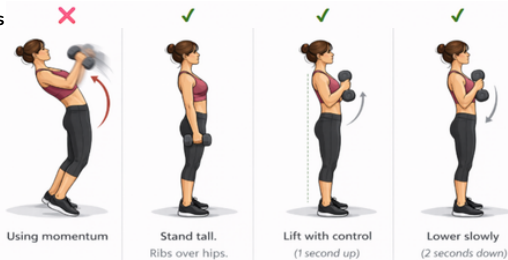


Are You Doing These Exercises Wrong?

You can work out consistently, break a sweat, and still make your training less effective than it could be. More often than not, it comes down to how you are moving, not how hard you are trying. A few very common habits reduce results and increase your risk of injury at the same time, and most of them are easy to fix once you notice them. Here are four worth checking.

1. Swinging weights instead of lifting them

Swinging is one of the most common mistakes in strength training. It's up in bicep curls, but also in lateral arm raises, tricep kickbacks, and front . . .



The illustration above uses a basic bicep (hammer) curl as the example. In the first frame, the torso leans back and the weight flies upward. Momentum and gravity are doing most of the work. When you swing a weight (the "using momentum" frame), you shorten the time your muscles stay under tension, which reduces the strength-building stimulus. At the same time, uncontrolled force increases stress on your shoulders and lower back, which raises the risk of strains and irritated tendons over time. In the three corrected frames, the body stays tall and the bicep muscle does the work. The weight moves because the muscle moves it, not because it is swinging on its own.

You will get more out of eight pounds lifted with control than fifteen pounds swung with momentum. Going lighter and moving well builds more strength over time than chasing a heavier number you can't control.

Form Check

- Move the weight with control. Aim for about one second to lift and two seconds to lower.
- Keep the working joint stable. During curls, keep your elbows close to your sides and avoid locking your joints hard at the bottom.
- Stay aligned. Keep your ribs stacked over your hips instead of leaning back.
- End the set when your form changes, not just when you feel tired.

2. Holding onto the treadmill for dear life

You have seen this at the gym. The incline is high, the pace is fast, and both hands are gripping the side rails. In some cases, people are practically hugging the monitor like it might drift away. In the comparison above, the difference is clear. On the left, the upper body is braced against the machine and the hands are doing real work. On the right, the body supports itself and the arms swing naturally.

When you hold on, you unload part of your body weight and reduce the demand on your legs and glutes. You also remove balance from the equation, which is a mistake because balance is super important for stability, long-term fitness, and injury prevention. Walking or climbing without holding on requires your core, hips,



and smaller stabilizing muscles to engage. That coordination is part of what keeps you steady outside the gym. If you have to grip the rails or hug the monitor to keep up, the pace or incline is too high. Lower it until you can stand tall and move without external support.

Form Check

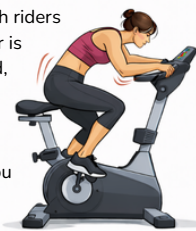
- Choose a setting you can maintain hands-free.
- Stand tall with your shoulders relaxed and your gaze forward.
- Let your arms swing naturally instead of bracing your upper body.
- If you are gripping the rails to keep up, lower the incline or pace.

3. Pedaling fast but bouncing in the saddle

SLUMPING & GRIPPING TOO HARD

GOOD POSTURE

In the bike illustration here, both riders are seated. On the left, the rider is slumped forward, gripping hard, and bouncing slightly. On the right, posture is upright, grip is light, and the hips are stable. If you are pedaling so fast that you are bouncing in the saddle with very low resistance, your heart rate may rise, but your muscles are not working against meaningful load. The bouncing and heavy grip can also strain your hips, shoulders, and lower back. Adding resistance creates controlled effort and better joint alignment.



Form Check

- Add enough resistance to feel steady pressure through your legs.
- Keep your hips stable against the saddle.
- Relax your grip and let your shoulders drop.
- Maintain a cadence you can control rather than chasing speed.

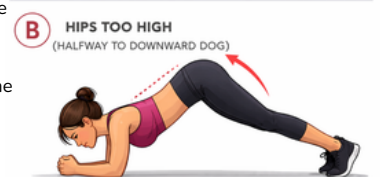
4. The plank that is not actually a plank

Look at the three plank images here. In A, the hips sag and the lower back takes the load. In B, the hips lift too high and the core checks out. In C, the body forms one straight line from head to heels. A plank is a test of alignment under tension, not a test of how long you can survive off the floor. When the hips sag, the lower back absorbs stress it was not meant to carry in that position. When the hips lift too high, the core is no longer fully engaged as a stabilizer. Neither is good for your body.

A well-aligned 20- to 30-second plank does more for your core and your spine than a two-minute plank performed in survival mode. When your hips drift up or down, the set is over.

Form Check

- Stack your shoulders over your elbows or wrists.
- Squeeze your glutes lightly and draw your ribs toward your hips.
- Keep your body in one straight line from head to heels.
- Breathe steadily instead of holding your breath.
- End the set when your hips drift up or down.



Form Check in the Kitchen: Vegetables That Actually Roast



Roasted vegetables are simple. They are also easy to accidentally steam. If the pan is crowded, vegetables release moisture and soften instead of browning. If the oven temperature is too low, they dry out before they caramelize. In many kitchens, the fix ends up being the same: use two pans or roast in batches. That one adjustment makes a noticeable difference. The structure matters more than the ingredient list.

Ingredients :

- 4–5 cups chopped vegetables (broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, squash, onions all work)
- 1–2 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- Optional: garlic, smoked paprika, lemon zest, fresh herbs

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F.
2. Spread the vegetables in a single layer with space between each piece. If they are touching and piled, use two pans or roast in batches. Space determines whether you get browning or steam.
3. Toss with olive oil and salt before roasting so the seasoning distributes evenly.
4. Roast for 20–30 minutes, flipping once, until the edges are browned and the centers are tender.
5. Finish with lemon zest, fresh herbs, or a squeeze of lemon.

If the vegetables look pale and soft instead of browned, they were likely too crowded.

Simple structure leads to better results.