

Push-Up

CHEST / BODYWEIGHT

A foundational exercise for the chest, arms and shoulders without equipment. Move your whole body up and down while keeping the trunk braced to practice pushing strength and postural control.

Three phases of the movement



01 Set up

Place the hands slightly wider than shoulder-width. Keep a straight line from head to heels.



02 Lower your chest

Keep elbows about 45 degrees from the trunk. Lower the chest and pelvis together.



03 Press the floor away

Push through the palms and raise the whole body. Return without arching the lower back.

FORM FOCUS

Move your chest and hips together as one unit.

Technique and training notes

Equipment: bodyweight. Use a non-slip floor or thin mat.

Muscles and their roles

PRIMARY

Pectoralis major and triceps brachii

Drive the pressing action and straighten the elbows.

ASSISTING

Anterior deltoid, serratus anterior and pectoralis minor

Support pressing and shoulder-girdle movement.

STABILIZING

Abdominals, gluteals and quadriceps

Help maintain a straight line from head to heels.

How to move

01 Place your hands and feet

Set the palms slightly wider than shoulder-width, fingers forward. Extend the legs and support your body on your toes.

02 Create a straight line

Brace the abdomen, glutes and legs. Align your head, chest, pelvis and heels. Look down and keep the neck long.

03 Lower slowly

Keep elbows about 45 degrees from the trunk. Lower your chest and pelvis together, as far as you can maintain your position.

04 Push back up

Press through the palms and lift the body like a rigid plank. Straighten the elbows naturally and return to the start.

KEY CUES

- Chest and hips move together.
- Maintain palm and toe contact.
- Look down; do not jut the neck forward.

COMMON ERRORS

- ! Sagging hips or a raised bottom.
- ! Elbows flaring straight out to the sides.
- ! Pressing the chest up ahead of the hips.

BREATHING: Inhale as you lower and exhale as you press up; keep breathing smoothly. **ADJUSTMENT:** Use a stable raised surface for an incline push-up, or a knee-supported version. Prioritize position over repetition count.

Stop if pain occurs. Work within a comfortable range and do not force the movement.

REFERENCES / LINKS FROM THE ORIGINAL JAPANESE GUIDE

NASM: Push-Up

ACE Exercise Library: Push-up