



OPTIMIZE HUMAN PERFORMANCE

STRONG THROUGH EVERY STAGE

A Woman's Guide to Smarter Strength Training

Strength. Health. Performance. For every stage of life.

THE LAB | A WOMAN'S GUIDE TO SMARTER STRENGTH TRAINING

STRONG THROUGH EVERY STAGE

Women deserve training that supports their strength, health and performance, not workouts built around outdated ideas about becoming “smaller.”

Strength training is one of the most powerful tools women can use to build confidence, protect their bodies and continue doing the things they love throughout every stage of life.

The fundamentals of effective training remain consistent, but a woman's program should also account for her individual physiology, life stage, recovery, symptoms, goals and training history.



SECTION 01

WHY STRENGTH TRAINING MATTERS

Strength training is about much more than changing how your body looks.

Consistent resistance training can help women:



Build and preserve lean muscle



Improve strength and physical function



Support bone health



Improve balance, stability and coordination



Perform everyday activities with greater confidence



Maintain independence and resilience with age



Improve athletic performance



Reduce the physical limitations associated with inactivity

Current physical activity guidelines recommend that adults perform muscle-strengthening activities involving all major muscle groups at least two days each week. The newest resistance-training guidance from the American College of Sports Medicine also emphasizes that consistency and progressive training matter more than following an unnecessarily complicated program.

Muscle Is an Investment in Your Future

Beginning in adulthood, preserving muscle, strength and bone becomes increasingly important. Training now helps create a stronger foundation for the decades ahead.



You are not just training for today. You are training to remain capable, active and independent for life.

SECTION 02

WOMEN ARE NOT SMALL MEN

Women and men benefit from many of the same foundational training principles:

- Progressive resistance
- Proper technique
- Adequate recovery
- Consistent practice
- Training that becomes gradually more challenging

A woman's training may need to account for:

- Menstrual-cycle or perimenopausal symptoms
- Pregnancy and postpartum history
- Pelvic-floor function
- Previous injuries
- Bone-health considerations
- Differences in body structure and movement strategy
- Sleep, stress and recovery
- Personal goals and training experience

However, that does not mean every program should look exactly the same.

INDIVIDUALIZED, NOT FRAGILE

Women do not automatically need lighter weights, smaller movements or less challenging workouts.

They need coaching that recognizes their individual needs.

Some women will feel strong and consistent throughout the month. Others may notice changes in energy, sleep, coordination or recovery. Training should respond to what is actually happening rather than forcing every woman into the same template.

The goal is not to avoid intensity.

The goal is to apply the right intensity, volume and exercise selection for the person standing in front of us.

SECTION 03

TRAINING IN YOUR LATE 30s AND BEYOND

Your late 30s can be an important time to become more intentional about strength training.

Perimenopause most commonly begins during a woman's 40s, but some women begin noticing changes during their 30s. These changes can include irregular cycles, sleep disruption, hot flashes, mood changes or differences in how they recover. Every woman's experience and timeline are different.

This does not mean that progress has to stop. It may mean your training needs to become more strategic.



SECTION 03

WHAT MAY NEED TO CHANGE

01 Prioritize progressive strength training

Your muscles and bones need a meaningful training stimulus. Avoid relying exclusively on light weights and high repetitions because they feel more traditionally “female.”

02 Respect recovery

Stress, poor sleep and hormonal changes may influence how prepared you feel on a particular day. Recovery is part of the training process, not a sign that you are working less seriously.

03 Adjust instead of stopping

A lower-energy day may call for fewer sets, a slightly lighter load or a change in exercise selection. It does not always require skipping movement completely.

04 Train for function

Include movements that help you squat, hinge, push, pull, carry, rotate, stabilize and move confidently through daily life.

05 Track more than the scale

- Strength

- muscle mass

- energy

- sleep quality

- movement confidence

- physical performance

often provide more meaningful information than body weight alone.

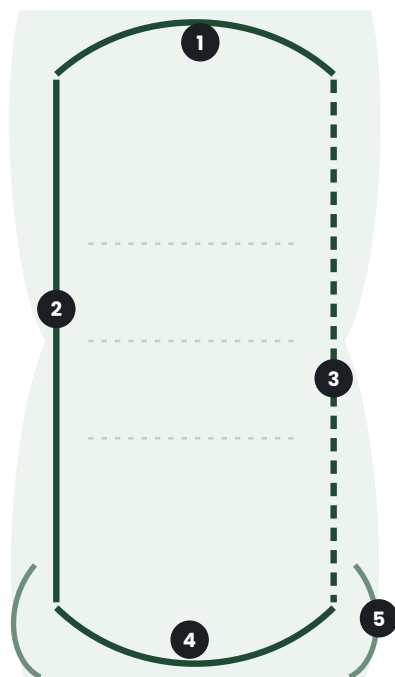
Your training should evolve as your body and life evolve.

SECTION 04

CORE ENGAGEMENT IS MORE THAN “SUCKING IN”

Your core is not one muscle.

It is a coordinated system that includes your:



- 1 Diaphragm
- 2 Abdominal muscles
- 3 Spinal stabilizers
- 4 Pelvic-floor muscles
- 5 Muscles surrounding the hips and pelvis

These structures work together to manage pressure, transfer force and stabilize your body during movement.

Constantly pulling your stomach inward or holding your breath is not the same as effective core engagement.

SECTION 04

A BETTER CORE-BRACING STRATEGY

01 Establish your position

Create a strong, comfortable position through your rib cage and pelvis without aggressively arching or flattening your back.

02 Breathe in three dimensions

Allow the breath to expand through the front, sides and back of your torso rather than lifting only through your chest.

03 Create tension around your trunk

Brace as though you are preparing for someone to gently press into your sides. The amount of tension should match the difficulty of the movement.

04 Coordinate your breath with effort

For many exercises, gently exhaling through the most challenging portion can help coordinate the abdominal wall and pelvic floor. Research supports a close relationship between breathing, abdominal-muscle activity and pelvic-floor function, although the best breathing strategy can vary with the exercise, load and individual.

05 Release unnecessary tension

Your core and pelvic floor must be able to contract and relax. More tension is not always better.

! PAY ATTENTION TO SYMPTOMS

Leaking urine, pelvic pressure, heaviness, bulging or pain during exercise should not simply be ignored or accepted as an unavoidable part of being a woman.

These symptoms may benefit from assessment by an appropriately qualified medical provider or pelvic-floor physical therapist. Pelvic-floor exercises also need to be performed correctly; repeatedly bearing down instead of lifting and contracting can make certain symptoms worse.

SECTION 05

WHAT EFFECTIVE TRAINING CAN LOOK LIKE

A well-designed strength program may include:

01

Two to four strength-training sessions each week

02

Full-body movement patterns

03

Gradually increasing resistance

04

Appropriate impact or power training when suitable

05

Core and pelvic-floor coordination

06

Mobility work based on individual needs

07

Conditioning that supports health and performance

08

Planned recovery

09

Adjustments based on symptoms, experience and goals

There is no single perfect program for every woman.

The best program is one that is appropriately challenging, consistently performed and adaptable to your body and your life.

SECTION 06

YOU ARE CAPABLE OF MORE THAN YOU THINK

Women should not be taught to fear weights, intensity or physical challenge.

They should be taught how to train with skill, purpose and confidence.

At The Lab, our coaches help women understand their bodies, build meaningful strength and develop training strategies that support their goals through every stage of life.



THE LAB

STOP GUESSING. START TRAINING WITH INTENTION.

Schedule an assessment with The Lab and let our coaching team help you build a stronger foundation.

[**SCHEDULE YOUR ASSESSMENT →**](#)

EDUCATIONAL DISCLAIMER

This guide is intended for general educational purposes and is not a substitute for individualized medical care. Speak with a qualified healthcare provider regarding pain, pregnancy, postpartum recovery, pelvic-floor symptoms, significant menstrual changes or other health concerns before beginning or modifying an exercise program.