



Lab A4-2 *Isometric Exercises to Fit a Busy Schedule*

Isometric exercises can contribute to muscular strength and endurance and are also excellent for combating stress and boredom. You can perform isometrics during many other daily activities—sitting in class or at the office or the library, standing in line, riding in a bus, car, or plane, and so on. List some of the activities in your daily routine during which you could perform isometric exercises:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Isometric exercises for the upper and lower body are described below. For each exercise, hold the contraction for about 6 seconds; do 5 to 10 repetitions. Don't hold your breath during the contraction, and try not to tense muscle groups not in use for the exercise.

Isometric Exercises for the Upper Body

- While seated, place the palms of your hands on top of your thighs. Press down.
- Fold your arms in front of your chest with your elbows lifted out in front of you. Grasp your left upper arm with your right hand, and pull toward the right while you resist with your left arm. Repeat on the other side.
- With your elbows bent and out to the side, place your palms together in front of your chest. Your fingertips should point toward the ceiling. Push your palms together.
- With your elbows bent and out to the side, use your fingers to lock your hands together in front of your chest. Attempt to pull your hands apart.
- Squeeze your shoulder blades together by bringing your shoulders down and back.

Isometric Exercises for the Abdominals and Lower Body

- In a seated position, tighten your abdominal muscles as you press your lower back into your seat.
- In a seated position, place your hands on top of your seat for balance and control. Keeping your knee bent, raise your foot from the floor and your knee from the seat and hold it in the raised position. Repeat for the other leg. For a more intense exercise, lift both legs together. Don't arch your back, and don't do this exercise if you feel any strain on your back.
- In a seated position, place your hands on top of your seat for balance and control. Straighten one leg out in front of you, lifting it slightly off the seat.
- In either a standing or seated position, tighten the muscles in your buttocks.
- From a standing position, do a shallow knee bend. Keep your back straight and don't let your knees extend out in front of your toes. You can mimic this exercise from a seated position by pushing against the floor with your feet as you tighten the muscles you would use to rise from your seat.
- From a standing position, rise up on the balls of your feet.
- Kegel exercises: Tighten the muscles of the pelvic floor and hold. (Pelvic floor muscles are those used to stop the flow of urine.)