

# The Best HIIT Workout with Weights to Build Athleticism

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High-intensity interval training (HIIT) involves alternating between intense burst activity and a short recovery period. It requires you to do exercises at high intensity (75 to 95 percent of the maximum heart rate), followed by a short recovery period.

Performing HIIT with weight helps build fat-free mass and strong muscles, improves aerobic and anaerobic fitness, and builds an athlete's type of fitness.

In this article, I'll show you the following best HIIT exercises that you can do with weights:

- Jumping Jacks
- Dumbbell Burpees
- Squat Jacks
- Squat Jump
- Dumbbell Crunches
- Dumbbell Surrender
- Push Press
- Power Maker
- High Knees
- Thruster
- Single-arm KB Swing
- Step-up
- Gorilla Row
- Half Kneeling Low to High Chop
- Hang Clean

- Dumbbell Squat Swing
- Shadow Boxing
- Side Plank Hip Taps

I'll also share a 30-minute weekly workout routine that will allow you to perform weighted HIIT in an organized manner.

But before you start performing interval training with weights, I recommend you follow this [bodyweight HIIT program](#) for six weeks to build up your fitness.

## Can You Do High-Intensity Interval Training with Weights?

Yes, you can perform high-intensity interval training using weights, particularly dumbbells, barbells, and kettlebells.

These pieces of equipment are easy to use, require less space, provide a full range of motion, and allow you to perform various exercises at higher intensity.

However, you can't move as fast holding weights as you can without weights, but the added resistance will help you build lean mass, strengthen your muscles and joints, and enhance athleticism.

## The 18 Best HIIT Exercises with Weights

Here, you'll learn how to perform each high-intensity exercise step-by-step and their benefits.

### 1. Dumbbell Jumping Jacks

<https://youtu.be/nSd2ebFATi8?t=30>

The dumbbell jumping jacks engage multiple muscles simultaneously, especially the shoulder, legs, and arms, and [enhance your jumping ability](#). It is great for those who want to burn more calories and improve stamina.

#### Steps to perform a weighted jumping jack:

- Grab one dumbbell in each hand and stand straight with your feet together.
- Bend your elbows and hold the dumbbell just above your shoulder.
- Jump your feet out and extend your arms up in an explosive manner.

- Now, jump back and return to the starting position.

## 2. Dumbbell Burpees

<https://youtu.be/AUmrtIzF4IE>

Burpees are excellent full-body exercises that strengthen the entire body, improve endurance, and increase short-term memory.

By adding dumbbells, you can make this exercise super effective. The added resistance develops fat-free mass and will help you **build a ripped body**.

A study has shown that performing a 3-minute Burpee for sixty days increases excellent endurance and improves overall performance.

### Steps to do a burpee:

- Grab one dumbbell in each hand, stand straight with your feet hip-width apart, and keep your arms at your side. That's your starting position.
- Push your hips back, bend your knees, and lower yourself into a squat position.
- Place the dumbbells on the floor, kick your legs behind, and softly land your feet on the floor. Now you're in a straight-arm plank position.
- Do one push-up, then jump your feet back just outside your hands and stand upright.

## 3. Squat Jacks

Squat jacks help **bolster legs** and demolish significant calories. They primarily isolate the quadriceps, improve aerobic and aerobic fitness, and can easily fit into any fitness regime.

### Steps to perform a dumbbell squat jack:

- Grab one dumbbell in each hand and stand straight with your feet hip-width apart and toes pointing slightly out.
- Bend your elbows and hold the dumbbell close to your chest. That's the start.
- Jump your feet out and land into a squat until your thighs are parallel to the ground.
- Push through your heels, jump back, and land into a standing hip-width stance. That's one rep.

## 4. Squat Jump

<https://youtu.be/7qPVEUQ6vE8>

The jump squat is a high-intense, [calorie-burning exercise](#) that develops explosive strength, power, and speed and improves athletic performance.

It is more challenging than the squat jack as it involves jumping as high as possible after returning to the squat.

### Steps to perform a dumbbell squat jump:

- Holding a pair of light dumbbells, stand straight with your feet hip-width apart and arms straight by your sides.
- Brace your abdominal muscles, bend your knees to squat down, then jump explosively while keeping your arms straight at your sides.
- Slowly land into a squat and jump again.
- Repeat until you can't perform another rep.

## 5. Dumbbell Crunches

Dumbbell crunches can help you [sculpt your abs](#) and increase your core muscle endurance. Having a firm core is essential for performing other high-intensity explosive exercises, such as snatch, swings, and thruster.

### Steps to do a dumbbell crunch:

- Grab a pair of dumbbells and lie on the floor with your knees bent and feet flat.
- Extend your arms over your chest with dumbbells in your hand. That's the start.
- Lift your upper back toward your knees until your abs are engaged.
- Then, slowly return to the starting position. Do as many reps as possible.

## 6. Dumbbell Surrender

<https://youtu.be/z9JwmD97Ogc>

The Surrender is a compound exercise that works throughout the body, especially the legs and shoulder, and helps [build up a firm and athletic physique](#).

### Steps to perform a dumbbell surrender:

- Grasp one dumbbell in each hand with a neutral grip and sit on your knees with your torso upright.
- Bend your elbows and hold the dumbbells close to your shoulder with your palms facing each other.
- Take one step forward with your right foot and raise the dumbbell at shoulder height.
- Bring your left foot forward to meet your right foot so that you can stand straight at the same time.
- Press the dumbbells upward until your arms are straight overhead.
- Return to the start and repeat as many times as possible.

## 7. Push Press

<https://youtu.be/eLnQUwgvJF0>

The dumbbell push-press is an [upper-body strength and explosive exercise](#) that works on several muscles simultaneously, primarily the delts and quads.

It is also excellent for increasing muscular strength, improving speed and power, and shaping your physique.

### Steps to perform a dumbbell push-press:

- Holding a pair of dumbbells, stand upright with your feet hip-width apart.
- Bend your elbows and hold the dumbbells just over your shoulder, palms facing each other.
- Lower into a half squat, and while returning, thrust the dumbbells over your head explosively until you're standing straight. That's one rep.

## 8. Power Maker

<https://youtu.be/H7iF5rNSoC4>

The power maker is another unfamiliar but efficient exercise that reinforces multiple muscle groups throughout the body, [improves functional and cardiovascular fitness](#), and helps build a strong and toned body.

It involves multiple movements, such as push-ups, squats, jump, and renegade row, making it an advanced and excellent dumbbell exercise.

### **Steps to perform a power maker:**

- Grab one dumbbell in each hand with a neutral grip and stand in a shoulder-width stance.
- Lower into a straight-arm plank position with your arms straight below your shoulders.
- Brace your core, take your feet slightly apart, and perform [renegade row](#).
- Once you row on each side, jump your feet in, outside your hands, and get in a squat position.
- Lastly, push the dumbbells up toward the sky until your arms are fully extended. That's one rep!

### **9. High Knees**

<https://youtu.be/woacGn0RGdc>

The high knee is another calorie-burning, high-intensity exercise that increases the heart rate, improves VO2 max, and helps your body release calories even after hours of training.

### **Steps to perform the dumbbell high knees:**

- Stand straight in the hip-width stance, holding a dumbbell in each hand at stomach height, palms facing each. (Your position will be the same as you do bodyweight high knees, but instead of empty hands, hold the dumbbells). You can also hold the dumbbells overhead.
- Raise your right knee until it comes close to the dumbbell, and then land your feet on the ground.
- As you land your right leg on the ground, repeat the same movement with your left leg.

### **10. Thruster**

<https://youtu.be/VdPjfmRcQfw>

A thruster is a combination of squat and push press that strengthens and tones multiple muscles from the upper to the lower body and improves body composition and athletic fitness.

### **Steps to do a Dumbbell thruster:**

- Stand upright with your feet hip-width apart while holding a pair of dumbbells in your hands, bend your elbows, and keep the dumbbells across your shoulder, palms facing each other.
- Keep your back straight, bend at your knees and hips, and perform a squat.
- Then, stand up explosively by pushing through your heels and pressing the weights straight overhead until your arms are fully extended. Then, lower the dumbbells into the starting position.

## 11. Single-arm Swing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cVT3ee9mgU>

The kettlebell swing is a proven exercise to increase both maximum and explosive strength and level up athletic fitness.

It helps [bolster the lower back](#), hip, core, and shoulder and enhances speed, endurance, and strength.

### Steps to perform dumbbell swings:

- Grab a dumbbell (weight depends on your strength) with an overhand grip with your right hand and stand in a shoulder-width stance. Keep your opposite arm straight at your side.
- To start the movement, bend at your hips and knees, swing the dumbbell between your legs, thrust your hips forward, and squeeze your glutes as you swing the dumbbell forward until your arm is straight at your chest level.
- Reverse the movement and repeat for the desired number of times.
- Once you complete, switch your arm to complete the work with your left arm.

## 12. Step-up

The step-up strengthens and [builds lower body muscles](#), particularly the quads, glutes, and hamstrings. It also maximizes strength and endurance and heightens functional fitness.

### Steps to do a dumbbell step-up:

- Grab a dumbbell in each hand.
- Stand upright in front of the box or bench, arms straight at your sides, and palms facing in. That's your starting position.

- Step your right foot on the bench, followed by the left.
- Reverse the movement to complete the first repetition.

### 13. Gorilla Row

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGDv8b1-c2c>

The gorilla row is a pull exercise that [targets the latissimus dorsi](#) (lats) and trapezius and helps build endurance and muscle mass.

This is the only back exercise in this article, so make sure you do it every time you perform a HIIT workout using weights.

#### Steps to perform a Gorilla row:

- Grab a pair of dumbbells or kettlebells with a neutral grip.
- Keep your feet wider than your shoulder width apart and lean forward until the weight touches the floor.
- Ensure your abs are tight, your spine is neutral, and your arms are straight below your shoulders.
- Row the bells alternatively until your back are fully contracted.

### 14. Half Kneeling Low to High Chop

<https://youtu.be/exMSeCF3DJg>

This exercise helps strengthen obliques, makes your upper body flexible, and improves the appearance of your abs.

#### Follow the steps to perform a low to high chop:

- Holding a dumbbell or kettlebell, sit on your right knee while keeping your left foot on the ground.
- Keep the bell close to the right side of the hip and brace your abdominal muscles.
- Raise weight across your body from your hip to the opposite shoulder. You'll feel the stretch in your obliques.
- Pause for a moment, then return to the start.
- Perform the same number of reps and sets on each side.

## 15. Hang Clean

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AUmwaF7RnQ>

The hang clean is a functional exercise that involves jumping and lifting weights on your shoulders. It helps improve explosive power and endurance and annihilate plenty of calories in a short time.

You can perform hang clean using dumbbells or a barbell, whichever suits you the most. It involves the following steps:

- Grab a loaded barbell/a pair of dumbbells and stand upright.
- Keep your arms straight with your hands just outside your knees.
- Brace your core, slightly bend your knees, and clean the bar over your front shoulder.
- Extend your knees to stand up back.

## 16. Dumbbell Squat Swing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzlxvLFVvWI>

The combination of swinging and squatting trains the multiple muscle throughout the body and helps develop endurance and power and build an aesthetic body.

### How to perform a DB squat swing:

- Grab one dumbbell in each hand and stand upright in a shoulder-width stance.
- Keep your arms straight by your sides with your palms facing in.
- Swing the dumbbells in front of you until your arms are parallel to the floor.
- Return your arms to the start and perform a squat. That's one rep.

## 17. Shadow Boxing

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/M10HjpxGb-M>

Shadow boxing is an excellent way to activate multiple muscles throughout the body. Doing it with light dumbbells helps increase muscular strength and endurance and build up your athleticism.

### Instructions to perform shadow boxing with dumbbells:

- Grab a dumbbell in each hand and stand straight.
- Punch forward with one arm at a time and alternate arms with a steady rhythm.
- Rotate between the hook, uppercut, and jab until you get tired.

## 18. Side Plank Hip Taps

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ftC2AAfJhU>

This exercise helps shape the love handles, reinforces the shoulder and abs, improves balance, and helps build a solid core.

### Steps to perform lateral plank hip taps:

- Get into a lateral plank with your left forearm supporting your body weight.
- Grab a dumbbell with your right hand and place it over your hip.
- Lower your hip until it touches the floor, then lift it back to the start.
- Perform 10 to 12 reps, then turn on the opposite side and do the same.

## 30-Minute HIIT Workout with Weights to Build Athleticism

I've designed a 30-minute weighted high-intensity interval training program that you can perform weekly to build a strong and toned physique.

- **Sessions/week:** Three
- **Duration/session:** 30 minutes
- **Equipment Needed:** Dumbbells/Barbells/Kettlebells
- **Target Gender:** Male and Female
- **Activity Time:** As many reps as possible in 30 seconds
- **Interval Time b/w Exercises:** 30-45 seconds
- **Number of rounds/sessions:** As many as possible.

### MONDAY

- 10 Jumping Jacks
- 20 Gorilla Rows (10 reps per side)
- 10 Push Presses
- 10 Squat Jumps
- 20 Single-arm KB Swing (10 reps per arm)
- 20 Half Kneeling Low to High Chop (10 reps per side)

- 10 Hang Clean
- Perform as many rounds as possible with 2 minutes of rest between them.

### **WEDNESDAY**

- 10 Squat Jacks
- 10 Dumbbell Crunches
- 5 Power Maker
- 10 Step-up (5 reps per leg)
- 20 Gorilla Rows (10 reps on each side)
- 5 Dumbbell Squat Swings
- Perform as many rounds as possible with 2 minutes of rest between them.

### **FRIDAY**

- 5 Dumbbell Burpees
- 20 Gorilla Row (10 reps on each side)
- 5 Dumbbell Surrender
- 15-sec High Knees
- 15-sec Shadow Boxing
- 20 Side Plank Hip Taps (10 reps per side), 2-3 minutes of rest
- Perform as many rounds as possible in 30 minutes.