Your first strength plan

Five movements. Three days a week. A little harder each time.

Five movements

- **Squat:** sit down and stand up. A leg press or a goblet squat.
- **Hinge:** bend at the hips with a flat back, like picking up a heavy bag. A Romanian deadlift.
- **Push:** push something away from you. A chest press, or press-ups against a wall.
- **Pull:** pull something towards you. A seated row or a dumbbell row.
- **Brace:** hold your middle still. A plank.

Every plan at the end of this article is built from these five.

Three days a week

Leave a day between sessions. Monday, Wednesday and Friday works. Start with two sets of 12, then build to three sets of 8 to 12. Rest a minute or two between sets.

The one rule

Start easier than you think you should. Then make it a little harder each week: one more rep, a little more weight, or a harder version.

SOURCES

1. Currier BS et al. (2026). American College of Sports Medicine position stand. Resistance training prescription for muscle function, hypertrophy, and physical performance in healthy adults: an overview of reviews. Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise.

2. Bull FC et al. (2020). World Health Organization 2020 guidelines on physical activity and sedentary behaviour. British Journal of Sports Medicine.

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