

Isometric Exercises for Upper, Middle and Lower Back

If you want to strengthen your back muscles without putting much stress, then you can try isometric strengthening back exercise. In this article, I'm going to share more than 10 isometric back exercises that will help you strengthen muscles, improve balance, and reduce low back pain.

These isometric exercises will work on your upper, middle and lower back and help you develop better posture.

Exercises

W Raises Hold

1. Lie on the floor on your stomach with your face facing the floor and arms straight in front of you.
2. Pull your elbows at your sides as much as you can. Hold in this position for a 5 to 10 seconds and then return your arms in front of you.
3. You'll feel the contraction in your back muscle when you hold.
4. To engage your back muscles more efficiently, you can lift your chest a few inches off the floor.

Y Raises Hold

1. Start with lying on the floor on your stomach, keep your arms straight in an alphabet "Y" shape in front of you.
2. Slightly lift your chest and arms off the floor until you feel the contraction in your back.
3. Engaging your back muscles, hold in this position for 10 to 12 seconds and then lower your arms and chest on the floor.

T Raises Isometric Hold

1. Start with lying on your stomach on the mat keep your arms out to the sides.
2. Raise your chest and arms a few inches off the floor, so your forms a letter "T" shape.
3. Engaging your back muscle, hold in that posture for 10 to 15 seconds and then return to the start.

O Raises Hold

1. Lie prone on the mat with your face facing downward and arms are straight in front you.
2. Raise your trunk a couple of inches off the floor and bring your arms behind you until your hands meet each other just above your lower back.
3. Hold in this posture for 10 seconds and then return to the start.
4. If your hands can't meet behind you, no problem. Just bring your hands as close as possible.

5. Your back muscles activate when you isometrically hold your body in O raised position.

Bird Dog Isometric Hold

The bird dog isometric hold engage you back and core muscles and help you improve balance, stability and posture.

This isometric back workout primarily help you cope with lower back pain, as it is suggested by the Staurt McGill.

1. Get on your all fours with your arms are straight underneath your shoulder and knees in line with your hips.
2. Keep your abdominal muscles tight and spine as neutral as possible.
3. Raise your right arm in front of you and the left leg behind you simultaneously until they are parallel to the ground.
4. Hold in that position for up to 15 seconds and then return to the start.
5. Repeat this movement on the opposite.
6. Do two sets of 15 seconds each.

Locust Pose

1. Lay down on your stomach on the mat with your legs are straight behind you on and arms straight at your sides.
2. Raise your chest, arms and leg a few inches off the floor. Keep your arms straight. You can also hold your hands together above your lower chest.
3. Hold in this position for couple 10 to 15 seconds and then return on floor.
4. Keep your arms straight throughout the movement.
5. Repeat this movement a couple of times.
6. Focus on engaging your back muscles during the movement.

Towel inside Pull Hold

1. Lie prone on the mat with your face facing the floor and arms straight in front of you.
2. Grab the towel firmly with your hands slightly wider than shoulder-width apart.
3. Slightly lift your arms and chest off the floor and look forward. That's the start.
4. Pull the towel inside toward your chest until your back muscles fully engaged. Hold in this position for a 10 seconds and then return your arms to the start.
5. Repeat for the desired number of sets.
6. You'll feel the contraction in your back muscle when you hold.

The Bridge

1. Lay down on your back on the mat.

2. Bend your knees with your feet flat on the floor.
3. Keep your arms straight at your sides.
4. Brace your abdominal muscles and tighten your glutes.
5. Raise your hips off the floor until your knees, chest and shoulder are in line.
6. Pause in the above position for 10 seconds before you lower your hips on the floor.

Seated Bend over Bodyweight Reverse Fly Hold

1. Sit on a flat bench with your feet flat on the ground.
2. Keeping your back straight, slightly bend your torso forward.
3. Now, raise your arms straight out to the sides, look forward and hold in this position for 10 to 15 seconds.
4. You'll feel the contraction in your back muscles during the hold.
5. Once the 10 seconds is over, return to the start.
6. Do two sets of five repetitions each.

Aqua man Isometric Hold

1. Lie prone on the mat and keep your arms are straight in front of you.
2. Keeping your lower body engaged, raise your right arm and left leg a few centimeters off the floor.
3. Hold for 10 seconds in that position before you return to the start.
4. You'll feel the contraction in our hamstring, gluteus and lower back during the hold.

Pullup Hold

If you have access to the equipment where you can hang on into a dead hang position, then you must try pull up isometric hold exercise for back.

How to do

1. Grab the pull up bar with your hands two times wider than hip-width apart.
2. Pull your bodyweight up as high as possible. Keep your chest up in the "up" position so your back muscle get engaged.
3. Hold in the "up" position for up to 10 seconds and then return to the start.
4. Repeat for a couple of times.

Inverted Row Hold

1. Get under the bar and grab the bar with an overhand grip, and keep your hands slightly wider than shoulder width apart.
2. Keep your body straight with your core and lower body tight.
3. Pull yourself up until your chest touches the bar.
4. Hold in that position for 10 seconds, squeeze your back muscles, and then lower your body to the start.

Single Arm Dumbbell Isometric Row

1. Place your left knee and left hand on a flat bench. While the right feet firmly stay on the ground beside the end of the bench.
2. Grab the dumbbell with a neutral grip with your right hand and hold your arm straight just underneath your shoulder. That's the start.
3. Raise the dumbbell at your side until it reached ribs level.
4. Hold in this position for 10 seconds, squeeze your back muscles and then slowly lower it down into starting position.
5. Do two sets of five reps each, each side.

Isometric Seated Cable Row

1. Attach the D handles to the cable rowing machine.
2. Sit on the bench with your legs are in front of you or keep your legs as you like.
3. Grab the handles firmly, and pull the weight toward you until you feel the contraction in your back muscles.
4. Hold in that position for 10 seconds and then return to the start.

Push up Plus Hold

The push up plus hold works effectively for serratus anterior and upper trap muscles – a [study](#) published by the Journal of Athletic Training demonstrated.

So the push up plus isometric exercise can be a good movement for your upper back.

1. Sit on your knees and place your hands on the floor with your arms are straight underneath your shoulder.
2. Kick your legs behind and get into “up” position of pushup.
3. Complete one pushup and once you return from down position, raise upper traps and shoulder blades.
4. Hold in this position for a five to ten seconds before you go for another rep.

Chinup Hold

1. Grab the bar with an underhand grip, hands slightly shorter than shoulder width apart.
2. Hang onto bar by keeping your arms straight.
3. Pull yourself up until your chin above the bar.
4. Hold in the “up” position for five to 10 seconds and then land your feet on the ground.
5. You'll feel your back and biceps contracted during the entire hold.

Benefits of Isometric Back Exercise

Doing isometric exercises for back have multiple benefits.

Reduce Lower Back

The isometric back exercises proven to an effective way to reduce lower back pain. Isometric exercises showed more effectiveness in reducing pain degree and enhancing muscle activity in a study <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4548678/> published by the Journal Exercise of Rehabilitation.

Strengthen Muscles

Isometric back workout can increase your muscle strength and may protect your from injuries. When you unable to lift weights or do weight training, then doing isometric exercise for back will help you scale up for that.

Balance

You can improve your balance and stability with the help of isometric exercises. Most of the isometric back workouts require you to hold your body in different position for 10 to 15 seconds and doing that will improve your balance in the long run.

Do Isometric Back Exercises Build Muscle?

Isometric exercise increase muscle strength, improve stability, balance and flexibility and good for rehab purposes but they do not build or increase muscle mass.

If you want to build muscle, you can try strength training for back. If you work out at home with dumbbells, you can also do dumbbell back exercises to build and strengthen muscles.

Final Words

Isometric exercises are useful for strengthening muscles and rehabilitation purposes. So if you want to improve muscle stability, balance and posture without putting less stress on your back, you can do isometric back exercises mentioned in this article. However, if you have back injury, you can take doctor consultation before adopting the above exercises.

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