

## Part 1 of 3: Upper Body Training

By Sgt. Ken • Photos by Evan Baines



# BASIC TRAINING FOR LIFE

**F**itness can be an uphill battle. But there's nothing like working up a good sweat—or the way you feel after exercising. Think of your body like a Porsche. To drive at peak performance, you must get rid of the junk and rev up your engine four to five days a week for at least an hour.

This issue kicks off part one of our three-part Basic Training for Life fitness series. In this issue, we'll give you a quick upper body workout. Next time, we'll focus on the lower body. Follow these workouts, and you'll be whipped into shape in no time. Getting started is simple: All you need is a chair or bench, and a step or medicine ball.

### Warm-up Phase

#### 1. AEROBICS (4 minutes)

*Examples:* Running in place, side-straddle hops, jumping jacks or high steps/knees

#### 2. STRETCHING

(4 minutes)

### Muscle Target Phase

#### 3. PUSH-UPS

**Basic:** 10 in 20 seconds

**Intermediate:** 21 in 40 seconds

**Advanced:** 41 in 60 seconds

### Hooah! CHALLENGE

Think you can take a little more heat? With enough core muscle strength, you can try some uneven push-ups. Here's how:

**Step 1:** Balance your

body on your hands and feet with your back forming a straight line. Place your left hand a step higher than your right hand. Look forward and keep your feet together or no more than 12 inches apart.

**Step 2:** While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, drop your body straight down by bending both elbows. Slowly return to the start position and continue. Switch arm positions after you've completed the required amount of time on each side.

Want to make this exercise even more extreme? Perform the repetitions while balancing one of your arms on a medicine ball.

*\*Caution: Perform the actions slowly so you don't roll off the medicine ball.*

#### 4. BENCH DIPS

**Basic:** 1-5 repetitions

**Intermediate:** 6-10 repetitions

**Advanced:** 11-20 repetitions

Never tried bench dips before? Here's how:

**Step 1:** Sit on the edge of a sturdy chair with your hands under your body and parallel to your legs. Curl your fingers over the edge of the chair. Your feet should be out in front of you at a 90-degree angle to your knees.

**Step 2:** Slide your bottom off of the chair and support your weight with your arms. Keep your back straight and look directly ahead. Slowly lower your body by bending your elbows backward. Then raise your body back

up, returning your arms to a straight, rather than a locked, position.

### **Hooah! CHALLENGE**

Get an extreme workout by doing five repetitions between two parallel bars.

#### **5. CRUNCHES**

**Basic:** 1-10 repetitions

**Intermediate:** 11-20 repetitions

**Advanced:** 21-40 repetitions

### **Hooah! CHALLENGE**

Not feeling the burn after 40 reps? Try 100!

### **Cooldown Phase:**

#### **6. STRETCHING**

(4 minutes)

—Staff Sgt. Ken Weichert is a Master Fitness Trainer with the Army National Guard.

How did this upper body fitness plan work for you?

Send an email to Sgt. Ken at [SgtKen@1-800-GO-GUARD.com](mailto:SgtKen@1-800-GO-GUARD.com) and tell him what you think.

### **GO EXTREME**

Can you handle push-ups with a medicine ball?



**“ENERGY AND PERSISTENCE CONQUER ALL THINGS.”**

—Benjamin Franklin

### **STRETCH IT OUT**

Don't forget to cool down!



**“WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING, BUT WANTING TO WIN IS.”**

—Vince Lombardi

## **THE REAL Hooah! CHALLENGE:**

If you completed our workout and still aren't feeling the burn, repeat the **Muscle Target Phase** according to this fitness formula:

**Quick Fix:** 1 full set = approximately 15 minutes

**Double Time:** 2 full sets = approximately 18 minutes

**Max Load:** 3 full sets = approximately 21 minutes

*Note: Perform the warm-up and cooldown phases only once.*

Warning: Always seek the advice and guidance of a qualified health provider with any questions or concerns you may have prior to commencing a fitness program. This article should not be relied on or substituted for professional medical diagnosis or treatment. The exercises presented are for suggestion only. Participate at your own risk. Stop if you feel faint or shortness of breath.