

## The New Workout Craze...Housework



We all know we need to exercise more but I bet you didn't know that you can do it all in the comfort of your own home...and have a clean house at the end of it too!

I hear many mums say that they just don't have time to exercise let alone, get the kids ready for school, pack lunches but now is the chance to use your housework to help you get fit and healthy.

House work can be draining and I can tell you that I am not a fan of it but when I do clean the house I make sure that I get my heart rate up and a sweat going and the best part is the end result – a workout and a really clean house.

While cleaning the house isn't a substitute for a good ol' fashioned workout, when you are time-poor this is a great alternative.

### Warm Up

Pop on your favourite music and dance around the house, picking up the kids toys, dusting and general tidying.

This should take you only 3-5 minutes and is meant as a quick warm up for the rest of the housework. You should be warm but not breaking a sweat.

## Clean that House!

### Laundry

#### - **Washing Machine Squats**

Slowly squat to pick up the dirty laundry to put into the washing machine. Make sure that you keep your back straight and heels on the floor when you squat and don't tilt your upper back.

Include one squat for each piece of laundry you put into the washing machine.

**Top Loaders:** When emptying your top loader, put basket on the floor so that you need to squat down with the washing to put it into the basket.

**Front Loaders:** Place basket on top of machine and squat to get the load out of the washing machine.

#### - **Hanging out the Washing**

Placing the washing basket beside the washing line, lunge to the side to pick up an item of clothing before placing on line. If you find this a little difficult or have a small child attached, why not squat it out instead!



#### - **Ironing**

Place your ironing basket on the floor away from the ironing board so that you will need to lunge to the side to reach the clothes.



While ironing, squeeze your butt for the length of time it takes you to iron the garment then relax. Your butt will start feeling firmer before you know it (especially if you have an overflowing ironing pile like I do!)

#### - **Folding & Putting away washing**

When folding and putting away washing, place basket on the floor and squat for each item that you fold.

When putting away, rather than taking all the folded clothes in one go to put away, take in smaller piles so you get more of a workout either walking down the hall or up and down the stairs.

### Bathroom

#### - **Toilets**

When scrubbing the toilets, put a bit of effort into the scrubbing process and instead of bending over the toilet why not try wide squats instead to look after your back.

#### - **Basin, Bath, Mirrors and Shower Screens**

Like the toilet scrubbing get into it and scrub using circular motions (making sure you use both arms), as the more effort you put into it the more you get out of it. This is a great all-purpose cleaning motion and can also be used for polishing/wiping furniture.



- **Floors**

**Option 1:** If you have time (not all of us do) scrub the floors by hand using a scrubbing brush and towel.

**Option 2:** If you are like many of us and don't have the time to do option 1, while you're mopping try and put some effort into it and do short sharp bursts of mopping.

**Option 3:** Time yourself! Pick your favourite song and try and complete the mopping within that song.



## Other Household Chores

- **Vacuum Cleaner Lunges**

Rather than just quickly vacuuming to get rid of the kids breakfast, try spending just a little bit longer vacuuming by taking forward lunge steps while you push the vacuum cleaner. Hold the lunge for a few seconds before coming up and swapping legs, so you get an even workout.

It may take a little longer but not only are you giving the house a good clean but getting a fit, strong body at the same time.

- **Window Washing**

Now we don't often wash the windows but if you have grubby little fingers running around the house, I'm sure that you have some lower windows that need a wipe at least once a week.

Using the bathroom circular motion, do 10 circles with your left hand, and then swap over with your right. If you want more of a challenge, use one hand to give the initial wipe and the other to polish the glass.

- **Dishwasher Dash**

Instead of emptying the dishwasher into piles, why not empty one dish at a time and put away and time yourself. Just make sure that you are being safe in the kitchen and don't run, making sure you are squatting to put away in lower shelves and standing on your toes (calf raises) to reach higher up cupboards.



A great workout for the whole of your body.

- **Speed cleaning**

Kids are home sick? Don't have enough time to do a BIG house clean?

Why not try speed cleaning, put on your favourite music and challenge yourself to complete your set jobs within a time frame.

Not only will it give you more time in your day but you will have got a nice cardio workout as well.

## Outside Jobs:

### - **Crazy Car Washing**

Now that water restrictions have reduced slightly and we can wash our cars with a high pressure hose or bucket, it is now a great time to get back into a great Saturday afternoon tradition Car Washing.

Using the circular cleaning motion, get in there and give the car a really good scrub and don't forget to squat to get to the hard to reach areas rather than bending over.

### - **Weeding**

Weeding is very therapeutic and considering how much rain we had this year, as soon as you pull the weeds out they are back in so a great time (when it's sunny) to get out and give the garden a once-over and you get a great workout on the legs as well.

### - **Mowing the Lawn**

This job is not for everyone and I would give it to my partner any day but if you don't have that option it is a great workout because you are pushing a fairly heavy machine and you will need to brace your abdominals to control.

## I burn HOW much?

Light housework/cleaning = **240** Calories per hour

Ironing = **171** Calories per hour

Washing up = **171** Calories per hour

Washing car = **343** Calories per hour

Mopping Floor = **238** Calories per hour

Mowing Lawn = **333** Calories per hour

## Housework Top Tips:

- Pop on your favourite music and turn up the volume (obviously not if the kids are asleep) – this will help you clean and scrub that little bit harder!
- Plan your housework so that you are always moving, whether it's running up and down the stairs with toys/washing or swapping jobs around so your moving more.
- Make sure you brace your abdominals when cleaning the house, it's a great workout for the abs but also will help protect your back.
- If you have a little one, strap them onto you for some extra weight while doing the housework – they get a bird's eye view and you have an extra weight for your workout (and no little hands making more mess).
- When you are done, have a little happy dance and burn off those last few calories!