

# Elite 8 Movements

## for Building Strength & Improving Your Physique

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It's easy to feel overwhelmed when it comes to strength training. What should you do? How often? Is what you're doing working? Is there something else that's most effective? There are thousands of strength training exercises - which ones should you do?

Not to mention - is this safe for you? How do you know you're doing them right? What if you can't do it? What do you do if you're facing knee pain, back pain or a bad shoulder? Are there things you can do that will be pain free? What are they?

Morgan Bungerz is one of the best fitness trainers in the country and he & I teamed up to share with you 8 strength training moves that will give you the biggest bang for your buck plus they are entirely scaleable for every limitation and degree of fitness.

Furthermore, we're offering a totally free 3-day mini course, delivered right to your inbox, that will teach you how to do these movements and give you options for scaling them for your fitness ability and physical limitations. Keep your eye on your inbox because that info will be coming soon.

**Please note: this is not medical advice and you should consult your personal health care provider if you have concerns about your health or fitness routine.**





## Meet Elizabeth

Elizabeth lives on Cape Cod, Massachusetts with her husband Chris, her children Roman, Piper & Charlie as well as her dog Rumi and a gaggle of chickens and goats. Her podcast, Primal Potential, has over 20 million downloads and over 1200 episodes! Her work focuses around helping people make meaningful, lasting change in their lives and she's the author of two books: Chasing Cupcakes and Tools for the Trenches.

## Meet Morgan

Morgan lives near Charleston, South Carolina with his fiancé Katie and their dog Murph. Morgan has been helping people awaken their inner athlete and improve their health and fitness for over 15 years. He is currently the Head Coach of Get To Fitness, a virtual gym that focuses on meeting people where they are at and helping them celebrate their abilities. His background is in CrossFit training and he uses those principles to help his clients establish a solid foundation of strength and conditioning.



# Squats

Lower body movements are going to give you a big bank for your training buck because the muscle groups in your lower body are larger than the muscle groups in your upper body. For that reason, 20 minutes of training lower body works more of your body than 20 minutes training upper body. Additionally, building muscle in your lower body (glutes, hamstring, quadriceps, etc) will deliver **more of a metabolic effect** than building muscle in your upper body because of the comparative size of the muscle groups.

Maybe you've been told that you shouldn't squat because you have bad knees or a bad back. We think that advice is ill-informed and here's why:

*Do you use the toilet? Sit on a chair for dinner? Lower yourself to sit on the couch? Get up off the couch?*

**All of those movements are squats.** Sure, maybe you don't need to be loading a barbell across your back and dropping into a squat below parallel, but **if you want to live independently and have use of your legs, you need to be strong in the squat.** You can maintain and develop that strength even if you have knee issues, hip issues, back issues or just about any other issue (with responsible, professional coaching).

A squat is simply the act of sending your hips back and down and then standing up tall. It engages your largest muscle groups (glutes, hamstrings, quads) and is also a great way to maintain (or even improve) the strength and flexibility of your hips, knees and ankles. Squats also engage your calves and your core while engaging your feet, ankles, knees and hips.

Squats can be done with or without weight and the depth of your squat can and should be modified to your current level of fitness, strength and flexibility.

You can also change your squat stance, squat type, heel elevation and load to target different muscles and increase or decrease the difficulty.

Squats can be done with dumbbells, barbells or kettlebells but they can also be done with household objects or no added weight at all!

Our upcoming 3-day mini-course will teach how to safely perform a squat and make sure you're moving well.

[To watch a video version of this squat overview, click here.](#)



## Deadlifts

Like squats, deadlifts deliver major bang for your fitness buck because you're working with your largest muscle groups, namely your glutes and your hamstrings. This hinging movement pattern not only strengthens those major muscle groups, but it helps you build and/or maintain a strong back, healthy hips and stable core.

A deadlift is simply taking an object from the floor and standing up tall with it. Deadlifts are an incredibly functional movement as this movement pattern mimics picking up a bag of groceries off the floor, lifting a child or picking up a bag of dog food. Our quality of life and independence demand that we have this range of motion, strength and stability.

Training this movement pattern ensures that you have control of your body as you pick up objects and put them down.

**When people say that they're scared of lifting weights, we like to remind them how scary it is to be weak and lacking flexibility and balance!**

As with every movement, deadlifts can and should be modified to account for the amount of weight you can safely move and your current range of motion capacity.

Bonus: squats and deadlifts help you build a strong, round bum!

You can perform deadlifts with weights or with just about any household object! No special equipment needed!

[To watch a video version of this squat overview, click here.](#)

# Push-ups

Many people cringe at the thought of push-ups. Maybe this movement brings back memories of your elementary school fitness test - you couldn't do push-ups then and you can't do them now!

Here's the great news: there's a push-up modification for nearly everyone (and we aren't talking about push-ups from your knees!)

Push-ups make our elite 8 list because they work a wide variety of muscles in your back, shoulders, biceps, chest, triceps and core. Though you might not have thought of the push-up as an exercise that works your abdominals and overall core, it is!

The push-up is a super functional pressing exercise. Our daily life demands that we press. Maybe you need to push yourself up off the floor after grabbing a dog toy from under the couch or push open a stubborn door. The push-up mimics real life functional movements and also targets many important muscle groups.

In Strong Foundations, we teach that **doing push-ups on your knees doesn't actually improve your ability to do push-ups on your toes!** But don't let that discourage you if you can't do push-ups on your toes yet! There are ways to scale for every fitness level without dropping to your knees! For example, you might start by doing push-ups against your kitchen countertop! We want you to keep that rigid, plank body position no matter how high the surface you're starting with. We'll dive into that more specifically in our free 3-day mini course that you'll see in your email inbox soon!

You don't need any equipment to do a push-up!

[To watch a video version of this pushup overview, click here.](#)

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## Bent Over Rows

Push-ups represent the pushing movement pattern whereas bent over rows represent the *pulling* movement pattern. If you're going to train the muscles on your front, you also need to train the muscles on your back!

Training your back also engages your abdominals and core while helping to maintain and improve your posture.

**Pulling movement patterns are a must for posture as you age!**

Have you ever tried to sit up straight and found your back muscles feeling tired just a few seconds later? We need to train our backs!

Bent over rows don't just train the back! They work your entire posterior chain, which helps stabilize your spine, hips and core.

With the bent over row, you're hinging from your hips and then pulling your wrist toward your ribs.

One of the unsung benefits of the bent over row is **improved grip strength**. Grip strength is associated with quality of life and longevity! We need to be able to hold onto things we're carrying! **Grip strength is a big part of moving safely and avoiding injury.**

You can perform bent over rows with weights or with just about any household object! No special equipment needed!



[To watch a video version of this bent over row overview, click here.](#)

## | Lunges

This is a move that a lot of people avoid because of cranky joints or lack of strength and/or flexibility. Yet, we've included it here for a few reasons. Like the squat and deadlift, lunges target our biggest muscle groups, giving us a great return for time spent training.

### **Lunges are also incredible for balance, flexibility and strength.**

Lunges work a different hip position than the squat. While the squat closes the hip, lunges open the hip. Additionally, lunges are a unilateral movement. Beyond strength and flexibility, lunges work the joints in your feet, ankles, knees and hips! Joint mobility and flexibility are major components of a good strength training program.

Lunges can be done with or without weight as well as with or without assistance. Plus, movement in different directions or planes allows you to target different muscle groups and modify the load placed on your joints. Range of motion can and should be modified to meet you where you are with regards to flexibility and strength. You don't need any equipment to lunge!

[To watch a video version of this lunge overview, click here.](#)

# Glute Bridges

As the name implies, glute bridges focus on your glutes but their impact goes way beyond that! Your glutes are your most powerful muscle group and most of us want a great tush, but **glute bridges are key for your core and your pelvic floor!**

**A training program that ignores the pelvic floor is an incomplete training program!** Your pelvic floor is actually part of your core and **it's impossible to have a strong core without a strong pelvic floor.** We talk a lot more about this in Strong Foundations, but you can think of your core as a cylinder with a top and a bottom. The cylinder is your abdominal muscles which are not only in the front of your body but also on your sides and around your back while the top of the cylinder is your diaphragm and the bottom is your pelvic floor.

*Proper breathing during a glute bridge is essential for training your pelvic floor.*

With a glute bridge, you're on your back with your heels close to your butt and you raise your belt buckle as high as you can, leading with your pelvis (not initiating the movement by arching your back).

You can modify your glute bridge by adding weight, using resistance bands or balls or using only one leg. You don't need any equipment to perform a glute bridge!

[To watch a video version of this glute bridge overview, click here.](#)

# Boat Pose

Boat pose is an example of a static exercise, where most of the other exercises in this list are dynamic movements. If you're someone who can't do dynamic abdominal exercises like sit ups, static movements are a great alternative.

Boat pose engages all of the muscles of your core and helps develop strength in your back. **Boat pose also helps eliminate lower back pain.**

Boat pose is a great movement to strengthen your hip flexors, a group of muscles at the top of your thighs that allow you to pull your knees to your chest and hinge at the hip. **Strong, healthy hips are key for independence, mobility and preventing falls as we age!**

In the absence of modifications, boat pose involves balancing on your tailbone with your legs and shoulders off the floor. A common variation of boat pose is a hollow hold. You don't need any equipment to execute boat pose!

[To watch a video version of this boat pose overview, click here.](#)



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# Farmer's Carry

This might be one of the least sexy, least exciting but most valuable strength training and functional movements out there.

A farmer's carry is simply holding a weighted object (kettlebell, dumbbell or household item) in one or both hands while walking slowly.

Though farmer's carries are often shown with equal weights in each hand, we prefer to do them with just one weight in one hand as that engages your core far more.

Farmer's carries are also incredible for your foot health! Foot health doesn't get as much air time as it should. Like the song says, the foot bone is connected to the...absolutely everything. **You can't have strong knees without strong feet. You can't have strong hips without strong feet.** You can't have a strong back without strong feet. Farmer's carries help us build strong feet.

Farmer's carries are also top notch for core strength and grip strength. Grip strength is directly correlated to longevity, so work that grip!

Lastly, we can't overlook how functional this movement is! We constantly walk while holding an object in one hand or differently weighted objects in each hand. We're essentially doing a farmer's carry when we carry a bag of groceries, a suitcase or a carseat.

You can do farmers carries with dumbbells or kettlebells or you can do them with almost any household object.

[To watch a video version of this farmers carry overview, click here.](#)

## We've Got You Covered!

Want to learn more about how to correctly execute these movements? Want to learn different options for executing them according to your ability?

Morgan and I are offering a free 3-day mini course to teach you just that! You'll automatically get information about this mini-course via email so keep an eye on your inbox!