

5 Things to Know About Creating an Effective Resistance Training Plan



Key takeaways from the 2026 ACSM position stand on Resistance Training Prescription for Muscle Function, Hypertrophy, and Physical Performance in Healthy Adults.

1

Consistency Beats Perfection

Doing something is the biggest win.

The biggest jump in results happens when you go from no resistance training to any resistance training. Keep it simple and focus on showing up regularly.

2

Match Your Training to Your Goal

Same tools. Different settings.

You can fine-tune your workouts depending on what you want most:

- **Strength:** Lift heavier loads [80% of your one-repetition maximum (1RM)] for 2–3 sets per exercise
- **Muscle growth (hypertrophy):** Aim for higher weekly volume (~10 sets per muscle group)
- **Power:** Use moderate loads (30–70% 1RM) and move as quickly as possible during the concentric (lifting) phase

3

Make It Personal

The best plan is the one you'll stick with.

Choose a routine that fits your schedule, comfort level, and goals—because consistency is what drives long-term results.

Complicated ≠ Better

4

You Don't Need a Gym

Budget-friendly and free options can be just as effective.

You can build strength and improve function without fancy equipment. Evidence supports elastic bands, bodyweight exercises, and home-based training as effective options.

5

Most "Advanced" Techniques Are Optional

You don't need extreme methods to get results.

Research has found that things like:

- training to momentary muscle failure
- using specific types of equipment (machine vs. free weights)
- complex periodization

...did **not** consistently change results for the average healthy adult.

The Bottom Line: The best resistance training program is the one you will actually do.

Start here: Train all major muscle groups at least 2 days per week and build gradually over time.

“American College of Sports Medicine position stand. Resistance training prescription for muscle function, hypertrophy, and physical performance in healthy adults: An overview of reviews.” *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, 2026.