluded to above, each week is six sessions per week. There will be two primary lifts, a short break, and then you have a WOD or metcon. You will also notice that on a few days there is some cardio thrown in. The cardio can be done at a gym, or you can choose to run, and modify the workout. I recommend you read this article on scaling as there will inevitably be days that something needs to be changed for your individual needs. If you want to focus on building strength, then check this program out. Get the Program! You can see that much of the strength work is percentage based. Keep in mind that Ive purposely programmed this so you shouldnt be going to max effort all the time. Most of these sets should feel moderately heavy and a few are listed as AHAP. Ive also included the acronym (RIR) which means reps in reserve. I use this term for lifts where you probably dont have a one rep max. If you were doing a set of 10 with 2 RIR that would mean that you could actually do 12 reps if you really had to. The weights increase each week, but Im still limiting you to less maximal work. Astute readers will also notice that Ive increased the length of the WODs as we move through the weeks. This helps to burn a little more energy, and keeps your overall progress from stagnating. In week 4, Ive changed the primary movements. Normally I stick with these movements for a few cycles, but the goal here is to work our muscles and maintain our fitness, not practice certain lifts. I also find that rotating exercises makes more sense when in a caloric deficit, as it keeps you from generating over use injuries. Ive included both steady state long duration cardio and short interval style cardio. Research has shown that both types of cardio can be effective methods to burn fat. If you read our previous article on combining cardio and strength training, youll remember that interval training interferes less with strength and muscle gain. However, long duration cardio is still king for overall caloric expenditure, and it does improve aerobic capacity very well with little soreness. This is the last week of the first 6 weeks of the functional fitness programming for fat loss. There will be a part two, where I provide the rest of the program. You can expect to see different movements and rep ranges, as well as a little difference style of cardio. So stay tuned! This is the million dollar question. In any diet there will come a time when you plateau. The best thing to do is panic, binge eat a whole pizza, and quit going to the gym right? Wrong! Haze yourself for even thinking that. Dietary plateaus simply indicate that some adjustments need to be made. The most common culprit for plateauing is inaccurate food estimation. If you are getting most of your food from unprocessed sources, you will find that there isnt a great way to tell how much you are eating. Researchers have shown repeatedly that visual estimation is not a very accurate method of determining how much food someone is consuming (3). This best way around this is to purchase a cheap scale like this one from Amazon (Affiliate Link). It costs less than $15, and has over 100,000 positive reviews; however, you can use any scale you like. Scales are great tools to keep you honest, and make sure you are following the nutrition plan. This is another area that athletes sometimes have issues with when losing weight. You need to make every effort to prioritize your sleep. There is ample research that shows that even one night of sleep deprivation can cause increased feelings of hunger (4). This isnt good when youre trying to lose weight. I find the easiest way to increase your sleep duration is to gradually change your evening schedule 10 minutes earlier every few days until you reach your goal. Most athletes need between 7-9 hours of sleep per night, and erring on the longer end of that spectrum will help with your dieting. If you find that youre sore very often, you can add in short walks or easy cycling to help your body recover from the hard work you put in at the gym. The key is that you increase your whole body circulation, without incurring more damage for your body to repair. Dont turn a recovery walk into an actual workout! Theres a very real possibility that you are doing everything correctly. In this case, you may need to lower your caloric intake slightly to allow continued fat loss. Youll want to lower it as little as possible to continue losing weight. If youre eating 2200 calories per day, and youve plateaud, try eating 1900 calories per day for a week and see what effect that has. If you lose weight, continue on at this level until you stop. If you havent, you can try dropping it another 200-300 calories. I caution you not to eat less than 1500 calories a day for men, and 1200 a day for women. At these levels you are getting into starvation, and your body isnt likely to allow further fat loss. At those energy levels the lack of weight loss is likely due to more complex reasons, such as under recovery. Weve covered a lot of info so far, so lets finish this portion of the 12 Week Functional Fitness Weight Loss Program. The best advice I can give you is to be patient with yourself. Make sure you execute each workout to the best of your ability. Track your food, and accurately log your progress, but dont lose yourself in the minutia of each piece of this program. If youre ready for the second part of the 12 Week Functional Fitness Weight Loss Program, then click here. You need to constantly remind yourself why you are doing this, and use the motivational tools to help achieve your goals. If you have any troubles you can alway post your questions in the comments section, and I will do my best to get you an answer. Now get out there and get training! The opinions and information expressed in this article are solely those of the author and are not affiliated with any corporation, group, public or private entity. This web site is not endorsed by, directly affiliated with, maintained, authorized, or sponsored by Crossfit Inc. All product and company names are the registered trademarks of their original owners. The use of any trade name or trademark is for identification and reference purposes only and does not imply any association with the trademark holder of their product brand. As a passionate athlete and certified nutritionist and trainer, I am deeply devoted to optimizing human health and athletic performance. If you want to learn the roadmap for optimizing your physical fitness and be fit as our human bodies have been built, then we are on the same page. Let me share some personal information: I am a doctor of electrical and computer engineering at the National Technical University of Athens, specializing in wireless telecommunications. My commitment to professional development has resulted in further education in security in electronic communications. As a direct outcome of these efforts, I have gained extensive experience in assessing and addressing modern security threats. And after the age of 35, I started research in fitness and proper nutrition for efficient body training. I have attended many seminars and trainings (inside and outside Greece), and I am certified in sports nutrition and coaching by Nutrilab. Gr center. At 13, I started playing basketball at Sporting B.C. and then at AEK B.C. until the age of 19. I switched things up and try a different sport, so I started training in the long jump and shot put. From the age of 25, having grown up with the dream of improving my physique, I tried bodybuilding techniques. Indeed, for 6-7 years, I tried to forge something similar to the standards, but it turned out to be futile. By the time I was 32, it was clear that bodybuilding was not mind-and-body training. The quest for physical education had just begun, and the journey promised to be long and challenging. Jeff Cavaliere (Athlean-x) was a big help and an excellent coach in that destination. Upon careful experimentation with various workout regimes, it was eventually determined that optimal fitness objectives were attainable solely through the utilization of bodyweight training through calisthenics. Initially an underweight, self-conscious young man lacking strength, through dedicated athletic and calisthenics training, and embracing nutrition, I transformed my physique and abilities. Having walked in your shoes, I now eagerly guide others on fulfilling journeys to become stronger, leaner versions of themselves brimming with energy. gets measurable results as an author and expert fitness advisor, I leverage decades of experience alongside ongoing research to debunk fad diets and uncover what truly gets meaningful results for athletic performance and well-being. My first book Primitive Health & Beauty shares hard-won lessons on maintaining vitality. On this site, dubbed The Fitness Engineers Workshop, I assemble an extensive, ever-grown knowledge base into actionable fitness regimens, nutritional recommendations, and lifestyle changes tailored to you. Consider me your personal expert, ready to help assess your needs and craft comprehensive solutions to unlock your potential on the rewarding quest towards fitness. With an insiders perspective on the transformative impact of optimizing health, I passionately share proven strategies so you can elevate energy, build your fit body, accelerate recovery, and tap into extra levels of vitality in all areas of life. Im thrilled youre here lets get started! Nasos Koutsouradis is a certified physical therapist (ATEI ATHINAS), with postgraduate studies in manual therapy (MAITLAND CONCEPT) and specialization in sports physical therapy. He is constantly trained in modern physical therapy methods, thus having a very wide range of rehabilitation techniques such as western acupuncture (dry needling), kinesiotaping, floss band, IASTM tool, clinical Pilates, Tecar expert and therapeutic gymnastics. Nasos Koutsouradis is a triathlete, marathon runner and mountain runner. He has finished several road and mountain marathons in Greece and abroad, but the race that stands out is the IRONMAN in Copenhagen in which he swam 3.8km, cycled 180km and ran 42.2km continuously, finishing in 12 hours and 40 minutes! Photo: Shutterstock. Design: Eat This, Not That! When aiming for weight loss, its common to focus solely on cardio workouts like running or cycling. While cardio is effective for burning calories, I often recommend that my clients try integrating functional strength workouts into their routines. Functional strength training helps build lean muscle mass, boosts metabolism, and improves overall body composition. Below are five of the best functional strength workouts for weight loss.Gear up to speed up your weight-loss efforts while enhancing your strength, endurance, and mobility. Remember to maintain proper form, start with lighter weights or resistance, and gradually increase intensity as you progress. Combine these workouts with a nutritious diet and consistent exercise regimen for optimal results. Continue reading for the five best functional strength workouts for weight loss. And when youre finished, dont miss out on the 10 Best Compound Exercises for a Fit & Lean Lower Body.Workout #1: Circuit TrainingFirst up on this list of functional strength workouts for weight loss shines a spotlight on circuit-based training. Circuit training efficiently melds together strength training and cardiovascular exercise, which is the ideal combo for calorie-torching and fat loss.1. Bodyweight SquatsShutterstockStand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Lower into a squat position, bending your knees and pushing your hips back. Keep your chest up and your back straight. Return to the starting position by pushing through your heels.Aim for three sets of 15 to 20 repetitions.2. PushupsShutterstockStart in a plank position with your hands shoulder-width apart and your palms on the floor. Lower your body toward the ground by bending your elbows. Maintain a straight line from your head to your heels. Push back up to the starting position.Aim for three sets of 10 to 15 repetitions.3. Dumbbell LungesShutterstockHold a dumbbell in each hand at your sides. Step forward with one foot, and lower body until both knees are bent at a 90-degree angle. Keep your front knee aligned with your ankle and the back knee hovering just above the ground. Push through the front heel to return to the starting position. Repeat on the other side.Aim for three sets of 10 to 12 repetitions per leg.5 Most Effective Gym Workouts To Melt Belly FatWorkout #2: Kettlebell Swing VariationsKettlebell swings engage multiple muscle groups simultaneously, elevating heart rate for maximum calorie burn.1. Classic Kettlebell SwingsShutterstockStand with your feet shoulder-width apart, holding a kettlebell with both hands in front of your body. Hinge at your hips and bend your knees slightly, lowering the kettlebell between your legs. Explosively drive your hips forward, swinging the kettlebell up to shoulder height. Control the swing as the weight lowers back down between your legs.Aim for three sets of 15 to 20 repetitions.2. Single-arm Kettlebell SwingsShutterstockStart with a kettlebell on the ground between your feet. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, hinge at the hips, and grasp the kettlebell handle with one hand. Engage your core, drive through the hips, and swing the kettlebell back between your legs. Explosively extend your hips, swinging the kettlebell forward and up to shoulder height. Control the descent as the kettlebell swings back between your legs. Complete the desired number of repetitions on one side before switching to the other arm.Aim for 3 sets of 12 to 15 repetitions per arm.3. Alternating Kettlebell Swings Begin with a kettlebell on the ground between your feet. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, and hinge at the hips to grasp the kettlebell handle with both hands. Swing the kettlebell back between your legs, then explosively drive through the hips to swing it forward and up to shoulder height.As the kettlebell reaches its peak, release one hand, and allow the kettlebell to swing down and back between your legs. Grasp the kettlebell with the opposite hand, and repeat the movement, alternating hands with each swing. Focus on maintaining proper form and generating power from the hips.Aim for three sets of 15 to 20 repetitions, alternating hands with each swing.Heres How Long You Need To Walk Every Day for Weight LossWorkout #3: High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)HIIT workouts alternate between intense exercise and brief rest, effectively incinerating calories in a short time.1. BurpeesShutterstockStart in a standing position with your feet hip-width apart. Lower into a squat position, and place your hands on the ground in front of you. Jump your feet back into a plank position. Perform a pushup. Jump your feet back to squat position, and explosively jump up, reaching your arms overhead. Land softly, and immediately lower back into a squat position to begin the next repetition.Aim for three sets of 10 to 15 repetitions.2. Mountain ClimbersShutterstockStart in a plank position with your hands directly under your shoulders and your body in a straight line from your head to your heels. Drive one knee toward your chest, then quickly switch legs, bringing the opposite knee toward your chest. Continue alternating legs at a rapid pace, keeping your core engaged and your hips stable.6254a4d1642c605c54bf1cab17d50f1eAim for three sets of 30 to 60 seconds.3. Jumping Lunges Start in a lunge position with your right foot forward and your left foot back, both knees bent at 90-degree angles. Explosively jump up into the air, switching the positions of your feet mid-air. Land softly with your left foot forward and your right foot back, immediately lowering into a lunge position. Repeat the movement, jumping back and forth between lunge positions. Maintain a rapid pace, focusing on explosive power and controlled landings.Aim for three sets of 20 to 30 repetitions (10 to 15 reps per leg).10 Functional Strength Exercises To Boost Mobility as You AgeWorkout #4: Medicine Ball WorkoutsMedicine ball exercises build strength, power, and endurance while enhancing coordination and stability.1. Medicine Ball SlamsShutterstockStand with your feet shoulder-width apart, holding a medicine ball with both hands. Raise the ball overhead, fully extending your arms. Forcefully slam the ball down to the ground in front of you, using your entire body to generate power. Catch the ball on the rebound, and immediately repeat the movement.Aim for three sets of 12 to 15 repetitions. ShutterstockSit on the floor with your knees bent and feet lifted off the ground, holding the medicine ball in front of your chest. Lean back slightly to engage your core and twist your torso to the right, tapping the medicine ball on the ground beside you. Quickly reverse movement, twisting to the left and tapping the ball on the ground on the opposite side. Continue alternating sides in a fluid motion.Aim for three sets of 20 to 30 repetitions (10 to 15 reps per side).3. Medicine Ball Pushups Begin in a plank position with your hands on the medicine ball, slightly wider than shoulder-width apart. Keep your body in a straight line from your head to your heels, engaging your core and glutes. Lower your chest toward the medicine ball, bending your elbows and keeping them close to your sides. Push back up to the starting position, extending your arms fully. Maintain stability and control throughout the movement, using your chest, shoulders, and triceps to perform the pushup.Aim for three sets of 10 to 15 repetitions.10 Best Compound Exercises for a Fit & Lean Lower BodyWorkout #5: Resistance BandsThe last of these functional strength workouts for weight loss will have you working with resistance bands. Resistance bands are portable, versatile, and effective tools for strength training, suitable for burning calories and shedding fat.1. Standing Rows Anchor a resistance band to a sturdy object at chest height. Hold one end of the band in each hand with palms facing each other. Step back to create tension in the band, and position your feet shoulder-width apart. Keep your elbows close to your body as you pull bands toward your chest, squeezing your shoulder blades together. Slowly release back to the starting position.Aim for three sets of 12 to 15 repetitions.2. Standing Bicep CurlsShutterstockStand on the center of a resistance band with your feet hip-width apart. Hold one end of the band in each hand, palms facing forward with your arms fully extended at the sides. Keeping your elbows close to your body, curl the bands up toward your shoulders, squeezing your biceps at the top of the movement. Slowly lower the bands back down to the starting position.Aim for three sets of 12 to 15 repetitions.3. Lateral Band Walks Place a resistance band around your thighs, just above the knees. Stand with your feet hip-width apart and your knees slightly bent. Take a step to the side with one foot, stretching the band. Follow with the other foot to maintain tension in the band. Continue side-stepping for a set distance or time. Aim for three sets of 12 to 15 steps in each direction. Sign up for our newsletter! Page 2 Copyright Coach Jarrod/Shutterstock Burpees might just be the most hated (and controversially effective) bodyweight exercise out there. Love or loathe them, theyre a brutally efficient test of your overall fitness. From cardiovascular endurance and coordination to explosive power and mental grit, if youve ever been gasping for air mid-set, you know exactly what we mean.How many complete burpees can you do in 60 seconds? This simple challenge can reveal a lot about your conditioning level. It demands total-body strength, anaerobic capacity, and just the right amount of pacing, not to mention mental toughness to push through the burn. Up for the challenge? If so, Ill dish out how to perform a proper burpee, show you what your 60-second score says about your fitness, and give you the best strategies to improve. Whether youre gunning for elite status or just trying to beat your last score, Ive got you covered.If You Can Finish This 300-Rep Leg Challenge, Youre in Top ShapeHow to Complete a Proper BurpeeShutterstockThe burpee has earned its brutal reputation for a reason. It combines strength, cardio, and coordination into one nonstop movement. But your form has to be sharp to get the full benefit (and an accurate count).How to Do It (Step-by-Step)Start standing tall with your feet shoulder-width apart and arms at your sides.Drop into a squat position and place your hands on the ground in front of you.Jump your feet back to land in a high plank positioncore tight, body straight.Lower your chest to the ground (chest must touch the ground to count).Push back up to the plank, then jump your feet forward to return to the squat.Explosively jump up, reaching your hands overhead. Thats one rep.Repeat immediatelyno pauses, no shortcuts.What Your Burpee Score Says About Your FitnessShutterstockReady to test yourself? Set a timer for 60 seconds and count your chest-to-floor burpees; no half reps, no resting at the top. Your number is an excellent indicator of your total-body conditioning and work capacity.Below Average: Fewer than 12 burpees. Youre beginning your fitness journeytime to build stamina, strength, and movement efficiency.Average: 10 to 14 burpees. Respectable! Youve got a solid base of strength and endurance, with room to grow.Above Average: 15 to 20 burpees. Youre fit and resilient. Your conditioning is solid, and your body recovers quickly.Elite: 21+ burpees. Elite-level conditioning, explosive strength, and top-tier work capacity. ShutterstockWant to level up your score and gas out less? Youll need a mix of explosive strength, efficient movement, and smart conditioning. These tips and exercises will help you move faster and recover stronger.6254a4d1642c605c54bf1cab17d50f1eBurpee-Boosting Exercises:Squat Jumps: Build explosive power through your hips and legs.Push-Ups: Strengthen the upper body phase of the burpee and improve chest-to-floor control.Mountain Climbers: Enhance your plank-to-stand transition with speed and core stability.Kettlebell Swings: Boost hip explosiveness and anaerobic endurance.High-Rep Air Squats: Build leg stamina for faster transitions between reps.Form Tips:Keep your core tight: avoid sagging during the plank and push-up.Land softly: soft landings on the jump to protect your knees and keep your rhythm smooth.Breathe consistently: exhale during the jump to avoid gassing out too soon.Find your rhythm: a steady pace beats all-out speed that fizzles after 20 seconds.Is Walking Every Morning Enough Exercise to Stay Fit? ShutterstockBurpees are intense, so frequency and recovery matter. Heres how to structure your training for max results without burning out:Train burpees or variations 2 to 3 times per week as part of a HIIT workout or circuit.Pair them with strength work (squats, push-ups, rows) to build foundational power.Test your 60-second max once every 3 to 4 weeks to track progress.Include active recovery days with walking, mobility, or low-impact cardio to stay fresh.Final Thoughts:ShutterstockBurpees are a no-BS benchmark for total-body fitness. Your 60-second score reflects your strength, grit, and overall conditioning. Dont be discouraged if youre not yet where you want to be. Stay consistent, train smart, and youll be racking up reps and respect in no time. Put goals in motion with a complete, personalized employee wellness benefit. Equip your team with access to Aaptivs fitness network, including access to thousands of gyms, studios and more.Find a Gym Keep employees engaged with AI-designed routines and guidance for mastering new techniques. Help employees turn practice into progress with Aaptivs 10,000+ on-demand classes. Take employee wellness beyond workouts with guided meditations and mindfulness exercises. Aaptiv's digital offering is available to anyone, simply download the Aaptiv app to get started. The Aaptiv gym network is available exclusively as an employer/health plan benefits. Reach out to your employer/health plan to check your eligibility. The Aaptiv Access fitness network is currently only available through your employer or health plan benefits. Check with your HR department to see if your company offers this benefit. Or refer your HR team here: YES! Your monthly membership gives you access to ALL gyms in your membership tier. You can visit any of the gym locations in your membership tier at a time, and even visit multiple gyms in one day! Note: Some locations may have caps on the number of visits per month, this information is noted in the gym finder (. Questions? Let us help!support@aaptiv.com A weight loss journey can be full of ups and downs or gains and losses. But rather than giving up when you dont see the numbers decreasing on the scale, sometimes all you need to do is go back to basics. Functional training is a popular form of training based off movements that mimic those you do in your day-to-day life. Think of exercises similar to lifting and placing your bag into an airplane overhead compartment, doing laundry, or even carrying your grocery bags down the street. It was first created as a form of exercise by physical therapists, and now is recognized as a safe and thorough way to work out your essential muscles. Most exercises include full-body, multi-plane movements that utilize several muscle groups at once. Since this requires more energy expenditure on your end, it also means you burn more calories, which is what youre aiming for when trying to lose weight!Heres what you need to know about functional training for weight loss:ProsWhen trying any new workout plan, you want to give your body new challenges to have to adapt to. With functional training that newness continues, even as you improve. With nearly every functional training-based workout, your body is constantly having to adapt to the demands placed upon it. This is why its the workout style of choice for those looking to lose weight.In addition to avoiding those frustrating plateaus, functional training also promotes safe, injury-free training. Since many movements require the use of your core and balance skills, this type of training focuses more on your stability muscles that support your larger muscle groups. Its an excellent format to mix in with other strength-based or more cardio-centered workouts.If youre not working with a personal trainer or other fitness professional, it can seem cumbersome to have to come up with your own multi-joint, multi-plane workout dayafter day. It's possible that your