

Stuck in a rut? Just starting out? Ready to start seeing real results?

Functional Fitness Add a new dimension to every workout!

So what is Functional Fitness you ask? It's not a new idea, physical therapists have been using it for years, but just recently made its way into the front door of fitness centers around the world. Functional fitness incorporates functional exercises, or exercises that use more than one movement and more than one muscle group to accomplish. These movements more closely resemble activities that we will find ourselves doing in daily life and lead to better muscular balance and joint stability, therefore we are training to be stronger and more fit in everything we do.

When you do functional training, not only are you building strength and toning your muscles, you're also increasing your ability to perform every day movements such as lifting a baby, shoveling snow, or reaching up to retrieve something from a high shelf. Workouts that use functional exercises are also more efficient since you're working more than one muscle group at a time, this means less time sweating and more time enjoying the fruits of your labor. You're also burning more calories than with static resistance training since you're working multiple muscle groups at the same time.

Every month the BrickHouse Health and Fitness Newsletter will include a Functional Exercise of the month. Try incorporating these exercises into your next workout and be amazed at the changes your body will make.

Take a few of your favorite exercises and make them more functional by performing them on new equipment, try some of the following:

- **Cable machines**
- **Dumbbells**
- **Medicine balls**
- **Kettlebells**
- **Physioballs (also called Swiss balls or exercise balls)**
- **Resistance tubes**
- **Rocker and wobble boards**
- **Balance disks**

If you have any questions about how Functional Fitness can work for you, please don't hesitate to sign up for a personal training session with Beth Downey.

February

Functional Fitness Exercise of the Month Squat to Press



1. Stand with legs about shoulder distance apart, and hold onto a medicine ball or dumbbells.



2. Squat, trying to keep your head up, chest out, and glutes back like you are going to sit on a bench.



3. Push your body up to a standing position while simultaneously pressing the ball or dumbbells overhead like a shoulder press.

- Repeat for 3-4 sets of 12-20 repetitions. To increase the intensity, try performing more repetitions before increasing the weight. When you are finally ready to increase the weight used, remember to decrease the amount of repetitions again.