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the **loungeroom** CHALLENGE

No one feels like exercising when it's cold and raining outside! But you can still get your 30 minutes a day (and watch TV at the same time).

Getting prepared

Pick one of your favourite shows that lasts for 30 minutes (you can make it longer if you like!). Do two 'sets' of each exercise (one set equals 15–20 repetitions), resting for 30 seconds between each set. Take another 30 second rest between each exercise.

1 Warming up

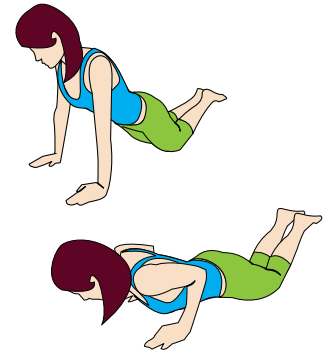
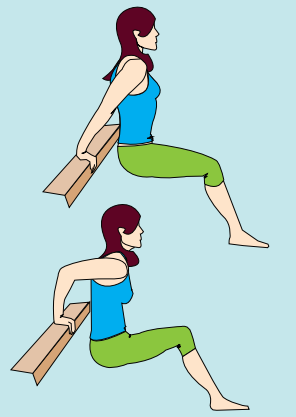
Having warm muscles before you exercise is important, so start your routine by walking on the spot, making sure to lift up your knees. To burn more kilojoules, try skipping for five minutes, or, if you don't have a skipping rope (or have no space for one), jump up and down on the spot.

2 Push-ups

You don't need a gym to build strong, toned arms! Push-ups are great all-round arm and shoulder work out. Start with your hands placed shoulder-width apart, directly under your shoulders, and your knees and toes on the ground. Lower yourself to within 5cm of the ground (inhale on the way down), or as far as you can go, then come back up again (exhale on the way up). Make them harder by doing the same exercise on your toes.

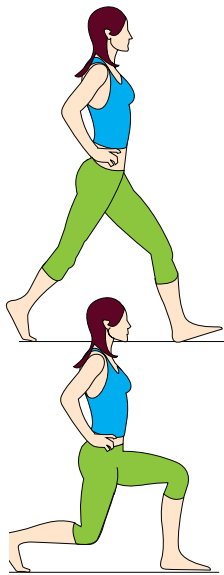
3 Chair dips

These can be done on the edge of a chair, or the lounge room coffee table. Place your feet flat on the floor about two feet in front of you with your knees bent. With your fingers facing towards your body, bend your arms, dipping your body down. Go down only as far as you feel comfortable. You should feel a 'burn' on the second set (this is what you want).



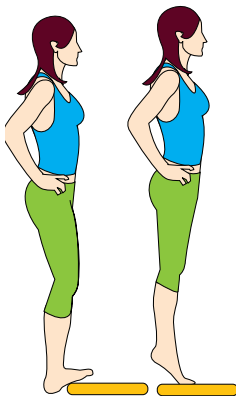
4 Lunges

Lunges are a great way to strengthen the legs and hips, reducing the risk of falls and improving your core stability, which will help with lower back pain. Start with your feet shoulder-width apart and take a big step out, careful to keep your hips in line, facing forward. Bend both knees to a 90-degree angle, making sure your front knee does not go over your toes. Squeeze your stomach muscles while you're there. Then push up through your front heel. Swap legs and repeat.



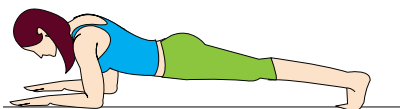
5 Calf raises

This exercise can be done on the edge of a small stair, or on a thick cookbook (just make sure it's stable, and that you have something steady to hold onto). Stand up with feet together, rise up onto your tip-toes (until you feel a little pinch in your calves) and lower yourself back down. To improve your posture simultaneously, try to balance a book on your head.



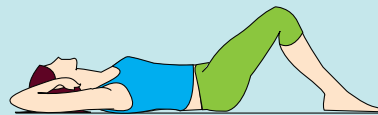
6 Planks

For improved posture and core strength, nothing beats the plank. Start with your forearms, knees and toes on the floor. Keeping your torso straight, your neck relaxed and your head looking down, lift on to your toes. Making sure your body is in a straight line, hold this position for 10 seconds to start. Over time work up to 30, 45 and then 60 seconds.



7 Crunches

Lie on your back with your knees bent, and your toes under the edge of the couch to prevent your feet from lifting off the ground. Rest your hands behind your head and sit up towards your knees. To increase the effectiveness of the crunch movement, push your chest and head up towards the ceiling, pushing your lower back flat onto the floor. Don't forget to exhale when you sit up and inhale on the way down.



8 Cooling down

Here's a great reason to sit in front of the TV a little longer! Research has shown that stretching has much the same effect on muscles as weight training does, by causing minute tears in the muscle tissue which stimulate the growth of new muscle fibres. In other words, stretching will make you stronger! So spend up to five minutes doing some light stretches, and finish with a walk around the house. [hfg](#)