



Back Basics

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The back muscles keep your spine in line, help your upper body to stand up-right, and they pull your arms back and down from different angles. Obviously, an important area of the body to keep strong!

Back exercises are usually called “pull exercises.” Which means, you usually have to pull on something to get your back muscles working. But, you don’t need to have anything fancy.

If you don’t have equipment, one way to work your back is to use the exercise band or an exertube. These are sold at local sport stores, department stores and some grocery stores. They even have them in different strengths, so you can get one that matches your fitness level.

Sometimes bands come with an attachment that you can use to hook it on a door. If you don’t have that, you can simply tie a knot in the middle. Then, place the attachment or the knot on the other side of a sturdy door and close it.

You can have the band at the top of the door, or at shoulder height at the side of the door. Either of these two placements work. Once you’ve got the band in the door and the door closed, pull on it to make sure it’s secure, so when you start working it doesn’t come out and sting you!

Exercise #1

Pull the band back with your elbows close to your sides. This will work your lats (lattissimus dorsi) - the large muscles that go from your underarm to your lower back on both sides. These muscles will give a “v” shape in to your upper body when they’re tone.

Exercise #2

Pull the band back with your elbows out to the side and your arms at about a 90 degree angle from your body. This works the mid trapezius and other muscles between the shoulder blades (scapulae). These muscles will help you to have good posture by bringing your shoulders down and back.

To get the most out of your work with the band, pull slowly through your entire range of motion to create maximum tension. Hold it for a second at the end of the move and contract your muscles for more intensity.

Finally, try pulling the band all the way to the end of the range and then slowly pulsing it about 2 inches forward and back until you can’t do any more. (This can get really intense if you do it right!)

As usual, do as many repetitions as you can with good form until you can’t do another. That will ensure that you’re taxing your back muscles enough to make them grow stronger and more toned.

It’s recommended that you talk to your doctor before starting to workout. This is basic exercise information for the general public. If you have injuries or other physical limitations, this exercise may not be appropriate. A good rule of thumb: If it doesn’t feel good- don’t do it!

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