Hang Tough

Practice these basic steps to perform a pull-up.

December 5, 2016 By Kate Ferguson

“When approached properly, a pull-up isn’t nearly as intimidating as it may seem,” says Jill Franklin, an aerial artist and creator of Aerial Physique, a unique airborne workout that sculpts and strengthens the body.

To master this exercise, you can use a pull-up bar at the gym, or you can buy one for the home and securely install it in a doorway. Have a sturdy box or chair on hand to help you step up to reach and grasp the bar with your hands. Place your hands shoulder-width apart with your palms facing you (a chin-up grip) or spread your hands wider than shoulder-width apart with your palms facing away (a pull-up grip). Lift yourself so your chin is above the bar, and allow your body to hang. Then bend your knees so your heels move toward your butt. Hold for about 20 seconds, and then slowly, in a controlled manner, lower yourself to the floor and stand.

Alternatively, bring your knees to your chest, and hold the position for 10 to 20 seconds before finishing the movement as before.

“Make sure your abdominals are in, and as you lower yourself down, make that movement just as important as pulling your chin above the bar,” Franklin advises. “That negative pull-up is eventually going to give you

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