

# Outdoor Fitness Training

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PLAYGROUNDS ARE GREAT PLACES for an outdoor workout while traveling. Most local parks have equipment that can facilitate the exercises in this article. Adult fitness playgrounds are ideal but less common than traditional playgrounds. Always be mindful of children's personal space when utilizing traditional playground equipment.

These exercises are also a great option for incorporating family fitness on vacation.

You can complete one round of each exercise if your time is limited. Some exercise is always better than none. Try to work up to three rounds of each exercise for the best results.

## INCLINE PUSHUPS

You can do this exercise on a bar or bench. Pushups build upper body and core strength to help you carry dive gear and improve body control.

1. Start by facing the bar or bench with your hips against it, and then take two steps backward.
2. Place your hands shoulder-width apart on the bar or bench, with most of your weight on your hands.
3. Slowly bend your arms, keeping your back flat until your chest touches the bar.
4. Slowly extend your arms back to the starting position.
5. Repeat 10 times.

*Tip: Keep your body stiff and straight to protect your back while building core strength.*

**Modification:** Take one step back from the bar, and keep most of your weight on your feet.

**Challenge:** Place your hands on something lower or less stable, such as a swing.



## HANGING ROWS

You'll need rings, a ladder, or a bar between thigh and shoulder height for this exercise. Rows build posterior upper-body and core strength, making it easier to pull yourself up a ladder when returning to the boat.

1. Grip the rings or bar approximately shoulder-width apart.
2. Bend your knees and lower your body while maintaining a stiff core.
3. Pull up until your chest is in line with your hands.
4. Hold the position for two to five seconds.
5. Release your arms to full extension.
6. Repeat 10 times.

*Tip: Keep your core tight, and start with a fixed bar instead of rings.*

**Modification:** Use a higher bar, which is easier than low rings.

**Challenge:** Extend your legs to support more of your weight with your upper body.

**NOTE:** To avoid an increased risk of decompression sickness, DAN® recommends that divers avoid strenuous exercise for 24 hours after making a dive. During your annual physical exam or following any changes in your health status, consult your physician to ensure you have medical clearance to dive.

## DIPS

All you need for this exercise is a park bench. Gaining arm strength and range of motion will help when entering a rigid inflatable boat or reaching for equipment.

1. Start with your back to the bench.
2. Take two small steps forward and place your hands on the bench so they face your body and are shoulder-width apart.
3. Bend your knees so they are directly over your feet.
4. Slowly bend your arms until your elbows are as close as possible to a 90-degree angle.
5. Slowly straighten your arms back to the starting position.
6. Repeat 10 times.

*Tip: Your elbows tend to flare outward, so keep them close to your body.*

**Modification:** Keep your feet closer to the bench.

**Challenge:** Hold your arms in the bent position for three seconds before slowly returning to the starting position.



## SCAP PULL-UPS

You'll need a stable pull-up bar, monkey bars, or something similar that can hold your weight. This exercise will improve shoulder stabilizers and back and upper extremity strength, making it easier to retrieve gear.

1. Start with a firm grip on the bar with your hands shoulder-width apart.
2. Hang from the bar, supporting your body weight.
3. Pull down your scapulae (shoulder blades) and shoulders using small, controlled movements while supporting your weight with the bar.
4. Repeat 10 times, relaxing between each.

*Tip: Make sure the bar can hold your weight.*

**Modification:** Take breaks as needed.

**Challenge:** Hold each contraction for two to five seconds.



## HANGING KNEE RAISES

These knee raises also need a stable pull-up bar, monkey bars, or something similar that can hold your weight. Strengthening your core will improve your body control underwater.

1. Start with a firm grip on the bar with your hands shoulder-width apart.
2. Hang from the bar, supporting your body weight.
3. Raise your knees until your thighs are parallel to the ground.
4. Lower your legs and straighten them.
5. Repeat 10 times.

*Tip: Maintain control so your body does not swing.*

**Modification:** Lift one leg at a time.

**Challenge:** Extend your legs during the repetitions. The straighter your legs are, the more challenging the movement.



## STEP-UPS WITH KNEE RAISES

Find a stable bench or step that can support you. This exercise works balance and leg strength to help you walk more easily with gear on.

1. Start by facing the bench or step with your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Step up with your right leg.
3. Stand on top with both feet.
4. Raise your left knee until your thigh is parallel to the ground.
5. Bring your left knee back to standing, and step down.
6. Repeat with the opposite leg.
7. Step up 10 times on each side.

*Tip: Descend slowly.*

**Modification:** Find a lower bench or step.

**Challenge:** Step up to the knee-raise and back down without standing in between. AD