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Pack on muscle as you get rid of extra pounds by adding bodyweight training into your current workout regimen or use it as a fitness program on its own. There are an endless amount of exercises that can be performed to work every muscle group of the body without the use of plated weights as resistance.

The natural movement of bodyweight exercises makes it less painful on the joints and is an extremely effective way to build strength and pack on the muscle. This explains why gymnasts are one of the strongest elite athletes pound for pound.

Getting started is as simple as putting together some basic body weight training exercises that will hit the major muscles of the body. The routines can range from 15 minutes to an hour long and doesn't require a lot of space or equipment.

One of the benefits of a bodyweight workout is that you can do it outdoors or inside depending on your preference. Minimal equipment is required and you can get by with a pull up bar, jump rope, and an abdominal power wheel.

Here are a few of the body weight exercises we can perform to focus on the upper part of the body:

Pull ups - The go to exercise to have in your bodyweight training arsenal. This exercise will focus on building up the lats of the back and will produce the V-shape symmetry of a well developed back. You can hit all the areas of the back simply by changing your grip on the bar or shortening or widening the placement of your hands.

Pushups - The main focal point is the area of the chest, but the shoulders and triceps will get a workout just the same. The pressing motion of the pushup can be varied by adjusting the angle of the body or getting to the point of using just one arm to isolate one side of the body.

Dips- If you want big impressive arms then you need to work the three heads of the triceps. This bodyweight exercise can be performed on parallel bars or rings and form will dictate how much emphasis is put on the triceps or the chest muscles.

Building strong core muscles should be priority number one. The abdomen muscles are the base that holds the body together as one and it is a shame that many people skip working this group of muscles all together.

Planks - The plank exercise is a great way to build endurance in the abs and back, as well as the stabilizer muscles. This exercise can be made harder by turning to the side or taking a foot or arm off the ground.

Crunch - A staple part of any abdominal routine that must be done correctly to be of any use. There should be a space at all times between the chin and the chest and pulling on the head to lift the body is not the proper way to perform this exercise. Do the movement slow and fluid while concentrating on the stomach staying tense through the movement.

Leg raises - Works the lower abdomen and builds functional strength and stability at the same time. Do not let your hips do the work because it will make the exercise less effective. You will know if you are using your hips because it will cause stress and pain on the lower back.

To build the muscles of the legs, you need to really work them and focus on exercises that will also develop coordination and balance as well as muscle mass. The lower bodyweight training should incorporate exercises for the calves, which is another group of muscles most workout enthusiasts don't do.

Squats – The fastest way to gain muscle and get stronger is by doing squats. When done correctly, the surrounding muscles of the knees will get stronger. Doing a full range of movement while doing a squat will build up the flexibility of the legs.

Lunges - This body weight exercise will incorporate the use of the muscles in the hips, glutes and thighs and changing the step can alter which areas of the legs are worked. It is important to not allow the knee to get over the toes when driving the hip forwards and down.

Calves - Working the calves has more to do with functional strength than it does for appearance.

Strong calves come in all shapes and sizes but they must be worked hard. Simply by changing the direction the heel is pointed in will provide a way to work every area of the calf muscle.

Incorporate your bodyweight training regimen with some or all of these exercises and you will notice amazing results in a short period of time. Building functional strength does not require a large sum of money spent on fitness equipment.

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