

Your strength plan Do this 20-minute routine 2–3 times per week on nonconsecutive days, keeping these tips in mind

- Warm up by doing arm swings, shoulder circles, marches, squats, jumping jacks (leave these out if you're postpartum), etc. for 5–10 minutes.
- When a move calls for dumbbells, select a weight (5–15 pounds) that's heavy enough to tire your muscles within 8–15 reps.
- Cool down by stretching your quads, butt, hamstrings, lower back, chest, and shoulders.

Once you're good with these moves, try them in a circuit format: Do 1 set of each with no rest in between, then jump rope or do other cardio for 2–5 minutes; repeat for a second or even third set. The intervals will up your calorie burn even more.

1 Alternating Overhead Squat (for legs, core, shoulders)
Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, toes slightly turned out, and hold a dumbbell in each hand. Keeping your spine lengthened and core engaged, squat down, pressing hips back. At the same time, press a dumbbell overhead and reach the other toward the floor. Return to starting position. Repeat squat with opposite arm; that's 1 rep. Do 2–3 sets of 8–15 reps.



2 Side Plank With Rear Dumbbell Fly (for core, shoulders)
Position body with left (bottom) leg bent, right (top) leg extended, left hand under left shoulder. Body should be in a straight line with hips lifted and shoulder pressing away from your ear. Hold a dumbbell in right hand, arm hanging straight down from shoulder. Holding body still, arc weight out and up until right hand is directly above shoulder. Squeeze backs of shoulder muscles for 1 count, then slowly lower arm to starting position. Do 8–12 reps, then switch sides and repeat. Do 2–3 sets.



3 Lunge Row and Press (for legs, core, back, shoulders)
Stand with feet together. Hold weight in right hand by shoulder, elbow bent. Lunge forward with left leg, bending knees while rotating torso and lowering weight down toward left ankle. Push off left foot to return to start position while pulling hand back to shoulder height. Push dumbbell straight up. Return to starting position. Do 8–12 reps, then switch sides and repeat. Do 2–3 sets.



4 Bird Dog (for upper back, butt, core)
Get down on all fours. Keeping abs engaged, lift right arm and left leg so they're in line with torso; reach hand and foot away from each other. Hold for a moment (don't let belly sag); return to starting position. Repeat with opposite arm and leg; that's 1 rep. Do 2–3 sets of 8–15 reps.

5 Alternating Dumbbell Fly (for chest, core)
Lie on back with legs lifted, knees bent to 90 degrees. Hold a dumbbell in each hand directly over chest with palms facing each other, elbows slightly rounded (as if hugging a tree). Without moving your torso, slowly lower the left dumbbell to the side; at the same time, exhale and brace your abs to prevent the opposite shoulder from lifting. Keeping the elbow soft, bring the hand back to starting position. Repeat with opposite arm; that's 1 rep. Do 2–3 sets of 12 reps.



6 Curtsy Lunge and Press Back (for legs, hips, thighs, core)
Stand with feet hip-distance apart, weight in each hand, arms hanging by sides with palms facing in. Step right foot diagonally behind left, bending knees to squat down while keeping hips facing front. Keeping abs tight, hinge body forward, pressing hands back and up, rotating palms toward ceiling and pulling shoulders open. Return to starting position, and repeat on opposite side; that's 1 rep. Do 2–3 sets of 12–15 reps.

