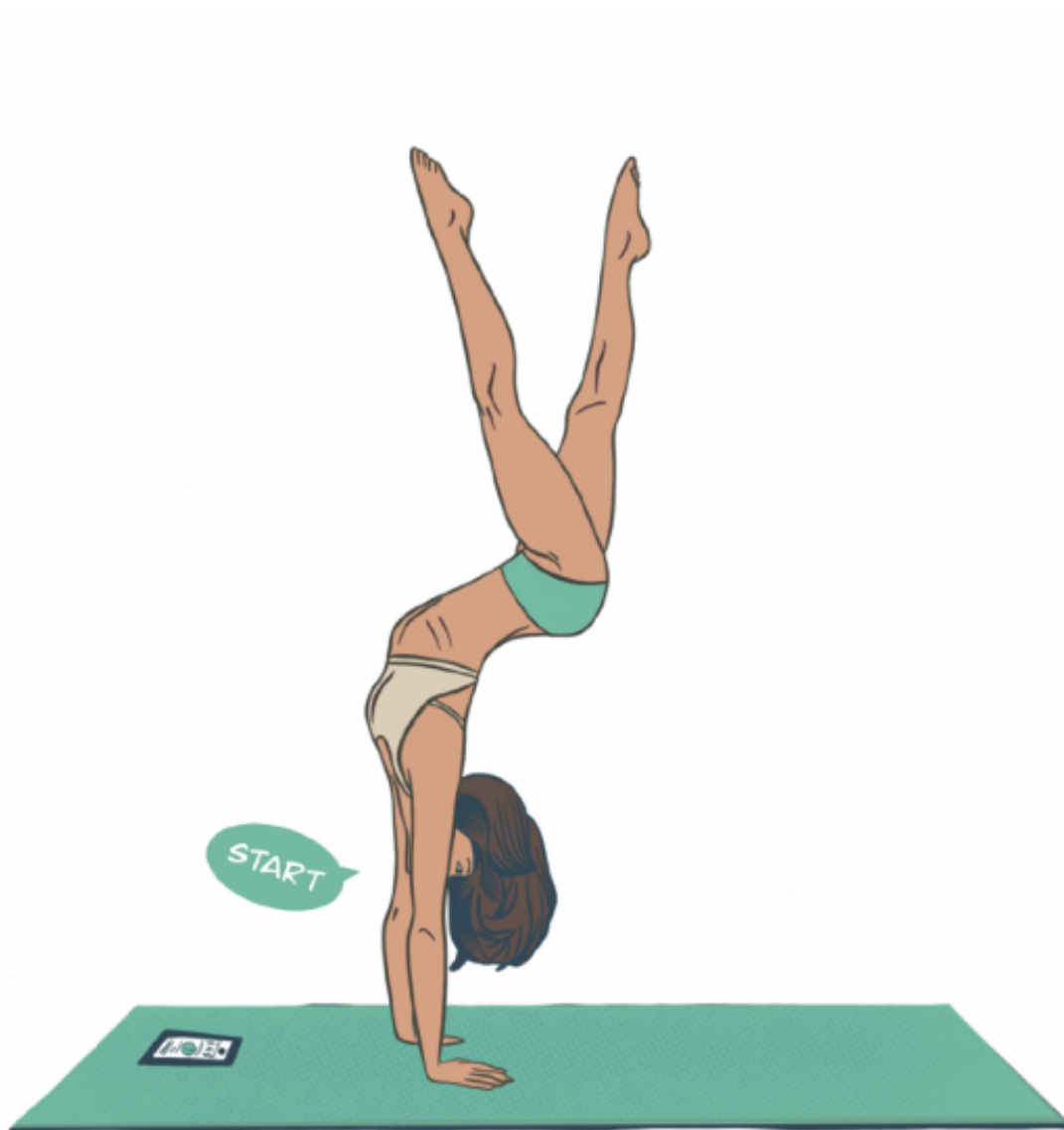


15 Seconds

Handstand Program



Introduction

We've been studying handstands for some time, and based on our lessons learned, we have put together a program that should help any beginner achieve the freestanding handstand.

The program is based on [Handstand Mechanics](#), takes into consideration overcoming the fear of falling, and helps you stay intentional with your practice by providing guided tips while performing each exercise. By providing mechanisms to evaluate exercises, the program helps you build awareness of your abilities and measure your progress.

This program is composed of 11 workouts.

- [Getting Started](#)
- [Wrist Mobility](#)
- [Wall Handstands](#)
- [Cambered Hand Technique](#)
- [Bailing](#)
- [Kick Ups](#)
- [Active Shoulders](#)
- [Building Strength](#)
- [10 Seconds Handstand](#)
- [Hollow Body](#)
- [15 Seconds Handstand](#)

Getting Started

Before standing on your hands, get a sense of what it's like to push hard into the ground by locking elbows. Build awareness of how to activate your shoulders and push them towards your ears.



This workout is composed of 4 sections: Warm up, Core, Shoulders and Readiness Test. Building strong and stable shoulders and core muscles is one of the very best things you can do to prepare yourself for handstands.

Section 1: Warm Up

Straight Arm Planks



20 seconds, 3 sets,
rest for 15 seconds

Shoulders over palms: Position your hands directly under your shoulders and spread fingers wide, with your palms pressing into the floor. Keep your chest lifted and draw your shoulder blades down the spine to avoid collapsing your weight into the shoulders.

Let your core carry you: Keep a straight line from your feet all the way to your neck. Tuck your pelvis in, drawing your navel up towards your back, with your hips neither dropped towards the floor or pointing towards the ceiling.

Downward Dog



20 seconds, 3 sets,
rest for 10 seconds

Breathe through your shoulders: Place your hands on the floor, with fingers spread wide. Your head should be in between your arms, not hanging downwards, keeping a straight line from tailbone to the top of the head.

Shoulders actively press down and back away from your ears. Let the breath flow through your shoulders, while you clear your mind and relax.

Straight Arm Plank Evaluation

How was your experience doing a straight arm plank?

- **My wrists and/or shoulders hurt** ⇒ Try pressing your palms into the mat and slide your shoulder blades down your back to alleviate pressure.
- **My neck hurts** ⇒ Make sure you are looking about a foot in front of you and keep the back of the neck long and in line with the rest of the spine
- **I am not able to keep a straight line** ⇒ Are you truly fully engaging your core by tucking your pelvis in and not bending your lower back? Make sure your legs are also doing their part, keep the balls of the feet pushing into the ground, press back through the heels, thighs lifting up towards the ceiling and squeeze your glutes.
- **I've got this** ⇒ Good for you! Make sure to keep your good form as you hold this exercise for longer times.

Downward Dog Evaluation

How was your experience doing the downward dog pose?

- **I feel discomfort in the wrists** ⇒ Make sure your middle finger is pointed straight ahead with your fingers spread wide. Take a slight bend in your elbows, as this will ensure the weight of your body is being supported by your muscles in your arms rather than your bones. Make sure your core stays engaged.
- **My neck hurts** ⇒ Gently turn your head side to side, or shake it yes or no. While in the pose, don't let your head dangle or push it too far upwards. Remember, the neck is a part of the spine, so let it follow the same natural line.
- **My shoulders hurt** ⇒ Downward dog is a pose that requires shoulder flexibility. Make sure to engage your shoulder blades and to externally rotate your upper arms, as if you are hiding your underarms from the person on the mat next to you. This will keep your shoulders away from the ears, giving more space for the neck. Make sure your core stays engaged.
- **My back hurts** ⇒ If you have tight hamstrings, for the sake of your back, you are far better to practice this pose with bent knees rather than force the heels down and compromise length in the spine.
- **My heels are not on the floor** ⇒ So what? If you do not have the flexibility in your hamstrings, it will build up over time. The important part is to stay relaxed and keep that straight line from head to tailbone.
- **I've got this** ⇒ Good for you! Make sure to keep your good form as you hold this exercise for longer times.

Section 2: Core

Plank Shoulder Taps



16 reps, 3 sets, rest
for 15 seconds

Tighten your core, engage your glutes, and keep your spine, head and neck aligned.

Breathe out as you tap your shoulder with your hand. Maintain your back flat and your hips level with the floor.

Hollow Body L1



15 seconds, 3 sets,
rest for 10 seconds

Press your lower back into the floor by drawing your belly button down and in.

Lift your shoulders off the floor by elongating your spine and actively contracting your abs.

Focus on breathing from your diaphragm. Don't hold your breath.

Keep your head in a neutral position so you are not straining your neck.

Boat - Knees Bent



20 seconds, 3 sets,
rest for 10 seconds

Sure, abdominal muscles will support you in this pose, but the key muscles to focus on in this exercise are the hip flexors.

Those are the muscles that bring your belly and thigh bones closer together. To help build this awareness, place a block between your thighs.

Lightly squeeze the block with your thighs.

Section 3: Shoulders

Arm Circles



15 seconds each direction, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Consider varying the size of the circles and speed of movement.

Standing Yoga Seal



15 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Draw the shoulder blades towards each other and lift the chest.

Exhale and hinge the hips coming forward with the chest.

Let the head hang relaxed from the neck.

Scapular Push-ups



12 reps, 3 sets, rest for 15 seconds

Without bending your elbows, slowly squeeze your shoulder blades together and apart to move your upper body up and down slightly.

This exercise strengthens your scapular muscles and is a great exercise for building shoulder strength and mobility.

Section 4: Readiness Test

Straight Arm Planks



Max Attempt with a goal to hit 1 minute hold. Rest for 30 seconds

An engaged core makes a straight line

Engage the lower belly by drawing the navel in towards the spine.

A firm core is key and can help take some weight off from the shoulders and wrists and back into the legs.

Downward Dog



Max Attempt with a goal to hit 1 minute hold.

Experiment with elbow locking: Don't put unnecessary pressure on your elbows. Simply keep your arms straight.

As the level of inversion increases (ex: doing a handstand), this will come in handy to help you stay balanced with less effort.

Workout Evaluation

After completing this workout, you should get a sense of what it's like to be inverted, and understand the importance of shoulder mobility and core strength.

You can consider this workout achieved when you are able to hold "Straight Arm Planks" and "Downward Dog" for more than 1 minute each, without losing your form.

Wrist Mobility

We all know that warming up before exercise is crucial to avoid injury, right? Spend time working on your wrist mobility. Done consistently over time, this will help reduce the risk of injury when putting our entire body weight on our hands.



This workout helps you warm up your wrists and build more awareness of the flexibility needed in your wrists to get upside down without injury.

Wrist Warm Ups

Open / Close fists



15 reps, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Build strength in the hands, wrists and forearms. Experiment with different speeds and intensity. Make sure to fully open your hands and to breathe.

Forward and Back Wrist Stretch



30 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Observe how your wrists are doing. How far forward can you comfortably move your arms?

The muscles, ligaments and tendons of the wrists need to gradually get used to extra weight.

Breathe.

Big Circles Wrist Stretch



15 seconds each direction, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Make sure you are aware of how your movement is touching different parts of your hands on both sides.

The muscles, ligaments and tendons of the wrists need to gradually get used to extra weight.

Breathe through each rotation.

Wrist Rotations



15 seconds each direction, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Breathe through each rotation. Observe how your wrists are doing.

Decide whether your wrists are ready for more intense load on them or if you should switch focus to core exercises.

Reverse Palm Wrist Stretch



30 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Fingers pointing to your knees. Palms down.

If you're having a hard time rotating your wrists all the way around, you might try doing one hand at a time.

Experiment with pulsating and holding.

Upside Down Wrist Stretch



30 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Fingers pointing to your knees. Palms up.

This can be a very uncomfortable position in the beginning, so please work slowly, and only go as far as you comfortably can.

You should not be moving into pain.

Mobility Test

Wrist Extension Stretch



15 seconds, 3 sets,
rest for 5 seconds

Pulsate your hand to stretch your wrist and the inside of your arm. Breathe through each pulsation.

Keep pulsating: Pulsate your hand to stretch your wrist and the inside of your arm. Breathe through each pulsation.

Hold: Hold your wrist in position and breathe through it with every passing second.

Wrist Flexion Stretch



15 seconds, 3 sets,
rest for 5 seconds

Pulsate your hand to stretch your wrist and the outside of your arm. Breathe through each pulsation.

Keep pulsating: Pulsate your hand to stretch your wrist and the outside of your arm. Breathe through each pulsation.

Hold: Hold your wrist in position and breathe through it with every passing second.

Wrist Extension Stretch Evaluation

Were you able to extend your wrists comfortably at 90 degrees angle?

- If yes, Awesome, your wrists can be extended at the angle needed for handstands.
- If no, Keep coming back to this exercise. You don't want to get injured due to a wrist mobility issue. If this is a major issue for you, consider using a push-up trainer or parallette.

Wrist Flexion Stretch Evaluation

Were you able to flex your wrists at 90 degrees angle?

- If yes, Awesome, your wrists can be flexed at the angle needed for handstands.
- If no, Keep coming back to this exercise. You don't want to get injured due to a wrist mobility issue.

Workout Evaluation

The wrist mobility workout is considered achieved when you are able to both flex and extend your hands comfortably for 15 seconds at a 90 degrees angle. This doesn't mean you don't come back and do this exercise some more! As we mentioned in [Handstand Mechanics](#), it's critical to keep warming the wrists up to prevent unexpected injuries.

Wall Handstands

Using the wall is the most effective way to get used to being fully inverted. Once you are able to hold a handstand on the wall for 60 seconds, you should be able to achieve 10 second handstands near the wall!



This workout is composed of two sections: (1) the first section is focused on “belly to wall” handstand and wrist warm ups while (2) the second section shifts the focus to your shoulders, back and core followed by a “back to wall” handstand.

Section 1: Chest to Wall

Forward and Back Wrist Stretch



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Observe how your wrists are doing. How far forward can you comfortably move your arms?

The muscles, ligaments and tendons of the wrists need to gradually get used to extra weight.

Breathe.

Big Circles Wrist Stretch



15 seconds each
direction, 1 set, rest
for 5 seconds

Make sure you are aware of how your movement is touching different parts of your hands on both sides.

The muscles, ligaments and tendons of the wrists need to gradually get used to extra weight.

Breathe through each rotation.

Arm Circles



15 seconds each direction, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Consider varying the size of the circles and speed of movement.

Chest To Wall



30 seconds, 3 sets, rest for 30 seconds

Adjust based on your comfort level: Place your hands down and start climbing your feet up the wall, while bringing your hands close to the wall at the angle you're comfortable with.

Upper chest to the wall: Try to pull your upper chest to the wall, this will help you open and elevate your shoulders. Keep your elbows straight, core and legs engaged (tucked tailbone, glutes active, inner thighs together, legs locked, feet pointed).

Breathe: Practice shallow breathing evenly. Do not suddenly inhale/exhale a bunch of air. If you did that while freestanding, you'd lose stability. Don't go until failure so you have energy left to walk your hands back out.

Cambered Hands: When you feel you're going to go over, dig your fingers into the ground and it will help prevent you from toppling over!

Wrist Rotations



15 seconds each direction, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Breathe through each rotation. Observe how your wrists are doing.

Decide whether your wrists are ready for more intense load on them or if you should switch focus to core exercises.

Hold Wrist Rotate



15 seconds each direction and each side, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Breathe through each rotation.

Build awareness of how your wrists are doing. Your wrists are your most important tool for handstands, so respect them, warm them up frequently, and gradually prepare them for more weight.

Chest To Wall Evaluation

Were you able to stay inverted the whole time while keeping a good form?

- **I was not able to hold it the whole time** ⇒ That's ok. Keep coming back to this workout until you can hold the whole time.
- **My body was not actually parallel to the wall** ⇒ Day by day, move an inch closer to the wall. You'll get there within 28 days. *Remember, your palms do not need to touch the wall for your body to be in a straight line.*
- **I forgot to lock elbows** ⇒ Get used to locking your elbows. Bones are much more effective at bearing load over muscles, which means longer holds will be easier to achieve.
- **I don't remember breathing** ==> Besides Oxygen, breath means awareness, and that's the most important thing you need for your brain to order your body to balance.
- **My ears were not pushed between shoulders** ⇒ Actively and consciously push your shoulders towards your ears. It will put your body in a straight line, which is easier to balance with gravity.
- **I did it all!** ⇒ Impressive work! You're close to a freestanding handstand!

Section 2: Back to Wall

Camel



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Tuck your tailbone under and engage your core.

With the palms of your hands on your lower back, lengthen up through the crown of your head as you arch your spine back over your feet.

Upward Dog



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Make sure your wrists are aligned directly under the shoulders.

If your shoulders are very much behind the wrists, the lower back may take too much of the bend.

Open your chest, pull the shoulders back while the shoulder blades are pulling downwards.

Boat - Knees Bent



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Sure, abdominal muscles will support you in this pose, but the key muscles to focus on in this exercise are the hip flexors.

Those are the muscles that bring your belly and thigh bones closer together. To help build this awareness, place a block between your thighs.

Lightly squeeze the block with your thighs.

Dolphin



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 10 seconds

If your legs are straight but your back is rounding, it's better to keep the knees bent to find length in your spine.

Take care to keep the shoulder blades firmly against the back to support you.

Keep the neck relaxed and in line with the spine.

Legs Up The Wall



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Though this pose requires a lot less effort, you will still be getting many of the benefits of practicing an active inversion, like increasing energy levels, reversing the effects of gravity, and helping balance blood pressure.

By fully relaxing your body and by focusing on deep breathing, you will evoke a meditative state.

Back to Wall Kick Up



20 seconds, 3 sets,
rest for 20 seconds

Do not arch your back: Don't put the hands too far from the wall, otherwise you will arch your back. Bring your feet close to your hands before kicking up so your hips are over your hands as much as possible.

Kick up as slowly as you can: Bring the leading leg up, then raise your second leg slowly to meet the first, feeling your balance the whole way.

Back to Wall Kickup Evaluation

Were you able to stay inverted the whole time while keeping a good form?

- **I was not able to hold it the whole time** ⇒ That's ok. Keep coming back to this workout until you can hold the whole time.
- **I forgot to lock elbows** ⇒ Get used to locking your elbows. Bones are much more effective at bearing load over muscles, which means longer holds will be easier to achieve.
- **I don't remember breathing** ⇒ Besides Oxygen, breath means awareness, and that's the most important thing you need for your brain to order your body to balance.
- **My ears were not pushed between shoulders** ⇒ Actively and consciously push your shoulders towards your ears. It will put your body in a straight line, which is easier to balance with gravity.
- **I did it all!** ⇒ Impressive work! You're close to a freestanding handstand!

Workout Evaluation

Once you are able to hold "Chest To Wall" for 30 seconds for 3 sets while keeping a good form (and "Back To Wall" for 20 seconds for 3 sets), you can count this workout achieved and leverage this understanding of self to practice your handstands anytime and anywhere there is a wall, and all it will take is 5 minutes with proper wrist warm ups!

Cambered Hand Technique

The handstand is a constant balancing act. This technique helps you regain your balance by letting two parts of your hand, palm and fingertips, support you in opposing directions.



First section of the workout helps you focus on experimenting with your palms to prevent yourself from falling while you're in a "Back to wall Kick Up". The second section helps you focus on using the fingertips to prevent yourself from falling while you're experimenting with "Alternating Feet with Wall".

Part 1

Back to Wall Kick Up



15 seconds, 3 sets,
rest for 20 seconds

Breathe and keep that form: Hold as long as you can keep a good form, keeping your legs straight, core engaged, elbows straight, and shoulders elevated.

You need to continue breathing, especially as the hold gets more challenging.

Hold Wrist Rotate



10 seconds each
direction and each
side, 1 set, rest for 30
seconds

Breathe through each rotation.

Build awareness of how your wrists are doing. Your wrists are your most important tool for handstands, so respect them, warm them up frequently, and gradually prepare them for more weight.

Back to Wall Kickup Evaluation

Were you able to stay inverted the whole time while keeping a good form?

- **I was not able to hold it the whole time** ⇒ That's ok. Keep coming back to this workout until you can hold the whole time.
- **I did not focus on my palms** ⇒ Since the wall supports you when you fall over your back, focus on using your palms to prevent you from falling over your belly.

- **I don't remember breathing** ⇒ Besides Oxygen, breath means awareness, and that's the most important thing you need for your brain to order your body to balance.
- **I forgot to lock elbows** ⇒ Get used to locking your elbows. Bones are much more effective at bearing load over muscles, which means longer holds will be easier to achieve.
- **I did it all!** ⇒ Impressive work! You're close to a freestanding handstand!

Part 2

Alternating Feet With Wall



20 seconds, 3 sets,
rest for 15 seconds

Deliberately slow: Remove one foot off the wall, placing it right above your shoulder. Switch with the other foot as slowly as you can without losing your balance.

Them fingertips: Make sure there are two solid points on the ground: palms and fingertips. Since the wall supports you when you fall over your belly, focus on using your fingertips to prevent you from falling over your back.

Leg reaching up. Remember, the leg is not just passively moving but reaching up to make you lighter.

Bridge



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Keep your shoulder blades drawn together as you extend your arms beneath your torso.

Do not turn your head to the right or left when you're in the pose, as that could cause neck injury.

Alternating Feet With Wall Evaluation

Were you able to stay inverted the whole time while keeping a good form?

- **I was not able to hold it the whole time** ⇒ That's ok. Keep coming back to this workout until you can hold the whole time.
- **I did not focus on my fingertips** ⇒ Since the wall supports you when you fall over your belly, focus on using your fingertips to prevent you from falling over your back.
- **I don't remember breathing** ⇒ Besides Oxygen, breath means awareness, and that's the most important thing you need for your brain to order your body to balance.
- **My ears were not pushed between shoulders** ⇒ Actively and consciously push your shoulders away from the ground. It will put your body in a straight line, which is easier to balance with gravity.
- **I did it all!** ⇒ Impressive work! You're close to a freestanding handstand!

Workout Evaluation

Once you learn how to dance between your fingertips and palms to keep yourself from falling over your back or belly, while being inverted for 20+ seconds, you can congratulate yourself for figuring out the Cambered Hand technique. Now, put it to good use every time you go into a handstand.

Bailing

Conquer your fear so you can practice handstands anywhere you go.



This workout helps you first warm up your wrists and then teaches you three bailing techniques: (1) Pirouette Bail, (2) Wall Pirouette and (3) the Cartwheel.

If you're just starting out, don't forget that you can simply get in a chest to wall handstand and walk your hands away from the wall before you're tired.

For most new hand balancers, the most common fear is falling over and landing on your back. The Pirouette Bail is a safe way of recovering from the feeling that you will fall head over heels. Basically, when you feel you've over-balanced, you lean all of your weight on one arm and you let your other arm move slightly forward in a different direction, which will naturally get your hips and legs falling safely to the ground.

The Wall Pirouette helps you experiment more safely if you're still not comfortable practicing away from the wall.

Finally, playing with the cartwheel, starting with just kicking around the side, then gradually improving the form correctly kicking vertically over your head. The cartwheel helps you build awareness of how your hips, shoulders and legs rotate when you're upside down so you can land. After all, the Pirouette Bail is basically like the second half of a cartwheel.

Warm Up

Big Circles Wrist Stretch



15 seconds each direction, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Make sure you are aware of how your movement is touching different parts of your hands on both sides.

The muscles, ligaments and tendons of the wrists need to gradually get used to extra weight.

Breathe through each rotation.

Reverse Palm Wrist Stretch



25 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Fingers pointing to your knees. Palms down.

If you're having a hard time rotating your wrists all the way around, you might try doing one hand at a time.

Experiment with pulsating and holding.

Upside Down Wrist Stretch



25 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Fingers pointing to your knees. Palms up.

This can be a very uncomfortable position in the beginning, so please work slowly, and only go as far as you comfortably can.

You should not be moving into pain.

The Frogger



10 reps, 1 set, rest for
20 seconds

Change up the speed and experiment with moving slowly. The slower you move, the more you will engage your core.

Bailing Technique 1

Pirouette Bail



6 reps, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Once you kick up, if you overshoot it, you shift your weight from one hand over to the other.

Start to lean on that hand then get to rotate your shoulders and then your hips to the side, and swing or step your legs down.

Child's Pose



30 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Relax and breathe!

Hold Wrist Rotate



10 seconds each direction and each side, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Breathe through each rotation.

Build awareness of how your wrists are doing. Your wrists are your most important tool for handstands, so respect them, warm them up frequently, and gradually prepare them for more weight.

Bailing Technique 2

Wall Pirouette



5 reps, 1 set, rest for
5 seconds

From a Chest To Wall position, tap one foot away from the wall gently to force yourself to overbalance.

Rotate your body away from the wall while you place your dominant hand next to your other hand.

Step down first with the leg farthest from the wall.

Meditate



2 minutes, 1 set, rest
for 5 seconds

Clear our mind: Catch yourself when you find that you're thinking or planning the next move.

The fastest way to teach your brain and to progress on a new skill is to consciously clear your mind.

Bailing Technique 3

Cartwheel



5 reps, 1 set, rest for
15 seconds

Start with just kicking around the side, then gradually improving the form correctly kicking vertically over your head.

Workout Evaluation

Let fear be your measuring tool. Count the workout achieved if you have completely overcome the fear of falling and hurting yourself after kicking up into a handstand.

Kick Ups

Establish a center of pressure over the fingers. Best kick up is slightly over balanced and easily squeezed back into place. Using the cambered hand technique, dance between overbalancing and underbalancing, as the center of pressure moves around under the hands.



The workout starts with warm-up exercises, then a test to hold a back to wall handstand for 45 seconds or more. If that's feasible, then you can proceed to practicing kick ups. If not, go back and practice the previous workouts in the program until ready.

Warmup

Arm Circles



15 seconds each direction, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Consider varying the size of the circles and speed of movement.

Big Circles Wrist Stretch



15 seconds each direction, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Make sure you are aware of how your movement is touching different parts of your hands on both sides.

The muscles, ligaments and tendons of the wrists need to gradually get used to extra weight.

Breathe through each rotation.

Reverse Table Top



25 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Squeeze your glutes, enjoy the shoulder stretch and keep your neck neutral.
Reverse tabletop

Downdog, Plank, Push-up



6 reps, 1 set, rest for
15 seconds

This is a move that strengthens your chest, arms, shoulders and core while stretching your back and hamstrings.

The Monkey



25 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 15 seconds

Move like an animal: In addition to warming up the entire body and preparing the wrists for more serious work, this massively beneficial exercise can help you improve coordination, overall movement capability, mobility and spatial awareness.

Prerequisites

Back to Wall Kick Up



Max Attempt with a goal to hit 45 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Cambered Hands: Experiment with using the palms of your hands to prevent yourself from falling.

Tuck your tailbone under and engage your core.

With the palms of your hands on your lower back, lengthen up through the crown of your head as you arch your spine back over your feet.

Meditate



2 minutes, 1 set, rest for 10 seconds

Visualize: Imagine yourself in an open field. Visualize that you're setting your hands down firmly, and kicking up with extreme control. Hold this handstand for 30+seconds in your mind's eye.

Repeat this in both the first-person and third person views. In the first person view, you could look at the ground. In the third person view, you're watching yourself like a spectator. Pan all around and marvel at your perfect line.

Before you attempt kick ups, we expect that you're able to hold the "Back To Wall" handstand for more than 45 seconds without losing form.

Kick Ups

Handstand Kick Ups



20 seconds, 5 sets,
rest for 15 seconds

Do not jump: Lean all of your weight into your hands. Kick your straight leg over your head gently and feel your other leg naturally lift off the floor.

Hips over head: Once your hips are over your head, join your legs together.

Remember, but then forget: Cambered hands, locked elbows and active shoulders, hips over head. Ok, that's a lot. Focus on one nagging problem and let your body figure out the other details.

Put the effort to stay balanced: Once one leg is fully up and the other on the way to meet it, squeeze into the ground to try and correct the overbalance and stand right.

Dance, very slowly: The slower you move, the easier it will be for your automatic non-thinking brain to send the right messages to your body. Remember, palms to correct from underbalancing and fingertips to correct from overbalancing.

Child's Pose



20 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Relax and breathe!

Workout Evaluation

Go back and look at the tips for the “Handstand Kick Ups” exercise. This workout counts as achieved when you’ve followed all the tips consistently in all 5 sets.

Active Shoulders

Creating flexibility in your shoulders will help you more easily activate them to position your body in a straight line when inverted. This will shift your center of mass and make it easier to balance a handstand for longer holds.



The warmup section focuses on flexing and preparing the shoulders. Then in the mobility section, you work on technical exercises that open up your shoulders and help you build more awareness of your shoulder strength and flexibility. Finally, you follow straightforward exercises focused on increasing the strength of your shoulders and core.

Warmup

Arm Circles



15 seconds each direction, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Consider varying the size of the circles and speed of movement.

Standing Yoga Seal



30 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Draw the shoulder blades towards each other and lift the chest.

Exhale and hinge the hips coming forward with the chest.

Let the head hang relaxed from the neck.

Reverse Table Top



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

This pose involves the strength of the shoulders and arms to lift the body, along with the strength of the lower back, abdominal muscles, pelvic floor muscles and quadriceps to be engaged to help stay in balance.

The tightness and stiffness around the neck, shoulders, lower back, hips, and the psoas muscles are released with the practice of this pose.

Bridge



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Keep your shoulder blades drawn together as you extend your arms beneath your torso.

Do not turn your head to the right or left when you're in the pose, as that could cause neck injury.

Mobility

Dolphin



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 10 seconds

If your legs are straight but your back is rounding, it's better to keep the knees bent to find length in your spine.

Take care to keep the shoulder blades firmly against the back to support you.

Keep the neck relaxed and in line with the spine.

Right angle to Wall



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 10 seconds

This move can help you open your shoulders. If your shoulders are tight, it is ok not to have a perfect L shape with hands a bit further away from the wall.

If you want to last longer and experiment more in this pose, raising one leg to the sky makes it easier.

Toe To Wrist Tap



10 reps, 1 set, rest for
10 seconds

Shift your shoulders over your wrists and then, leveraging your core, move one leg forward and try to tap the back of your wrist with the toes.

If you can't do it, get some elevation by placing your hands on yoga blocks or getting on your fingertips.

Wheel



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 10 seconds

Keep the feet parallel to each other and hip distance apart. If they turn out when you push up, adjust them back to parallel. A nice trick is to squeeze a block between the thighs as you come up.

Push off the legs, not the hands. Wrap the elbows in as you come up, allowing the shoulder blades to stay close to the body. Once you come up into the pose, balance the weight between the hands and the feet.

Strength

Straight Arm Side Planks



15 seconds, 2 sets,
each side, rest for 5
seconds

Lift your hips off the mat with the palm of your supporting hand directly under your lower shoulder, with your fingers facing away from you. Try to keep your head and neck straight. Ideally find a spot on the wall and keep your eyes locked on it.

To stay stabilized in this position, the muscles in your shoulders, hips, and sides of your core all have to work together. If you're finding this exercise to be intense on your shoulders, move to your elbows.

Scapular Push-ups



7 reps, 1 set, rest for
5 seconds

Without bending your elbows, slowly squeeze your shoulder blades together and apart to move your upper body up and down slightly.

This exercise strengthens your scapular muscles and is a great exercise for building shoulder strength and mobility.

Hand Walkouts



6 reps, 1 set, rest for
5 seconds

As you walk out, make sure you get into a strong plank position where you don't let the spine hyperextend.

Squat down as much as you need to to help you get up and down. Really try to use the legs as you come back up.

Cooldown

Child's Pose



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Relax and breathe!

Workout Evaluation

If you were able to comfortably do the wheel and could form a perfect “L” with the “Right Angle to wall” exercise, then you can pat yourself on the back for having flexible shoulders that will play a critical role in helping you hold your handstand for longer times.

Building Strength

Strong core, shoulders, hips, arms and even legs, will all come in handy when doing a handstand.



This workout helps you gently workout almost every part of your body, as it'll all come in handy when doing handstands.

Warmup

Jumping Jacks



15 reps, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Do not jump out too wide as that might cause your knees to collapse inward and risk an ankle sprain. Instead, jump just outside of hip distance apart.

After jumping your feet, the less you pause, the more cardiovascular and muscular benefits you'll gain, so move it ;)

Bear Walk



25 seconds, 1 set, rest for 10 seconds

On tippy toes, pressing through your shoulders as you walk, with straight legs and arms. If your hips are flexible, do this exercise with feet hip distance apart. Otherwise, widen your stance. The higher the hips, the more load on the shoulders. This is a great prerequisite for handstand walks.

When doing this pose, you use muscles throughout the entire body including the shoulders, chest and back, glutes, quadriceps, hamstrings, and core.

Cat Cow



8 reps, 1 set, rest for 10 seconds

In Cat: let your head drop, releasing the back of your neck. Do not force your chin to your chest. Draw your belly button firmly in toward your spine.

In Cow: let the movement start from the tailbone. Allow your neck and head to be the very last part of the movement. Keep your shoulder blades broad and draw your shoulders away from your ears. This helps to protect your neck during the movements.

Imagine your breath traveling up and down your spine as you inhale and exhale

Core

Wall Plank



15 seconds, 2 sets, rest for 15 seconds

Your feet can be parallel to the floor (wall plank) or perpendicular (Chest to wall handstand).

Feel free to pick any angle between the two, but as your core and shoulders get stronger, see how long you can hold the plank with feet on the wall and body parallel to the floor.

Boat - Knees Bent



30 seconds, 1 set, rest for 10 seconds

Roll your buttocks flesh back so your tailbone isn't scooped under your body. Keep your spine straight, chest lifted and don't forget to breathe.

Plank with Knee to Tricep



15 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

As you do this move, don't lift your hips or let them sag. Instead, maintain a straight line from your head to toes.

Try not to let your hips twist as you raise your knee toward your elbow. Squeeze your abs as you bring your knee to your chest.

Scale



15 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Begin by only lifting your sit bones off the floor, keeping your legs on the ground.

As you gain strength, you will be able to lift your entire body.

If needed, use a block under each hand to increase the length of the arms and assist the lift of the legs.

Boat



20 seconds, 1 set, rest for 15 seconds

Roll your buttocks flesh back so your tailbone isn't scooped under your body. Keep your spine straight, chest lifted and don't forget to breathe. Straightening the legs is the last action of this pose, so don't do it unless you get the Boat with knees bent posture right.

Sure, abdominal muscles will support you in this pose, but the key muscles to focus on in this exercise are the hip flexors. Those are the muscles that bring your belly and thigh bones closer together. To help build this awareness, place a block between your thighs. Lightly squeeze the block with your thighs.

Arms & Shoulders

Open / Close fists



10 reps, 1 set, rest for
10 seconds

Build strength in the hands, wrists and forearms. Experiment with different speeds and intensity. Make sure to fully open your hands and to breathe.

Plank Shoulder Taps



16 reps, 3 sets, rest
for 15 seconds

Tighten your core, engage your glutes, and keep your spine, head and neck aligned.

Breathe out as you tap your shoulder with your hand. Maintain your back flat and your hips level with the floor.

Crow



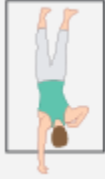
8 seconds, 1 set, rest
for 20 seconds

Get the knees as high up the arms as possible. The elbows are drawing in, not flapping out to the side.

Focus on lifting your hips high, almost as if your knees could lift off your elbows.

Upper back is rounded, not flat.

Handstand Shoulder Touches



6 reps, 1 set, rest for 30 seconds

Belly to the wall, arms straight, shoulders pressing away from earth, rock your hips side to side to shift the weight from one hand to the other.

Make sure your form is not sacrificed when you touch your shoulder with your hand. Really engage your core and do not bend your back.

Are you breathing with each rep?

Legs & Back

Balancing Tabletop



30 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Keep your gaze at a spot between your palms to prevent neck injuries.

Keep your spine in a neutral position.

This pose improves balance, memory, focus and coordination. It also builds core body strength and lengthens the spine.

Superman



10 reps, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Engage your back, glutes and core as you simultaneously lift up your arms and legs a few inches off the floor.

Keep your neck and back in a neutral plane.

This exercise helps to strengthen the entire spine from the shoulders to the glutes.

Workout Evaluation

Were you able to hold scale, boat and crow for the amount of time specified while keeping a good form and breathing effectively? If you did, then you've really built enough core strength for handstands!

Were you able to complete handstand shoulder taps while keeping good form? If so, your shoulders are now strong enough to each carry your whole body on their own!

10 Seconds Handstand

There needs to be countless failed handstands before you reach your goal. Real progress comes from struggling to correct your balance by squeezing your body and fingers tightly in an attempt to recover.



In this workout, you take your serious attempt at holding the handstand for 10 seconds.

Warmup

Big Circles Wrist Stretch



15 seconds each direction, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Make sure you are aware of how your movement is touching different parts of your hands on both sides.

The muscles, ligaments and tendons of the wrists need to gradually get used to extra weight.

Breathe through each rotation.

Reverse Palm Wrist Stretch



20 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Fingers pointing to your knees. Palms down.

If you're having a hard time rotating your wrists all the way around, you might try doing one hand at a time.

Experiment with pulsating and holding.

Lifted Palms Wrist Stretch



20 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

If you struggle to perform a handstand with the index fingers pointing forward, you must focus on improving wrist extension and shoulder external rotation.

This exercise helps you safely improve your wrist extension.

Arm Circles



15 seconds each
direction, 1 set, rest
for 5 seconds

Consider varying the size of the circles and speed of movement.

Action

Handstand



Max attempt with a goal to hit 10 seconds. 2 sets, rest for 30 seconds

Form follows function: Cambered hands, active shoulders, locked elbows, hips over head, feet over hips... really whatever feels easier to get you to hold the handstand longer.

Make it automatic: By doing countless handstands, we get from conscious to automatic brain behavior. It starts becoming more like driving, and thus a lot easier to hold.

Regaining balance: Lose balance => correct the flow => recover. Real progress comes from struggling to correct your balance by squeezing your body and fingers tightly in an attempt to recover.

Stretch

Child's Pose



30 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Relax and breathe!

Workout Evaluation

Were you able to hold the freestanding handstand for 10 seconds in both sets? Did you apply all the tips provided? If your answer is yes to both questions, then now you can officially claim that you can do 10 second handstands!

Hollow Body

Get used to getting your body form a straight line, all the way from hands to feet. Powerful core muscles are key to unlock so many amazing movements, including handstands!



This is the perfect workout to create the proper form for handstands and build up the core strength needed to hold the handstand for longer times. It's also a great workout to keep coming back to when your wrists and/or shoulders are tired or injured.

Body Line

We start the workout with some bonus shoulder flexibility work.

Front Body Line L1



20 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 10 seconds

Arms Bent.

Tilt the pelvis posteriorly so that the belly comes off the floor and tighten the glutes.

Relax in the legs and neck.

Lift off only the arms and the dowel rod from the floor.

Front Body Line L2



20 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 10 seconds

Same as above.

Arms Straight with wide grip.

Front Body Line L3



20 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 10 seconds

Same as above.

Arms Straight with narrow grip.

Hollow body

Hollow Body L1



30 seconds, 3 sets,
rest for 10 seconds

Press your lower back into the floor by drawing your belly button down and in.

Lift your shoulders off the floor by elongating your spine and actively contracting your abs.

Focus on breathing from your diaphragm. Don't hold your breath.

Keep your head in a neutral position so you are not straining your neck.

Hollow Body L2



20 seconds, 3 sets,
rest for 10 seconds

The second your back starts arching, stop or move to an easier variation with legs or hands closer to your core.

Hollow Body L3



15 seconds, 3 sets,
rest for 15 seconds

Straighten your arms overhead. You should be in the shape of a banana with just your lower back and hips on the ground.

The handstand requires overhead hand positioning, intense core strength, and a straight, stacked spine in order to stay still, which is the exact body positioning that this hold demands.

The second your back starts arching, stop or move to an easier variation with legs or hands closer to your core.

Stretch

Downward Dog



20 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Don't forget your lower body: Push your tailbone up and back. Make sure your feet are placed hip distance apart with your toes pointing to the front.

Actively press the heels towards the floor with knees slightly bent. Don't put too much distance between your hands and feet.

Upward Dog



20 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Make sure your wrists are aligned directly under the shoulders.

If your shoulders are very much behind the wrists, the lower back may take too much of the bend.

Open your chest, pull the shoulders back while the shoulder blades are pulling downwards.

Legs Up The Wall



30 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

Though this pose requires a lot less effort, you will still be getting many of the benefits of practicing an active inversion, like increasing energy levels, reversing the effects of gravity, and helping balance blood pressure.

By fully relaxing your body and by focusing on deep breathing, you will evoke a meditative state.

Cat Cow



10 reps, 1 set

In Cat: let your head drop, releasing the back of your neck. Do not force your chin to your chest. Draw your belly button firmly in toward your spine.

In Cow: let the movement start from the tailbone. Allow your neck and head to be the very last part of the movement. Keep your shoulder blades broad and draw your shoulders away from your ears. This helps to protect your neck during the movements.

Imagine your breath traveling up and down your spine as you inhale and exhale

Workout Evaluation

Were you able to hold the “Hollow Body L3” for 15 seconds in all 3 sets? Was your back touching the ground all the time? If your answer is yes to both questions, you’ve achieved the exact body positioning that the handstand demands.

15 Seconds Handstand

Handstands don't really require much strength. As long as you can do a 60 second plank, 60 second handstand hold on the wall, keep your elbows locked and shoulders active while inverted, practice wrist and shoulder mobility, you should be able to achieve your goal!



In this workout, you take your serious attempt at holding the handstand for 15 seconds. Before attempting your handstands, you first go on a 2 minute meditation journey to visualize doing a handstand and make it more real in your own mind.

Warmup

Big Circles Wrist Stretch



15 seconds each direction, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Make sure you are aware of how your movement is touching different parts of your hands on both sides.

The muscles, ligaments and tendons of the wrists need to gradually get used to extra weight.

Breathe through each rotation.

Reverse Palm Wrist Stretch



20 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Fingers pointing to your knees. Palms down.

If you're having a hard time rotating your wrists all the way around, you might try doing one hand at a time.

Experiment with pulsating and holding.

Lifted Palms Wrist Stretch



20 seconds, 1 set,
rest for 5 seconds

If you struggle to perform a handstand with the index fingers pointing forward, you must focus on improving wrist extension and shoulder external rotation.

This exercise helps you safely improve your wrist extension.

Arm Circles



15 seconds each
direction, 1 set, rest
for 5 seconds

Consider varying the size of the circles and speed of movement.

Standing on hands

Meditate



2 minutes, 1 set, rest
for 5 seconds

Visualize: Imagine yourself in an open field. Visualize that you're setting your hands down firmly, and kicking up with extreme control. Hold this handstand for 30+seconds in your mind's eye.

Repeat this in both the first-person and third person views. In the first person view, you could look at the ground. In the third person view, you're watching yourself like a spectator. Pan all around and marvel at your perfect line.

Handstand



Max attempt with a goal to hit 15 seconds. 2 sets, rest for 30 seconds

Form follows function: Cambered hands, active shoulders, locked elbows, hips over head, feet over hips... really whatever feels easier to get you to hold the handstand longer.

Make it automatic: By doing countless handstands, we get from conscious to automatic brain behavior. It starts becoming more like driving, and thus a lot easier to hold.

Regaining balance: Lose balance => correct the flow => recover. Real progress comes from struggling to correct your balance by squeezing your body and fingers tightly in an attempt to recover.

Child's Pose



30 seconds, 1 set, rest for 5 seconds

Relax and breathe!

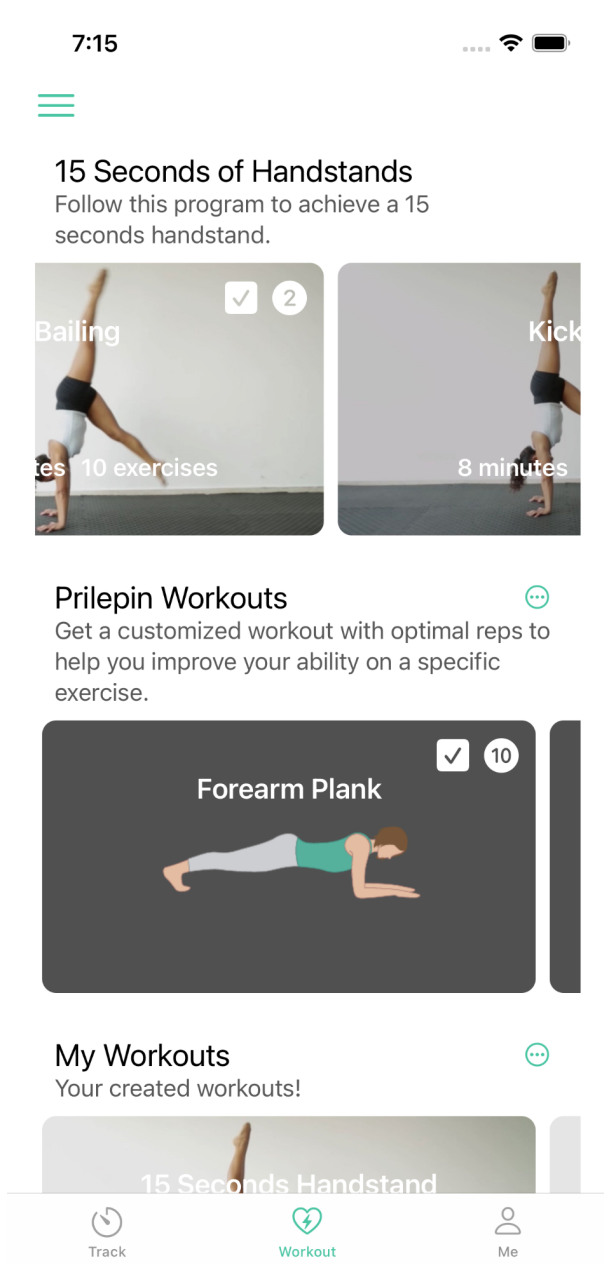
Workout Evaluation

Were you able to hold the freestanding handstand for 15 seconds in both sets? Did you apply all the tips provided? If your answer is yes to both questions, then now you can officially claim that you can do 15 second handstands!

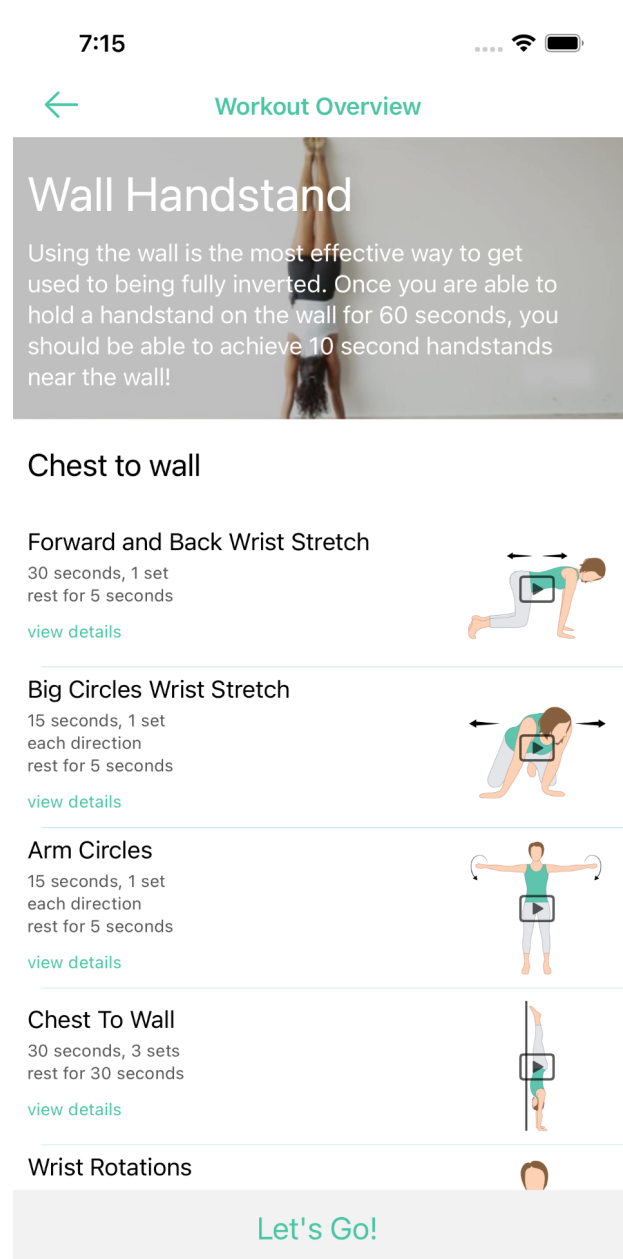
Conclusion

This program has been carefully constructed by your friends at <https://www.handstandquest.com/>. The program has been built into the Handstand Quest App and it's free!

Program Overview



Workout Overview



The app lets you play each workout following demo videos for the exercises. You can also see detailed instructions about each exercise that were not included in this guide for brevity. Certain exercises in the sequence have countdowns so you can get ready.

Workout Player

Countdown

7:16 ... 📶 🔋

< 🔄 🔊 📶 🔇

🧘 Started Exercise.



8
out of 30s

FORWARD AND BACK WRIST STRETCH ⓘ

< || >

7:16 ... 📶 🔋

< 🔄 🔊 📶 🔇

🧘 2



0 **3**
out of 30s out of 3 sets

CHEST TO WALL ⓘ

< ② >

Guided tips appear contextually while you rest in between exercises. Evaluations appear after you complete relevant exercises so you can get instant feedback on how you're doing on highly technical exercises.

Contextual Tips

7:16



Upper chest to the wall

Try to pull your upper chest to the wall, this will help you open and elevate your shoulders. Keep your elbows straight, core and legs engaged (tucked tailbone, glutes active, inner thighs together, legs locked, feet pointed).

REST

00 : 25

+20s

START

SET 2/3

CHEST TO WALL

30 seconds



Evaluations

7:22



Were you able to stay inverted the whole time while keeping a good form?

- I was not able to hold the whole time
- My body was not actually parallel to the wall
- I forgot to lock elbows
- I don't remember breathing
- My ears were not pushed between shoulders
- I did it all!

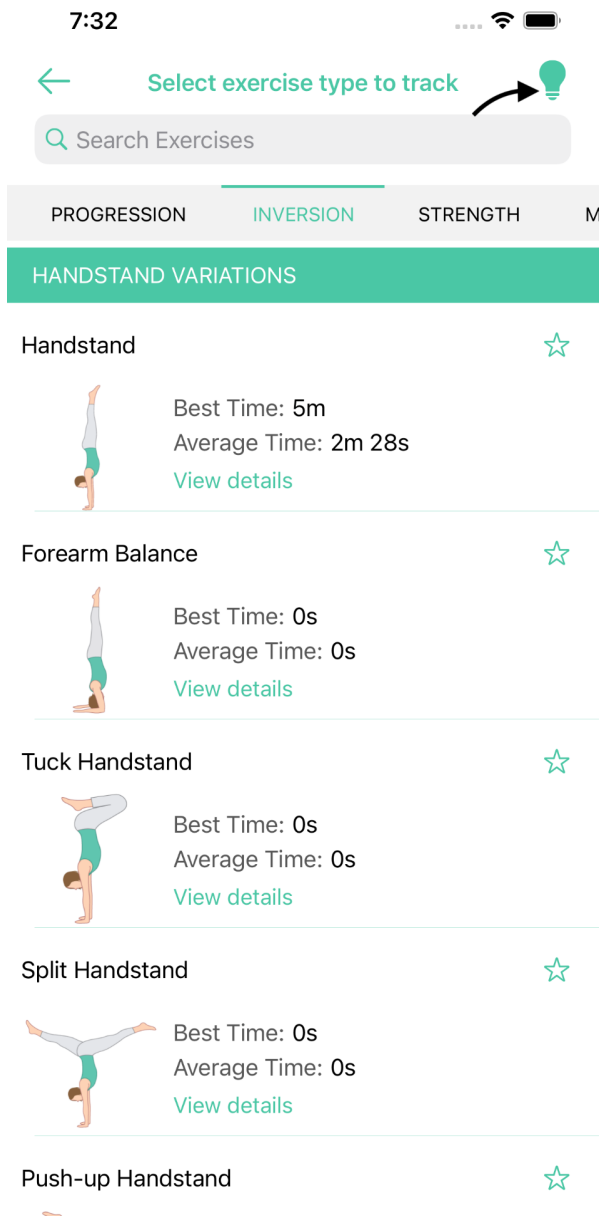
Actively and consciously push your shoulders towards your ears. It will put your body in a straight line, which is easier to balance with gravity.

Retry

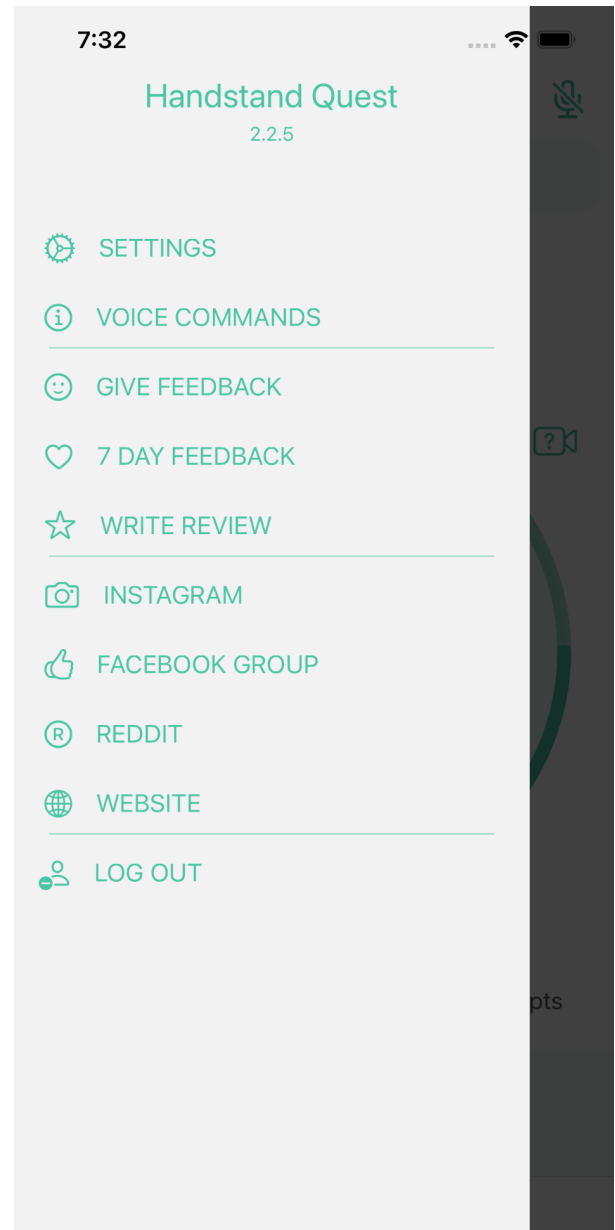
Continue

If there are exercises you would like requested in the app, you can do so via the app from the exercise catalog. Any other feedback is always welcome and acted upon. Feedback can be submitted from the app or at <https://www.handstandquest.com/contact>.

Exercise Request



Feedback From App




If you're a handstand coach and you'd like to add your own program to the app, please get in touch at info@humanquest.net.

Workout Builder


7:37 ...

← **Workout Editor** Save

Lifted Palms Wrist Stretch
20 seconds, 1 set
rest for 5 seconds
[view details](#)



Arm Circles
15 seconds, 1 set
each direction
rest for 5 seconds
[view details](#)




4 exercises for 2 minutes, 10 seconds. Includes 30 seconds of rest


[Add Exercise](#)

Standing on hands edit


Meditate
2 minutes, 1 set
rest for 5 seconds
[view details](#)



Handstand
Max Attempt, 15 seconds, 2 sets
rest for 30 seconds
[view details](#)



Child's Pose
30 seconds, 1 set
rest for 5 seconds
[view details](#)



[Add Section](#)

Exercise Editor

2:03 ...

← **Exercise Editor** Save

Handstand

[Settings](#) [About](#) [Tips](#) [Eval](#)

Pick the settings for how the exercise will play in the workout.

Things you configure here apply to the exercise, only in the context of this workout.

Max Attempt?
Whether the user should try and do their best attempt. If this option is enabled, the user will be given the option to track when the exercise starts and stops.

Max Duration Goal 15
The goal for the user's maximum duration. When the user's attempt exceeds this value, then it's a success.

Is Max Attempt Goal Required?
Whether to prevent the user from moving on to the next exercise, unless they complete the goal for the max attempt.

Sound Interval 3
How many seconds before playing sound?

Sets 2
How many sets to repeat this exercise.



Handstand Quest App

You cannot improve that which you cannot measure.

Use our app to track your handstand and movement progress hands-free with your voice!

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