FOREST VANCE

BODY WEIGHT STRONG

Little Known Secrets for Gaining Strength and Mass with Body Weight Only Training
Disclaimer

Strenuous physical exercise can be a dangerous activity. There are inherent risks in any physical activity, intense fitness training is no exception. The use of professional instruction is recommended before entering into any type of sport or physical exercise. You should become knowledgeable about the risks involved and assume personal responsibility for your actions. The information contained within this manual may or may not be accurate and is open to interpretation.
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About Forest Vance

Forest holds a Master’s degree in Human Movement and personal training certifications through the American College of Sports Medicine and the National Academy of Sports Medicine. He is also a level II Russian Kettlebell Challenge Certified Instructor, Certified Corrective Exercise Specialist, Certified Performance Enhancement Specialist, and Certified Fitness Nutrition Coach.

Over the last 8 years, Forest has experience as a personal trainer, group fitness/boot camp instructor, fitness manager, and health club general manager. He currently works as the owner and head trainer at his Sacramento functional training gym.

He also maintains a network of fitness-related websites, makes regular guest appearances on many others, has been featured in national newspaper, radio, television, and other media, and is the creator/author of numerous books, DVDs, and digitally delivered workout programs/systems.

For info on additional websites, books, DVDs, workshops, speaking engagements, online coaching, and more from Forest, visit his personal site at www.ForestVance.com.
Introduction and Program Overview

I like lifting weights, just like you. I started training over 15 years ago, and I still love lifting heavy stuff as much as ever.

Problem is, life “gets in the way” more and more all the time. A variety of factors – cumulative injuries that have kept me from doing stuff like back squats and heavy overhead barbell pressing, less time availability to hit the gym, just wanting an occasional break from the hard lifting – have motivated me to explore other modes of training to gain functional, healthy strength.

I knew there had to be a better way, a simple solution out there – and that’s what drove me to learn more about body weight training.

See, back in my pro football days, body weight only work was a big part of my routine. HOWEVER – it was mostly stuff like push ups, sit ups, and high rep calisthenics.

When it came time to build “real” strength, I trained with barbells and dumbbells.

I truly did not know any different – and thought that this was the only effective way to gain strength. And quite frankly I trained this way for a good ten years – from my mid teens to mid twenties.

Then I discovered the power of REAL body weight strength training.

Searching on the internet, purchasing all the books, manuals, and DVDs I could get my hands on, and spending thousands of dollars to attend specialty certifications, seminars, and workshops, I discovered a whole world of body weight only strength training. Folks were doing things like one arm push ups and pistol squats. I learned many high tension, advanced body weight exercises that you can do for maybe five to ten reps.

Training in this manner is a real and legitimate way to get strong.
I’ve used this solution, and am now enjoying all the benefits of it. I do cycles of body weight strength training throughout the year – at least 33% of the time.

I have found that there is WAY more carry-over from this style of training to many athletic activities then there is from other more traditional methods. The brain and the nervous system get “better acquainted” and your body awareness goes off the charts. It’s also just a great “break” and change up from other training methods. And last but not least, it REALLY saves my joints.

SO … now that hopefully you're “sold” on the power of body weight only training for gaining strength and muscle ... I want to talk briefly about what this program is based around.

The three key points we are going to focus on in our program are body control, programming, and progression. Let's delve into each of these topics in a bit more detail before we get going with the full program.
Body Weight Strong

**Body Control**

Body weight training should be the foundation of all training.

If folks made sure to master all of the basic body weight movements – such as double and single leg lower body exercise progressions, push-ups and more advanced variations, pull-ups, and advanced body weight core training movements – they would get a much quicker start with other types of training modalities.

Why?

Because if you can master body weight training, then you have excellent control of your body – which means you have a much easier time picking up all other athletic – type movements. Like kettlebells. Or barbells. Or dumbbell training. Or any other type of training you might be involved in.
Progression

The Body Weight Strong system is also based around progressions.

I am going to give you lots of progression options for each body weight movement in the workouts. For example, if we are doing push-ups, you will have the option to do knee push-ups, hands elevated push-ups, standard from the toes push-ups, or feet elevated push-ups.

The key lies in working your progressions. You'll get much more out of doing the appropriate progression correctly then the next one up incorrectly.

As another example, let's say we are doing a single leg lower body exercise. Level I would be a split squat. This is like a lunge in place without moving the feet.

The next progression up would be a Bulgarian split squat – this is where you do a split squat but elevate the back foot up on it object like a box or bench.

You're going to get much more out of a split squat done correctly, with the prescribed tempo and perfect form, then you're going to get out of doing the Bulgarian split squat but petering out and doing half range reps before the set is finished.

Moral the story: work your progressions, get results.
Programming

The last big thing we are going to focus on in the Body Weight Strong system is programming.

It is critical that you follow the programming as it is laid out in this manual. If you just pick one of the workouts and do it on a random day just for fun, you may very well get a good workout for that day, get your heart rate up, and maintain or improve your fitness level. But, it will not be effective for getting you big and or strong.

Progressive overload and smart progression is what we are relying on to get you results.

Gaining size and strength with body weight only is not as easy as just cranking out as many push-ups and body weight squats as you can everyday. It requires some serious planning and following a specific program like this one to get you where you want to be.

We are also going to be manipulating different factors such as volume, intensity, tempo prescriptions, and rest periods ... You need to make sure to follow these to a T as well. These are also a critical part of the program and really getting the best results from it.
The Body Weight Strong Program - Overview

The Body Weight Strong program is a 12 week program that is broken up into two phases.

I highly recommend that you follow the program as outlined in this manual for best results.

**Phase 1** – done for the first six weeks – focuses on building muscle.

**Phase 2** – done for the next six weeks – focuses on getting you strong.

You will be doing 3 to 4 days per week of body weight training and 2 to 3 days per week of high-intensity cardio training in this program.

**Make sure to watch the videos included with this program to see all of the exercises and progressions.**
Warm Up – All Phases

Getting yourself mentally and physically ready for the workout ahead is critical. You must get warmed up before you hit these training sessions. Here are two warm-ups you can use to get ready for your body weight Strong sessions.

A

Run in place/high knee – 30 sec
sumo squat-to-stand - 8
push up with superman - 8

do exercises circuit style for two rounds total

B

Jumping jacks – 30 sec
prisoner lunges – 8 (ea leg)
inchworm with push up – 8

do exercises circuit style for two rounds total

Again, if you aren't sure what a specific exercise looks like, be sure to watch the videos included with this program to see a demonstration.
Phase 1 – Get Big

The get big phase of Body Weight Strong is a body part split.

You'll be focusing on the upper body on day one and the lower body on day two.

We are focusing more on high-volume training, high time under tension and muscle building during this phase.

For the timed sets – start on your first workout with the lower end of time suggested (e.g. 30 seconds), and try to work up as you get stronger and in better shape over the 6 week period.

So, as an example – week one, you might do 30 seconds of dips on each set. Week two you might do 35 seconds. Week three 40 seconds. Week four 45 seconds.

Once you can do that, you would move up to the next harder version of the exercise.

Make sense?

NEXT phase, after we have built a base here, is where we move in to advanced body weight exercise progressions like one arm push ups and pistol squats.

For this phase you are going to train with a 2 on 1 off schedule – upper body day one, lower body day two, rest day three, and repeat.
** IMPORTANT – see the exercise progressions section at the back of the book to see exactly what movement YOU should be performing for each set. Also be sure to watch the coaching videos to see technique tips for each exercise.

*(exercise pair 1)*

- chin up (underhand grip) progression – 30 - 45 sec AMRAP (as many reps as possible)
- pike press progression - 30 – 45 sec AMRAP (as many reps as possible)

Rest for 30 seconds between exercises. Do them back and forth, circuit-style. Do three total sets of each exercise.

Rest for about 60 seconds, and then move onto:

*(exercise pair 2)*

- inverted row (overhand grip) progression – 30 - 45 sec AMRAP (as many reps as possible)
- dip progression – 30 - 45 sec AMRAP (as many reps as possible)

Rest for 30 seconds between exercises. Do them back and forth, circuit-style. Do three total sets of each exercise.

Rest for about 60 seconds, and then move onto:

*(exercise circuit)*

- no weight overhead squat – 14 reps
- burpee with push up – 7 reps

Do four rounds of the above circuit. Try to beat your time each workout.
Day Two – Lower Body Day

**IMPORTANT – see the exercises progressions section at the back of the book to see exactly what movement YOU should be performing for each set. Also be sure to watch the coaching videos to see technique tips for each exercise.**

(exercise one)

- split squat progression – 30 - 45 sec AMRAP (as many reps as possible)

Do four sets on each leg; 15 seconds rest between legs. NO exercise pairing on this one.

Rest for about 60 seconds, and then move onto:

(exercise two)

- kneeling hamstring raise progression – 30 - 45 sec AMRAP (as many reps as possible)

You will do four sets total, resting about 30 seconds between sets.

Rest for about 60 seconds, and then move onto:

(exercise circuit)

- body weight squat – 20 reps
- step up – 10 reps each leg
- walking lunge – 10 reps each leg
- box jump (hop up, step down) – 10 reps

Do three rounds as fast as you can. Try to beat your best time each workout.
**Phase One Cardio Training**

Pick from the following cardio modalities for your interval workouts:

- running
- biking
- jump rope

Do these workouts two times per week – either between strength sessions or at the end of a workout, on the same day.

Do 6 to 8 rounds of 1 min. at a high intensity and 1 min. at a low intensity alternated back-and-forth.

Also do a 5 minute warm up at the beginning and a 5 minute cool down at the end.
**Phase 2 – Get Strong**

In phase 2 of the body weight Strong program you are going to move into a full body workout.

We are moving away from long work sets for hypertrophy like we did in phase 1, and working into lower rep ranges and more advanced exercise variations to actually gain strength.

You will use this method of training - resting 48 hours and/or doing your cardio session on the next day, and then doing the next workout – and alternating back and forth for six week.

Your objective for this phase is to progress to more difficult versions of exercises.
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Day One -

(exercise pair one)

- one arm push up progression – 5 to 8 reps each arm
- vertical jump progression – 5 to 8 reps

Do four sets total of each exercise. Rest about one minute between exercises – but remember, get mostly recovered before the next set.

(exercise pair two)

- split squat progression – 8 to 10 reps each leg
- inverted row (underhand grip) progression – 8 to 10 reps

Do four sets total of each exercise. Rest about one minute between exercises – but remember, get mostly recovered before the next set.

(exercise circuit)

Do these exercises circuit style. Each exercise is to be done continuously or 35 seconds; take 5 seconds of transition between exercises and rest for about 30 seconds at the end of the circuit. Repeat the circuit three times total.

- Power jack
- plank hold
- reverse overhead lunge
- x body mountain climber
- run in place

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Day Two -

(exercise pair 1)

- pull up (overhand grip) progression – 5 to 8 reps
- pistol squat progression – 5 to 8 reps each side

Do four sets total of each exercise. Rest about one minute between exercises – but remember, get mostly recovered before the next set.

(exercise pair 2)

- pike press progression – 8 to 10 reps
- box jump progression – 8 to 10 reps

Do four sets total of each exercise. Rest about one minute between exercises – but remember, get mostly recovered before the next set.

(exercise circuit)

Do these exercises circuit style. Each exercise is to be done continuously or 35 seconds; take 5 seconds of transition between exercises and rest for about 30 seconds at the end of the circuit. Repeat the circuit three times total.

- burpee
- body weight squat
- close grip push up
- SLDL (single leg dead lift)
- run in place
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**Phase 2 Cardio training**

Pick from the following cardio modalities for your interval workouts:

- sprinting
- jump rope
- kettlebell swings
- heavy rope waves

You are going to stick with two times per week of cardio training in this phase.

You're going to do 10 to 12 rounds of 30 second sprints alternated with 30 seconds of complete rest.

Also do a 5 minute warm up at the beginning and a 5 minute cool down at the end.
Exercises and Progressions

Always start with the most basic exercise in the progression. When you can do that exercise with perfect form for the maximum number of repetitions called for, move up to the next harder exercise variation.

Make SURE to watch the coaching videos to see details about how to progress through each exercise.

Pull Up/Chin Up Progression

- jumping pull up/chin
- pull up/chin w chair or box assistance
- pull up/chin w out assistance
- pull up/chin up to sternum

Push Up Progression

- knee push up
- hands elevated push up
- standard push up
- low feet elevated push up
- high feet elevated push up

Inverted Row Progression

- high inverted row
- low inverted row
- feet elevated inverted row
Pike Press Progression

- feet on floor pike press
- low feet elevated pike press
- high feet elevated pike press

Split Squat Progression

- split squat
- Bulgarian split squat
- free standing one leg squat

Kneeling Ham Raise Progression

- kneeling ham raise w plyo push up, partial range negative
- kneeling ham raise w plyo push up, full range negative
- kneeling ham raise w out plyo push up, up and down

One Arm Push Up Progression

- one hand elevated on ball/KB/etc.
- one hand in suspension trainer one arm push up
- standard one arm push up

Vertical Jump Progression

- squat jump
- tuck jump
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Pistol Squat Progression

- pistol w suspension trainer assistance
- box pistol
- pistol w counter weight
- pistol w body weight only

Dip Progression

- dip w foot assistance
- dip w foot assistance up, no assistance down
- dip w no help up or down

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Additional Notes

At this point you should have a pretty good overview of the Body Weight Strong program. There are just a few more considerations I wanted to mention before you get going:

Before and after testing

We are not going to do a specific fitness test. However, it is a good idea to keep a training journal and see where you are starting off – how many pull-ups can you do in a row? How many push-ups can you do around? What version of push-ups are you doing? What version of single leg lower body movements are you doing?

We need to be sure to track these things so that we can see our progress as we go.

Keeping a training log

As mentioned in the last point it is very important to keep a training log. This way we can aggressively overload our bodies from workout to workout and make sure that we are continuing to make progress.
Conclusion

Rock on and go start your body weight strength program and start making it happen. If you have any questions about anything at all, don't hesitate to shoot me an e-mail at forest@forestvancetraining.com, and I will do my best to help.

I can't wait to hear your success story!

– Forest Vance, MS, RKC
Additional Resources

If you enjoyed this report, here is where you can find more of my “stuff”:

http://forestvance.com – Forest's site, updated several times each week with cool new videos, workout tips, and much more.

ALSO here you can sign up for my free email newsletter … where you'll get TONS of free workouts and updates on the latest happenings in the “FVT” world

Http://facebook.com/kettlebellbasics – My Facebook Fan Page – 'like' for free workouts, videos, and a lot more

http://youtube.com/forestvancetraining – My YouTube channel – updated weekly (or more) with new body weight and kettlebell training videos

http://forestvance.com – Online store where you can find all of my other programs and products!