

VISTA HUB · FITNESS GUIDE 2026

Dumbbell-Only 4-Day Workout

Home-Gym Strength Split
Upper A · Lower A · Upper B · Lower B
Sets × Reps · Form Cues · Progression

FREE PRINTABLE PDF · A4

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Original educational guide · Not medical advice

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How to Use This 4-Day Split

This dumbbell-only routine trains every major muscle group twice per week with one pair of dumbbells, adjustable dumbbells, and an optional bench. The two upper and two lower sessions use different angles and rep targets so you can build strength without needing a barbell, cable stack, or large gym.

Weekly schedule

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Upper A	Lower A	Rest / walk	Upper B	Lower B	Rest / mobility	Rest

Move days to match your week, but avoid placing both lower sessions back-to-back. If four sessions are too much at first, complete the next session in order rather than cramming missed workouts.

Before each session

- Warm up 5–8 minutes with brisk walking, marching, or easy mobility.
- Do 1–2 light practice sets before the first two exercises.
- Choose a load that leaves about 1–3 good reps in reserve.
- Rest 90–150 seconds on big lifts and 60–90 seconds on smaller moves.

Home-gym setup

- Use a clear, non-slip floor and enough room to extend arms safely.
- A stable bench is useful; a sturdy chair can substitute for supported work.
- Keep dumbbells close, check collars and handles, and never drop weights near feet.
- No bench? Use floor presses, split squats, and hip hinges.

Effort target: Most sets should feel challenging but controlled. Stop a set when technique changes, not only when the weight becomes impossible.

Inside this PDF

03	Upper A — horizontal push and pull
04	Lower A — squat and hinge strength
05	Upper B — shoulders, back, and arms
06	Lower B — unilateral work and posterior chain
07	Progression, warm-up, and equipment notes
08	Log, FAQ, and medical disclaimer

DAY 1

Upper A — Push, Pull, and Core

UPPER A

Start with the heaviest stable press and row you can perform with a quiet, controlled tempo. Alternate exercises only if space or time requires it.

Exercise	Sets × Reps	Form cue
Dumbbell Bench Press	4 × 6–10	Feet firm; shoulder blades gently set. Lower elbows about 45° from the body and press without bouncing.
One-Arm Dumbbell Row	4 × 8–12 / side	Support one hand on a bench or thigh. Pull elbow toward hip; keep hips and shoulders square.
Seated Dumbbell Shoulder Press	3 × 8–12	Brace ribs down. Press up smoothly and stop short of painful range or hard lockout.
Chest-Supported Rear-Delt Raise	3 × 12–15	Use light weights, soft elbows, and a wide arc. Think “move the arms,” not “shrug.”
Dumbbell Hammer Curl	3 × 10–14	Neutral palms and still elbows. Lower for two seconds; avoid swinging the torso.
Dumbbell Dead Bug Pullover	2 × 8–10 / side	Lie on the floor, brace gently, and move opposite arm and leg without arching the back.

Technique checkpoints

- Pressing: keep wrists stacked over elbows and use a range you can own.
- Rows: pause for one second at the top, then let the shoulder blade move naturally on the way down.
- Core: slow breathing matters more than using heavy dumbbells.

Home swap: No bench? Perform a dumbbell floor press and brace your non-working hand on a sturdy chair for rows.

DAY 2

Lower A — Squat and Hinge Strength

LOWER A

This session leads with a squat pattern, then trains the hamstrings and glutes through a controlled hip hinge. Keep at least one rep in reserve on the first few weeks.

Exercise	Sets × Reps	Form cue
Double-Dumbbell Front Squat	4 × 8–12	Hold weights at shoulders or sides. Brace, sit between the hips, and keep the whole foot grounded.
Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift	4 × 8–12	Hips travel back; dumbbells stay near legs. Stop at a hamstring stretch without rounding.
Reverse Lunge	3 × 8–12 / side	Step back softly, keep front heel down, and drive through the middle of the front foot.
Dumbbell Hip Thrust	3 × 10–15	Rest upper back on a stable bench or use a floor glute bridge. Tuck chin and squeeze at the top.
Single-Leg Calf Raise	3 × 12–18 / side	Use a wall for balance. Pause at the top and lower into a comfortable stretch.
Suitcase Carry	3 × 30–45 sec / side	Stand tall with one dumbbell. Resist leaning; take short, quiet steps.

Lower-body notes

- Use a shorter range or hold a support if balance limits reverse lunges.
- For knees, let them track in line with toes; do not force them inward.
- For the RDL, the stretch is the endpoint—not a reason to chase the floor.

Sharp pain is a stop signal. Reduce load or change the exercise if pain appears. Normal muscular effort should not feel like a sudden joint or nerve symptom.

DAY 3

Upper B — Shoulders, Back, and Arms

UPPER B

Use slightly higher reps and different angles from Upper A. Keep the shrug out of raises and let the back do the work on pullovers and rows.

Exercise	Sets × Reps	Form cue
Incline Dumbbell Press	4 × 8–12	Set the bench around 20–35°. Lower under control and keep shoulders comfortable.
Chest-Supported Dumbbell Row	4 × 8–12	Lie chest-down on an incline bench. Pull toward lower ribs without lifting the chest.
Half-Kneeling One-Arm Press	3 × 8–12 / side	Squeeze the glute of the down-knee side. Press while keeping ribs stacked over pelvis.
Dumbbell Pullover	3 × 10–15	Keep elbows softly bent and move only as far as shoulders stay comfortable.
Lean-Away Lateral Raise	3 × 12–20	Use very light weights. Lead with elbows, pause briefly, and avoid momentum.
Alternating Supinating Curl	3 × 10–14 / side	Turn the palm up as you lift; keep the upper arm still and squeeze at the top.
Overhead Triceps Extension	3 × 10–15	Hold one dumbbell with both hands. Point elbows forward and move only the forearms.

Shoulder comfort: A neutral grip is often friendlier. Reduce range or substitute a floor press if any movement pinches.

Optional density finish

If time is short, pair lateral raises with curls for two easy rounds. Rest only as needed, keep reps smooth, and do not turn accessory work into a max-effort test.

DAY 4

Lower B — Unilateral Work and Posterior Chain

LOWER B

Single-leg work exposes side-to-side differences and trains balance. Use a wall or chair for support; stability is more useful than heavier dumbbells.

Exercise	Sets × Reps	Form cue
Bulgarian Split Squat	3 × 8–12 / side	Use a low rear support or regular split squat. Lower straight down and keep front knee tracking toes.
Single-Leg Romanian Deadlift	3 × 8–12 / side	Reach the free leg back, keep hips level, and hold a support if balance wobbles.
Goblet Squat, 1½ Reps	3 × 8–10	Lower, rise halfway, lower again, then stand. Use a moderate load and a steady tempo.
Dumbbell Step-Up	3 × 8–12 / side	Choose a low, solid step. Drive through the working foot; avoid bouncing off the back leg.
Dumbbell Swing or Hinge	3 × 12–15	Only swing if you know the hinge. Otherwise use a light RDL with a two-second lower.
Seated Calf Raise	3 × 15–20	Place dumbbells over knees on a stable seat. Move through the ankle, not the knee.

Scaling options

Make it easier

Bodyweight split squat, lower step, lighter goblet squat, and two-foot calf raises. Add reps before load.

Make it harder

Add a pause, slow the lowering phase, increase range, or add a small load—not all four at once.

Fatigue check: If your balance or bracing collapses, finish the set and choose a simpler variation next time.

MAKE PROGRESS

Warm-Up, Technique, and Progressive Overload

5–8 minute warm-up

1. 2–3 minutes of brisk walking, marching, or easy cycling.
2. 8 bodyweight squats, 8 hip hinges, 8 reverse lunges, and 10 arm circles.
3. One light rehearsal set for the first press, row, squat, and hinge pattern you will use.

Double progression

Each exercise has a rep range. Begin with a load you can use at the low end with clean form. Over successive sessions, add repetitions until every set reaches the top of the range. Then increase the dumbbell by the smallest practical step and return to the lower end.

Track the basics

Write the date, exercise, load, reps, and a short note about effort. Compare the same day from week to week.

Deload when needed

Every 6–8 weeks, or when recovery falls, cut sets by about one-third to one-half for one week.

Use small jumps

Upper-body increases may be 1–2 kg per dumbbell; lower-body increases can be larger when technique stays stable.

Recover on purpose

Sleep, regular meals, hydration, and rest days support training. More work is not always better work.

Home-gym notes

- Adjustable dumbbells save space; choose a pair that locks securely and has a comfortable handle.
- A flat or adjustable bench expands pressing, supported rows, hip thrusts, and rear-delt options.
- Use a yoga mat for floor presses, dead bugs, mobility, and a non-slip setup.
- Keep a clear path, inspect fasteners, and place weights down quietly.

Example: If Upper A bench press is 18 kg × 8, 8, 8, 8, keep that load until you can reach 10 reps on all four sets. Then move up slightly and rebuild.

PRINT AND REVIEW

Weekly Log · FAQ · Disclaimer

Four-day training log

Session	Top exercise / load	Effort 1–5	Notes
Upper A			
Lower A			
Upper B			
Lower B			

Quick FAQ

Can beginners use this plan? Yes. Start with two sets for accessory exercises and learn the patterns before adding load.

What if I only have one pair of light dumbbells? Slow the lowering phase, add pauses, use unilateral variations, and work toward the top of each rep range.

How long should sessions take? About 40–65 minutes, depending on rest periods and whether you perform every listed set.

Can I train on consecutive days? Prefer the schedule on page 2. If life requires two consecutive days, avoid pairing the two lower sessions.

Medical disclaimer: This guide is for general educational and fitness information only. It is not medical advice, diagnosis, treatment, or a personalized training plan. Consult a qualified healthcare professional before starting exercise, especially if you have an injury, medical condition, are pregnant, take medication, or have been inactive. Stop if you feel chest pain, faintness, severe shortness of breath, sudden weakness, or sharp pain. Use equipment safely and exercise at your own risk.

Vista Hub / vhoriginal.com is not responsible for injuries, losses, or outcomes arising from use of this general routine. Loads, reps, and exercise choices should be adapted to your ability and environment.

Train with control. Record the work. Build gradually.

Vista Hub · Original dumbbell-only 4-day workout routine · 2026