

GET FARM-WORTHY POWER

8 Steps to boost your man strength today

Real world strength goes head to head with gym strength in a reinvention of power as you know it

Your health club might make you gym-strong and deliver muscles that wink back at you in the mirror, but it's a pale imitation of real world farm strength. Try lifting an awkward hay bail or carrying a hefty fence post from the truck, over and over again until you're drenched in sweat and you'll understand why. The lack of physical challenges our generation has to surmount on a daily basis has actually made us pathetically weak, according to research by Cambridge University. They discovered the leg bones of your average everyday farmer in 5300BC were as strong and thick as those of elite cross-country runners. If you need more evidence look at the

example of Rulon Gardner, a pig farmer from the mid-west who beat the Russian Olympic wrestler for the Gold in 2000 Olympics.

The big difference was that Rulon was stronger in ways of old. From an exercise physiology point of view, farm strength is the ultimate in functional power, which translates into something you can use.

There's an old saying when it comes to being functional strong: strength from your toenails to fingernails. With farm strength, there is no breaking body parts down or doing separate cardio. You move as nature intended – as a complete unit to get the job done.

Today, it's unlikely you're using your body in the ways that our ancestors did, even if you're in a factory. To correct this you need to max out your time spent exercising and be efficient.

As a 40-plus guy, you'll want as much go as you can get during any activity. You want to be able to change your tire if needs be, shovel snow anytime, lay mulch in your yard in the spring, or cut a dead tree down in the back garden. Here's how to achieve the skills and performance in order to become the chiseled stud your great-great-grandfather once was.

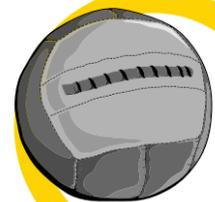
OLDER GUY WORKOUT PLAN

Men over the age of 40 need to activate as many joints and muscles as possible to max out the benefit you receive from exercise. To do this you need to:

- 1 Stimulate growth hormone with heavy loads because you lose testosterone and human growth hormone after the age of 30.
- 2 Boost calorific output because you need to burn more fat as we get older.
- 3 Maintain and preserve lean muscle mass because after the age of 35 you lose half a pound of muscle and gain a pound of fat every year if you are doing nothing.
- 4 You need to seek a way to relieve stress because life can – and will – happen.

SO HOW DO WE GO ABOUT THIS?

The great part is some of these drills can be accomplished both in and out of the gym with a little ingenuity. Now, they may not be the sexiest exercises in the world but, after 40, who cares as long as the results transfer into something sexy? After all, everyone wants to be able to get their rig out when they're on the beach and still coach little league. The workout here will be both for reps and time. It should not take you longer than 45 minutes max. To do it you'll need dumbbells, a heavy medicine ball, pull-up bar, a sand bag, a sled (or heavy tire) and a covert ball if you want to kick it into overdrive.



HEAVY MEDICINE BALL SQUAT TO PRESS

WORKS: Shoulders, chest, triceps, forearms, abs.

- A) Stand holding a medicine ball close to your chest with your elbows bent. Keep a slight bend in your knees.
- B) Bend your knees into a deep squat then, as you rise out of it, straighten your arms to press the ball above your head.

DUMBBELL FARMER'S WALK

WORKS: Quads, glutes, hamstrings, traps, core, lower back.

- A) Hold a dumbbell in each hand and let them hang to your sides with your palms facing your body.
- B) Walk normally with your chest high, chin up and back straight. Do this for 20 yards.



OVERHAND GRIP PULL-UPS

WORKS: Back, biceps, abs, forearms.

- A) Grab the pull-up bar with an overhand grip that's shoulder-width apart. Hang at arm's length so your elbows are extended.
- B) Bend your elbows to pull yourself up until your chin crosses the plane of the bar. Pause then slowly lower yourself to the starting position without allowing your body to sway.

OVERHEAD SANDBAG STAIR CLIMBS

WORKS: Core, chest, back, quads, glutes, calves.

- A) Rest a 25lb sandbag on the front of your shoulders. Press it overhead and lock out your elbows.
- B) Climb up and down a flight of stairs until your lungs burn.

TIRE SWINGS

WORKS: Core, shoulders, legs, upper body, forearms.

- A) Grab an SUV (or larger if you fancy a challenge) tire and hold it with both hands.
- B) Swing the tire from side to side with control while keeping your back straight and shoulders pulled back.



TRAIN BY AGE

POWER

SQUAT JUMP TO PULL-UP

WORKS: Full body.

- A) Stand beneath a pull-up bar.
- B) Squat down beneath the bar and launch yourself up to grab the bar and pull yourself up. This is an excellent way to build explosive power in your legs and your back.



OVERHEAD SAND BAG WALKING LUNGES

WORKS: Shoulders, core, legs, upper body.

- A) Rest a 25lb sandbag on the front of your shoulders. Press it overhead and lock out your elbows.
- B) Take a large step forward until your back leg's knee touches the ground so you perform a lunge. Keep doing this for 20 yards forward then 20 yards backwards.



SLED OR TIRE PULLS

WORKS: Total body.

- A) Load the sled with weight and attach the pulling strap. You can pull with handles, use a harness, or attach the pulling strap to a weight belt.
- B) Lean forwards and extend through your hips and knees to drag the sled forwards as you run.

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JUNE 2017 • 48

THE OLD VS THE NEW

GYM MOVE: BACK SQUAT

This strengthens the legs and lower back. Your cardio output can be high if high reps are done. However, there is no rotational element in the movement and no locomotion, which you need every day to be injury free.

Farm equivalent: Farmer's walk

This strengthens your legs, shoulders, upper back, lower back, as well as hitting the lungs and locomotion, which causes core rotation.

GYM MOVE: LOW ROWS

This works the lats, arms and lower back. It's great for putting on size in that area but does little for your lower body. Plus, how often are you sitting down, supported pulling something? Never, probably.

Farm equivalent: Sled pulls

This works the legs completely; it'll crush your cardio and can be used to work the entire anterior of the body or posterior, depending on the sled. Forget about grip strength if you are using a rope.

