5 Tips for a Perfect Push-up

It's one of the first exercises we learn as youngsters. In fact, you were probably forced to do them in gym class, as punishment for being late to practice, or maybe you just did them on your own because you saw other people doing them.



- [ ] **Chest out** - Beware, this is harder than it seems. Most of us battle with weak scapular stabilizers and tight pecs since we are constantly sitting; sitting at work, sitting in the car, or sitting playing video games. In order to keep your chest out properly you must seat your scapulae, driving them down and together. This puts your scapulae in the correct position to do their job during the push-up, which leads us to our next point.
- [ ] **Scapular retraction and protraction during the push-up**- When you go into the bottom portion of the push-up, your scapulae should retract or "come together" and when you push yourself up, your scapulae should protract, or "come apart."
- [ ] **Low back neutral** - This is one of the biggest issues I see whenever someone is doing a push-up. Everyone thinks that they are keeping their core nice and tight, but the truth is you probably aren't. Get a video of yourself doing push-ups from the side and you will get a much more objective perspective of what your push-up really looks like!
- [ ] **Glutes tight** - You should be squeezing your glutes like you are holding a $100 bill in there! Keeping your glutes tight will help stabilize your core and pelvis while performing the push-up. I know it's not an easy task concentrating on keeping every area of your body tight at once, but you will gain more strength with every tight push-up than you would with 10 mindless push-ups.
- [ ] **Elbows at 45 degrees and go through the full range of motion (ROM)** -OK… this one might be preaching to the choir, but just to cover my bases, flaring your elbows out to 90 degrees is hard on the shoulders and should be avoided. And if you aren't getting full ROM, well then you are just fooling yourself. If you cannot get full ROM at first, feel free to start with push-ups on an incline and slowly lower the include until you are ready to do push-ups on the floor.

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