

Beginner Kettlebell Workout

Five movements. Controlled repetitions. A session you can repeat.

Plan: About 30 to 40 minutes. Start twice weekly on nonconsecutive days. Complete both sets of each exercise before moving on. First session back? One set of each is enough to learn the routine.

Effort: Finish with about 2 or 3 good repetitions left. Rest 60 to 120 seconds between sets, longer if needed. For carries, stop before leaning or losing grip. Breathe throughout; exhale through the effort.

WARMUP • ABOUT 5 MINUTES

Walk or march for 2 minutes. Then do 5 chair stands, 5 unloaded hip hinges and 5 wall pushups. Practice a few easy repetitions of each lift before its working sets.

Exercise	Sets × target	Key cue	Load / reps
Kettlebell deadlift	2 × 8 to 10	Hips back. Stand tall. Set the bell down quietly.	Set 1: _____ Set 2: _____
Goblet squat to a bench	2 × 6 to 10	Bell close. Light touch. Stand without rocking.	Set 1: _____ Set 2: _____
Supported one arm row	2 × 8 to 12 each side	Stable support. Pull toward your hip. Keep torso quiet.	Set 1: _____ Set 2: _____
Incline pushup	2 × 6 to 10	Use a fixed counter or wall. Keep body in one line.	Set 1: _____ Set 2: _____
Suitcase carry	2 × 20 to 30 sec each side	Walk slowly. Stay level. Set down before switching.	Set 1: _____ Set 2: _____

Cool down: Walk easily for 2 to 3 minutes. Record your effort and how the session felt. Carry targets are a starting range, not a requirement to hold through fatigue.

Date: _____ **Session effort (0 to 10):** _____ **Next day response:** _____

Before you train: Use loads and movements appropriate for you. Follow existing medical restrictions. Stop for sharp or worsening pain, dizziness, chest discomfort or unusual breathlessness. Seek urgent care for severe or persistent concerning symptoms. Read page 2 for setup and substitutions.

Make the Workout Fit You

Use the simplest version you can control. Add difficulty only when you are ready.

Choose your load by movement

Start light enough to practice without rushing, gripping desperately or holding your breath. Your row may need a lighter bell than your deadlift. If your only bell is too heavy, use a lighter dumbbell or a bodyweight option. Age and sex alone do not determine a starting weight.

Set up the room

Use a firm, nonslip surface and a clear walking path. Use a stable bench or chair without wheels for squats and rows. For pushups, use a fixed counter or wall. Do not balance your hands on kettlebell handles. Set the bell down before changing hands.

Adjust the movement

Deadlift: Raise the bell on a stable, load bearing platform if reaching the floor changes your position. Practice an unloaded hinge if needed.

Squat: Use a higher seat or a bodyweight chair stand. If you need hand support, put the bell down first.

Row: Reduce the load and use firm hand support. If the hinge position bothers your back, use a seated band row with a secure anchor.

Pushup: Raise your hands or use a wall. Keep the range comfortable. Do not force shoulder pain.

Carry: Start with 10 to 15 seconds or a light stationary hold beside support. If balance or grip is unreliable, skip it until an appropriate alternative is assessed.

Progress without turning it into a test

First, make the repetitions consistent. When both sets reach the top of the range with 2 or 3 good reps left in two consecutive sessions, try the smallest available weight increase and return to the lower rep target. Change one thing at a time. For carries, build to 30 seconds before adding weight and shortening the time again. Large kettlebell jumps are optional; keep practicing or use an adjustable option.

Use your next day response

Mild muscle soreness can happen, but it is not the goal. If soreness changes how you move, reduce the next session. If pain or unusual fatigue persists or worsens, pause and get it checked. Do not progress on a calendar just because another week has passed.

Scope: General exercise education for adults who can tolerate these movements. This is not rehabilitation or a substitute for individual medical advice. Recent surgery, an active injury, significant heart or vascular disease, or restrictions on lifting require an individualized plan.

Want help choosing your starting point? Visit steadfaststrengthandmobility.com/contact/ to ask about a strength assessment.