

Adding weights to exercises

For resistance training to be effective, it should be challenging. You can make exercises more challenging by adding weights. Below are some suggestions for adding weights to your home exercises. Find instructions for more advanced exercises in the exercise manual.



Lift canned goods

Canned goods that fit into your hands work well as simple hand weights. This is especially good if you are starting out and trying to build strength slowly. Use larger canned goods as heavier weights or medicine balls.



Use water bottles for hand weights

Fill bottles with water, pebbles or sand. When filling the bottles, weigh them to make sure the weights are the same for both hands.



Make wrist/ankle weights from socks

Fill a clean sock with dry beans. Alternatively, use pebbles or small craft rocks for a heavier weight. Use a scale to adjust the weight. Fill the sock as full as you want based on weight and then cut the excess fabric. If you want to make heavier weights but the inside material won't fit, use a larger sock.



Sew or glue the open end of the sock closed. Then, sew the ends together to make a circle that you can place over your wrist or ankle. Alternatively, sew Velcro onto the ends of the sock so that you can easily attach it and remove it from your wrist or ankle.

When choosing a sock, make sure to choose one long enough to wrap around your wrist or ankle. If the sock is too long, fill it until it will wrap around your wrist or ankle, then cut the excess fabric before sewing the end closed.



Use packets of rice or beans

These packages are great for mini-weights if you are a beginner. You can use them right from the cupboard for arm curls and other small weight-lifting moves.



Use paint cans

Hold paint cans in your hands by their handles. Most paint cans are heavier than plastic bottles or cans of food, so you can use them as your strength increases.



Buy weights or join a gym

You can buy wrist and ankle weights or small hand weights in department stores and sport stores throughout NSW, or online.

Alternatively, you can join a local gym to use their weights or participate in their group classes. Many gyms have group classes tailored for older adults that include resistance exercises.

