

# Training fundamentals worth remembering



### Master your bench press

If you’re ready to conquer the bench press, remember this tip: push the weight quickly. If your speed in pressing the bar slows, your strength slips

since it limits the amount of force you create. To produce more power, pull the elbows towards your sides as you lower the weight, then press the bar straight up from the sternum.

The majority of your chest routine should be comprised of compound movements like presses. Finish with one or two isolation movements like flyes, then stretch as much as possible.



### Strengthen the rotator cuff

Use external rotation to keep your shoulders healthy. Lie face down on an inclined bench holding two light dumbbells and extend the arms

down. Bend your elbows 90 degrees with your palms facing toward your feet and squeeze your shoulder blades together. Without changing the bend in your elbows,

rotate your arms upward until your hands are beside your head, palms facing the floor. Hold the position, then slowly lower the weight back to the starting position.



### Prevent runner’s knee

Follow a smart lifting plan to strengthen your quadriceps and hamstrings. Runner’s knee is caused by abnormal

movement of the patella on the thighbone. People who have weak quadriceps are by far more likely to develop the syndrome than those with

weak hamstrings. Focus on isolation movements like leg extension and leg curls, or compound movements like lunges.

### The push up challenge

If you can’t do 15 push ups with perfect form – your chest and triceps are weak. Strengthen them by doing regular high rep (12-15) sets of bench press and triceps push down. Try push ups with hands on a bench or in a squat rack to set your body at an incline and make it easier. As you get stronger, go for regular pushups.

If your hips sag during pushups – your core is weak. Strengthen with planks and side planks. They build stability and endurance in your core and mimic the movement of the push ups. They are also great abdominal workouts.

### Fast muscle

Use supersets for super gains. Alternating between a back exercise and a chest exercise boosts strength more than just working one muscle at a time. However, if you’re trying to burn fat, running sprints and cutting on calorie intake is still your best bet. The more muscle you have, the greater the fat-burning capacity of your metabolism.

### Jogging barefoot or not?

Jogging in minimalist shoes after a lifetime of traditional shoes may set you up for injury, not to mention that running shoes usually have heels up to two inches. Everybody needs barefoot exercise but the downfalls are the uneven surfaces, the hardness of

the concrete and increase in impact. Many footwear companies have started to create shoes that allow more natural biomechanics while still offering a bit of protection from floor surfaces. For most people, these provide the best of both worlds, enhancing health and performance while minimising risk of injury. When switching to barefoot or minimalist footwear, give under-utilised muscles time to develop. Begin foot exercises like toe lifts, toe abduction and stretching the toe flexors before switching. Continue them while doing your whole body training in less supportive shoes. Feel comfortable shoeless walking before going for shoeless running. Reduce overuse injury potential with interval runs.

### Stretch for sciatic pain

Tightness or spasm in the short muscles of the hip external rotators can lead to hip and leg pain since the sciatic nerves passes through and can become irritated. These muscles frequently become tight in runners. To stretch them, lie on your back with one knee bent over and across, while gently pulling with your opposite hand to internally rotate the hip.

### How to strengthen your grip

Wrist and grip strength is important to develop when weight training, as this improves your ability to stabilise the

weight. This will prevent wrist injury and allow you to use heavier weights while lifting. There are two important parts to wrist and grip strength. You must have enough strength to be able to close your hand from an open position, which can be trained with repeated hand squeezes of a weight clip. The other is to have enough strength to keep your hand in the closed position, which can be practised with the arm hang. Stand on a step under a pull up bar and grab it with an overhand grip wider than shoulder width. Step off slowly so that your body hangs.

### Battle of the starches

Brown rice versus wild rice – Wild rice is lower in calories, carbohydrates, fat and sodium. It also has more protein, vitamin E and folate.

Sweet potatoes versus white potatoes - Sweet potatoes have more beta-carotene but white potatoes have more essential minerals like potassium.

Quinoa versus couscous – Couscous is a tiny pasta. Quinoa is a grain with a good source of protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals.

*For questions or information on training and healthy lifestyle you can contact Manuela Ioana Nemes at Body Sculptor Fitness Centre (Mirco Centre); Tel: 939 5288 or bodyscul@weststartv.com*

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