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compound workout

A compound workout uses complex, layered moves to create powerful, effective exercises which can be adapted to suit you.

In a nutshell, you will start with a basic movement (eg. a squat) and then layer in extra movements (eg. a calf raise and shoulder press) to increase the load on your body. By working-out in this way, you will increase your heart- & breathing-rate and add extra work to your muscles and bones, whilst decreasing the amount of time you need to exercise for. If you are time-poor, this style of workout is ideal for you!

The other great advantage of a compound workout is that because there are layers added-on, you can easily adapt it by taking away (or replacing) anything which doesn't feel right for you, without having to miss out on a whole exercise.

For example, in the case of squat, calf raise & shoulder press:

- if you had an issue with your shoulder, you could continue with squats & calf raises but leave out the shoulder press; or you could substitute a biceps curl in place of the shoulder press
- if your feet were not comfortable with calf raises, you could do just a squat & shoulder press; or you could do a squat, shoulder press & triceps extension

The key to layering in movements is to find ones which flow together fairly easily so that the workout doesn't feel awkward to do, but other than that, the only rule is to listen to your body and change anything that doesn't feel right for you. And don't feel that every exercise has to be a compound one – mix in a few simple exercises too for more variety.

I've put together a simple compound workout to get you started and I have filmed all the exercises, to go with the notes below, so that you can see how they look. Once you've watched the video, and got the basic idea, you can follow the notes for subsequent workouts and dream up your own combinations too!

Watch me doing all of the moves in the video [here](#) – and I added some afterthoughts on push-ups [here](#).

As always:

- *spend some time mobilising and warming-up your body before you begin your workout*
- *pay attention to your body and change anything which does not feel useful for you*
- *either use a timer for each exercise or count repetitions – whichever you prefer*



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Compound workout:

1. **squat, calf raise & shoulder press** – start with your weights by your shoulders; sit into your squat to begin and then as you stand rise up onto the balls of your feet and press your weights towards the ceiling; bring your heels to the floor and lower the weights back to your starting position before starting on your next squat
2. **diamond push-up** – this is a variation to target your triceps, but you can change to a wider push-up or a standard narrow push-up if you prefer; focus on your range of movement and adjust your position to allow a deep push-up
3. **alternate forward lunge and row** – have your weights at your sides; step into a long, deep lunge, pressing your front heel on the floor with both knees bent; bring your chest to your thigh if you can before starting your row; the longer and lower you go into your lunge, the more energy you will use to come back to standing; reverse lunges are a little easier and are also kinder on sore knees so try those if you need to
4. **walk-out to stand** – start as if you were about to perform a gymnastics floor routine; say ta-dah if it amuses you to do so; bend forward and walk your hands along the floor until you are in a full plank position; hold for 2-3 seconds; walk your hands back towards your feet, bend your knees & stand; ta-dah; repeat (NB if your body doesn't like the motion of going up and down in this way, either come down to the floor and stay in a plank position for the whole time or miss this move out altogether)
5. **repeater reverse lunge to knee lift & hold (x each leg)** – I love single leg work because it really loads the big muscles in your standing leg; go as slow as you can on this for extra core-control and as a contrast to the next exercise which will ideally be fast & light; step back into your lunge position; as you come back to standing bring the knee up to hip height; try to step straight into your next lunge without tapping your foot back to the floor; add a tap down in between if you are feeling unstable
6. **knee/tap repeater (x each leg)** – this is a sped-up version of the move above, without the lunge; you will need to lean slightly forward to keep your weight on your standing leg; try not to transfer your weight back into the tap; go as fast as you can without losing control
7. **upright row and front raise** – in the upright row make sure your elbows lift higher than your hands; in the front raise maintain a neutral posture through your torso – ie. no arching in your lower back and no flaring of your ribs

Please ask if you have any questions at all

Jx

(this workout is aimed at regular tmf clients but it is generally suitable for everyone; however, if you are new to exercise, recently post-natal, or have any health concerns please seek medical advice or professional guidance before embarking on a new exercise routine)