

Quarantine doesn't mean losing sight of your goals!



28-DAY CONQUERING QUARANTINE CHALLENGE

with Laura!

INTRO
MUST READ!

Who Am I and Why Should You Listen To Me?

Hey, I'm Laura!

I've been working out for over 8 years now, and have been a certified coach for 5 years. I've helped hundreds of women (*and some men!*) completely transform their physiques and lifestyles. I struggled with yo-yo dieting for so much of life and just couldn't manage to get the results I wanted. There was so much poor info out there leading me the wrong way, and I found myself overly consumed with my nutrition and feeling restricted, stuck, and confused.



Now my goal is to help you stop feeling that way. To understand that fitness and nutrition should enhance your life, not take away from it. I've always relied on industry experts in exercise science to help me optimize my training programs to get the most bang for my buck. My clients are following workouts and nutrition strategies that are evidence based and proven to work. You just need to keep showing up, **put in the work and not give up!**

Can You Actually See Progress While Working Out At Home?

Yes! You have to know how to **push yourself** in the workouts though. To build muscle (*aka look 'toned'*) and see results, it's not so much about the rep range you're doing. It's more about taking your sets close to failure (*failure meaning you wouldn't be able to do another rep with proper form*).

I want you to consider the prescribed set and rep ranges as general guidelines, *NOT* absolutes that you must follow. Exactly how much volume you need (*volume being total sets and reps performed*) will depend on your advancement level, as well as what equipment you've got on hand. If two people of the same fitness level were to perform this workout but one had weights, and the other didn't, the person who does *NOT* have weights would need to go much higher rep in order to feel challenged.



Benefits of Total Body Training Splits

Unless you've got a barbell in your home, these exercises aren't going to totally beat you up. Meaning it's fine to be following a full body approach and training the same muscle groups multiple days in a row. For example, if you tried to do heavy, low rep dead-lifts multiple times a week, you would die. Whereas if you're doing banded hip thrusts with a light dumbbell multiple times a week, you're not going to be nearly as fatigued and don't need that same amount of rest.

Spreading out your volume over the week can improve the quality of your sets, which means **BETTER RESULTS!** Once you adapt, you will have reduced soreness and improved recovery capacity, which equals better performance and better results too!

New Muscle Stimulus

Many of us are used to more of a moderate rep range when weight training at the gym - these high rep workouts may stimulate the muscle in a way that it hasn't been before, which will help you see results. It lays a foundation for your *NEXT* cycle of heavy weight training in the gym to make it **more effective**. You'll be able to tolerate more lifting volume, you'll recover more quickly, and be able to train that body part or movement pattern again sooner! That heavy set of 10 reps in the back squat will no longer feel like it takes forever to recover from, so you'll be able to pack more work into less time in your main training sessions.

In summary, this challenge will enable you to raise your base level of fitness, improve your joint health, stimulate your metabolism, and lay a foundation for your next bout of heavy weights at the gym.

What's not to love?!

How To Make Progress

When you do these workouts, make sure you're recording reps and how much weight (*if any*) you use. The reason behind this is so when you repeat the workouts each week, you **improve** and do better than last time (*as long as you can do so while maintaining proper form!*). By doing this, you're forcing your body to change because you're getting stronger and pushing yourself to the next level.

This is called **progressive overload**, and aside from nutrition - it's the most critical factor in seeing your body change. This will be much more efficient at maintaining or building muscle than just doing circuits, not focusing on strength, and just going through the motions. When you're working out in the gym, if you need to increase difficulty, you usually add weight. That's likely not always going to be an option when working out at home. You need to know other ways to increase the difficulty so you can still get stronger in some type of way.

Ways To Progress/Increase Difficulty

Add reps. For example, let's say you do squats for 3 sets of 20 reps one week. The next week you may aim for 3 sets of 22 reps, then 3 sets of 25 reps.

Improve the quality of the reps you're performing. For example, if you're doing an eccentric movement (*movements that have a slow lowering phase*), you can focus on slowing those down more and more over time. Right now, if you do 3 sets of 5 eccentric push-ups with a slow lowering phase, you may find that towards the end of the set, you don't have as much control over the lowering portion.

To progress, you could slow down that lowering phase more over time. If you have multiple sets of resistance bands, you could also use two bands at once. Squats with a resistance band don't feel that difficult, but if you use two at once, it's quite challenging.

Use the invisible weights. This is basically extreme mind-muscle connection - always maintain tension! You want to focus on the



squeeze even more so than usual. You can actually make very little weight feel challenging when you do this. What you want to do is contract the muscle you're working, as well as the surrounding muscles. Flex and squeeze the muscle as you go through a range of motion. Think about pushing against an imaginary weight. It feels silly when you do it, but there is research supporting this! You're still generating tension in the muscle, even without any load. This is going to be way better than doing nothing at all!

Some examples of that - If you were doing lateral raises, you'd contract your lats while squeezing your shoulders to work against the movement, pushing up against the imaginary weight. For movements like squats, or split squats, you can make it feel more difficult by always maintaining tension and not fully coming back up. If you do a split squat and stand all the way back up and lock out your knees, you lose tension. This is fine when you have weight, but if we want to make the exercise feel difficult with no or minimal weight, you want to keep the tension constant and not come all the way back up.

No equipment? No problem!

If you don't have dumbbells, either stick with body weight and think about using the invisible weights, **OR use any household items such as water bottles or laundry detergent bottles.**

This is entirely optional, but you could always purchase a set of dumbbells, so you've got a little more to work with. Even a 10lb, 15lb, or 20lb set could be versatile enough. You can order this online! Same applies to resistance bands.

Finally, it is also an excellent idea for you to **go on a lot of walks outdoors** during these 21 days. It will lower your cortisol, which can help you look leaner, decrease your stress, and help you burn more body fat. Don't try to make these walks hard, just a nice stroll for at least 60 minutes per day (*but more if you'd like!*)



Tips for Taking Progress Photos



1 ► Keep the area behind you relatively simple; try to stand in front of a plain wall or door. When there are too many distractions going on in the background, it makes it tougher to spot changes.

2 ► Wear something that shows how you currently look. While a bikini or shorts/sports bra are ideal, form-fitting clothing is also acceptable if you're more comfortable wearing that.

3 ► Consistency is important! Take photos in the same place at the same time of day. This matters for a few reasons:

- **The first is lighting** - this can make a HUGE difference in how you look. You could take a photo within the span of 5 minutes, and if one of them is in bad lighting and one is in good lighting, it can make you look very different.

- ▶ The second reason is that your body looks different at different times of the day. Taking the photo in the morning on an empty stomach is ideal because once you've eaten, you may have some minor bloating (*this is normal*), so **morning is generally most consistent**.
 - ▶ You also want to make sure you're **taking photos at the same angle each time**. If one time you take the picture on a high angle that's slightly to the side of you, and the next time you take the photo at a low angle, straight on, the images are not going to be comparable.
- 4 ▶ Although you want to be consistent with camera angles, you can **take multiple photos of different aspects of your physique**. It's important to do this because everyone loses fat in different areas at different rates. You may find that a photo of you from the front doesn't look super different, but a picture of your side profile or from behind may have very noticeable changes.

I suggest using your camera timer, a tripod, or another person to take the photo. Unless you have a very well-lit mirror and are careful with angles, it can be tough to see small differences in mirror selfies.

