THE ULTIMATE Resistance Bands Training And Fitness Solution

GET A EFFECTIVE AND CHALLENGING WORKOUT

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Introduction

Resistance band training provides an ideal entry point into the resistance exercise arena. Training with a band will not only allow you to get a challenging workout in, but it will allow you to do so cost effectively and on the go. With just your band and your body, you’ll never be too far from the gym.

While resistance band training is a fantastic transitional tool for those who are new to resistance exercise, it also has a key role in the training mix of intermediate and advanced trainers. In this book, we’ll discover why resistance band training is so effective. We’ll then examine the proper technique points to maximise the use and reduce the injury risk when using bands. Finally, we’ll step you through a series of resistance band training regimes designed for beginner, through intermediate and advanced trainers.
Resistance band training has been a part of the exercise mix for over a century. They were created in the early 1900’s from surgical tubing and first used in the rehabilitation of patients with atrophied muscles. Over the past twenty years, resistance bands have had a resurgence as a result of slick new designs and marketing campaigns.

Although resistance bands are still widely used in a medical setting to help patients regain muscle, ligament, tendon and joint strength, they have also become extremely popular with the general fitness audience. Here are some key benefits of resistance band training:

- Resistance band training offers an extremely cost effective alternate to purchasing bulky equipment or joining a gym.
- Resistance bands are flexible, lightweight and extremely portable.
- Resistance bands allow you to work out on the go – when you travel simply take the band with you.
- Because resistance bands don’t work against the force of gravity they are able to provide a freer range of motion, allowing you to work in ways that you simply cannot when using barbells and dumbbells.
- Resistance band training works the muscle through both the concentric and the eccentric parts an exercise.
Grip

Depending on the exercise you are performing there are a variety of hand grips when using resistance tube bands.

Underhand Grip.

For exercises where you are curling or rowing the band towards your body, such as band curls, use an underhand grip. Fully enclose your fingers around the handle grip.
Hammer Grip

Some exercises call for a palms facing each other grip, otherwise known as a hammer grip.

Overhand Grip

The overhand grip is used for exercises which involve pushing the band away from you body (with the aid of a fixed station) or those that have you pulling the resistance toward you.

Double Handed Grip

Some exercises call for you to grip both handles together with the band looped around a fixed object.
Body Position

It is important to have your body firmly set when performing your resistance band workout. When performing standing movements your feet should be shoulder width apart, with toes pointing slightly outward.

You should always have a slightly arched back and tight core. Do not give in to the tendency to round your back when the resistance becomes challenging.

A key principle of resistance training is isolation of the working muscle group. When you are training your biceps, you want it to be doing the bulk of the work. If you use your back by swinging the hips or otherwise utilising momentum to get the resistance up, you will be vastly diminishing the effect of the exercise.
Warming up is a too often overlooked aspect of working out. Often people are so busy that they are tempted to skip the warm-up and throw themselves directly into the workout proper. This is not a safe thing to do. Warming up gets the body ready for the intense work to come. It also minimizes the risk of injury.

A good warm-up consists of both an aerobic and an anaerobic component. Skipping is a great aerobic option. You can also jog or use an exercycle. 5 minutes at a steady pace is all you need to get your cardiovascular system ready for the work to come.

You are then ready to warm up your anaerobic system with some pre-workout stretching.
Pre-Workout Stretching Routine

Follow these stretching guidelines:

1. Move slowly into the stretched position and stretch to a point where you can feel slight tension
2. Relax, inhale deeply and then exhale
3. Hold the stretch for 15 seconds and then return slowly to the start position
4. Perform each stretch twice

Upper Body Stretches

**Pec Stretch: Major Muscles Worked = pectoralis major and deltoids**

With your elbows straight, clasp your hands together behind your back and slowly lift your arms upward. If you are not able to clasp your hands, simply reach back as far as possible. For an additional stretch, bend forward at the waist and raise your arms higher.

**Tricep Stretch: Major Muscles Worked = rhomboids, deltoids and triceps brachii**

With your left hand, grasp your right elbow and pull it slowly across your chest toward your left shoulder. Repeat with the other arm.

**Upper Back Stretch: Major Muscles Worked = latissimus dorsi and triceps brachii**

Bring both arms overhead and hold your right elbow with your left hand. Bend your right arm at the elbow and let your right hand touch your upper back. Pull with your left hand to move your right elbow slowly toward and behind your head until you feel a stretch. Repeat with your other arm.
**Lower back Stretch: Major Muscles Worked = erector spinae and gluteus maximus**

Sit on the floor with your legs straight in front of you. Bend your right leg, cross it over your left knee, and place the sole of your right foot flat on the floor to the outside of the left knee. Next, push against the outside of your upper right thigh with your left elbow, just above your knee. Place your right hand behind you and then slowly rotate your upper body toward your right hand and arm. Repeat with your left leg placed over your right leg and rotate toward your left hand.

**Thigh Stretch: Major Muscles Worked = quadriceps**

Using a wall or stationary object for balance, grasp your left foot with your left hand and pull so that your heel moves toward your left buttock (the alignment is important for avoiding stress on your knee). You should feel the stretch along the front of your left thigh.

Repeat with your other leg.

**Hamstring Stretch: Major Muscles Worked = hamstrings and erector spinae**

Sit on the floor with your legs straight out in front of you. Flex your right leg, rotate your right hip to point your right knee out to the side and place the sole of your right foot lightly against the inside of your left knee. Slowly lean forward from your hips to move your torso toward your left knee. Be sure to keep the toes of your left foot pointing up with your ankles and toes relaxed. Switch the position of your legs and repeat with your right leg straight out in front of you.
**Calf Stretch: Major Muscles Worked = soleus and gastrocnemius**

Stand about three feet away from a wall or stationary object. Keeping your left heel in contact with the floor, place your right foot about one foot in front of your left foot with your right knee flexed. With your left knee straight, lean forward at your waist. Keep your left heel on the floor and your back straight. Repeat with other leg.

**Warm Up Set**

Every exercise that you perform should begin with a warm up set. This set should be done with little or no resistance for 12 - 15 repetitions with a slower than normal tempo. So, if your working set is with a red band, you should do the warm-up set with a green band.
SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Always inspect your resistance band for wear, rips or holes. Do not use a band that is impaired in this way. If you are placing the band around a tree limb, pole or any other fixed structure, always check the object to make sure that there are no nails, sharp edges or shards of glass that could rip the band.

If an exercise calls for you to place the handles of the band over your feet, make sure that they are securely inserted beyond the forefoot so that they are your mid-foot level.

If the exercise calls for you to use the door attachment accessory that may come with your resistance band system, make sure that it is securely fitted. If possible lock the door while you are using it. If this is not possible make sure that everyone knows not to come through it!
Abdominal Exercises

Oblique Overhead Extension

- Attach the resistance band to a door frame. Stand six feet away from the door frame and grab the handles with double handed grip. Extend your arms overhead and maintain a light bend in your knees.
- In a controlled movement, bend to the right to feel the stretch through your oblique muscles. Hold for a 2 count.
- Return to the start position.

Standing Twists

- Attach the resistance band to a door frame. Stand six feet away from the door frame and grab the handles with double handed grip. Extend your arms out in front of your chest.
- Keeping your arms straight, pull your arms across and to the right. The handles should be moving towards your right hip.
- Return to the start position.
**Torso Twists**

- Attach the resistance band to a door frame. Stand six feet away from the door frame and grab the handles with a hammer grip. Hold the band at waist level, with your elbows at your side.
- Turn your upper body to the right, keeping your legs firmly planted ahead. Pull the bands toward your right side.
- Return to the start position.

**Oblique Crunch**

- Attach the resistance band to a door frame. Kneel alongside the doorframe, holding both handles in one hand.
- Crunch down to the right, tensing the obliques and intercostals. Keep your back straight and shoulder back.
- Return to the start position.
Arm Exercises

**Squat Curl**
- Stand with the band under your feet, which are about a foot apart. Bend down into a half squat position, resting your elbows on your knees.
- Pull the handles toward your chest. Squeeze tightly in the top position to feel the contraction in your biceps.
- Return to the start position.

**Seated Bicep Pull-down**
- Attach the resistance band to a door frame. Kneel alongside the doorframe, grasping the handles with an underhand grip.
- Bend your elbows to bring the handles toward your chest. There should be no movement through the upper torso. Squeeze the biceps at the fully contracted position.
- Return to the start position.
Bicep Curls

- Stand with feet shoulder width apart and the resistance band under your mid feet (wear shoes). Hold the handles in an underhand grip at waist level.
- Bend at the elbows to curl the handles up to your chest. Keep your elbows in at the sides and forcefully contract your biceps in the top position.
- Return to the start position.

Reverse Curls

- Stand with feet shoulder width apart and the resistance band under your mid feet (wear shoes). Hold the handles in an overhand grip at waist level.
- Bend at the elbows to curl the handles up to your chest. Keep your elbows in at the sides and forcefully contract your forearms in the top position.
- Return to the start position.
Lunge Triceps Extension

- Attach the resistance band to a door-frame. Stand 3 feet away from the door-frame facing away from it. Hold the handles in an underhand grip with your arms above your head. Keep your elbows in at the sides of your head throughout the movement.
- Straighten your arms to extend them at a 30 degree angle. Feel for a deep contraction in the triceps in the fully extended position.
- Return to the start position, keeping the elbows in at the side of the head.

Triceps Double Overhead Extensions

- Stand with feet shoulder width apart and the resistance band under your mid feet (wear shoes). Hold the handles with palms facing the ceiling and elbows bent alongside your ears.
- Keeping the elbows in at the sides of your head, straighten your arms to extend your triceps.
- Return to the start position, keeping the elbows in to force the triceps to do all the work.
Triceps Extensions

- Attach the resistance band to a door-frame. Stand 3 feet away from the door-frame facing away from it. Hold the handles in underhand grip with your arms in front of your face. Keep your elbows in at the sides of your head throughout the movement.
- Straighten your arms to extend them forward, keeping the elbows in (imagine that you are holding a basketball between your elbows).
- Return to the start position.
Shoulder Exercises

Standing Shoulder Press

- Stand with the resistance band under your feet, which are shoulder width apart. Hold the handles with an overhand grip and raise the handles to shoulder width, palms facing away from your body.
- Simultaneously press the bands overhead to touch in the top position. Your arms should move in a slightly arcing position.
- Slowly return to the start position.

Upright Rowing

- Stand with the resistance band under your feet, which are shoulder width apart. Hold the handles with an overhand grip, with your arms hanging at your sides. Your palms should be facing your body.
- Pull the handles up to your chin to bring your elbows high and out to the sides. Feel the contraction in your trapezius and rhomboid muscles in the top position.
- Slowly return to the start position.
Lateral Raises

- Stand with one foot in front of the other as if you were about to go into a lunge. Place the band under your front foot, holding the handles with an overhand grip. Your arms should be slightly bent and at your sides.
- Move from the shoulder joint (don’t straighten your arms) to move the handles out to the sides, laterally away from the center of your body as far as shoulder height.
- Hold the top position for a two second count before slowly returning to the start position.

Front Raises

- Stand with one foot in front of the other as if you were about to go into a lunge. Place the band under your front foot, holding the handles with an overhand grip. Your arms should be straight at your sides.
- Raise your arms directly up and forward, away from your torso until they are parallel with the floor. Do not bend your arms.
- Hold the top position for a two second count before slowly returning to the start position.
Back Exercises

Lat Rowing

- Attach the resistance band to a door-frame. Stand 6 feet away from the door-frame facing towards it. Grasp the handles with your arms fully extended in front of you.
- Row your arms back towards your ribs. Fully contract your upper back muscles, pulling with the last rather than the biceps.
- Slowly return to the start position.

Bent Over Rowing

- Stand with feet shoulder width apart & the resistance band under your mid feet (wear shoes). Bend your knees so that you are in a quarter squat position. Make sure that your back is arched rather than rounded. Your arms should be hanging at your sides, with the handles in your hands in an overhand grip.
- Row the handles toward your ribs, using your lats to initiate the movement. Do not move the position of your torso. Fully contract the lats in the top position.
- Slowly return to the start position.
Seated Rowing

- Place the band around a fixed structure about 4 feet from the floor. Sit six feet in front of the structure, facing it with knees slightly bent. Grasp the handles in a hammer grip with your arms fully extended.
- Pull the handles towards your chest, focusing on pulling through the lats. Forcefully squeeze your upper back muscles in the fully contracted position.
- Slowly return to the start position.

Reverse Flyes

- Attach the resistance band to a door-frame. Stand 6 feet away from the door-frame facing towards it with your knees slightly bent. Grasp the handles with your arms fully extended in front of you.
- Keeping your arms straight, pull laterally away from the center line of your body. Hold the fully extended position for a count of two, feeling the contraction in your mid back.
- Slowly return to the start position.
Chest Exercises

Band Flyes

- Attach the resistance band to a door-frame. Stand 6 feet away from the door-frame facing away from it with your knees slightly bent. Position one foot slightly in front of the other. Grasp the handles with your arms extended to the sides in a crucifix position. Your elbows should be slightly bent.
- Keeping your arms lock in a slightly bent position, move from the shoulder joint to bring the handles together at your mid-chest. Forcefully contract the pectoral muscles in this position.
- Slowly return to the start position.

Band Chest Press

- Attach the resistance band to a door-frame. Stand 6 feet away from the door-frame facing away from it with your knees slightly bent. Position one foot slightly in front of the other. Grasp the handles in an overhand position and place your hands at shoulder level.
- Press the handles forward, bringing them together to meet in line with your chest. Forcefully contract the pectoral muscles.
- Slowly return to the start position.
Band Push Ups

- Set yourself on the ground, face down with your hands slightly wider than shoulder width apart. Your feet should be touching. Hold the resistance band handles in your hands with the band traveling across your upper back.
- Keeping your body in a straight line, rise up so that your arms are fully extended. Tense your buttocks and tighten your abs to prevent your butt from lifting you into a ‘v’ position. Look straight ahead rather than down.
- Now steadily lower yourself until your elbows are at a 90-degree angle. When your chest touches the floor, explode back up to the start position.
Thigh Exercises

Band Squats

- Take a wide stance with your feet arched slightly outwards.
- Place the resistance band under your feet and hold the handles at shoulder level with palms facing outward. Make sure that your back is slightly arched and that you are looking up.
- Squat down until your hamstrings are slightly below parallel to the floor.
- Drive back to the start position, pushing through the heels and focusing the center of your power on your thighs.

Lateral Leg Extensions

- Take a wide stance with your feet arched slightly outwards.
- Place the resistance band under your feet and hold the handles with a double-handed grip in front of you. Make sure that your back is slightly arched and that you are looking up.
- Place your full weight on your left leg and raise your right leg up and out laterally as high as you can. Do not bend the knee.
- Hold the fully contracted position for a second before lower and repeating.
Resistance Band Lunges

- Attach the resistance band to a door frame. Stand six feet away from the door frame, facing away from it. Grab the handles with an overhand grip. Hold the handles at shoulder level.
- Assume a lunge position by taking an exaggerated step to bring your front thigh parallel to the floor. Your rear knee should just about touch the ground.
- Use the power of your rear thigh to push yourself back up to the start position.

Band Deadlift

- Take a wide stance with your feet straight ahead. Place the resistance band under your feet and hold the handles at waist level with palms facing inward. Make sure that your back is slightly arched and that you are looking up.
- Bend your knees and descend until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Push back to the start position by flexing your hamstring muscles. Keep your arms locked out throughout the movement.
Non-Band Exercise Descriptions

Push Ups

Set yourself on the ground, face down with your hands slightly wider than shoulder width apart. Your feet should be touching. Keeping your body in a straight line, rise up so that your arms are fully extended. Tense your buttocks and tighten your abs to prevent your butt from lifting you into a ‘v’ position. Look straight ahead rather than down. Now steadily lower yourself until your elbows are at a 90-degree angle. When your chest touches the floor, explode back up to the start position.

Burpees

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Crouch down and place your palms on the ground. With your arms supporting your body kick your legs back. Immediately draw your legs back then thrust yourself back up to the start position.
Mountain Climbers

Starting in the plank position (extended arms on the floor, shoulder width apart, body flat, legs straight and together), as if you were starting a sprint.

Now alternate bringing your knees to your chest, going as quickly as possible. Keep your back flat and butt down.

Continue for 40 seconds

Body Weight Squats

With your feet shoulder width apart, your eyes focused on the ceiling and your lower back arched, place your hands on your head.

Now lower down to a parallel squat position by pushing your hips back and bending your knees. After a slight pause, and without rounding your back, push through your heels to return to the start position.
### Beginner’s Programme

The following workout is in the form of a circuit, where you complete an exercise and then go directly to the next one. Do not rest until you have completed all ten exercises in the circuit. Perform one circuit in Week Two. In the second week, rest for two minutes and then go through a second circuit. Add a circuit every week until you are completing four circuits. After three weeks of doing the 4 circuit workout, you will be ready to advance to the intermediate program.

The number of repetitions are indicated in brackets after each exercise.

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**Intermediate Program**

Moving to the intermediate programme introduces you to the set system in which you do a set of repetitions, rest for 30 seconds and then do another set. Build up over a period of 2 weeks to completing 3 sets of each exercise. Stick to the 30-second rest limit between each set.

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**Advanced Program**

*After 8 weeks at the intermediate level, you are ready for our advanced training program. This regimen introduces you to the split training concept. This means that you will work half your body (Workout A) one day and the other half (Workout B) the next day.*

*Each workout will be performed twice per week. If possible do Workout A on Monday and Thursday, and Workout B on Tuesday and Friday, with Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday as your rest days.*

*If a rep count indicates “failure”, keep going until you cannot do another rep.*

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Final Word

The resistance band training programs presented in this book will take you from absolute beginner to seasoned resistance trainer. If you follow the programs as outlined, that journey will see you transforming your body. By combining your training with a sensible approach to nutrition, you will build muscle, lose body fat, strengthen your muscles, bones, joints and ligaments and become a far fitter, healthier person.

We encourage you to continue your fitness journey on into the future. Your resistance band investment can pay dividends for years to come. In this book we have presented three very effective programs. But there are many more. Once you’ve trained through our series of programs, go online and find new and exciting ways to train with your bands. That way you’ll keep moving, keep growing and keep improving.