



BEGINNER STRENGTH PROGRAM

Me 2 years after baby #1.
This is my program as
I start back (again!)
after baby #2!!



Terms of Use

The advice and information contained in this program are the opinions of Sisters In Shape and Erica Willick, and are not a replacement for medical advice. You should consult a physician before starting any diet or exercise program. If you choose to follow this program without consulting your physician, you are doing so at your own risk.

Copyright

All material in this on-line program is, unless otherwise stated, the property of Erica Willick. Copyright and other intellectual property laws protect these materials. Reproduction or retransmission of the materials, in whole or in part, in any manner, without the prior written consent of the copyright holder, is a violation of copyright law.

Beginner Strength Program (At Home & Gym)

This program is your **first step** to improving your strength and achieving that “toned” look many woman want. It will also build your confidence in an area that women tend to lack – picking up those weights!

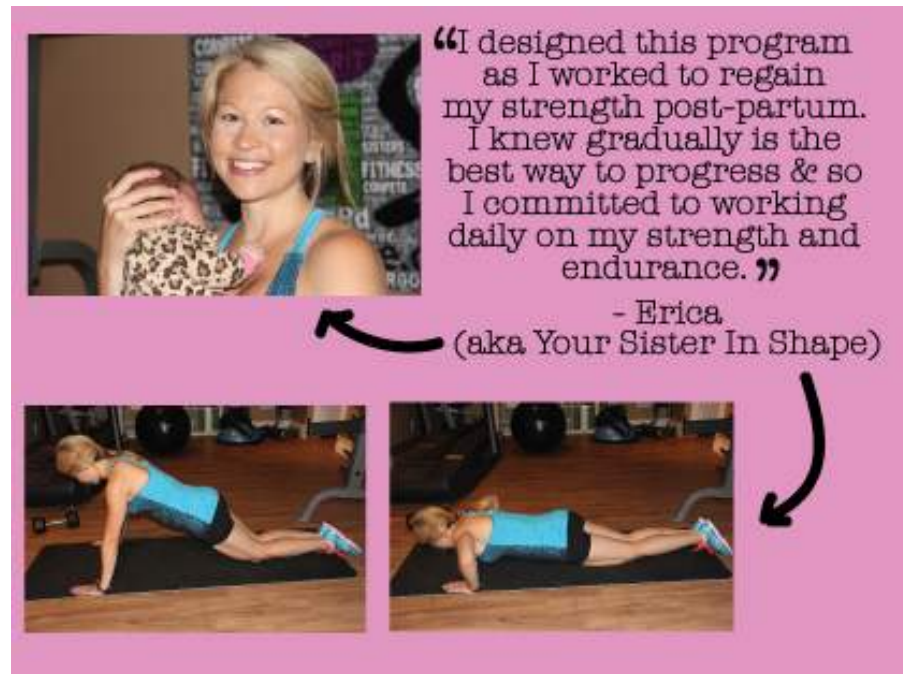
A “beginner” is someone who is new to weight training or exercise, has not worked out in the past 3 months, or is recovering from an “event” such as having a baby. Also, if other programs intimate you or look “too intense”, then this is a great program to start with.

Step 1 is always to get the OK from your doctor to start exercising.

Step 2 before undertaking this beginner strength program walk daily for a week or two for 30-60 minutes a day. **This is a gradual process, and one foot ahead of the other is the best place to start.**

Along with your daily walking routine, incorporate the beginner core training as well ([Click HERE for video](#) demonstration of the three Beginner Core Exercises).

Step 3 is to temper your beginner’s ambition and ensure that you *go gradual* with this program. You may be feeling “just fine” on your first day, but you risk overdoing it if you jump right to 4 sets and choose too heavy of a weight. Listen carefully to your body – it will tell you if you pushed it too hard or you’re OK to progress and add sets the next time. When in doubt, do fewer sets and choose a lighter weight to start. If you feel great the next day, add a set the next time! Have patience with yourself and this process – there is lots of time down the road to “kill” your workouts.



Program Overview

I designed this program to gradually increase your strength and endurance. It also includes core (abs) in each workout because core strength is crucial in advancing beyond the beginner level with weight training.

Do the three days in a row, take one day off, and then do the three days again, then take one day off. Repeat this until you've progressed to completing 4 sets of each exercise with ease. Take additional rest days if your body signals to you it needs another rest day (but not because you didn't make time/don't feel like it).

If this seems too much to commit to, then at a minimum do the three different strength training days once a week. However, advancing beyond a beginner level requires a good base and to do so, 4-6 days a week of strength training is the target.

Beginner Strength Program						
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Strength Train: Chest + Back	Strength Train: Legs	Strength Train: Shoulders + Arms	Rest (Cardio Activity)	Strength Train: Chest + Back	Strength Train: Legs	Strength Train: Shoulders + Arms

Rest days, should be active rest days. Don't sit on the couch on your "rest day"...get out for a walk (20-60 minutes). This strength program is not intense and does not warrant a full day sitting on your rear end. Committing to an active lifestyle takes *daily* commitment.

The strength program will take you 20-30 minutes to complete.

Start with 2 sets of 10-15 repetitions (reps) of each exercise. Do each of the three days with just the 2 sets before assessing your ability to progress. Add another set to each exercise only if you feel good after doing the 2 sets (for a total of 3 sets per exercise). Add another set to each exercise only if you feel good after doing the 3 sets (for a total of 4 sets per exercise).

Choose a light weight (5-10lbs, at most 15lbs dumbbells) for each exercise. Do not pick up a heavier weight until you are able to complete 4 sets per exercise. Once you are able to do 4 sets at a light weight, then you can continue to progress with this program by choosing a heavier weight. Form should never be compromised by too heavy of a weight.

Perform the exercises “superset” style, which means that you complete exercise 1 for the prescribed number of reps then immediately perform exercise 2 (core or walking) before taking a rest. You then repeat exercise A1+A2 (or B1+B2, etc.) for the desired number of sets.

Continue to walk daily for 20-60 minutes along with performing the strength program. If you're time constrained, then break up your walks into smaller chunks to make it manageable for your schedule, but aim to clock 20-60 minutes of exercise over the course of the day.

The Program

Exercise Demonstration Photos Below

Day 1 & 5: Chest + Back

A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2							
Chest Press On Flat Bench	+	Core: Pelvic Tilts	+	Lat Pull Down (at home use a resistance band)	+	Core: Leg Slides	+	Standing Row	+	Core: Modified Sit-up	+	Modified Push-up	+	Walk Uphill on Treadmill (3 mins) (at home use stairs)

Day 2 & 6: Legs

A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2							
Walking Lunges	+	Core: Pelvic Tilts	+	Standing Kick Backs (at home use a resistance band)	+	Core: Leg Slides	+	Squats (no weights)	+	Core: Modified Sit-up	+	Calf Raises (at home use stairs)	+	Walk Uphill on Treadmill (3 mins) (at home use stairs)

Day 3 & 7: Shoulders & Arms

A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2
Seated Overhead Press	Core: Pelvic Tilts	Upright Row	Core: Leg Slides	Seated Dumbbell Curl	Core: Modified Sit-up	Seated Tricep Overhead Extension	Walk Uphill on Treadmill (3 mins) (at home use stairs)

Exercise Demonstrations

Photo Credits: My husband ;)

"Fitness Model": Me (Erica Willick)

Clothes: MPG (<http://www.mpgsport.com>)

CORE > [Click HERE for video](#) demonstration of the three Beginner Core Exercises (pelvic tilts, leg slides, modified sit-up)

Day 1 & 5: Chest + Back



Move A1: Chest Press

- Keep lower back flat on bench. Avoid arching lower back.
- Pace should be slow and even.



Move B1: Lat Pulldown

- If at home, use a resistance band and attach to top of door
- Low back is tucked in, chest is high through entire movement.



At Home with Resistance Band



Move C1: Standing Row

- Low back is tucked in, chest is high through entire movement.
- Do not arch low back (i.e. no "cat-back")



Move D1: Modified Pushup

- Keep movement slow & controlled
- Get chest as low to mat as possible

Day 2 & 6: Legs



Move A1: Walking Lunge

- Continue movement as shown as you walk (lunge) across the room
- Knee should be aligned with ankle at front of lunge. Knee should NOT go forward over toes.
- Push emphasis on front leg by pushing through heel on front leg as you walk (lunge) forward.



Move B1: Standing Kick Backs

- At home, use a resistance band
- If ankle strap is not available, use cable handle and tuck front of foot into the handle
- Keep movement slow and controlled throughout exercise
- Focus on glute (your bum!) as you raise your leg back



At Home with Resistance Band



Move C1: Squat

- Low back is tucked in, chest is high through entire movement.
- Knees should not go over toes
- Sit back into tail bones, going as low as your range of motion allows
- Push emphasis through heels
- Keep neck in alignment by looking up slightly as you squat down



Move D1: Calf Raises

- At home, use a step
- Start movement with heels down, push up through toes

Day 3 & 7: Shoulders + Arms



Move A1: Seated Overhead Press



Move B1: Upright Row

- Keep movement slow and controlled throughout exercise



Move C1: Bicep Curl

- Keep elbows tucked into sides



Move D1: Seated Tricep Overhead Extension